



WEBEQUIE SUPPLY ROAD FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REPORT / IMPACT STATEMENT

January 30, 2026

AtkinsRéalis Ref: 661910

SECTION 15: Assessment of Effects on Economic Environment



WEBEQUIE FIRST NATION

AtkinsRéalis



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15. Assessment of Effects on Economic Environment

This section describes and assesses the potential project related effects may have on the economic domain including the Regional and Local Economy.

The Regional and Local Economy is defined as economic activity at both the Regional Study Area (RSA) and Local Study Area (LSA) scales, which includes features such as employment, businesses and procurement, and the flow of goods and services. Interconnection between the biophysical environment, and/or the health and social conditions associated with the Project, may create direct or indirect effects to the Regional and Local Economy Valued Component (VC).

The Environmental Assessment/Impact Assessment (EA/IA) approach is supported by studies that characterized the existing conditions of the Regional and Local Economy as a comparative basis to determine the potential net effects of the Project on this VC. The studies were based on a review of secondary sources of literature, online sources, government and industry databases, engagement and consultation, and primary data collection (surveys, focus groups and key knowledge holder interviews, as well as expert opinion). The Socio-Economic Existing Conditions Report is provided in Appendix L of this EAR/IS.

The assessment of potential effects for the Regional and Local Economy VC is presented in the following manner:

- Scope of the Assessment;
- Existing Conditions Summary;
- Potential Effects, Pathways, and Indicators;
- Mitigation and Enhancement Measures;
- Characterization of Net Effects;
- Determination of Significance;
- Cumulative Effects;
- Prediction of Confidence in the Assessment;
- Predicted future Condition of the Environment if the Project does not proceed;
- Follow-up and Monitoring Programs; and
- References.

15.1. Scope of the Assessment

15.1.1. Regulatory and Policy Setting

The Regional and Local Economy VC is assessed in accordance with the requirements of the *Impact Assessment Act* (IA Act), the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act*, and the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines (TISG) for the Project, and the provincial EA Terms of Reference (ToR) and EAR/IS guidance documents. **Table 15-1** outlines the key legislation, regulations, and policies relevant to the assessment of the Regional and Local Economy VC for the construction and operations phases of the Project.



Table 15-1: Key Regulation, Legislation, Policy Relevant to Regional and Local Economy

Regulatory Agency	Regulation, Legislation, or Policy	Project Relevance
Federal		
Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC)	<i>Impact Assessment Act (2023)</i>	The Project is subject to the federal <i>Impact Assessment Act</i> (refer to Section 2). The TISG issued by IAAC (2020) for the Project (Appendix A-1) were used to identify requirements for the assessment of the economic environment.
IAAC	Practitioner's Guide to Federal Impact Assessments	The Project follows the policy frameworks, guidance documents and templates provided in the Guide to Impact Assessment (IA) by IAAC (2023).
IAAC	Guidance: Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) in Impact Assessment	The Project refers to the guidance document on GBA+, which is a component of the Practitioner's guide to federal IAs under the <i>Impact Assessment Act</i> .
Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada / Indigenous Services Canada (ISC)	<i>Indian Act (1985)</i>	Project development on designated reserve land (or implicated via spatial bounds) will be subject to provisions and oversight via the <i>Indian Act</i> . The assessment will also consider Project effects related to the economic mandate associated with the <i>Indian Act</i> in relation to governance, infrastructure funding, economic development, housing, cost of living and well-being related to First Nation communities.
ISC	<i>Indian Act</i> and Indian Timber Harvesting Regulations (2002)	Timber removal on federal land jurisdiction within the Project Footprint may be subjected to regulations under the <i>Indian Act</i> . Currently, no regulation under this Act applies to Webequie First Nation; however, the <i>Indian Act</i> does have provisions for such. Project timber harvest may result in changes to the traditional economy and/or represent Crown stumpage fees.
ISC	Framework Agreement on <i>First Nation Land Management Act (2002)</i> / <i>First Nation Land Management Act</i> (repealed)	If opted into the Framework, First Nations can develop their own land use regulation, the environment and natural resources, and take advantage of cultural and economic development opportunities with their new land management authorities. The assessment will consider economic development opportunities because of the Project, which may support future opt-in for Webequie First Nation. Environmental authority in land resource decision-making is inherently linked to traditional and commercial economies. The Framework applies to federally designated areas of the Project Footprint (or implicated via spatial bounds).
ISC	<i>Federal Sustainable Development Act (2008)</i>	Economic assessment discussion will consider the principles of sustainable development as presented in the <i>Federal Sustainable Development Act</i> with relevancy to federal land areas of the Project Footprint (or implicated via spatial bounds).
ISC	<i>First Nations Commercial and Industrial Development Act (2006)</i>	Projects occurring on federal land areas may benefit from the <i>First Nations Commercial and Industrial Development Act</i> , which can develop regulations to support Project advancement in consideration of economic reconciliation.



Regulatory Agency	Regulation, Legislation, or Policy	Project Relevance
Department of Finance	Fall 2023 Economic Statement	The assessment will describe Project effects related to the economic environment as it relates to federal financial and economic development policy mandates for items such as: infrastructure; Indigenous housing development; cost of living; economic resiliency; generating opportunities; Indigenous equity ownership; or Indigenous investment priorities.
Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)	<i>Species at Risk Act</i> (2002)	Project effects related to listed wildlife, plant and fish species will be considered in relation to the traditional economy.
ECCC	<i>Migratory Birds Convention Act</i> (1917)	Avian species potentially effected by the Project will be considered with respect to the traditional economy.
ECCC	Canada's National Adaptation Strategy: Building Resilient Communities and a Strong Economy	In the context of climate change and adaptation strategies, the economic assessment will consider Project effects related to infrastructure, cost of living and climate change related inequities facing northern remote communities.
ECCC / Natural Resources Canada	<i>Forestry Act</i> (1985) and Timber Regulations	Timber removal on federal land jurisdiction within the Project Footprint will adhere to the requirements of forest harvest agreements and/or permitting requirements of the <i>Forestry Act</i> and Timber Regulations, including security and/or stumpage fees owed to the Crown.
Fisheries and Oceans Canada	<i>Fisheries Act</i> (1868)	The economic assessment will consider Project interactions with fish and fish habitat in relation to the traditional economy.
Provincial		
Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP)	<i>Ontario Environmental Assessment Act</i> (1990)	The Project is subject to the Ontario <i>Environmental Assessment Act</i> . The proposed ToR (Webequie First Nation, 2020), which was approved by the MECP on October 8, 2021, were used to identify requirements for the assessment of Regional and Local Economy VC.
MECP	Ontario Declaration Orders MNR-71 and the former Order MNR-75 (Forest Management Planning Exemption)	Forest management and harvest activities on Crown land within the assessed area of undertaking has been exempted from the Ontario <i>Environmental Assessment Act</i> since 1994 following the outcome of the Class EA and Ontario Declaration Orders MNR-71 and the former Order MNR-75 (now revoked). The Project Footprint does not overlap with the Class EA area of undertaking assessed for exemption, and therefore does not apply to the Project.
MECP	<i>Endangered Species Act</i> , 2007	Project effects related to listed wildlife, plant and fish species will be considered in relation to the traditional economy.
MECP	<i>Environmental Protection Act</i> (1990), <i>Ontario Water Resources Act</i> (1990)	Project effects assessed for the biophysical environment (e.g., air, water) will be considered in relation to potential changes in the traditional economy.
MECP	<i>Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act</i> (2006)	The assessment will consider economic effects related to Winisk River Provincial Park.



Regulatory Agency	Regulation, Legislation, or Policy	Project Relevance
Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR)	<i>Far North Act</i> (2010)	Project components and activities that affect land use are generally consistent with Webequie First Nation Draft (in-progress/early version) Community Based Land Use Plan and Community Based Land Use Plans from other First Nations as available.
MNR	<i>Crown Forest Sustainability Act</i> (1994)	Sustainable management of Ontario Crown forests in the Far North region of Ontario are informed by the <i>Crown Forest Sustainability Act</i> and related regulations, licensing, and/or policies. The Project Footprint and LSA of this Project do not overlap with a forest management unit and therefore will not have economic relevance on the commercial forest industry; however, Crown timber charges and licensing to harvest trees from Ontario public forests for construction of the WSR will be considered in the evaluation of the economic environment and reviewed in the context of applicable land use planning.
MNR	Fisheries Management Plan	The RSA falls within Zone 1 – 3 of the Fisheries Management Zone (FMZ). The LSA falls within Zone 2 and Zone 3 of the FMZs (MNR, 2023). Each specific zone outlines restrictions and guidelines for sport and conservation activities as it relates to fishing activities. No specific fisheries management plans have been approved for FMZ 1 – 3 (MNR, 2023). Project effects on fisheries will be considered, as relevant, for change in the traditional economy.
MNR	Provincial Fish Strategy (2015)	Ontario's Provincial Fish Strategy: Fish for the Future, provides a practical and strategic framework for managing Ontario's fisheries resources from 2015 forward, key management approaches, implementation approaches, and adaptive management. Project effects on fisheries will be considered, as relevant, for change in the traditional economy.
MNR	<i>Aggregate Resources Act</i> (1990)	Project effects related to aggregate extraction will be considered for changes in the traditional economy, and development of new industry or jobs.
MNR	<i>Public Lands Act</i> (1990)	The <i>Public Lands Act</i> is relevant to the Project because it governs the use and development of Crown land, including road construction, work permits, and land-use planning, ensuring legal authorization and environmental stewardship throughout the Project.
Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism	<i>Ontario Heritage Act</i> (1990)	The Project assessment considers effects on cultural heritage and archaeological resources, which may impact traditional economy and/or tourism.
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing	<i>The Planning Act</i> (1990)	The <i>Planning Act</i> outlines how Ontario Crown land may be used and controlled, and the purpose of this Act is to make sure that processes are fair, open, accessible, timely, efficient and promote the best economic and environmental interest within the provincial policy framework. The <i>Planning Act</i> allows the province to integrate matters of provincial interest into municipal and regional planning decisions by requiring that all decisions that are made are in conformance with provincial plans.



Regulatory Agency	Regulation, Legislation, or Policy	Project Relevance
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing	Provincial Policy Statement of Ontario (2020)	The Project assessment considers and follows the policy directions of the Provincial Policy Statement of Ontario, which details directives on land use planning and development.
Ministry of Energy and Mines	<i>Mining Act</i> (1990)	The assessment of the Regional and Local Economy VC considers Project interactions with mining sector activities such as: prospecting, mineral exploration, mine development and rehabilitation in Ontario.
Ministry of Northern Economic Development and Growth [MNEDG]	Ontario's Critical Minerals Strategy 2022–2027	The Ontario Critical Minerals Strategy 2022-2027 outlines provincial mandate commitments related to mining and mineral sector growth. Project effects will consider economic influence relevant for the mining sector and community growth related to training and employment.
MNEDG	Growth Plan for Northern Ontario (2011)	The growth plan for Northern Ontario, 2011, includes a commitment by the province to work with remote communities and other orders of government towards improved access for community residents (Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry [now Ministry of Northern Economic Development and Growth], 2011). This plan documents the growth plan for northern Ontario for the next 25 years.
Ministry of Transportation	Northern Ontario Transportation Plan (2020)	The Project is aligned with the objectives of this plan and will support in the endeavour of supporting sustainable development of northern Ontario.
Ministry of Transportation	<i>Highway Traffic Act</i> (1990)	The Project assessment considers government obligations for administration of the <i>Highway Traffic Act</i> , with respect to the WSR expanding Ontario provincial highway infrastructure.
Ministry of Infrastructure	<i>Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act</i> (2015)	The assessment will describe changes in employment as a Project effect arising from road infrastructure development.
Other		
Webequie First Nation	Webequie First Nation On-Reserve Land Use Plan (2019)	The Webequie On-Reserve Land Use Plan provides information and guidance for community land use and development projects that occur on the reserve. This includes, housing, power, water and sewer, community buildings, roads, camps, the airport, the landfill, the pow wow area, gardens, etc.
Webequie First Nation	Webequie First Nation Comprehensive Community Plan (2023)	The 2023 Webequie First Nation Comprehensive Community Plan outlines a roadmap for the Community's future. It is a planning process led by the community.
Webequie First Nation	Webequie First Nation in-progress/ early version Draft Community Based Land Use Plan (CBLUP)	The in-progress Webequie Draft CBLUP outlines the vision, goals, objectives and principles set out by Webequie First Nation. The in-progress Webequie Draft CBLUP forms the basis for proposed land use areas and direction for land use activities and highlights the shared development and protection interests of Webequie First Nation. It advances the Webequie community economic and social development goals and community direction for the protection of land, water, species habitat, cultural heritage features and community values. The in-progress Draft CBLUP



Regulatory Agency	Regulation, Legislation, or Policy	Project Relevance
		acknowledges Webequie customary stewardship responsibilities, including those that overlap with other First Nations, and <i>Far North Act</i> , 2010 objectives that together enable economic development benefitting First Nations, protecting areas of cultural and natural significance and providing for interconnectedness in protected areas. The in-progress Webequie Draft CBLUP remains pending joint final approval from Webequie First Nation and Ontario.

15.1.2. Consideration of Input from Engagement and Consultation Activities

The engagement and consultation activities for the socio-economic environment, including the Regional and Local Economy VC, were carried out in several stages of the Project. The engagement and consultation program were guided by the Webequie First Nation Elders to ensure respect for the cultures and traditions of the Webequie people and their clans and neighbours outside the Webequie First Nation. In coordination with other provincial government agencies, Ontario (MECP) identified 22 potentially affected and/or interested Indigenous communities (First Nation communities and the Métis Nation of Ontario) that are to be consulted by the Webequie Project Team as part of its project planning. Sixteen (16) of these Indigenous communities may be affected by the Project, whereas the other six (6) Indigenous communities may have potential interest in the Project.

Interested and potentially affected stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations, were identified based on their interest and willingness to be included in engagement and consultation activities, such as members of the public, Crown land tenure and claim holders within the mineralized zone in the McFaulds Lake area, environmental interest groups, community-based organizations, and recreational and eco-tourism businesses. Municipalities to be included in the consultation program were identified based on their proximity to the Webequie Supply Road (WSR) such as City of Thunder Bay, Municipality of Greenstone, Township of Pickle Lake, City of Timmins, and Municipality of Sioux Lookout.

Engagement and consultation activities and materials are described in detail in the Section 2 (Engagement and Consultation Summary) of EAR/IS. Comments received from participants during engagement and consultation activities are documented in the Record of Engagement and Consultation as a supportive document to the EAR/IS.

Table 15-2 summarizes key feedback related to the Regional and Local Economy VC received during engagement and consultation activities listed above, and how the comments and inputs are addressed in the EAR/IS. This feedback includes concerns raised by Indigenous communities and groups, the public, government agencies, and stakeholders prior to the formal commencement of the federal IA and provincial EA, during the Planning Phase of the IA and ToR phase of the EA. The Project Team considered the comments received on the Draft EAR/IS in finalizing the EAR/IS. Details of responses and how the comments have been addressed are provided in the Record of Engagement and Consultation.



Table 15-2: Regional and Local Economy VC – Summary of Input Received During Engagement and Consultation

Comment Theme	How the Comments are Addressed in this EAR/IS	Indigenous Community or Stakeholder
<p>Concern that the socio-economic IA baseline studies should be inclusive of information about kinship, familial relationships between Webequie First Nation and other communities, community disruption, stability, and cohesion.</p>	<p>It is acknowledged that Webequie First Nation has familial relationships with neighbouring Indigenous communities. Through consultation activities, the Project Team has sought to obtain this information from neighbouring communities. If information is provided and permission is granted by the communities, information will be used in the EAR/IS.</p> <p>Consideration of kinship, familial relationships within the Webequie community and among other communities, community disruption, stability and cohesion based on information received and is discussed in the EAR/IS (Section 14: Social Environment and Section 19: Indigenous People and the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights).</p>	<p>Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines (ENDM) (now Ministry of Energy and Mines)</p>
<p>Concerns that the socio-economic effects assessment should include the review and reference to current Comprehensive Community Plans/Economic Development Plans for alignment as well as identifying opportunities for businesses and current assets that could provide local opportunities.</p>	<p>Comprehensive Community Plans prepared by First Nation communities were reviewed as part of the Socio-Economic Baseline study, as available. The EAR/IS considered opportunities for businesses and current assets for local opportunities. Section 15.3.4, below, and Section 16 (Non-Traditional Land and Resource Use) of the EAR/IS provides information in this regard.</p>	<p>ENDM</p>
<p>Inquiry on workforce needs for the road construction.</p>	<p>Potential effects of the Project on employment opportunities are described in Section 15.3.1 of the EAR/IS.</p> <p>The proponent welcomes any discussions with Constance Lake First Nation, including suggestions for job creation opportunities, through ongoing engagement and consultation and Indigenous Knowledge programs.</p>	<p>Constance Lake First Nation – ATRI Forum</p>
<p>Information that Constance Lake First Nation had previously partnered with a drilling and construction company and has a local Economic Development Corporation; however, the economic development officer passed away and the corporation is now inactive.</p>	<p>Potential effects of the Project on local businesses are considered in Section 15.3.3 of the EAR/IS.</p>	<p>Constance Lake First Nation – ATRI Forum</p>
<p>Concerns that quarry in the area should be owned by First Nations and community members being construction crew.</p>	<p>Potential effects of the Project on local business, including potential business development, are considered in Section 15.3.3 of the EAR/IS.</p>	<p>Constance Lake First Nation – ATRI Forum</p>
<p>Request that future contracts agreed to should be written to benefit Indigenous communities and be thought out for the long-term.</p>	<p>Potential effects on local business are considered in Section 15.3.3 of the EAR/IS.</p>	<p>Ginoogaming First Nation – ATRI Forum</p>



Comment Theme	How the Comments are Addressed in this EAR/IS	Indigenous Community or Stakeholder
Suggestion that power needs to be given back to the people as this removes unhealthy behaviour (e.g., addiction), creates revenue for people and consequently a healthy community.	Potential effects of the Project on community well-being and safety are considered in Section 14.3.7, and the human health in Section 17 (Human Health) of the EAR/IS.	Long Lake #58 First Nation – ATRI Forum
Request for trainings to be provided for jobs during construction, operation and maintenance of the Project.	The Project welcomes any information the First Nation wishes to share, including suggestions for job creation opportunities and training, through ongoing engagement and consultation. Information on environmental and cultural awareness training currently planned to be provided as a part of WSR is mentioned in Appendix E (Mitigation Measures).	Long Lake #58 First Nation – ATRI Forum
Request on the status of the assessment of aggregate sources for the Project.	Information regarding aggregate assessment for the WSR is provided in Section 3 (Evaluation of Project Alternatives), Section 6 (Geology, Terrain, and Soils), Appendix D-2 (WSR Exploration of Potential Aggregate Development Sites Report), and Section 16 (Non-Traditional Land and Resource Use) of the EAR/IS.	Nibinamik First Nation – ATRI Forum
Information that the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) are completing an assessment within the Nibinamik region. However, Nibinamik First Nation indicated they lacked the capacity to complete this assessment alone.	The proponent has not received information to-date directly from Nibinamik First Nation; however, it continues to correspond with Nibinamik First Nation, and any information provided will be integrated into the EAR/IS.	Nibinamik First Nation – ATRI Forum
Request for a meeting between the proponent and Nibinamik First Nation to discuss opportunities.	The proponent continues to correspond with Nibinamik First Nation, and any information provided will be integrated into the EAR/IS. Following the request, meetings have been scheduled with Nibinamik First Nation, and further information can be found in Section 2 (Engagement and Consultation).	Nibinamik First Nation – ATRI Forum
Information that studies on aggregates have not been completed within Nibinamik territory.	The proponent continues to correspond with Nibinamik First Nation, and any information provided will be integrated into the EAR/IS. Information on assessments completed related to aggregates can be found in Section 3 (Evaluation of Project Alternatives), Section 6 (Geology, Terrain, and Soils), Appendix D-2 (WSR Exploration of Potential Aggregate Development Sites Report), and Section 16 (Non-Traditional Land and Resource Use) of the EAR/IS.	Nibinamik First Nation – ATRI Forum
Information that there is eco-tourism in Weenusk First Nation community, and this includes travel along the river in canoes, fishing and polar bear watching.	The Project acknowledges the information provided. The EAR/IS Section 19 (Non-Traditional Land and Resource Use) has included this information.	Weenusk First Nation – ATRI Forum



Comment Theme	How the Comments are Addressed in this EAR/IS	Indigenous Community or Stakeholder
Inquiry on commencement of construction, how materials will be delivered for each phase of the road and if there will be a small window of delivering materials through the ice roads to begin construction.	Information regarding construction timelines, requirements, and activities involved in each phase is provided in Section 4 (Project Description) of EAR IS.	Public Information Centre (PIC) #3
Inquiry on the type of economic development opportunities available besides mining.	Information regarding opportunities available, such as employment and supply chains, is provided in Section 15.3.1 , Section 15.3.2 , and Section 15.3.3 of this document, and also in EAR/IS Section 4 (Project Description). Information regarding recreational and tourism opportunities are provided in EAR/IS Section 16 (Non-Traditional Land and Resource Use).	PIC #3
Request to know if there is a potential for other court cases to influence construction of the road as Wyloo, federal government, provincial government are in court, with the regional assessment ongoing.	The proponent intends to complete the EAR/IS. If new information is provided with respect to regional planning, the proponent will respond accordingly.	PIC #3
Clarification on whether the transmission line announced by the Premier of Ontario to be developed for five (5) Matawa First Nations Management member communities will be built along the road.	This is yet to be determined although constructing the transmission line along the road would be ideal as there is an established route. However, the transmission line would still have to go through its own review and approval process.	PIC #3
Inquiry on additional infrastructures to be built along the road.	Section 4 (Project Description) of the EAR/IS provides a description of the Project components as part of the construction phase and operations phase, including both temporary and permanent infrastructure.	PIC #3
Request to know if job opportunities will be available to neighbouring communities like Neskantaga and Kasabonika Lake First Nations and if the opportunities will be on a rotational basis.	Information on opportunities available, such as employment and for businesses, is provided in Section 15.3.1 , Section 15.3.2 , and Section 15.3.3 of this document. Further information on employment opportunities available for WSR is provided in EAR/IS Section 4 (Project Description).	PIC #3
Concerns on lack of information regarding opportunities with respect to the proposed roads.	Information regarding economic development and expansion opportunities present with the Project are provided in this section as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Opportunities with regard to labour force, employment and Income – Section 15.3.1; ▪ Opportunities with regard to overall economy – Section 15.3.2 and ▪ Opportunities with regard to business environment – Section 15.3.3. 	Marten Falls First Nation during meeting held on August 24, 2023
Companies are approaching Marten Falls about wanting to partner on various initiatives. The community recognizes that the process of partnering on economic initiatives	Section 15.3.3 has outlined the changes to the business environment caused by the Project.	Marten Falls First Nation – ATRI Forum February 2023



Comment Theme	How the Comments are Addressed in this EAR/IS	Indigenous Community or Stakeholder
requires community readiness. People in Marten Falls might not be ready to work.		
Concerns on employment opportunities, reliance on the welfare system, and need to have a variety of jobs available.	Employment opportunities available for the Project are provided in detail in Section 4 (Project Description), and the positive impact of these opportunities are described in Section 15.3.1 It is estimated that the Project will create job opportunities in the LSA and RSA, as well as influence the needs for education and training for the benefits of the Project and future mining industry opportunities.	Webequie First Nation – Meeting on May 13 & 14, 2024
Concerns on cost of living, and associated challenges such as finding healthy food options. Currently the Northern Store in Webequie First Nation is too expensive to purchase from, and junk food is preferred due to low cost. Persons with health complications such as diabetes, who require prescribed foods and healthy diets, have challenges procuring such foods in the community.	Webequie First Nation’s challenges in terms of cost of living and lack of proper options to purchase food from are noted. The Community Readiness Plan (CRP) which is developed in line with Webequie Community Comprehensive Plan (CCP) has addressed the concerns of lack of options in the community in terms of procuring a healthy meal. The CRP can be found in Appendix N. Section 15.3.2 discusses the impacts of cost of living in terms of the Project.	Webequie First Nation – Meeting on May 13 & 14, 2024
Commented that future infrastructure and telecommunications need to be considered under economic impacts.	Community infrastructure and services and potential impacts are assessed under Section 14 of the EAR/IS (Section 14.3.3: Community Services and Section 14.3.6: Community Infrastructure). Proponent’s future developments are considered in Section 15.9 .	Aroland First Nation – Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario
Commented that a community specific and local economic baseline should be established to understand the private sector activities taking place and the income from government expenditures. The effects assessment should consider potential price fluctuation of goods and local businesses that could be impacted. The province may have available resources of baseline data. Other sources are census data from Statistics Canada and community profile data from Indigenous Services Canada.	Appendix L of the EAR/IS (Socio-Economic Existing Conditions Report) provides a comprehensive baseline of socio-economic conditions of the Project’s LSA and RSA. The baseline existing conditions have been considered in the EAR/IS as the basis for results (Section 15.2.2). The effects assessment has considered all existing information currently publicly available for identification of effects in Section 15.3 .	Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario – Neskantaga First Nation – Member of public – Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism, and Culture Industries (now Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism)



Comment Theme	How the Comments are Addressed in this EAR/IS	Indigenous Community or Stakeholder
<p>Commented that the Project has the potential to be economically beneficial due job creation, increased small businesses, increased access to services.</p> <p>Commented that the Project could increase economic activity in the project area, such as forestry from clear cutting and aggregate resource extraction.</p> <p>Requested that these aspects be included in the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines.</p>	<p>Section 15.3 provides an analysis of Project effects on labour force, employment and income, overall economy, business environment and public and Indigenous finances within LSA and RSA in construction and operations phases of the Project.</p>	<p>Aroland First Nation – Member of public – Employment and Social Development Canada – Ginoogaming First Nation – Member of public – Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism, and Culture Industries (now Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism)</p>
<p>Commented that there will be a need for programs for Indigenous community members, local businesses and workforce, to benefit from economic opportunities, such as job training and health supports.</p> <p>Commented that the proponent connects with the Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Employment and Training Services (KKETS) and the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program, and other federal services to understand the job training opportunities available and identify individuals who have already received training.</p>	<p>The assessment of effects with regard to job opportunities, business and economic developments and effects of the Project on existing economic conditions is provided in Section 15.3.</p>	<p>Employment and Social Development Canada – Member of public – Nibinamik First Nation</p>
<p>Commented that the proponent should be able to demonstrate the capacity to carry out construction and operation of the Project from an economic and human resource perspective.</p>	<p>Please refer to Section 15.2.2.4 for information on existing conditions of public and Indigenous finances, Section 15.3.4 for impacts to public and Indigenous finances and Section 15.4.4 for identified mitigations.</p>	<p>Attawapiskat First Nation – Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario – Member of the public – Mushkegowuk Tribal Council – Neskantaga First Nation – Weenusk First Nation</p>
<p>Socio-economic Study Plan, Section 2.4, it is not clear how changes to some indicators will be evaluated. For example, no methods are included for how the economic modelling will be done (e.g., for 'Change in output/GDP value-added' or 'Cost of Living').</p>	<p>Detailed methodology on the methods utilized for economic assessment is provided in Section 15.2.1, and in Section 15.2.1.2.3.</p>	<p>MECP</p>
<p>Commented on a tendency to solely consider economic value for certain environmental components, such as fish.</p>	<p>The impacts to species and habitats in ecological aspects are covered under following sections of the EAR/IS: Section 10 (Fish and Fish Habitat), Section 11 (Vegetation and Wetlands), Section 12 (Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat), and Section 13 (Species at Risk).</p>	<p>Member of the Public</p>



Comment Theme	How the Comments are Addressed in this EAR/IS	Indigenous Community or Stakeholder
Provide detail on the timeline for engagement relative to the project work plan, including engagement relative to the schedule for baseline work, and in consideration of the Project Team's timeline for the development of the Impact Statement.	Please refer to Section 02 (Engagement and Consultation) of the EAR/IS for detailed information on engagement and consultation carried out.	IAAC
Provide detail to demonstrate how the changes to specific supply chains of materials, through longer-term facilitation of development of the Ring of Fire, will be included in the Impact Statement.	Impacts to overall economy is provided in Section 15.3.2 and impacts to existing businesses is provided in Section 15.3.3 .	IAAC
Provide further detail to demonstrate consideration of how mineral exploration would potentially benefit due to the Project and how that will be included in the Impact Statement.	Impacts to overall economy is provided in Section 15.3.2 and impacts to existing businesses is provided in Section 15.3.3 .	IAAC
Provide additional detail on the analytical approach to the socio-economic impact analysis and pathway approach to ensure that the EAR/IS will include an assessment of differential effects of the Project, as part of the assessment of impacts to community well-being, including surrounding communities, as required in Section 13.1 of the TISG.	Please refer to Section 15.1.5 which provides information on the spatial and temporal boundaries considered for the assessment; the assessment includes the local and RSA communities, GBA+ components Indigenous perspective comprising of the differential effects.	IAAC

15.1.3. Incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge and Land and Resource Use Information

To enable Indigenous Knowledge communication and engagement, Webequie First Nation formed a Webequie Project Team, comprised of community members and elected councillors. The Webequie Project Team advised the consultant Project Team (AtkinsRéalis). The Webequie Project Team reports directly to the Chief and Council at crucial stages and decision-making junctures throughout the EA/IA process. The Elders guide the Webequie Project Team to ensure that engagement and consultation for the Project are conducted respectfully and inclusively, aligning with the Elders' guiding principles. This approach aims to reflect the culture and traditions of the Webequie people, including their clans, as well as neighbouring communities beyond the Webequie First Nation.

Subsequent to the sequential engagement and consultation efforts, the following First Nations provided knowledge via the Indigenous Knowledge and Land and Resource Use (IKLRU) study or the Socio-Economic Primary Data Collection Program as input for the EAR/IS to-date:

- Webequie First Nation;
- Marten Falls First Nation;
- Weenusk First Nation;
- Kashechewan First Nation; and



- Fort Albany First Nation.

Key Indigenous Knowledge that was shared and subsequently incorporated and/or considered in the assessment of the Regional and Local Economy VC is presented in **Table 15-3**. Further details related to methods of IKLRU data collection are provided in the Socio-Economic Existing Conditions Report (Appendix L) and summarized in **Section 15.2.1.1**.

Table 15-3: Regional and Local Economy VC – Summary of Indigenous Knowledge and Land and Resource Use Information

Topic	Key Information and Concerns	Response and/or Relevant EAR/IS Section
Business environment – Mining & Forestry Potential	<p>Information Shared</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It was noted that areas with old volcanic and gabbroic rocks near Webequie have high economic potential for valuable minerals like gold and diamonds. Rocks in other areas, like younger sedimentary types, have less potential for metals but might be useful for industrial minerals or aggregates. ▪ All-season road access is expected to connect communities and support resource-based projects. These roads could link Webequie to mineral projects in the Ring of Fire and improve access for community needs and economic development. ▪ Exploration near Webequie has found valuable minerals like chromite and nickel. Balancing exploration with environment and cultural values remains a strong priority. ▪ Webequie First Nation has the right to develop or manage resources within its traditional territory, the potential impacts of these activities on other communities' ways of life and governance must be thoroughly assessed and understood. 	<p>Potential expansion of mining and forestry resource activities are anticipated following road access connectivity of the WSR. The change in opportunities for growth and expansion for mining or forestry potential is provided in discussion of the overall economy and business environment subcomponents under Sections 15.3.1 and 15.3.2, respectively. Project mitigation and enhancement measures related to mining and forestry potential have been designed by considering community feedback, and are found in Sections 15.4.2 and 15.4.3, respectively.</p>
Economic Growth	<p>Information Shared</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Webequie First Nation's vision for the future is rooted in long-standing community dialogue and focuses on land use planning and managing opportunities, to maximize community benefits. A three-tier inherited model is used to balance Indigenous use, land and water protection, resource development and cultural sustainability which fosters a positive cultural and economic environment. ▪ The proposed planning area encompasses the entire Ring of Fire and this sparks interest from Webequie First Nation and surrounding communities to create opportunities for economic development. 	<p>Potential economic growth is anticipated following road access connectivity of the WSR. Assessment of the Regional and Local Economy has taken into consideration community values, concerns and interests to understand potential Project driven economic changes and/or magnitude of effects. Economic growth is discussed as a change to the business environment subcomponent under Section 15.3.2.</p> <p>Project mitigation and enhancement measures related to economic growth potential have been designed using community feedback and are presented in Section 15.4.3. Where possible, the mitigation and enhancement measures are intended to be compatible with</p>



Topic	Key Information and Concerns	Response and/or Relevant EAR/IS Section
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The cultural and economic land bases are key to Webequie First Nation's relationship with the Province and effective coordination with the federal and provincial government will ensure that resource development benefits the community. ▪ Tourism interests in the 1960's led to the creation of the Winisk River Provincial Park, protecting the area but restricting community development. ▪ Webequie First Nation seeks to grow both culturally and economically by reviving traditional practices and knowledge and blending these with eco-cultural tourism. ▪ Webequie First Nation has long engaged in commercial fishing and trapping. While trapping is no longer considered the main source of income and commercial fishing decreasing due to the withdrawal of subsidies, the community is keen to revive these traditional activities and seeks to balance them with these new commercial opportunities. ▪ There is untapped tourism potential in Webequie area with opportunities for seasonal jobs and community-owned ventures and the community seeks to expand eco-cultural tourism and other ventures to enhance community benefits whilst respecting existing operations. ▪ Economic growth is guided via Webequie land use planning. The general approach considers major areas of land use (e.g., Kaa-shi-ti-kwayak Protected Areas, Waanaabiikaan Enhanced Management Area (EMA), Corridor EMA, Prime Lake EMA). The land use guidance safeguards cultural practices while allowing various resource development activities that benefit the community. ▪ Consideration will be given to land use and development activities that contribute to long-term economic sustainability and maximize benefits for Webequie First Nation, with consideration for shared benefits with neighbouring First Nations. All planning and decision-making will respect Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and involve proper consultation. ▪ Interest to pursue additional community-owned and operated tourism establishments with a speciality market promoting eco-cultural tourism venture is strong. Existing tourism and new tourism opportunities are a major focus in the western part of the proposed planning area due to proximity of community 	<p>Webequie First Nation's CCP (Webequie First Nation, 2023) and On-Reserve Land Use Plan, which is captured in the draft framework presented in Appendix N for a Socio-Economic Community Readiness Plan (CRP).</p>



Topic	Key Information and Concerns	Response and/or Relevant EAR/IS Section
	<p>resources, existing protected areas and the geography of the Ontario Shield.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Winisk Lake has waterpower development potential, if the community agrees. There are also smaller tributaries with waterpower potential, subject to further community discussion. ▪ Webequie may explore small scale forestry projects led by the community. Partnerships with neighbouring First Nations and thorough resource assessments will help shape these opportunities. Development of a locally owned services such as a gas station and service shop, mechanic, restaurant, hotel, clothing stores, greenhouses are also encouraged alongside resource development potential. ▪ The Project may increase the likelihood of future extractive resource development in the Ring of Fire and surrounding region, which could lead to additional economic activity, but also heighten the risk of environmental and cultural impacts. 	
<p>Environmental condition (e.g., land, wildlife, fish, plants) and connectedness of economy to spiritual necessity, livelihood, Indigenous way of life</p>	<p>Information Shared</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Webequie promotes the importance of preserving traditional livelihood practices to sustain culture, support the economy, and maintain the health of the land and water. They also teach that the Creator placed economic value on the earth, giving the land wealth and the knowledge to use it for an economic livelihood. ▪ Webequie has long been a traditional gathering place known for hunting and fishing, with inter-community ties across the region. ▪ The Waanaabiikaan Area is noted for having extensive wildlife and is traditionally and culturally important and requires a balanced development approach that protects these land values. ▪ Travel routes along the Kistachowan Sipi (Albany River) and its tributaries is traditionally and culturally important. Other areas include along the Albany River and its tributaries, such as the watershed of the Ogoki River and the mouth of the Henley River. These routes allow First Nations to access their traditional lands for harvesting and trapping. ▪ Connection to the Kistachowan Sipi is essential, influencing cultural, social, health, and economic aspects of their lives. 	<p>Potential economic growth is anticipated following road access connectivity of the WSR. Assessment of the Regional and Local Economy has taken into consideration community values, concerns and interests to understand potential Project driven changes and/or magnitude of effect on the traditional economy. Potential changes in the ability of Webequie First Nation and other First Nation community members to practice and engage in traditional economy is discussed as a change to the overall economy subcomponent under Section 15.3.1.</p> <p>Project mitigation and enhancement measures related to the traditional economy have been designed by considering community feedback and are presented in Section 15.4.2. Where possible, the mitigation and enhancement measures are intended to be compatible with Webequie First Nation's CCP and On-Reserve Land Use Plan, which is captured in the draft framework presented in Appendix N for a Socio-Economic CRP.</p> <p>Cumulative effects related to western influences on pre-existing traditional economies is considered in Section 15.3.2 where information is available, as well as in Section 19</p>



Topic	Key Information and Concerns	Response and/or Relevant EAR/IS Section
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Historically, European trading beginning in the 1600s changed Anishnawbe sustainable living patterns, and Indigenous People participating in this economy experienced inequitable conditions. ▪ <u>Due to the high cost of living and ongoing inflationary and economic pressures, many community members rely on living off the land as a means of survival.</u> Community members expressed that living on the land, referred to as the 'muskeg economy' also supports overall well-being <p>Concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elders stress that traditional practices help balance the ecosystem, reflecting the health of the land and the people. ▪ In the past, Webequie people relied on the land for all their needs, with commercial activities like trapping and fishing supporting traditional livelihoods. Changes in market demands, western influences and increased dependence on wage income have impacted traditional practices. ▪ Members have noticed changes in animal populations and harvesting patterns. Despite a decline in commercial trapping, the community remains committed to maintaining this tradition for economic and cultural reasons. ▪ By limiting First Nation community members' ability to travel and spend time together at camps and traditional sites across their Territory, the Project could disrupt cultural transmission. 	<p>(Indigenous People) and Section 21 (Cumulative Effects) of the EAR/IS.</p>
<p>Training, Education & Workforce Participation</p>	<p>Information Shared</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community members hope to see more training opportunities, new skills training centre with well-equipped staff, improved adult education programming for Grade 12, and support for online university/college students. More workshops to inform people about the types of jobs available, and improved employment services with internships and part-time employment as well as training for local home-improvement and renovation workers. ▪ Recommendation for a new training centre that focuses on life skills, heavy equipment training, job connection, improved education, support for online university/college students, trades training and specialized workshops. 	<p>Potential economic growth is anticipated following road access connectivity of the WSR. Assessment of the Regional and Local Economy has taken into consideration community values, concerns and interests to understand potential Project driven changes and/or magnitude of effects on the labour force, Employment and Income VC. Potential changes in the ability of Webequie First Nation and other First Nation community members to participate equitably and meaningfully in the workforce is discussed in Section 15.2.1.2.3.</p> <p>Project mitigation and enhancement measures related to Labour force, employment and income have been designed by considering community</p>



Topic	Key Information and Concerns	Response and/or Relevant EAR/IS Section
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Suggestion on creating unions to ensure community members gain access to quality employment and training thereby encouraging members to live and work in the region. ▪ Desire to have financial planning and life skills workshops for interested Webequie First Nation members. <p>Concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concerns that where training and professional development is not provided, community members may not have the required skills and expertise to work on the Project and as such will not benefit from the Project development. ▪ Concerns of below average education will restrict Webequie First Nation members from taking advantage of many benefits. ▪ Fear of nepotism and favouritism to community members are offered opportunities. ▪ Fear that the Project will only economically benefit Webequie First Nation and Marten Falls First Nation. ▪ Families have more adults working, and fewer to take care of children. ▪ Residential schools caused lasting trauma, affecting mental health and traditional knowledge. Substance abuse and anxiety are major issues, impacting participation in traditional activities and workforce. ▪ Youth show little interest in learning traditional skills. There is a need for educational programs to teach traditional practices, but funding is lacking. Modern employment demands reduce time for land-based activities. 	<p>feedback and are presented in Section 15.4.1. Where possible, the mitigation and enhancement measures are intended to be compatible with Webequie First Nation's CCP and On-Reserve Land Use Plan, and information provided in IKLRU studies by Indigenous communities, which is captured in the draft framework presented in Appendix N for a Socio-Economic CRP.</p>
Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High rates of unemployment are experienced in many Indigenous communities; ▪ Hunting and trapping began to decline with an increase in employment opportunities; ▪ Employment demands in the community leave limited opportunities to get out on the land; ▪ Commercial trapping is still valued economically, traditionally and spiritually however there is decline in commercial trapping due to high operating costs and market challenges; 	<p>Community members have emphasized the issues of unemployment and the lack of growth and learning opportunities. The Project Team has acknowledged these concerns. With the anticipated road access connectivity from the project, potential economic growth is expected, leading to job opportunities for community members, allowing them to work closer to home. The assessment of the Regional and Local Economy has considered community values, concerns, and interests to understand the potential project driven changes and their impact on the labour force, employment, and income.</p>



Topic	Key Information and Concerns	Response and/or Relevant EAR/IS Section
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extensive commercial tourism opportunities that are largely underutilized; and ▪ Strong interest to pursue additional community-owned and operated tourism establishments with a specialty market promoting eco-cultural tourism venture. 	<p>Project mitigation and enhancement measures related to Labour force, employment and income have been designed by considering community feedback and are presented in Section 15.4.1.</p>

15.1.4. Valued Components and Indicators

A VC is a human or physical aspect of the environment that is important to Indigenous, public, and/or scientific perspectives, therefore warranting detailed consideration in an EAR/IS (Noble and Smith, 2015). Indigenous communities and groups, the public, government agencies, and stakeholders have much interest in the Regional and Local Economy VC as it is complexly important to future economic stability and/or growth. Economic subcomponents were identified in the TISG and ToR and will serve as the basis for how potential project effects on the economic environment will be assessed.

The Regional and Local Economy VC is composed of several subcomponents that are intended to capture features of the economic environment that may be affected by the Project, which will thus inform the basis for the assessment of effects. The VC subcomponents are assessed using the same methodology outlined in EAR/IS Section 5 (Environmental Assessment / Impact Assessment Approach and Methods).

Four subcomponents were developed to describe the Regional and Local Economy VC and include:

- Labour Force, employment and income;
- Overall economy;
- Business environment; and
- Public and Indigenous community finance.

Each subcomponent is further characterized based on preliminary indicators that were presented in the ToR and TISG for the Project. Indicators represent specific factors to reflect the status of a VC and include metrics that measure change (qualitatively or quantitatively) relative to existing conditions. The VC, subcomponents and indicators used to assess the economic environment were refined following input received during engagement and consultation activities. Indicator metrics were developed using Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) methods. Using a blended approach to meet the information requirements of both the EAR/IS, VC subcomponents were developed to organize indicators and metrics and are presented in **Table 15-4**.



Table 15-4: Regional and Local Economy VC – Subcomponents, Indicators, and Rationale

Subcomponents	Indicators	Rationale
Labour force, employment and income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Labour force participation¹: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ employment age population; ▫ labour force participation; ▫ unemployment; ▫ barriers to employment; and ▫ time spent on unpaid domestic work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project workforce hiring and procurement could increase employment and training opportunities and change income.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Labour income¹: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ income; and ▫ sources of income. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project workforce hiring could increase employment and change income.
Overall economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gross Domestic Product (GDP). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Project has the potential to impact GDP through increased employment opportunities, employment income and procurement.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cost of living: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ consumer price index; ▫ low-income cut-off indicators; ▫ percentage of residents spending over 30% of income on shelter; ▫ average retail prices for select products; and ▫ average annual household spending. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Project may affect the price of goods due to increased access to the community with consideration of other projects.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Economic development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ economic development; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - capacity for other projects; - gaps; ▫ major projects; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - new projects; - closures; ▫ equipment availability; ▫ energy profile; ▫ access to capital; and ▫ trends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Project has the potential to change the composition of the economy and alter the industrial and commercial activities available within the area. ▪ The Project will require the procurement of goods and services – possibly from firms within the local area.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Traditional economy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Commercial; and ▫ Non-commercial. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project works and activities have the potential to affect traditional land use activities. ▪ The Project has a potential to effect participation of Indigenous People in traditional economy.



Subcomponents	Indicators	Rationale
Business environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Main employers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ key industries (jobs, wages, and sales by industry); ▫ main employers; and ▫ local construction businesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Project may potentially affect employment and business activities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local economy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ industry supply chain; ▫ industry subsidies; ▫ economic leakage; and ▫ market trends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Project may potentially affect local supply chains.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mining, aggregate, and forestry activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ size of industry; ▫ supply chain; ▫ industry projects; ▫ economic development plans; ▫ active mines; and ▫ area (ha) of significant aggregate deposits affected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Project may potentially result in effects on existing aggregate deposits (depletion of, access to), effects on mining operations, effects on the mineral exploration industry. ▪ There is a potential for uncontrolled access to mineral exploration.
Public and Indigenous community finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public and Indigenous community finances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ tax base; ▫ Indigenous community funding/grants; ▫ revenues (taxes, transfers, grants etc.); and ▫ public expenditures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project may result in changes to government expenditures and provide revenue from taxation.

Notes: * Lightcast products provide detailed information about occupations, skills in demand, and career pathways, providing labour market insight to employers, educational institutions, and government agencies.

¹ GBA+ disaggregated where possible.

Ha = hectares.

Km² = square kilometres

15.1.5. Spatial and Temporal Boundaries

The following assessment boundaries have been defined for the Regional and Local Economy VC.

15.1.5.1. Spatial Boundaries

The spatial boundaries for the Regional and Local Economy VC are shown on **Figure 15.1** and include the following:

- **Project Footprint** – the area of direct disturbance (i.e., the physical area required for project construction, operations). The Project Footprint is defined as the 35-metre wide right-of-way (ROW) of the WSR; and temporary or permanent areas needed to support the Project that include access roads, construction camps, laydown and storage yards, aggregate pits/quarries, and a maintenance and storage facility.
- **Local Study Area (LSA)** – the area where direct and indirect effects of the Project on economic conditions are likely to occur. The LSA for the Regional and Local Economy VC (i.e., labour force and employment, overall economy, business environment, and public and Indigenous community finance subcomponents) includes the following communities:



- Webequie First Nation;
 - Attawapiskat First Nation;
 - Eabametoong First Nation;
 - Kasabonika Lake First Nation;
 - Marten Falls First Nation;
 - Neskantaga First Nation;
 - Nibinamik First Nation; and
 - Weenusk First Nation.
- **Regional Study Area (RSA)** – the area where potential, largely direct, indirect, and/or cumulative effects of the Project may occur in a broader, regional context, which include changes to regional economic conditions. The RSA for the Regional and Local Economy VC includes select municipalities and Indigenous communities, organized within the Kenora, Thunder Bay and Cochrane districts, as follows:
 - Kenora District:
 - Kashechewan First Nation;
 - Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation;
 - Kingfisher Lake First Nation;
 - Mishkeegogamang First Nation;
 - North Caribou Lake First Nation;
 - Wapekeka First Nation;
 - Wawakapewin First Nation;
 - Wunnumin Lake First Nation;
 - Township of Pickle Lake; and
 - Municipality of Sioux Lookout.
 - Thunder Bay District:
 - Aroland First Nation;
 - Ginoogaming First Nation;
 - Long Lake #58 First Nation;
 - Métis Nation of Ontario Region 2;
 - City of Thunder Bay; and
 - Municipality of Greenstone.
 - Cochrane District:
 - Constance Lake First Nation;
 - Fort Albany First Nation; and
 - City of Timmins.



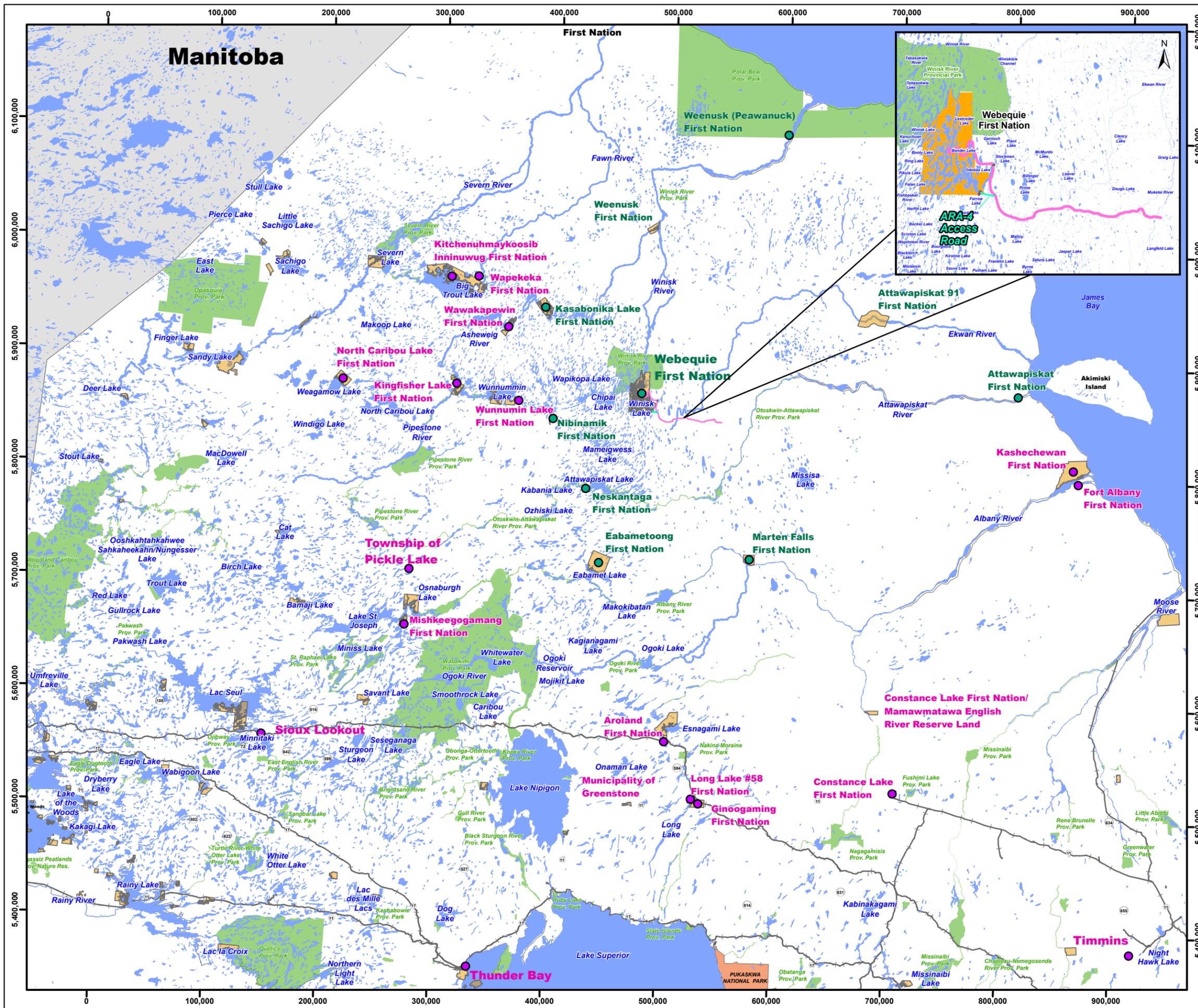
15.1.5.2. Temporal Boundaries

Temporal boundaries for the assessment address the potential effects of the Project over relevant timescales. The temporal boundaries for the Project consist of two main phases:

- **Construction Phase:** All activities associated with the initial development and construction of the road and supportive infrastructure from the start of the construction to the start of the operation and maintenance of the Project and is anticipated to be approximately five to six years in duration.
- **Operations Phase:** All activities associated with operations and maintenance of the road and permanent supportive infrastructure (e.g., operation and maintenance yard, aggregate extraction and processing areas) that will start after the construction activities are complete, including site restoration and decommissioning of temporary infrastructure (e.g., access roads, construction camps, etc.). The operations phase of the Project is anticipated to be 75 years based on the expected timeline when major refurbishment of road components (e.g., bridges) is deemed necessary.

The Project is proposed to be operated for an indeterminate period; therefore, future suspension, decommissioning and eventual abandonment was not evaluated in the EAR/IS (refer to Section 4.4 – Project Description).





Legend

- Preliminary Recommended Preferred Route
- Economic Environment Local Study Area
- Economic Environment Regional Study Area
- First Nation Reserve
- Waterbody
- Federal National Park
- Provincial Park
- Rail
- ARA-4 Access Road
- Recommended Aggregate/Rock Source Areas

Webequie Supply Road (WSR)

Economic Environment Study Areas

Figure Number:	15.1	REV	PA						
Client:	Webequie First Nation	Project Number:	661910						
		Date:	1/12/2026						
DSC			<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20px;">DRN</td> <td style="width: 20px;">CHK</td> <td style="width: 20px;">APP</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">TE</td> <td style="text-align: center;">AD</td> <td style="text-align: center;">VS</td> </tr> </table>	DRN	CHK	APP	TE	AD	VS
DRN	CHK	APP							
TE	AD	VS							

NOTES

1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 Ontario MNR Lambert.
2. Cadastral boundaries are for informational purposes only and should not be considered suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes.
3. Topographic/landcover features obtained from CanVec v12.0 dataset, Natural Resources Canada Earth and Sciences Sector Centre for Topographic Information; and, Land Information Ontario (LIO) Warehouse Open Data (<https://geohub.io.gov.on.ca/>), Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (OMNRF) Download Date : 2021-02-04

DISCLAIMER

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15.1.6. Identification of Project Interactions with Economic Environment

The identification of project interactions with the economic environment provides a basis for the subsequent assessment of the potential effects of the Project.

The potential effects are described separately for subcomponents of the Regional and Local Economy VC. Potential adverse interactions are identified in the table below with a check mark (✓) and predicted positive interactions between the Project and the VC are identified with a “P”. Where no effect is anticipated, a dash (-) is provided in the interaction table.

The selection of project interactions takes into consideration that several activities are interconnected and/or overlap leading to similar effects. Project interactions were strategically identified to reduce the need for duplicative discussion. In this regard, interactions for employment and expenditures are presented as a separate activity, as nearly every activity would create a potential interaction. The presentation of project interactions aims to streamline measurable parameters to one primary pathway, as appropriate.

The interaction and effect pathways are presented in **Section 15.3** and are the basis for mitigation and enhancement measures and the assessment of net effects. Provided below in **Table 15-5** is the evaluation of project activities and interactions with components of the economic environment.

Table 15-5: Project Interactions with Regional and Local Economy VC and Potential Effects

Project Activities	Potential Effects			
	Change in Labour Force, Employment, and Income	Change In Overall Economy	Change In Business Environment	Change in Finance
Construction				
Mobilization of Equipment and Supplies: Transport of equipment, materials and supplies to the Project site area using the winter road network and airport in Webequie First Nation Reserve.	-	-	-	-
Surveying: Ground surveys are conducted to stake (physically delineate) the road right-of-way (ROW) and supportive infrastructure components of the Project (i.e., construction camps, access roads, laydown/storage areas, and aggregate extraction and processing areas).	-	-	-	-
Vegetation Clearing and Grubbing: Clearing and grubbing of vegetation (forest & wetland), including removal, disposal and/or chipping.	-	-	-	-
Construction and Use of Supportive Infrastructure: This includes temporary construction camps, access roads and watercourse crossings, laydown/storage areas, and aggregate extraction (pits & quarries) and processing areas (screening, crushing), including blasting.	-	-	-	-



Project Activities	Potential Effects			
	Change in Labour Force, Employment, and Income	Change In Overall Economy	Change In Business Environment	Change in Finance
Construction of Road: removal and stockpiling of organics, subgrade excavation, placement of fill and gravel, grading and drainage work (e.g., road ditches, erosion protection, etc.).	-	✓	-	-
Construction of Structures at Waterbody Crossings: Culverts and bridges – foundations (e.g., pile driving and concrete works), bridge girders, bridge decks, install of culverts.	-	-	-	-
Decommissioning / Closure of Temporary Aggregate Extraction and Processing Areas (pits and quarries): Demobilization of extracting and processing equipment, grading and site reclamation/revegetation. This also includes formalizing / re-purposing select pits and quarries proposed as permanent Project components during operations and maintenance.	-	-	-	-
Decommissioning of Temporary Construction Camps, Access Roads, and Laydown / Storage Areas: Grading and site reclamation/revegetation. This also includes formalizing / re-purposing select access roads to permanent pits and quarries and a construction camp to an operations and maintenance facility as Project components for use during operations and maintenance.	-	-	-	-
Emissions, Discharges and Wastes ¹ : Noise, air emissions / GHGs, water discharge, and hazardous and non-hazardous wastes.	-	-	-	-
Completion of Project-Wide Clean-up, Site Restoration / Reclamation and Demobilization: Clean-up of excess materials, site revegetation and demobilization of equipment and materials.	-	-	-	-
Potential for Accidents and Malfunctions ² : Spills, vehicle collisions, flooding, forest fire and vandalism.	-	-	-	-
Employment and Expenditures ³ .	P	P / ✓	P	P
Operations				
Road Use: Light and heavy vehicles and maintenance equipment with average annual daily traffic volume of less than 500 vehicles.	-	-	-	-
Operation, Maintenance and Repair of Road: Includes vegetation management control within road ROW; repairs/resurfacing of road granular surface and shoulders; dust control; winter/seasonal maintenance (i.e., snow clearing); road drainage system cleanout/repairs to culverts, ditches, and drainage outfalls; rehabilitation and repairs to structural culverts and bridges; and road patrols for inspection.	-	-	-	-



Project Activities	Potential Effects			
	Change in Labour Force, Employment, and Income	Change In Overall Economy	Change In Business Environment	Change in Finance
Operation of Pits, Quarries, and Maintenance Yard / Facility: Includes periodic extraction and blasting and processing operations (i.e., crushing, screening) and stockpiling of rock and aggregate materials. Also includes operation and repairs of Maintenance Yard/Facility and components within (office buildings, parking, storage of equipment and materials).	-	-	-	-
Emissions, Discharges and Wastes ¹ : Noise, air emissions / GHGs, water discharge, and hazardous and non-hazardous wastes	-	-	-	-
Potential for Accidents and Malfunctions ² : Spills, vehicle collisions, flooding, forest fire and vandalism ² .	-	-	-	-
Employment and Expenditures ³ .	P	P	P	P

Notes:

✓ = Potential interaction

– = No interaction

P = Anticipated positive interactions between Project activities and the VC effects

¹ Emissions, Discharges, and Wastes (e.g., air, noise, light, solid wastes, and liquid effluents) can be generated by many project activities. Rather than acknowledging this by placing a checkmark against each of these activities, “Wastes and Emissions” is an additional component under each project phase.

² Accidents and Malfunctions including spills, vehicle collisions, flooding, forest fire and vandalism may occur at any time during construction, operations and maintenance of the Project. Rather than acknowledging this by placing a checkmark against each of these activities, “Potential for Accidents and Malfunctions” is an additional component under each project phase. The potential effects of accidental spills are assessed in Section 23 (Accidents and Malfunctions).

³ Project employment and expenditures are related to most project activities and components and are the main drivers of many socio-economic effects. Rather than acknowledging this by placing a checkmark against each of these activities, “Employment and Expenditures” is an additional component under each project phase.

15.2. Existing Conditions

This section summarizes existing economic conditions based on socio-economic data collection, engagement and consultation conducted for the Project, and the integration of IKLRU information. A detailed description of the existing conditions, study methods and results are provided in Appendix L (Socio-Economic Existing Conditions Report).

15.2.1. Methods

To characterize economic existing conditions within the spatial and temporal boundaries defined for the Project, a mix of data collection methods were applied, in conjunction with analytical frameworks that integrate information using various lenses or perspectives to deepen the understanding of economic conditions.



Data collection methods included secondary and primary data source research, combined with analytical framework considerations such as: Indigenous Knowledge, community knowledge, meaningful engagement, and GBA+.

Community profiles related to the economic environment were developed through the data collection process. The profiles are intended to present data metrics that define the indicators used to assess changes to each VC subcomponent based on the summary presented in **Section 15.1.4**.

15.2.1.1. Engagement and Consultation

Overall engagement and consultation activities were conducted with Indigenous communities and groups, the public, government agencies, and stakeholders related to the Project and/or effects predicted in the LSA and RSA. The assessment for the economic environment focuses on engagement and consultation with Indigenous communities. A full discussion of Project engagement and consultation is provided in EAR/IS Section 2 (Engagement and Consultation).

In addition to seeking input from Indigenous communities, government regulators, and other stakeholders on valued components, indicators and spatial boundaries, Indigenous communities and groups were also invited to participate in the Socio-Economic Primary Data Collection Program.

The following communities outlined in **Table 15-6** represents the invitees who participated in engagement activities engaged as part of Project planning, and these communities were identified by Ontario as per direction provided in the letter from MECP to the Webequie First Nation on December 19, 2018, as potentially having their rights and/or interests affected by the Project, and also by the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada *Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan* provided as guidance to the proponent.

Table 15-6: Indigenous Communities Engaged/Consulted

Tribal Council or Affiliation	Community or Organization
Matawa First Nations Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aroland First Nation ▪ Constance Lake First Nation ▪ Eabametoong First Nation ▪ Ginoogaming First Nation ▪ Long Lake #58 First Nation ▪ Marten Falls First Nation ▪ Neskantaga First Nation ▪ Nibinamik First Nation ▪ Webequie First Nation
Mushkegowuk Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attawapiskat First Nation ▪ Fort Albany First Nation ▪ Kashechewan First Nation
Shibogama Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Kasabonika Lake First Nation ▪ Kingfisher Lake First Nation ▪ Wapekeka First Nation ▪ Wawakapewin First Nation ▪ Wunnumin Lake First Nation
Windigo First Nations Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ North Caribou Lake First Nation



Tribal Council or Affiliation	Community or Organization
Independent First Nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation ▪ Mishkeegogamang First Nation ▪ Weenusk (Peawanuck) First Nation
Métis Nation of Ontario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Métis Nation of Ontario – Lakehead / Nipigon / Michipicoten Traditional Territories Protocol Area (“Region 2”)

15.2.1.1.1. Indigenous Knowledge and Land and Resource Use (IKLRU) and Data Validation

To understand the economic environment, engagement and collaboration with Indigenous communities provided insight on economic information relative to each community’s experience. It is important to note that the IKLRU program was undertaken by the Indigenous communities and organizations / groups (and their selected advisors / consultants / contractors) with capacity support provided through the EA/IA process.

Details of the engagement and consultation on IKLRU is presented in **Section 15.2.1.4.**

15.2.1.2. Collection and Analysis of Baseline Information

Collection of baseline information for the economic environment involved a mixed methods approach. Mixed methods refer to a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods and associated data collection tools. By combining these methods, a better understanding of issues and complex phenomena can be developed than by either method alone (Creswell and Clark, 2007).

Quantitative and qualitative data methods serve different study purposes and are designed to address different types of research questions and information needs. The quantitative approach allows the Project Team to collect information at a broader scale, on a wide range and across a number of indicators. The qualitative approach complements the quantitative approach as its purpose is to understand topics more in-depth from the perspective of lived experience, and the meanings attached to that experience (Winchester and Rofe, 2010). The Project Team and community facilitators engaged interested communities where possible, to develop primary data using surveys, interviews, and focus groups.

The steps undertaken to collect and analyze data for economic existing conditions, including the collection of secondary information, primary information and how GBA+ was incorporated, are described in detail in Appendix L (Socio-Economic Existing Conditions Report).

Following sections provide a summary of baseline information collection.

15.2.1.2.1. Secondary Data Collection

Secondary data research and analysis included collecting and analyzing information from a range of quantitative and qualitative information sources to present a narrative of the existing economic conditions of communities in the LSA and RSA.

Census Data

Census data for Kenora District, Thunder Bay District, and Cochrane District were used to characterize existing conditions of the economic environment. Within these divisions there are 114 census subdivisions that include 72 Indigenous communities (Statistics Canada, 2022a). The census districts are inclusive of the geographic area of the LSA and RSA. Desktop research involved compiling and reviewing



quantitative information such as the Census of Population and other sources. Some, though not all, data was disaggregated by gender and other attributes.

Other Sources of Information

Desktop research also involved collecting and reviewing, where available and permissible, community websites, and recent community documents such as Community Based Land Use Plans, On-Reserve Community Plans, Comprehensive Community Plans, studies, housing plans, and economic development plans.

Economic Modelling

To align the economic baseline data with the temporal boundaries defined for the Regional and Local Economy VC, several variables were modelled and forecasted using the 2016 and 2021 Census of Population (Statistics Canada 2019, 2023a). Using economic modelling software platform, Lightcast, forecasts were derived by calculating the Compound Annual Growth Rate and the mean annual growth rate over a specified period of time longer than one year, between data points. The calculated Compound Annual Growth Rate was then applied to the data to forecast economic variables to 2043.

Hierarchy of Economic Data

Due to varying levels of data available for each community, a data selection decision hierarchy was implemented to guarantee consistency throughout reporting and a reliable economic model. In the context of data selection decision hierarchy, the hierarchy refers to the structured process of prioritizing and selecting data sources or variables based on their relevance, quality, and suitability for analysis or decision-making. In the event a data gap was identified, the next available data set was considered to provide the relevant information.

When gaps were identified, the following data hierarchy was employed:

- 2021 Census of Population (Statistics Canada, 2023a);
- 2016 Census of Population (Statistics Canada, 2019);
- Lightcast modelling data; and
- Official Municipal Forecasts.

15.2.1.2.2. Primary Data Collection

Specific data collection related to the economic condition of the LSA and RSA required data collection from Indigenous communities. A Socio-Economic Primary Data Collection Program was developed to gather Indigenous Knowledge to support assessment of the Regional and Local Economy VC. Information relevant to the economic environment was isolated from data that specifically related to social conditions. The methods to gather primary data related to the economic environment included:

- **Community surveys:** The survey format (i.e., online, in-person surveyors, and community sessions) and the survey content (i.e., questions posed to community members) tailored to the needs of the community as needed. Indigenous communities in the LSA and RSA were invited to participate in surveys through the Socio-Economic Primary Data Collection Program. Indigenous communities were able to choose to complete some or all of the surveys themselves and were provided with support via survey administrators or Project Team. All 22 Indigenous communities in the LSA and RSA were invited to participate in the Socio-Economic Primary Data Collection Program, with the aim to discuss and collect socio-economic information or verify information gathered. Some of the surveys which



were administered included Socio-Economic Data Collection Survey and Country Foods Survey. A plain language socio-economic survey guide was developed to accompany the survey electronically transmitted to each First Nation. Survey statistics were analyzed using Survey Monkey and NVivo, a qualitative software package that allows for systematic thematic analysis of large amounts of text-based information.

- **Focus groups:** Diverse sub-groups of the community participating in small group discussions related to the existing conditions in the community. Indigenous communities in the LSA and RSA were invited to participate in Socio-Economic focus group sessions, through the Socio-Economic Primary Data Collection Program. Focus groups allow for in-depth understanding of quantitative data, due to qualitative information that relates to individual experiences and issues for a particular topic or question. In May 2022 and February 2023, focus groups were undertaken with distinct sub-groups in the community relevant to indicator metrics, including youth, women, Elders, land users, knowledge keepers and/or off-reserve members. Focus groups were comprised of 3 to 6 participants each and lasted approximately 2 to 3 hours. Participants were recruited by community coordinators and were carried out either virtually via teleconference or in-person, depending on provincial and community COVID-19 restrictions in place at the time and participant preferences and comfort levels. Although all 22 Indigenous communities were invited to participate in the focus group discussions, only Webequie First Nation chose to engage in these discussions.
- **Knowledge holder interviews:** A range of community representatives providing key first-hand knowledge and insights about community through interviews. Indigenous communities in the LSA and RSA were invited to participate in socio-economic knowledge holder interviews, through the Socio-Economic Primary Data Collection Program, however only Webequie First Nation participated in Key Informant Interviews. Knowledge holder interviews were conducted with knowledge holders and individuals possessing special knowledge or information. Although all 22 Indigenous communities were invited to participate in the Key Informant Interviews, only Webequie First Nation chose to engage in these discussions.

15.2.1.2.3. Effects Assessment Methods

Assumptions

The Project construction phase is estimated to occur within a five to six year period. For the purposes of the EAR/IS, it is assumed that construction will begin in the 2028 winter season and conclude in the 2032 summer season, taking approximately five years to complete. It is assumed that operations and maintenance will begin in 2033 and will continue for an indeterminate amount of time.

It is assumed that workers coming from outside of Webequie First Nation will commute to the site on a fly-in/fly-out schedule based on the remote Project location and community proximity for construction employment opportunities. Rotational labour schedules are assumed to be limited to 14 days in and seven days out to prevent fatigue and encourage retention.

For the purposes of the economic effects assessment, it is assumed that the winter and summer construction season will each run six months (26 weeks). It is assumed that workers will work 40 hours per week and be on-site approximately 17 weeks per season (it is assumed a 70 hour work week applies to the Project as a whole, not the individual worker).



Data

The effects assessment uses the baseline assessment as a base to consider Project effects to the existing conditions. The baseline assessment is integrated into the economics effects assessment and is a key part of the Environmental Assessment.

Project specific data and forecasts were used in conjunction with the results of the baseline assessment to quantify Project effects. Key resources used include:

- Webequie Supply Road Project Description – Project Workforce Requirements;
- Webequie Supply Road Planning and Construction Input for Road and Supportive Infrastructure – Labour Staffing Schedule; and
- Sigfusson Northern Ltd. a Class 4 Budgetary Cost Estimate for Webequie Supply Road Project.

Input-Output Model

To measure potential economic effects of the Project on the LSA and RSA, an Input-Output (I-O) model was used. I-O models are used to estimate the direct, indirect, and induced effects of an investment, and are defined as follows.

- Direct effects: the immediate and measurable effects resulting directly from a specific activity or transaction;
- Indirect effects: the secondary effects that occur as a result of the initial economic activity, influencing other businesses and sectors; and
- Induced effects: the broader and overall economy effects that arise when money circulates through the economy, benefitting various individuals and business beyond the initial transaction.

The assessment of economic related Project effects involved the development of an integrated I-O and allocation model. The economic effects of the Project were modelled to understand potential changes relevant to Webequie First Nation and the LSA and RSA communities. The I-O model utilizes I-O multipliers from Statistics Canada that are used to assess the effects on the economy of an exogenous change in final demand for the output of a given industry. The multipliers provide a measure of the interdependence between an industry and the rest of the economy. Furthermore, multipliers show the direct, indirect, and induced potential effects on gross output, the detailed components of GDP, and full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs. The variables considered in the I-O model are defined as follows:

- GDP: measures the total output created through the production of goods and services in a country during a certain period;
- Labour Income: all compensation paid to employees including wages, salaries, and supplementary labour income; and
- FTE Jobs: measures the total hours of full-time, part-time, and various other types of employees into measurable 'full-time' units as a result of the economic shock.

Based on the availability of labour within the study areas and the communities' industry supply chains, the direct, indirect, and induced effects of the Project labour requirements and expenditures were apportioned.



15.2.1.3. Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+)

Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) is a required analytical approach for any projects operating under Section 22 of the *IA Act* and is considered part of this EA/IA process. GBA+ recognizes that historical and current power structures (e.g., laws, policies, governments, and other institutions) have shaped society and created inequalities. This is especially important with respect to legacies of colonialism and the impacts on Indigenous People, and in particular, Indigenous women and two-spirited people.

In the context of the EA/IA, GBA+ is intended as means to understand and assess how potential project effects could disproportionately impact more vulnerable groups including women, youth, two-spirited and gender diverse persons, disabled persons, and Elders, with respect to the Project. It is particularly important to consider how the impacts, benefits, and risks of the Project could be unequally distributed across diverse groups within a community, and to develop targeted plans and mechanisms that can be put in place to avoid and mitigate impacts, and/or compensate these groups.

GBA+ is not a method unto itself, but an approach that is associated with a variety of standard quantitative and qualitative data collection tools.

Quantitative secondary data collection and analysis for GBA+ focuses on disaggregating population and demographics data from Census of Population and other sources in order to understand the characteristics of the community, represented by diverse groups.

Qualitative primary data collection and analysis for GBA+ focuses on seeking input from diverse groups about their experiences and characteristics of the community, as well as conditions and services available to diverse groups.

15.2.1.3.1. GBA+ Data Validation Session

A validation of GBA+ included in the Social-Economic Baseline took place on May 13 and 14, 2024 in Webequie First Nation with Webequie community members. Representatives of the WSR Project Team visited Webequie First Nation to provide an update about the Project and to talk to community members and request feedback on the socio-economic and health conditions of the community that have been assembled into draft baseline study reports and circulated to the community leadership. The Project Team also heard from community members about concerns and issues related to potential effects of the WSR Project on the community.

15.2.1.4. Indigenous Knowledge and Land and Resource Use (IKLRU) Information

The IKLRU program was initiated to engage and collaborate with Indigenous communities and groups on the collection and consideration of IKLRU information throughout the EAR/IS. It is important to note that the IKLRU program was undertaken by the Indigenous communities and organizations / groups (and their selected advisors / consultants / contractors) with capacity support provided through the EAR/IS process.

Indigenous Knowledge information collection was developed with multiple steps with respect to gathering, documenting and permission of use, as well as validating Indigenous Knowledge for the EAR/IS.

Community validation is a process for the community and its knowledge holders to verify the accuracy, completeness and sensitivity of the Indigenous Knowledge that is collected for a project.

During Indigenous Knowledge data collection, the community's practitioners and/or contractors may meet with community members, especially Indigenous Knowledge holders that participated in the study, to review Indigenous Knowledge collected, to discuss, question, add to the information and verify that the



community is comfortable and confident with the accuracy and completeness of the information presented. The process is consistent with the TISG prepared by the Agency and adheres to the following guiding principles-respect to Indigenous Knowledge holders, building relationships, carrying on an ongoing dialogue with community members, community involvement in ensuring the context and the meaning of the Indigenous Knowledge provided is understood and maintained, transparency of the process, gaining permissions from communities for usage, and Ownership, Control, Access and Possession.

Community visits were carried out in Webequie First Nation (October 13, 2021, October 27, 2021, November 10, 2021, March 30, 2022, June 20, 2022, July 19, 2022, May 3, 2023, May 12, 2023, June 7, 2023, August 29, 2023, September 26, 2023, January 12, 2024, May 13-14, 2024, August 20-22, 2024, September 12, 2024, December 18, 2024, May 21-23, 2025, March 17, 2025, March 25, 2025, October 24, 2025, November 6, 2025, November 19 and 20, 2025), Weenusk First Nation (July 19, 2022, August 26, 2022, August 17-18, 2023, August 29, 2024), Constance Lake First Nation (September 12, 2024, June 29, 2023, June 22, 2023, January 28, 2025), Nibinamik First Nation (January 16, 2024, August 6, 2024), Marten Falls First Nation (August 24, 2023, July 21, 2025), and Kashechewan First Nation (September 6, 2023) during the EAR/IS preparation, and these sessions also included validation of collected Indigenous Knowledge data.

A data validation meeting was held with Webequie First Nation from August 20 to 22, 2024, where information collected via the primary data collection methods were discussed and refined. This community visit validated primary and secondary information regarding Indigenous Knowledge, cultural heritage and GBA+.

A second data validation session was held on September 12 with Elders of Webequie First Nation at Thunder Bay, where Elders knowledge on existing conditions and their concerns was identified and discussed.

Webequie First Nation completed a document 'Webequie First Nation Indigenous Knowledge Study for the Webequie Supply Road', dated October 4, 2024. This draft document was made available to the Project Team on October 7, 2024 as confidential information, and as guidance for development of the EAR/IS (Stantec, 2024).

Weenusk First Nation completed a draft version of Weenusk First Nation Existing Conditions Report for the Project. This draft was made available to the Project Team on July 26, 2023 with the understanding that it was confidential, pending community verification/confirmation (MNP, 2023). In November 2023, the community completed a verification of the reports, and on January 24, 2024, the final report for the Weenusk First Nation Existing Conditions Report for the Project was made available to the Project Team (MNP, 2024).

Marten Falls First Nation completed a draft version of the Marten Falls First Nation Indigenous Knowledge, Land Use and Occupancy Study for the Northern Access Roads, dated March 20, 2024. The draft report was made available to the Project Team on May 17, 2024, and it was indicated that the report was subject to change (Suslop, 2024).

Kashechewan First Nation completed a draft version of the Kashechewan First Nation Existing Conditions Report specific to the proposed Webequie Supply Road. The draft report was made available to the Project Team in March 2025 (MNP LLP, 2024b).

Fort Albany First Nation completed a draft version of the Fort Albany First Nation Indigenous Knowledge and Use Study Specific to the proposed Webequie Supply Road. The draft report was made available to the Project Team in November 2025, and it was indicated that the report was subject to change (Fort Albany First Nation and Firelight Research Inc., 2024).



15.2.1.5. Summary of Data Sources

In summation of the methods section, **Table 15-7** identifies, by value component and indicators, the data sources that were used to define economic environment existing conditions.

Table 15-7: Summary of Methods Data Sources for Regional and Local Economic VC

Valued Component	Indicators	Data Sources
Regional and Local Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Labour force, employment and income – <i>Labour Force Characteristics</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Employment age population; ▫ Labour force participation; ▫ Unemployment; ▫ Barriers to employment; and ▫ Time spent on unpaid domestic work. ▪ GBA+ disaggregated where possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Statistics Canada 2021 Census of Population. ▪ Lightcast.* ▪ Economic development reports and plans. ▪ Government documents. ▪ Skills inventories. ▪ Primary data (focus groups, surveys, knowledge holder interviews).
Regional and Local Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Labour Force and Employment – <i>Labour Income</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Income; ▫ Sources of income; and ▫ GBA+ disaggregated where possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Statistics Canada 2021 Census of Population. ▪ Lightcast.* ▪ Economic development reports and plans. ▪ Secondary data collected from government documents/research. ▪ Skills inventories. ▪ Primary data (focus groups, surveys, knowledge holder interviews).
Regional and Local Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overall economy – Gross domestic product (GDP). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Government of Ontario economic statistics.
Regional and Local Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overall economy – Cost of living: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Consumer price index; ▫ Low-income cut-off indicators; ▫ Percentage of residents spending over 30% of income on shelter; ▫ Average retail prices for select products; and ▫ Average annual household spending. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lightcast.* ▪ Statistics Canada 2021 Census of Population. ▪ Secondary data collected from government documents/research. ▪ Municipal, Planning/Economic Development, Tourism Documents. ▪ Primary data (Indigenous, knowledge holder, surveys, engagement, local business).
Regional and Local Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overall economy – Economic development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Economic development; ▫ Capacity for other projects.; ▫ Gaps; ▫ Major projects; ▫ New projects; ▫ Closures; ▫ Equipment availability; ▫ Energy profile; and ▫ Access to capital. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lightcast.* ▪ Secondary data collected from government documents/research. ▪ Municipal, Planning/Economic Development, Tourism Documents. ▪ Primary data (Indigenous, knowledge holder, surveys, engagement, local business).



Valued Component	Indicators	Data Sources
Regional and Local Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overall economy – Traditional Indigenous economy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Commercial; and ▫ Non-commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary data collected from government documents/research. ▪ Statistics Canada 2021 Census of Population. ▪ Primary data (Indigenous community engagement, knowledge holder interviews, surveys, engagement, local businesses).
Regional and Local Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business environment – Main employers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Key industries (jobs, wages, and sales by industry); ▫ Main employers; and ▫ Local construction businesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Statistics Canada 2021 Census of Population. ▪ Lightcast.* ▪ Municipal, Planning/Economic Development, Tourism Documents. ▪ Primary data (Indigenous, knowledge holder, surveys, engagement, local business).
Regional and Local Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business environment – Local economy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Household spending patterns; ▫ Industry supply chain; ▫ Industry subsidies; ▫ Economic leakage; and ▫ Market trends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lightcast.* ▪ Secondary data collected from government documents/research. ▪ Municipal, Planning/Economic Development, Tourism Documents. ▪ Primary data (Indigenous, knowledge holder, surveys, engagement, local business).
Regional and Local Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business environment – Mining, aggregate, and forestry activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Size of industry; ▫ Supply chain; ▫ Industry projects; ▫ Economic Development plans; ▫ Active mines; and ▫ Area (ha) of significant aggregate deposits affected. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lightcast.* ▪ Secondary data collected from government documents/research. ▪ Land use plans. ▪ Primary data (Indigenous, knowledge holder, surveys, engagement, local business).
Regional and Local Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public and Indigenous community – <i>Finances</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Tax base; ▫ Indigenous community funding/grants; ▫ Revenues (taxes, transfers, grants etc.); and ▫ Public expenditures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Crown-Indigenous-Relations and Northern Affairs Canada First Nations Profiles. ▪ Secondary data collected from government documents/research. ▪ Municipal, Planning/Economic Development, Tourism Documents. ▪ Proactive Disclosure of Grants and Contributions – Government of Canada.

Notes: * Lightcast products provide detailed information about occupations, skills in demand, and career pathways, providing labour market insight to employers, educational institutions, and government agencies.

ha = hectares.

km² = square kilometres



15.2.2. Results

The economic environment is described based on analysis of the existing conditions found within the LSA and RSA as relevant to describe the Regional and Local Economy VC subcomponents via related indicator metrics, as presented in **Section 15.1.4**. Detailed descriptions of the baseline results, including results of the primary data collection and interpretations, are provided in Appendix L (Socio-Economic Existing Conditions Report).



Section 15.2.2 presents the baseline existing conditions considered in the EAR/IS as it relates to the Economic Environment, in keeping with the TISG and ToR requirements, and also requested by Federal Economic Development Initiative and Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries (now Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism), and in response to specific concerns raised from Indigenous communities, such as Neskantaga First Nation, during engagement and consultation activities.

15.2.2.1. Labour Force, Employment and Income

15.2.2.1.1. Labour Force Participation

Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Employment Age Population

As shown in **Table 15-8** and based on the 2021 census population trends (Statistics Canada, 2022a), the working age population (defined as those aged 15 to 64) of Webequie First Nation is in decline. The census population trends indicate that the working age population in 2021 was 420 individuals compared to 450 in 2016, a decline of approximately 6.7% (Statistics Canada, 2017).

Table 15-8: Projected Working Age Population in Webequie First Nation (2016, 2021, 2028, 2033, 2043)

Year	Total		Male		Female	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
2016	450	100%	220	48.9%	230	51.1%
2021	420	100%	190	45.2%	225	53.6%
2028	381	100%	155	40.6%	218	57.2%
2033	356	100%	134	37.6%	213	60.0%
2043	310	100%	100	32.2%	204	65.9%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2017; 2022a.

Note: All counts in census tabulations undergo random rounding, a process that transforms all raw counts into randomly rounded counts. This reduces the possibility of identifying individuals in the tabulations. This results in breakdown values not always adding up to the total count.

Conversely, the working age population is forecasted to be 310 individuals by 2043; thus, the current condition of the working age population is considered to be decreasing over time. The declining trend is attributed to aging population and birth replacement rate dynamics, which follow a similar declining trend that is currently observed across Canada. The working age population of Webequie First Nation could also be further impacted by people leaving the reserve; however, this was not a factor that is captured within the census.



Labour Force Participation

Based on the 2021 Census of Population, the majority of Webequie's population is not in the labour force (61.7%), and the participation rate for Webequie's working age population (aged 15-64) is 37.9%, with similar participation rates between the female labour force (39.2%) and male labour force (38.6%) (Statistics Canada, 2022a). This is a significant change from the 2016 Census of Population results which reported Webequie's participation rate at 43.6%. The participation rate for females during this period was 40.4% and 47.9% for men (Statistics Canada, 2017). The decrease in the overall participation rate indicates a shrinking labour force specifically amongst men. Although most people who want to be employed have a job, the participation rate within the community is low in comparison to Ontario. In 2021, the participation rate in Ontario was 63% while Webequie had a rate of 38% for the same year. The participation rate is the percentage of the working age population who are currently employed or seeking employment. The unemployment rate for Webequie First Nation is slightly high at approximately 10% but is still lower than Ontario which is at 12%. This will constrain the number of Project related positions that Webequie First Nation community members might be able to take on.

It is important to note that within First Nation communities the Project effects on the traditional economy are not captured within traditional statistics collections such as the Census of Population. Additionally, due to the governance of First Nation reserves, employment activity captured within the community and government services category could include employment in reserve owned businesses such as accommodations on-reserve land. These factors may result in an under or over representation of labour skills within the community.

In 2022, three occupational categories made up over 70% of the jobs in Webequie First Nation (Lightcast, 2023a) (see **Table 15-9**):

- Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services (28.2%);
- Business, finance, and administrative occupations (22.6%); and
- Sales and services occupations (20.7%).

The overlap of Project related National Occupational Classification (NOC) requirements with existing Webequie First Nation NOCs is minimal, with the exception of health care and social assistance workers. During construction, most of the Project labour requirements are within the construction and transportation and warehousing NOC categories. NOC is the national reference for occupations in Canada. It provides a systematic classification structure that categorizes the entire range of occupational activity in Canada for collecting, analyzing, and disseminating occupational data for labour market information and employment related program administration.

Table 15-9 presents the number of jobs existing within Webequie First Nation in Project specific NOC categories as of 2023.

Table 15-9: Existing Employment within National Occupation Code Categories, Webequie First Nation, 2022

National Occupation Codes	2022 Employment
Legislative and senior management occupations	17
Business, finance, and administration occupations	69
Natural and applied sciences and related occupation	12
Health occupations	17
Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	86



National Occupation Codes	2022 Employment
Occupations in art, culture, recreation, and sport	5
Sales and service occupations	63
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	24
Natural resources, agriculture, and related production occupations	5
Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	5
Unclassified	5
Total	308

Source: Lightcast, 2023a

As noted, Webequie First Nation has a limited workforce in the key Project NOCs as well as a limited supply of labourers who have attained a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree. Although the required areas of study have been pursued by some, it is not enough to fully supply the Project’s labour requirements. Webequie First Nation members who are not currently working in a Project related NOC, will have the opportunity to be trained to develop new skills that will be required for work on the Project. However, based on the availability of labour within Webequie First Nation it is highly probable that a significant portion of labour requirements for the Project will be met by labour force from the RSA.

It should be noted that since traditional economy is not captured in this data, and relevant skills such as skills in forestry and logging for instance, may exist to meet the required labour demand. There is a motel in Webequie First Nation, and community members who may have previously worked as motel workers may have the skills to supply labour to the camp that will be operating during construction phase.

Due to the governance of First Nation reserves, some occupations that should be categorized in North American Industry Classification System such as construction, mining, agriculture, or accommodations may be counted in public administration because they are owned by the First Nation band.

Unemployment

Based on the 2021 Census of Population, the majority of Webequie residents in the labour force are employed (94.6%). In comparison to Ontario, the unemployment rate in Webequie is low at 5.6% compared to 12.2% in the Province (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

Business, finance, and administration occupations was the leading job category in Webequie First Nation, with 69 jobs in 2022 (Lightcast 2023a). This accounted for 22.6% of the total jobs in the community (InterGroup, 2024).

Barriers to Employment

The socio-economic survey revealed that 67.6% of Webequie First Nation resident respondents felt there are not enough local job opportunities (AtkinsRéalis, 2022a), with particular concerns on limited local employment opportunities. Nearly one third (31.6%) of the respondents were between the ages of 15 to 30. Approximately 69% of unemployed Webequie youth between the ages of 15 to 30 responded that they are searching for work (InterGroup, 2024).

The main barriers identified for obtaining or maintaining employment by Webequie First Nation resident respondents were lack of education or training (47.5%), childcare (43.4%), and traditional needs (i.e., hunting, fishing, and gathering) (30.3%). Youth aged 15 to 30 constituted 29% of those who noted lack of education or training as a barrier to employment.



Community members have also expressed concerns regarding a lack of motivation among youth to seek employment (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a as cited in InterGroup, 2024).

“And the sad part is, we want to hire them, but they do not want to work. How do you make them work? And this is something that is a challenge, we got a lot of opportunities and various programs. We have job postings, but people do not want to work for some reason.” (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b).

Results from knowledge holder interviews and the women’s focus group discussions revealed community concerns for women’s barriers to employment. Participants feedback showed that several women in the community are eager to work and/or receive training to obtain employment, but due to the barriers which create complications in obtaining and maintaining employment women have less chances of securing a job; the main barriers to employment based on the discussions held were alluded to lack of education and childcare responsibilities (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b).

Caring for dependents also prevents women in Webequie First Nation from seeking further education and training as well as employment. Participants of the discussions felt strongly that if the childcare and education issues which are prevalent could be resolved, more women from the community would be involved in the labour force (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b). A focus group participant shared that they felt women must work twice as hard as men to prove themselves when it comes to employment (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a as cited in InterGroup, 2024).

Approximately 47% of the unemployed females living in the community responded as looking for employment, whilst approximately 50% of Webequie First Nation resident respondents who mentioned education or training as a barrier to employment were female (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b). With respect to barriers in obtaining or maintaining employment, 73.6% females responded with childcare as a barrier for employment (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a).

Time Spent on Unpaid Domestic Work

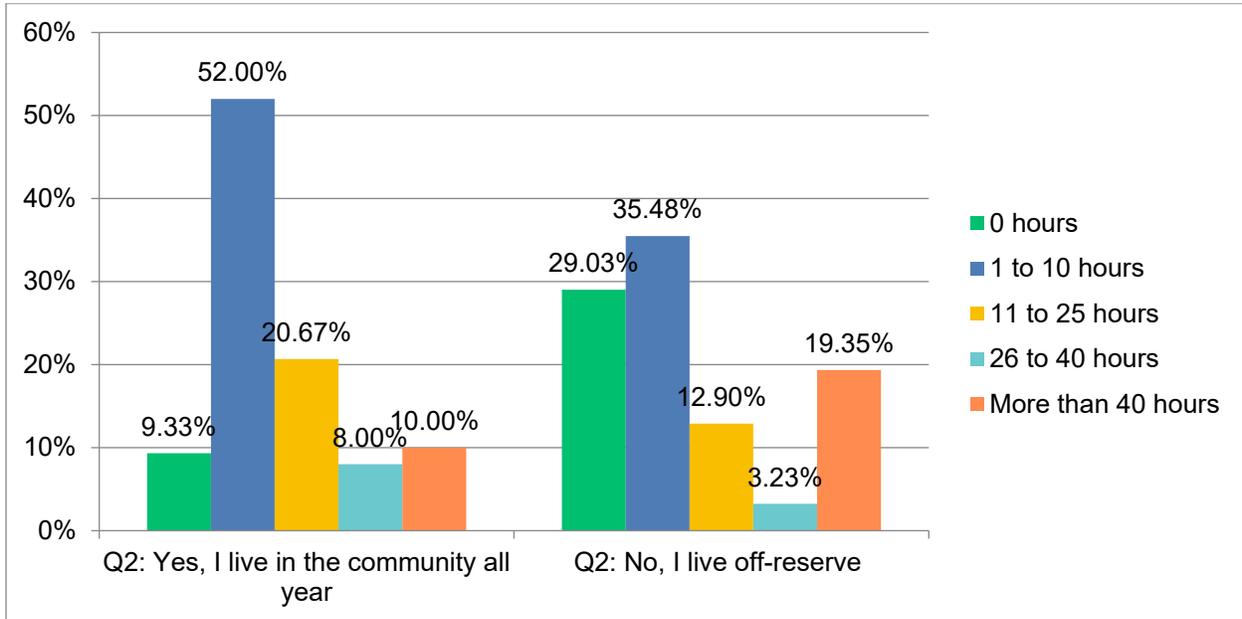
According to Statistics Canada, Indigenous women spend more time on unpaid domestic work compared to their non-Indigenous counterparts. While specific averages for Indigenous women can vary, a 2021 report suggests that Indigenous women dedicate a significant portion of their time to household and caregiving tasks. The extensive time devoted to these tasks can limit economic opportunities and career advancement for Indigenous People, impacting their overall financial well-being. There are fewer resources and supports available for Indigenous communities to balance these responsibilities with other aspects of life, exacerbating the time burden (House of Commons, 2021).

In Webequie First Nation, caregiving and domestic work is considered one of the major barriers for women finding and maintaining employment. Majority of respondents living on-reserve spend one to 10 hours on domestic work at 52%, whilst 10% of respondents spend more than 40 hours on domestic work (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a). Comparatively, 35% of off-reserve respondents spend roughly one to 10 hours on domestic work, and 19% spend more than 40 hours on domestic work (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a). Collectively, around 31% of on-reserve respondents spend more than 10 hours on domestic work, and 35% of off-reserve respondents spend more than 10 hours on domestic work (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a). It is assumed that off-reserve members, without the assistance from other family members, are compelled to spend more time on domestic and caregiving work when compared to their peers living on-reserve.



Figure 15.2 provides a visual representation of hours spent on domestic and caregiving work.

Figure 15.2: Hours per week spent on domestic and care work- Webequie First Nation



Source: AtkinsRéalis, 2022a

Other Local Study Area Communities

Employment Age Population

Based on the 2021 Census population trends, the working age population (defined as those aged 15 to 64) across the LSA is in a state of growth. As indicated in **Table 15-10**, the census population for other communities in the LSA in 2021 was 2,820 individuals. The working age population in the other LSA communities is projected to increase over the projection period from 2,820 as of 2021, to 3,677 by 2043 (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

Conversely, the 2021 working age population of the other LSA communities is forecasted to be 3,677 individuals by 2043; thus, the current condition of the working age population is increasing over time.

Table 15-10: Projected Working Age Population for Other LSA Indigenous Communities (2016, 2021, 2028, 2033, 2043)

Year	Community	Total		Male		Female	
		Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
2016	Marten Falls First Nation	150	100%	80	53.3%	65	43.3%
	Nibinamik First Nation (Summer Beaver Settlement)	225	100%	105	46.7%	125	55.6%
	Neskantaga First Nation	140	100%	80	57.1%	65	46.4%
	Kasabonika Lake First Nation	505	100%	255	50.5%	250	49.5%
	Eabametoong First Nation (Fort Hope 64)	585	100%	295	50.4%	290	49.6%



Year	Community	Total		Male		Female	
		Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
	Attawapiskat First Nation	935	100%	510	54.5%	425	45.5%
	Weenusk First Nation (Peawanuck First Nation)	115	100%	65	56.5%	50	43.5%
	Total	2,655	100%	1,390	52.4%	1,270	47.8%
2021	Marten Falls First Nation	135	100%	70	51.9%	65	48.1%
	Nibinamik First Nation (Summer Beaver Settlement)	215	100%	110	51.2%	105	48.8%
	Neskantaga First Nation	145	100%	80	55.2%	65	44.8%
	Kasabonika Lake First Nation	645	100%	360	55.8%	285	44.2%
	Eabametoong First Nation (Fort Hope 64)	560	100%	275	49.1%	285	50.9%
	Attawapiskat First Nation	950	100%	490	51.6%	460	48.4%
	Weenusk First Nation (Peawanuck First Nation)	170	100%	95	55.9%	70	41.2%
	Total	2,820	100%	1,480	52.5%	1,335	47.3%
2028	Marten Falls First Nation	116	100%	58	49.8%	65	55.8%
	Nibinamik First Nation (Summer Beaver Settlement)	202	100%	117	58.2%	82	40.8%
	Neskantaga First Nation	152	100%	80	52.5%	65	42.7%
	Kasabonika Lake First Nation	909	100%	583	64.2%	342	37.7%
	Eabametoong First Nation (Fort Hope 64)	527	100%	249	47.3%	278	52.8%
	Attawapiskat First Nation	971	100%	463	47.7%	514	52.9%
	Weenusk First Nation (Peawanuck First Nation)	294	100%	162	55.0%	112	38.2%
	Total	3,068	100%	1,616	52.7%	1,432	46.7%
2033	Marten Falls First Nation	105	100%	51	48.5%	65	62.0%
	Nibinamik First Nation (Summer Beaver Settlement)	193	100%	123	63.8%	69	35.8%
	Neskantaga First Nation	158	100%	80	50.7%	65	41.2%
	Kasabonika Lake First Nation	1,160	100%	824	71.0%	390	33.6%
	Eabametoong First Nation (Fort Hope 64)	504	100%	232	46.1%	273	54.2%
	Attawapiskat First Nation	987	100%	445	45.1%	556	56.4%
	Weenusk First Nation (Peawanuck First Nation)	434	100%	236	54.4%	157	36.1%
	Total	3,259	100%	1,720	52.8%	1,505	46.2%



Year	Community	Total		Male		Female	
		Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
2043	Marten Falls First Nation	85	100%	39	45.8%	65	76.5%
	Nibinamik First Nation (Summer Beaver Settlement)	176	100%	135	76.7%	49	27.7%
	Neskantaga First Nation	169	100%	80	47.3%	65	38.4%
	Kasabonika Lake First Nation	1,893	100%	1,642	86.7%	507	26.8%
	Eabametoong First Nation (Fort Hope 64)	462	100%	202	43.7%	264	57.1%
	Attawapiskat First Nation	1,019	100%	411	40.3%	652	64.0%
	Weenusk First Nation (Peawanuck First Nation)	949	100%	505	53.2%	308	32.4%
	Total	3,677	100%	1,951	53.1%	1,663	45.2%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2017; 2022a.

Note: All counts in census tabulations undergo random rounding, a process that transforms all raw counts into randomly rounded counts. This reduces the possibility of identifying individuals in the tabulations. This results in breakdown values not always adding up to the total count.

Labour Force Participation

The aggregate labour force participation rate for the other LSA communities is 46%, which is 17% lower than Ontario. Within the other LSA communities, the distribution of those within the labour force and those not in the labour force is nearly equal with 46.1% of the total population in the labour force and 53.9% not in the labour force.

The highest participation rate out of the other LSA communities occurs in Weenusk First Nation at 71%, while the lowest occurs in Attawapiskat First Nation at 35% (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

In 2022, three occupational categories made up nearly 70% of jobs (AtkinsRéalis Inc, 2022a):

- Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services;
- Business, finance, and administrative occupations; and
- Sales and services occupations.

Labour within project specific NOC categories is limited within the LSA, with the exception of health care and social assistance workers. During construction, most of the Project labour requirements are within the construction and transportation and warehousing NOC categories. **Table 15-11** presents the number of jobs existing within the LSA in the Project specific NOC categories as of 2023.

Table 15-11: Existing Employment within National Occupation Code Categories, Local Study Area, 2022

National Occupation Codes	2022 Employment
Legislative and senior management occupations	75
Business, finance, and administration occupations	300
Natural and applied sciences and related occupation	53
Health occupations	118



National Occupation Codes	2022 Employment
Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	366
Occupations in art, culture, recreation, and sport	15
Sales and service occupations	238
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	135
Natural resources, agriculture, and related production occupations	21
Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	14
Unclassified	18
Total	1,353

Source: Lightcast, 2023a

It should be noted that traditional economy in the LSA is not captured in this data and the skills in forestry and logging for instance, likely do exist to meet the required labour demand. Due to the governance of First Nation reserves, some occupations that should be categorized in North American Industry Classification System such as construction, mining, agriculture, or accommodations may be counted in public administration as they are owned by the First Nation.

Unemployment

The combined unemployment rate for the other LSA communities is 13%, which is slightly higher than the 12% unemployment rate for Ontario. In the 2021 Census of Population, Ontario's unemployment rate is reported as 12.2% with a labour force of 7,399,200 and an unemployed population of 906,310 (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

The highest rates of unemployment occur in Marten Falls First Nation and Weenusk First Nation with 31% and 28%, respectively, see **Table 15-12**. The lowest rate of unemployment is in Neskantaga First Nation, at 11% (Statistics Canada, 2022a). This is compared to 5.5% noted above for Webequie First Nation.

Table 15-12: Other Local Study Area Unemployment Rate, 2016 and 2021

Other Local Study Area Communities	2016	2021
Attawapiskat First Nation	32.4%	8.3%
Eabametoong First Nation	22.6%	9.8%
Kasabonika Lake First Nation	23.4%	9.5%
Marten Falls First Nation	18.8%	30.8%
Neskantaga First Nation	12.5%	11.1%
Nibinamik First Nation	20.7%	13.3%
Weenusk First Nation	20%	27.6%
Ontario	7.4%	12.2%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2017; Statistics Canada, 2022a.



Barriers to Employment

Indigenous women frequently encounter obstacles to education and employment stemming from gender norms, family responsibilities, insufficient childcare options, discrimination, and concerns for their personal safety (Dalseg et al., 2018). The influence of patriarchal colonialism and its undermining of Indigenous women's status in society is a significant factor in the inequalities they experience (McKinley, Liddell, & Lilly, 2021).

Conflicts in work-life balance, mandatory relocation to work location, unappealing, unsafe or male-dominated work environments, and stereotypes, sexism, unfriendliness and wage gaps were also identified as major barriers for employment for Indigenous women (NWAC, 2015).

Additionally, lack of a driver's license, as is the case in Webequie First Nation and also in other LSA communities, is identified as a barrier to finding employment (NPI, 2017). Based on the socio-economic survey findings, 43% of on-reserve respondents and 57% of off-reserve respondents of Webequie First Nation possess a driver's license, 62% of respondents from Marten Falls First Nation members possess a driver's license, whilst only 9% of respondents from Weenusk First Nation members possess a driver's license (AtkinsRéal, 2022a).

Time Spent on Unpaid Domestic Work

Due to deeply entrenched gender stereotypes and roles, women often bear the primary responsibility for domestic labour, volunteer work, and both paid and unpaid caregiving. Unpaid work is deemed "invisible" because it is not included in the labour market economy like consumer spending or commercial transactions.

Results from the socio-economic survey carried out, shows the number of hours spent on domestic and caregiving work by Weenusk First Nation and Marten Falls First Nation respondents. Approximately, 80% of Weenusk First Nation respondents spend mostly one to 10 hours on domestic and caregiving work, whilst majority of Marten Falls First Nation respondents, at 50%, spend zero hours. However, 8.3% of Marten Falls First Nation respondents mentioned spending more than 40 hours, and 16.7% of respondents mentioned spending 26 to 40 hours on domestic work and caregiving activities (AtkinsRéal, 2022a).

Regional Study Area

Employment Age Population

Common themes throughout the RSA include an overall decline in the working age population based on current projections (Statistics Canada, 2022a). The working age population in the Kenora District is projected to decline over the projection period from 41,115 in 2021 to 38,152 by 2043 (Statistics Canada, 2017; 2022a).

Similarly, the working age population in Thunder Bay District is projected to decline from 93,095 in 2021 to 81,584 by 2043 (Statistics Canada, 2017; 2022a).

The working age population in the Cochrane District is also projected to decrease from 49,715 in 2021 to 39,245 by 2043 (Statistics Canada, 2017; 2022a).

More detail can be found in Table 6-17 of Appendix L.



Labour Force Participation

The RSA comprises of lower labour participation rates compared to Ontario trends (Statistics Canada, 2022a). However, the majority of the RSA population is within the labour force and 48% of the group consists of females while the remainder 42% consists of males. The participation rate of the total working age population stands at 74.8%, with males participating at a rate of 77.4% and females at 72.2% (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

Of the population classified as in the labour force, 90.1% are employed; and the unemployment rate for the RSA labour force is approximately 9.9% (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

In 2022, sales and service occupations were the most common job category in the RSA, employing 32,095 individuals, which represents 23.4% of all jobs. From 2018 to 2022, there was a 3% overall increase in job numbers across six different occupational categories. The category with the most significant percentage growth during this period was health occupations, which saw an 18% increase (Lightcast, 2023a).

Unemployment

The unemployment rate within the Kenora District is lower than Ontario at 8.7%; however, the participation rate is 57% in comparison to 63% for Ontario (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

Within the RSA, the Thunder Bay District has the highest unemployment rate at 10.8%, which is still below the Ontario average. The participation rate in the district is 58% (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

The unemployment rate in the Cochrane District was 9.2% with a participation rate of 59%, which is the highest within the RSA, however, this is lower than the overall rate of unemployment across Ontario (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

Barriers to Employment

The main cities and municipalities of the RSA, such as City of Thunder Bay and City of Timmins have less barriers to employment when compared to LSA communities, especially due to the availability of facilities and services which reduce and mitigate many of the existing barriers. However, the Indigenous communities within the RSA experience the same barriers which are experienced by the LSA community members, such as gender discrimination, inability to maintain work-life balance, occupational segregation and lack of support for career development (House of Commons, 2021).

There is no information specific to the RSA in terms of barriers experienced by community members.

Time Spent on Unpaid Domestic Work

Indigenous individuals, particularly women, often spend more time on unpaid domestic and caregiving tasks compared to non-Indigenous counterparts. Traditional and cultural responsibilities, such as caring for extended family members and participating in community activities, contribute to the high time investment. The extensive time devoted to these tasks can limit economic opportunities and career advancement for Indigenous People, impacting their overall financial well-being. There are fewer resources and supports available for Indigenous communities to balance these responsibilities with other aspects of life, exacerbating the time burden (House of Commons, 2021).

There is no information specific to the RSA in terms of time spent on unpaid domestic work.



15.2.2.1.2. Labour Income

Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Income

The most common income group in the Webequie First Nation is 'under \$10,000 (including loss)' with 27.8% of working males included within this category, and the most common income groups for working females was 'under \$10,000 (including loss)' and '\$10,000 to \$19,999' with 40% of working females falling within each category equally (Statistics Canada, 2022a). The total of working individuals in the 'under \$10,000 (including loss)' category constitutes 22.9% of total working individuals.

The second highest income group for males is \$10,000 to \$19,999 with 19.4% of working males included in this group. The second highest income group for females is \$20,000 to \$29,999 with 17.8% of working females within this group (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

The highest income bracket for males is between \$70,000 to \$79,999 with 2.7% of working males falling into this category; and the highest income bracket for females was between \$100,000 to \$149,999 with 2% of working females falling into this category (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

The majority of households have an income level between \$50,000 to \$59,999, \$60,000 to \$69,999, or \$70,000 to \$79,999; and each group accounts for 11.1% of private households. Approximately 50% of households earn under \$70,000 (52.8%) while the remainder earn over \$70,000 (47.2%) (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

During the socio-economic survey, it was revealed that 36% of the respondents received income from Ontario Works, 10.8% received income from Ontario disability program, 16.2% received income from old age pension Old Age Security (OAS), the Canada Pension Plan (CPP), 23% received income from employment insurance, 1.4% received income from employee disability insurance, 1.4% received income from accident and benefit insurance, whilst 10.8% did not receive any income from government sponsored programs (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a).

Income sources for Webequie First Nation members were diversified in previous decades but has become limited in the recent years. Apart from limited commercial traditional economic activities, off-reserve employment, temporary employment for firefighting, and few tourism and recreation opportunities, there are not many other ventures that community members can engage in for income (Stantec Consulting Inc., 2024).

Sources of Income

Colonialism has economically marginalized Indigenous People in Canada (Paul, 2020). There remains a significant income gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians, with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit individuals earning less on average than their non-Indigenous counterparts (Wilson & Macdonald, 2010). Additionally, those residing on reserves generally have lower incomes compared to those living off-reserve (Raphael et al., 2020). The combined effects of these economic disparities, isolation in northern communities, and high living costs result in considerable socio-economic challenges for households. Historically, members of Webequie did not rely on employment income for their livelihood as they do today (Webequie First Nation, 2025). This shift in economic dependence has diminished their ability to engage in traditional land-based activities.

Although most people who want to be employed have a job, the participation rate within the Webequie First Nation community is low in comparison to Ontario. In 2021, the participation rate in Ontario was 63% while Webequie had a rate of 38% for the same year.



In 2022, three occupational categories made up over 70% of the jobs in Webequie First Nation (Lightcast, 2023a), please refer to **Table 15-9**:

- Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services (28.2%);
- Business, finance, and administrative occupations (22.6%); and
- Sales and services occupations (20.7%).

The workforce in Webequie is not particularly suited for working directly in projects relating to construction, with few jobs existing within this field and a small labour force.

Other Local Study Area Communities

Income

Common themes throughout the LSA are the majority of households have an income level between \$50,000 to \$59,999 and the labour income for most individuals living on these First Nation reserves is under \$10,000. Compared to the RSA, the LSA communities have a higher total percentage making under \$10,000 (including loss) – 23.8% for the LSA versus 8% for the RSA. Approximately, 16.6% of individuals within the LSA made over \$50,000 versus 42% of individuals in the RSA made over \$50,000. Having a baseline indicator of labour income data aids in understanding the potential effects of the Project on overall labour income within each community.

The largest individual income group for females is \$10,000 to \$19,999 with 185 across the LSA Indigenous communities in this category which accounts for 18.2% of income earning females within the LSA. In 2020, there were 40 more males than females with individual incomes; In 2020, 2% of females were making between \$100,000 to \$149,000, all of which were located in Attawapiskat First Nation, this is the highest reported income bracket; and in 2020, 0.9% of males were making between \$100,000 to \$149,000, all of which were located in Attawapiskat First Nation, this is the highest reported income bracket.

The aggregate participation rate for the other LSA Indigenous communities is 46%, which is 17% lower than Ontario. The highest participation rate out of the seven communities occurs in Weenusk First Nation at 71%, while the lowest occurs in Attawapiskat First Nation at 35% (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

As per the socio-economic survey results, out of the 11 Weenusk First Nation respondents, 66.7% stated that their individual income in 2021 was \$6,000 – \$15,000, and income categories \$16,000 – \$30,000 and \$31,000 – \$45,000 had 16.7% respondents each (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a). Five of the total respondents from Weenusk First Nation did not provide their individual income.

Socio-Economic survey results for 13 Marten Falls First Nation respondents, regarding individual income in 2021, are as below (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a). One respondent did not provide their individual income information. Of the respondents, 25% have no income; 25% of respondents have an income of \$16,000 – \$30,000; 8.3% of respondents have an income of \$31,000 – \$45,000; 8.3% of respondents have an income of \$46,000 – \$70,000; 16.7% of respondents have an income of \$71,000+; and 16.7% of respondents are unsure about or do not know their individual income.

Sources of Income

In 2022, three occupational categories made up nearly 70% of jobs within other communities in the LSA (Lightcast, 2023a):

- Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services;
- Business, finance, and administrative occupations; and
- Sales and services occupations.



First Nation communities within the LSA range from \$50,400 (Eabametoong First Nation) to \$68,000 (Webequie First Nation). In Canada and Ontario, the labour market related income is proportionally higher among men than women, and this same pattern is present within the LSA where the median after-tax income among men (\$65,000) was 1.4 times higher than women (\$47,200).

During the socio-economic survey, Ontario disability program, Old Age Pension (CPP/OAS), and employment insurance were mentioned as government benefits received by Weenusk First Nation and Marten Falls First Nation community members (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a).

Regional Study Area

Income

In 2020, the median after-tax income of households in the Unorganized Kenora District was \$76,000, which was a 3.4% increase from the median after-tax income recorded in 2015 (\$73,500) (Statistics Canada, 2022b). All three districts also share the same largest individual income group (\$20,000 and \$29,999) and household income group (\$100,000 to \$124,999) (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

The smallest individual income group for both male and female is \$150,000 and over with 3.7% and 1.1%, respectively (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

The smallest household income group is \$5,000 to \$9,999 at 0.6% in the RSA (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

Sources of Income

The main sources of income in the RSA originate from employment of a significant proportion of the working age population earning wages or salaries from various sectors, including health care, education, and public administration (Statistics Canada, 2021a). Self-employment is another important income source in the RSA. The 2021 Census data shows that many residents engage in self-employed activities, which include small businesses, trades, and personal services (Statistics Canada, 2021b). Government transfers are a crucial component of income for many households. This includes Old Age Security (OAS), the Canada Pension Plan (CPP), and social assistance programs. In the Kenora District, these transfers play a significant role, especially for seniors and lower-income families (Statistics Canada, 2021d).

Approximately 73.2% of total income in the Kenora District comes from employment income (Statistics Canada, 2021a), around 9.5% of income in the district is derived from self-employment (Statistics Canada, 2021b), and around 14.7% of income originates from government transfers and social assistance programs (Statistics Canada, 2021b).

Approximately 71.3% of total income in the Thunder Bay District comes from employment (Statistics Canada, 2021c), with around 9.3% of income in the district is derived from self-employment (Statistics Canada, 2021a), and approximately 15.2% of income derived from government transfers and other social assistance programs (Statistics Canada, 2021b).

Approximately 74.0% of total income in the Cochrane District comes from employment income (Statistics Canada, 2021a), around 7.6% of income in the district is derived from self-employment (Statistics Canada, 2021b), and 15.5% of income accounts for government transfers and social assistance programs (Statistics Canada, 2021b).



15.2.2.2. Overall Economy

Community members are hopeful about the prospect of several potential improvements from the Project, such as better food and gas prices and better transport (AtkinsRéal, 2023). They believe that the Project could bring benefits to the community, such as improvements to the cost of living (e.g., lower food prices), increased employment and business opportunities, and increased community involvement. This Socio-Economic Baseline provides information that will enable the assessment of effects on overall economy.

Existing conditions of overall economy in the LSA and RSA are described in this section using the following indicators:

- Gross Domestic Product (GDP);
- Cost of living;
- Economic development; and
- Traditional economy.

15.2.2.2.1. Cost of Living

Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Consumer Price Index

Webequie and neighbouring LSA communities are remote in nature and there are associated difficulties in transporting goods to the community and the cost of living is significantly higher than in the area further south which are more urban. Webequie community has the same difficulties and challenges as other fly-in communities of northern Ontario in terms of supply of goods and services in the community and travelling south to obtain goods and services, mainly due to the remoteness of these communities. High cost of living can disproportionately affect more vulnerable community members, including those who are low-income, youth, Elders, women, and individuals living with disabilities (InterGroup, 2024). Cost of living in Webequie First Nation was considered in terms of household income and the percentage of income spent on rent/mortgage, energy, and groceries per month, highlighting the effects of high cost of living on vulnerable populations in the community (InterGroup, 2024).

“Even to go out on the land, you have to spend money. And some of these people that go out depend on others. Like, I support my son and daughter if they want to go out into the Bush. It costs money. It cost several hundred dollars to a thousand dollars to send out kids for experience during the cultural break that they have now. That’s why we have programs like Choose Life for kids to go out and gain experience. And some people don’t have the opportunity to send their kids. Even if a person wants to go out and fish on a boat people need money. We are on an island. If you want to go out fishing every once in a while or go swimming with the kids they need to buy more things.” (AtkinsRéal, 2022a).

Low-Income Cut-Off Indicators

Approximately 31.2% of the Webequie population is considered low-income and over half (52.8%) of Webequie households earn under \$70,000 (Statistics Canada, 2022 as cited in InterGroup, 2024). Cost of living is a major challenge for Webequie community members; one participant mentioned that some of the families in the community cannot afford the internet service, Starlink, which shows the inequalities experienced by low-income households in Webequie. Some other thoughts from community members included that the high costs of living also affected traditional activities such as going out on the lands



(AtkinsRéalais, 2022a). Knowledge holders shared that the lack of infrastructure and lack of access to the land means people need the right equipment to travel for activities on the land, such as a boat, snow machine, and survival gear, which is a substantial cost to bear in addition to their other expenses (e.g., utilities, food) (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a as cited in InterGroup, 2024). Both knowledge holders and focus group participants shared that the high costs associated with getting out on the land have disproportionate effects on Webequie youth, who must often rely on others, such as parents and family members, to have the means to go fishing or hunting (InterGroup, 2024). Due to this reason where the youth have limited movement, the feeling of being stuck and unable to move is generally felt by the younger members of the community (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a). A critical determinant of health for Indigenous youth is the connection to the land (Lines et al., 2019). Consequently, the challenges raised by high cost of living in Webequie has affected the health and well-being of the Indigenous youth, which may result in and inhibit the ability to learn and practice culture in their lands.

Percentage of Residents Spending Over 30% of Income on Shelter

The Webequie First Nation Socio-Economic Survey (AtkinsRéalais, 2022b as cited in InterGroup, 2024) indicates approximately a quarter of Webequie respondents spent less than 30% of their household income on rent or a mortgage, 15.5% spent between 30% and 50% of their income, 1.3% said they spent more than 50% of their income, while nearly 60% of respondents said they were unsure/did not know (InterGroup, 2024). This may be due to approximately 94% of Webequie private dwellings being government or band housing (Statistics Canada, 2022 as cited in InterGroup, 2024).

Average Retail Prices for Select Products

Food insecurity is a challenge in Webequie, with natural and healthy foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables associated with high costs in the community (Webequie First Nation, 2014). People are food secure when they have physical, social, and economic access to safe, sufficient, nutritious, and culturally appropriate foods to live an active, healthy life at all times (OECD, n.d. as cited in InterGroup, 2024). Food security can be assessed by four categories: 1) access (physical, financial, and social), 2) availability, meaning an adequate supply of food, 3) utilization, meaning the ability to have food that is nutritious, safe, and culturally appropriate, and 4) stability, meaning the ability to maintain food access, utilization, and stability (InterGroup, 2024). Food security supports development and maintenance of physical and mental well-being. Understanding the level of food insecurity in the community helps to identify who is most vulnerable to high food costs and who may experience changes to food costs disproportionately (InterGroup, 2024). Food insecurity can be the result of several factors, including inflation, poverty, addictions, mental health, and lack of education and employment opportunities. Changes as a result of industrial development can impact a community's food security (IAIA, 2023 as cited in InterGroup, 2024).

Approximately, 30% of the Webequie First Nation Socio-Economic Survey (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a) respondents stated that \$751 to \$1,000 per month is spent on groceries, 29% of respondents stated that access to food distribution programs was lacking, and 13.7% of respondents stated utilizing food distribution services either daily, weekly, monthly, or annually. Around 57% of respondents in Webequie stated that food distribution services were utilized either daily, weekly, monthly, or annually. From the total accessing food distribution programs, 35.9% of respondents stated utilizing food distribution programs annually. The Webequie First Nation Well-Being Survey (Webequie First Nation, 2014) results indicate that 94% of the total households were experiencing some form of food insecurity, and thus it is one of the crucial issues in the community. Lack of sufficient food supplies leads to skipping meals, or consuming reduced portion sizes, and 38% of the respondents stated being affected by these conditions. About 90% of households in Webequie stated as being unable to afford healthy balanced meals sometimes or often. Approximately, 45% of the Webequie respondents stated as having access to traditional food items such



as local fish, berries, and game meat for two or more times per week; this might be a result due the high costs associated with accessing land for hunting and fishing and similar activities. Thus, not only do the high costs of food from the store create a barrier to food security for Webequie residents, but high costs associated with land-based activities further create a barrier to consuming country foods to supplement their diets (InterGroup, 2024).

Women are often more vulnerable to food insecurity, as they are more likely to skip meals to ensure their children, family members, and household breadwinner(s) are fed before them (Koutouki, Lofts, & Davidian, 2018 as cited in InterGroup, 2024). One knowledge holder shared that food insecurity presents another barrier for women's education and training in the community, questioning how women could have the opportunity to think about education and training when instead they must worry about more pressing issues like food and health (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a as cited in InterGroup, 2024). Lack of healthy affordable foods also has a disproportionate effect on children and youth, who, according to Webequie residents, are often consuming unhealthy "sugary" foods (AtkinsRéalais, 2022a as cited in InterGroup, 2024).

Webequie First Nation Country Foods Assessment Report (Appendix O) reveals that country foods are consumed by Webequie members at least on a weekly basis. Around 71% of the country foods survey respondents, out of a total of 14, stated that locally harvested fish are consumed for at least one meal per week, and few indicated two to three meals per week. Around 86% of the survey respondents stated that game meat is consumed for at least one meal per week, and a single respondent indicated four (4) or more meals per week. Around 64% of the survey respondents indicated consuming migratory birds at least one meal per week, with few indicating up to three (3) meals per week. Country foods consumed in Webequie at a less frequent basis include gooseberries, strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, service/June/saskatoon berries, Labrador (tea), muskrat root, mint, cedar (tea), and bear root (AtkinsRéalais, 2022e). Although the high cost is a burden on the community in terms of going out on the land for traditional activities, it can be assumed that some of the members have regular access to country foods as a part of their diet, based on the survey findings.

As traditional activities are an important part of the lives of Indigenous People, and the collective sharing between members is highly valued, country foods is a regular part of the diet. According to the Webequie First Nation Well-Being Survey (Webequie First Nation, 2014 as cited in InterGroup, 2024), over 60% of households sometimes or regularly share food, wood, or help others, with sharing food between households being the most common practice as 86% of households indicated they share food sometimes or regularly with other households. This suggests that those who do have the means to go harvesting are able and willing to share their harvest with their fellow family and community members, indicating social connectedness of the community (InterGroup, 2024).

Average Annual Household Spending

In Webequie First Nation, the majority of individuals:

- Are unaware of how much their income is spent on renting / mortgaging;
- Spend approximately the same amount on energy in the summer as the winter, with most individuals spending approximately \$100 to \$200 per month; and
- Spend approximately \$751 to \$1,000 per month on groceries.

One of the main concerns in Webequie is the high energy costs, and majority of the survey respondents have indicated that the amount spent on energy costs in winter is the same as in summer (\$100 to \$200 per month) (AtkinsRéalais, 2022f). For some of the households in the community, these high values in terms of cost of utilities have created significant problems. As indicated by findings from the Webequie First Nation Well-Being Survey (Webequie First Nation, 2014), 83% of household members mentioned



that paying electricity bills some or all of the time was difficult, and 90% mentioned that paying fuel payments some or all of the time was difficult. Knowledge holders explained that most Webequie residents use wood to heat their homes (InterGroup, 2024). Wood can be expensive, with one informant sharing that people must go across the river to get wood at a cost of \$180 per sled load (AtkinsRéal, 2022a as cited in InterGroup, 2024). Heating costs can be a particular barrier for young people in the community, some of whom are on social assistance, with one participant explaining the difficulty of having to use the small amount of money people receive to purchase all their essentials when goods in the community are so expensive (AtkinsRéal, 2022a as cited in InterGroup, 2024). Knowledge holders echoed that the payments people receive, such as those provided by Ontario Works, are not enough to pay for the things they need, particularly with the high cost of food in the community (AtkinsRéal, 2022a as cited in InterGroup, 2024). With the largest group living in low-income in Webequie being between the ages of 0 to 17 (Statistics Canada, 2022 as cited in InterGroup, 2024), high cost of living can have disproportionate effects on young people.

Other Local Study Area Communities

Consumer Price Index

Majority of Indigenous communities are faced by challenges associated with high cost of living, mainly due to the remote nature of the communities. This in turn results in doubled costs for everyday items such as fresh produce, in comparison to the urban areas such as in the RSA region. Due to this, majority of community members are faced with food insecurity and poverty.

The rising cost of living puts additional economic pressure on households, making it harder to meet basic needs and manage everyday expenses. Many Indigenous communities have lower average income levels compared to the general population. This income disparity exacerbates the impact of rising prices, leading to greater financial strain (Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy, 2022).

Information regarding consumer price index in other LSA communities is not available.

Low-Income Cut-Off Indicators

The population in other LSA communities constitute of an equal distribution of individuals from 0 to 17 years of age and individuals from 18 to 64 years of age living in low-income. Seniors (individuals who are 65 years old or older) are a smaller portion of the low-income population.

In 2021, the percentage of individuals with low-income in the other LSA communities range from 30% in Kasabonika Lake First Nation to 47% in Eabametoong First Nation; whilst around only 10% of the population in Ontario lived with low-income.

Percentage of Residents Spending Over 30% of Income on Shelter

Residents in remote First Nations communities often spend a significant portion of their income on shelter. This can be attributed to high costs of construction, maintenance, and heating in northern climates; and housing costs can consume 30-40% of household income. This percentage can vary based on specific local economic conditions and the availability of housing. Overcrowding and lack of space also impacts the health and well-being of individuals and families and creates challenges for social and economic health. Canada's 2021 Census reveals that individuals living in First Nations communities are four times more likely than the non-Indigenous population to reside in overcrowded housing, where there are insufficient bedrooms for the household size and makeup. Additionally, residents of First Nations communities are six times more likely to live in homes requiring significant repairs, such as those needed for plumbing, electrical systems, walls, floors, and ceilings (Office of the Auditor General of Canada, 2024).



One of the many challenges for the lack of capacity and adequacy of housing in First Nations is the remote nature of the communities, which are most of the fly-in nations, such as the case for LSA communities of the WSR Project. Construction costs tend to be high along with maintenance costs as well.

In general, five out of six households on-reserve report having shelter costs for their homes. Out residents in dwellings provided by the local government, First Nation, or Indian band, three quarters reported similar costs spent on homes (Statistics Canada, 2022c).

The average monthly shelter cost for households on-reserve that reported such expenses was \$584. For those living in government-provided dwellings, the average was \$432 per month. When considering all households on-reserve, including those without shelter costs, the overall monthly average was \$489. For those in government-provided dwellings, it was \$326 (Statistics Canada, 2022c).

Shelter costs on-reserve differ from those off-reserve. Dwellings provided by the local government, First Nation, or Indian band—which make up over half of reserve dwellings—are less likely to incur shelter costs, with an average of \$326 per month, compared to \$647 for owner-occupied and \$934 for renter-occupied dwellings on-reserve (Statistics Canada, 2022c).

Owner households on-reserve had an average shelter cost of \$647, which is less than half of the \$1,498 average for owner households off-reserve. This discrepancy is partly due to only 31.2% of owner households on-reserve having a mortgage, compared to 60.0% off-reserve. Being mortgage-free usually means lower costs, but this might also reflect difficulties in accessing mortgage financing, potentially indicating limited homeownership opportunities or challenges in leveraging home equity. Additionally, some dwellings provided by local governments may be mistakenly reported as owner-occupied if the terms make households believe they own the property, such as with long-term leases (Statistics Canada, 2022c).

Renter households on-reserve faced the highest average shelter costs among the different housing types on-reserve, with an average of \$934 per month. However, this is still lower than the \$1,209 average for renters off-reserve. Factors such as location, dwelling size, type, rent subsidies, and the condition of the dwelling contribute to this difference. For instance, 19.0% of renters on-reserve receive rent subsidies, compared to 11.7% off-reserve. Additionally, reserves are often in remote areas, while off-reserve housing is mostly in urban centres (Statistics Canada, 2022c).

Average Retail Prices for Select Products

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations, food security is “all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, 1996). Food insecurity is also one of the challenges faced by remote First Nations in the LSA; either there is not enough food, or food lacks the quality of variety to be healthy and worries of not having to eat or feed the family due to financial restrictions are some of the main issues. Food insecurity also leads to physical, mental and social health and is a factor for the well-being of individuals (Northwestern Health Unit, 2023).

The Revised Northern Food Basket (RNFB) is a survey instrument developed by Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, in collaboration with Health Canada, to track food costs in remote northern communities. The RNFB, which reflects average consumption patterns for a representative sample, includes 67 items and their corresponding purchase sizes, as updated in 2008 (Ministry of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 2008). Based on the study by Food Secure Canada and Nutrition North



Canada (NNC), the cost of RNFB for one in each community studies are provided in **Table 15-13** (Food Secure Canada, 2016; NNC, 2023).

On April 14, 2020, in response to urgent needs highlighted by governments for COVID-19 preparation and response, the Government of Canada introduced additional support measures to meet the immediate health, economic, and transportation needs of Indigenous communities. This included a \$25 million boost to NNC, aimed at raising subsidy rates for all eligible communities. As a result, residents in these communities have benefited from reduced costs during this year (NNC, 2023).

Table 15-13: Cost of the RNFB for a Family of Four for One Month

Year	2016	March 2011***	March 2020***	March 2021***
Attawapiskat First Nation	\$1,909.01*	\$1,840.20	\$1,751.88	\$1,800.92
Fort Albany First Nation	\$1,831.76*	\$1,811.56	\$1,648.36	\$1,711
Kashechewan First Nation	-	\$1,808.92	\$1,706.72	\$1,754.04
Kasabonika Lake First Nation	-	-	\$1,718.12	\$1,675.88
Weenusk First Nation	-	\$1,747.84	\$1,909.64	\$1,845.56
Webequie First Nation	-	-	\$1,797.96	\$1,723.08
Wunnumin Lake First Nation	-	-	\$1,613.52	\$1,634.76
Timmins**	\$1,056.35	-	-	-

Sources: Food Secure Canada, 2016; NNC, 2023

Notes: *Prices include food costs after the full Nutrition North Canada subsidy has been applied to the items; therefore, this is the subsidized price.

**Timmins is provided for comparison.

*** The cost of the revised RNFB is estimated amount of what it cost to feed a family of 4 a healthy diet for 1 week, which is projected for a month.

As observed in **Table 15-13**, cost of food prices in the LSA community are significantly higher than when compared to even the RSA communities (where prices are higher still than in southern Ontario communities). The reduced participation and availability of traditional foods (originating from the impact of residential schools and barriers to passing of traditional knowledge) has also compounded the effects felt by LSA communities when securing foods and consumables.

Key factors impacting food security include diminishing of traditional knowledge and skills, insufficient understanding of market foods, poor quality of market foods, and concerns about food safety. Additionally, climate change has also had a detrimental effect on all four pillars of food security (availability, access, utilization, and stability) for Indigenous People (Shafiee et al, 2022).

Average Annual Household Spending

Indigenous communities have high expenditures when compared to non-Indigenous communities (Statistics Canada, 2023a). Food Secure Canada's research in the communities in LSA (and similar communities in RSA), the cost of household items was compared with that of Toronto (Food Secure Canada, 2016). Details of that comparison is provided below in **Table 15-14**.

The study done in 2016, found that on average, northern remote Indigenous households on-reserve need to spend around 50% of their income solely on food; in comparison in Toronto households only need to spend 11%. Although subsidies are provided by the government, it does not cover the cost of a family's needs (Food Secure Canada, 2016).



Table 15-14: Cost of household items, 2016

Item	Attawapiskat First Nation	Fort Albany First Nation	Timmins*
Water, bottled, 591 ml	\$2.49	\$2.59	\$1.69 (391 ml)
Toilet paper, 2-ply	\$7.00 (8 rolls)	\$13.99 (12 rolls)	\$4.52 (8 rolls)
Diapers, pampers, size 4	\$37.89 (box of 44)	\$33.69 (box of 52)	\$21.48 (box of 76)
Feminine sanitary pads, package of 20	\$7.59	\$7.79 (pkg of 24)	\$3.22 (pkg of 24)
Toothpaste, 100 ml	\$6.39	\$6.35 (130 ml)	\$1.59

Source: Food Secure Canada, 2016

Note: *Timmins is provided for comparison.

Regional Study Area

Consumer Price Index

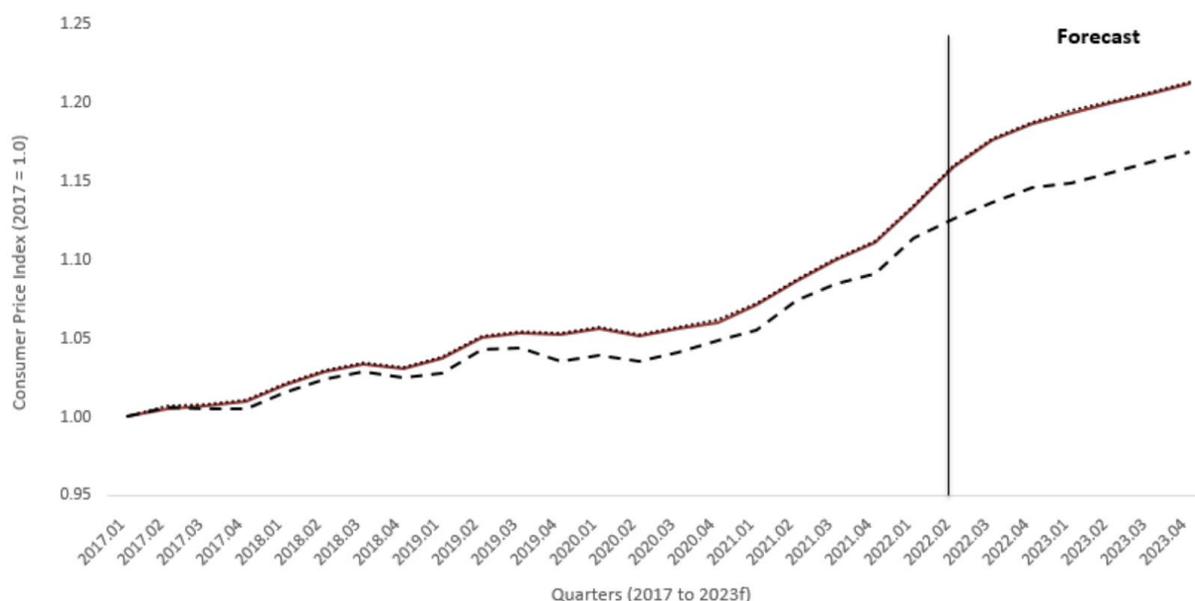
In March 2024, the consumer price index (CPI) increased by 2.9% year-over-year, up from a 2.8% rise in February 2024 in Canada. The most significant factor driving this acceleration was the rise in gasoline prices, which grew more rapidly in March than in February 2024. When excluding gasoline, the overall CPI showed a more modest increase of 2.8% year-over-year, down from 2.9% in February 2024. On a monthly basis, the CPI went up by 0.6% in March, with widespread price increases. Seasonally adjusted, the CPI rose by 0.3% for the month (Statistics Canada, 2024).

When in comparison to southern Ontario, CPI in northern Ontario is higher, with inflation also adding into the issue of high prices already experienced by communities in the RSA. CPI in municipalities and cities such as Thunder Bay and Timmins are slightly higher than southern Ontario, however the remote Indigenous Nations in the RSA experience the same issues as the communities in the LSA.

While Thunder Bay's price levels have not risen as rapidly as those in the rest of the province, it is still affected by the increase in the CPI; as shown in **Figure 15.3**. The Bank of Canada's interest rate hikes to address high inflation could quickly diminish purchasing power, and the previously strong growth in the housing market might slow down. Thunder Bay experienced a significant impact in CPI by COVID-19 pandemic and the more recent war in Ukraine (Thunder Bay Ventures, 2022).



Figure 15.3: CPI across Canada, Ontario and Thunder Bay (2017 = 1.0)



Source: Thunder Bay Ventures, 2022

Figure 15.3 above shows the CPI change in the last five years and forecast into 2022 and 2023. Although Thunder Bay has low changes in its CPI, there might be price level changes forecasted to increase.

Currently, information specific to CPI in the Kenora District and Cochrane District are not available.

Low-Income Cut-Off Indicators

Low-Income-Cut-Off Indicator, income thresholds below which a family will devote a larger share of its income on the necessities of food, shelter and clothing than the average family, for northern Ontario it considerably captures a percentage of its households, mainly due to the issues pertaining in the areas such as food insecurity, poverty, and lack of employment opportunities (Statistics Canada, 2023b).

The low-income cut-off indicators (LICO) based on Statistics Canada and as per the last census survey data, is shown in Table 15-15 to Table 15-17 below.

Table 15-15: LICO Low-income Status, Cochrane District, 2020

Characteristic	Total-Indigenous Identity	Indigenous Identity	Single Indigenous Responses	First Nations	Métis	Non-Indigenous Identity
Within low-income based on LICO, after-tax	2,565	470	450	270	175	2,090
0-17 years	390	90	75	50	0	295
0-5 years	135	50	40	20	0	80
18-64 years	1,985	355	350	215	135	1,630
65 years and over	195	25	20	0	0	170
Prevalence of low-income based on LICO, after-tax (%)	3.5%	4.1%	4.0%	4.7%	3.2%	3.4%



Characteristic	Total-Indigenous Identity	Indigenous Identity	Single Indigenous Responses	First Nations	Métis	Non-Indigenous Identity
0-17 years	2.7%	2.6%	2.2%	2.3%	X	2.7%
0-5 years	3.1%	5.4%	4.0%	4.0%	X	2.5%
18-64 years	4.4%	5.2%	5.3%	6.4%	4.0%	4.3%
65 years and over	1.4%	2.2%	1.9%	X	X	1.3%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2023c

Note: X-suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*

As shown in above table, the highest prevalence of low-income based on LICO in Cochrane District is found within the age group 18 to 64 at 4.4%; which also consists of the income earners and household expense bearers.

Table 15-16: LICO Low-income Status, Kenora District, 2020

Characteristic	Total	Men+	Women+
Total – LICO low-income status in 2020 for the population in private households to whom the low-income concept is applicable – 100% data	43,090	21,545	21,545
0 to 17 years	7,995	4,120	3,880
0 to 5 years	2,450	1,225	1,225
18-64 years	25,920	12,880	13,040
65 years and over	9,180	4,550	4,630
In low-income based on the Low-income cut-offs, after-tax (LICO-AT)	1,155	615	545
0 to 17 years	195	105	95
0 to 5 years	65	35	30
18 to 64 years	880	475	405
65 years and over	85	35	45
Prevalence of low-income based on the Low-income cut-offs, after-tax (LICO-AT) (%)	2.7%	2.8%	2.5%
0 to 17 years (%)	2.5%	2.5%	2.4%
0 to 5 years (%)	2.7%	3.0%	2.6%
18 to 64 years (%)	3.4%	3.7%	3.1%
65 years and over (%)	0.9%	0.8%	1.0%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2023d

In Kenora District as well, the highest prevalence of low-income based on LICO is found in the age group 18-64 years, with the percentage of males (at 3.7%) in low-income slightly higher than females (3.1%).



Table 15-17: LICO Low-income Status, Thunder Bay District, 2020

Characteristic	Total	Men+	Women+
Total – LICO low-income status in 2020 for the population in private households to whom the low-income concept is applicable – 100% data	140,730	70,045	70,690
0 to 17 years	24,800	12,815	11,985
0 to 5 years	7,880	4,035	3,845
18-64 years	85,765	42,745	43,015
65 years and over	30,170	14,480	15,685
In low-income based on the Low-income cut-offs, after-tax (LICO-AT)	6,410	3,450	2,960
0 to 17 years	1,010	525	485
0 to 5 years	395	200	200
18 to 64 years	5,015	2,760	2,250
65 years and over	385	165	220
Prevalence of low-income based on the Low-income cut-offs, after-tax (LICO-AT) (%)	4.6%	4.9%	4.2%
0 to 17 years (%)	4.1%	4.1%	4.1%
0 to 5 years (%)	5.0%	4.9%	5.1%
18 to 64 years (%)	5.9%	6.5%	5.2%
65 years and over (%)	1.3%	1.1%	1.4%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2023e

In Thunder Bay District, the highest prevalence of low-income is experienced by the population in 18-64 years age group, with the disparity between males (at 6.5%) and females (at 5.2%) higher than when compared to Kenora District.

Percentage of Residents Spending Over 30% of Income on Shelter

In 2021, the number of households that spend 30% or more of their income on shelter costs in the RSA communities were equally distributed at around 13-14%. In comparison, the Ontario average households that spend 30% or more of their income on shelter costs is at 21% in 2021. The RSA communities have a cost of living that is lower than other parts of Ontario.

Although the cost of living in the RSA is lower in comparison to other areas in Canada, this does not necessarily make it affordable (InterGroup, 2024). The cost of living across Canada continues to grow with high inflation, growing interest rates, and the increasing cost of basic needs (InterGroup, 2024).

Average Retail Prices for Select Products

Prices for food items in northern Ontario are on the rise following inflation and also considering the distance these communities are located in. Average retail prices for food items are higher than in Toronto, but less than in LSA communities; refer to **Table 15-14**.

Timmins Today reports on the significant increase in food costs and its impacts on the local food banks, how prices are rising and becoming a strain against the community services in the areas, and where challenges on meeting the growing demand is on the rise. Due to the increased demand, vulnerable persons such as Elders and disabled persons sometime end up with no supplies. The area has seen the



number of persons dependant on food assistance programs rising in the last years, with more families with children joining for the assistance programs (Timmins Today, 2023).

A study done in Sioux Lookout revealed that food sources and availability of food are very limited and creates challenges in keeping a family properly fed (Parker et al, 2018). Participants of the study brought issues such as limited food availability and access to choices for food to eat on a daily diet, inability to participate in traditional activities to obtain wild food (explained as due to the loss of traditional knowledge and skills), limited opportunities to purchase provincially local food items, limited availability of foods for those with health concerns, monopoly of food items held by retail stores (the few present in the community), high cost of food items, reliance of food banks which should be left only for emergencies (but how reliance has grown for regularly visiting food banks), high costs associated with hunting and fishing gear and related expenses. One of the main common sentiments of the study participants was their desire to have access to “locally grown, harvested, hunted, or fished foods.” (Parker et al, 2018). The members who participated in the study emphasized on the importance of being connected to the land, and being able to access to hunt or grow their own foods like in the past, instead of relying on retail stores and government subsidies; the loss of traditional skills and knowledge which entailed cooking techniques and dressing methods such as for moose and deer has removed the community’s self-sustenance and self-determination over food (Parker et al, 2018).

Lack of adequate housing is also an issue in the RSA, with increasing demand and low supply creating significant increases in rent and mortgage, compounded by increasing utility bills and gasoline prices (Timmins Today, 2023).

A study carried out by the Northwestern Health Unit revealed that about 21.3% of households in the Kenora-Rainy River Districts are experiencing food insecurity, surpassing the provincial average of 18.7% and the northwest region's rate of 19.2%. This indicates that at least one in five households in the area struggles with insufficient or unreliable access to food due to financial difficulties. Food insecurity can manifest as concerns about depleting food supplies, the inability to afford balanced or nutritious meals, consuming less food than necessary, or even enduring periods without food (Northwestern Health Unit, 2023). The study notes income as a main determinant of health, and its connectivity with housing, health services, education, employment and obtaining access to quality food and recreational activities and such create a reliance on income for a healthy household (Northwestern Health Unit, 2023).

Average Annual Household Spending

In 2023, the Ontario Living Wage Network calculated that a living wage in northern Ontario should be set at \$19.80 per hour (Northwestern Health Unit, 2023). This figure represents the amount needed to cover the genuine costs of living in the area. Based on the Northwestern Health Unit (2023), in northern Ontario the minimum income in a family of four (based on minimum wage) is \$4,187, rent accounts for \$2,062, food accounts for \$1,412 and remainder for other monthly expenses is \$713 which includes utilities and health and other expenses (Northwestern Health Unit, 2023).

However, for a family of four relying on Ontario Works, the income is \$2,821, rent is \$2,062, and food is \$1,412, with the remaining income going down to -\$653; where the family will not be able to afford basic items. Single parent families as well as single person households experience the same issue of not having enough income to cover basic expenses following rent and food expenditures (Northwestern Health Unit, 2023).



15.2.2.2.2. Economic Development

Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Economic Development

Webequie First Nation council is responsible for stimulating local economy and developing economic initiatives and opportunities for the community (211 Ontario North, 2025), which includes these following responsibilities (211 Ontario North, 2025):

- Provide information, training, and educational workshops to enhance employability skills;
- Development of plans for the use of traditional lands for community members;
- Access funding for band-owned business ventures; and
- Provide coaching in areas such as business plan development and assistance in obtaining financial support for people wanting to start own business.

Current economic initiatives that Webequie First Nation is involved with include (211 Ontario North, 2025):

- Management of the Webequie Business Centre;
- Advisory for Northwest Company's Northern Store;
- Business assistance for Webequie Motel, which consists of one suite and five double rooms;
- Collaboration with provincial and federal government on the WSR; and
- Assistance with proposed construction of a new Community Readiness & Wellness Centre; announcement in August 2020 that Webequie received a FedNor grant of \$546,000 towards the Project.

Capacity and Gaps

As mentioned in **Section 15.2.2.1.1** the current capacity of Webequie First Nation community members is inadequate to meet the demand and needs of the community in itself. Housing, utilities, education and training are some of the essential gaps in the community which reduce progress in economy as well. Section 14 (Social Environment) of this EAR/IS provides information on community services and facilities availability.

Current needs of the community have been identified through multiple plans and studies conducted within the community, such as the 'On-Reserve Land Use Plan', 'Community Well-being Pilot Project', 'Resilience Plan', 'Economic Development Strategy', 'Webequie First Nation Airport Redevelopment Project,' 'Webequie Communications Gaps Analysis', 'Housing Assessment', and 'Webequie Education Authority Teacherage Assessment and Replacement Report' (Webequie First Nation, 2023).

The current gaps identified through the different plans (based on which have been shared), are as follows:

- On-Reserve Land Use Plan: community development like housing, community facilities such as water and sewage, programs, cultural spaces and activities, and businesses;
- Community Well-being Pilot Project (2016-2019): identified three areas of priority need: Housing, Prescription Drug Abuse, and Education. Pilot project's funding was cut-off following the completion of housing phase, and currently the Prescription Drug Abuse and Education components are remaining;



- Resilience Plan (2018-2019): identified requirements for hazards, threats and risks such as fires, extreme weather, utility outages, accidents and food security; and
- 2007 Economic Strategic Plan / Economic Development Strategy: researched socio-economic trends, human resource gaps and sector opportunities.

Major Projects

Webequie recently partnered with federal and governmental department through Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC)'s program 'Strategic Partnerships Initiative', where 14 new modular housing units to the community as well as two 4-unit multiplex housing facilities and five (5) single-family homes were brought to the community along with renovation of 14 existing houses (Webequie First Nation, 2023).

Webequie First Nation is currently working on redevelopment of the Webequie Airport, working to provide more options and flexibility in its usage in future. The community is looking to plan for future mining activities and increased economic activities (Webequie First Nation, 2016).

New Projects

A fibre optic broadband line installation is currently in place for providing better connectivity in the community, which will be carried out within the next few years (Rapid Lynx Telecommunications, 2022). The community is hoping that with better connectivity there will be more opportunities for distance and online learning and training, as well as trades.

The development of the WSR and the subsequent Northern Road Link are two of the main projects that the community has planned. With the development of these two roads along with the Marten Falls Community Access Road, Webequie First Nation will have access to the Ring of Fire as well as the provincial road system, which will significantly ease the current restrictions in access that the community is facing. Webequie First Nation hopes to create opportunities for the community to grow and expand within the Webequie First Nation planning area which includes the potential of the Ring of Fire (Stantec Consulting Inc., 2024).

On March 5, 2024, Webequie First Nation and Marten Falls First Nation became parties to an agreement focused on development of community infrastructure projects to assist with future development opportunities in the area, including the development of all-season roads to the Ring of Fire region. The agreement was signed at the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada convention in Toronto, and the development focus will be on health and training facilities, recreation centres, commercial buildings and labour force development programs to improve the well-being and economy of First Nations communities (King's Printer for Ontario, 2024a).

Webequie First Nation also has the following ongoing developments; 1-megawatt diesel electrical power system, a drinking water management system, and a wastewater management station (Stantec Consulting Inc., 2024).

Closures

Currently, information on project closures in Webequie First Nation is not available.

Equipment Availability

Equipment availability in the community is currently lacking; the community removed the long-term drinking water advisories which had been in place in 2020 (First Nations Drinking Water Settlement, 2024), however a short-term boil-water advisory was established in September 2024 (ISC,2024a).



The sewage treatment plants required upgrading or replacing of Rotating Biological Contactors, boilers, and repairs to sewage truck. The landfill site is full and requires a significant amount of maintenance, signage and segregation.

Energy Profile

Webequie has a 1-megawatt diesel generating station. The generating station has three (3) generators that range from 400 to 1,000 kilowatts (kW). Installed in 2012, the generating station had a capital investment of \$17 million (TBT Engineering, 2023). According to Hydro One Remote Communities, the number of electricity customers in 2016 was 187 (Hydro One Remote Communities, 2017).

Access To Capital

The community currently does not have any major income generating mechanisms and rely on government funding for development of the community infrastructure and services. However, the community has advanced in its policy and planning requirements and there a few projects in the pipelines awaiting funding (Webequie First Nation, 2023).

Trends

Currently, information on developmental trends in Webequie First Nation is not available.

Other Local Study Area Indigenous Communities

Economic Development

Within the LSA, there are organizations (Nishnawbe Aski Nation, Wakenagun Community Futures Development Corporation, Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund, and Matawa First Nations Management) who provide resources to business and individuals to encourage economic growth. A main focus of these organizations is providing support to businesses through funding opportunities, training, and advisory services.

Additionally, many of the Indigenous communities work independently to support their local economy and create opportunities for community members. Initiatives range from offering training opportunities, providing access to funding, developing land use plans, and managing business opportunities.

Capacity

Currently, detailed information on developmental trends in other LSA communities are not available. However, based on feedback and comments received during engagement and consultation (please refer to Section 2 of EAR/IS, **Section 15.1.2**, and **Section 15.1.3** herein), it is understood that the current needs and demands of the communities are not met as needed due to lack of capacity and availability of facilities. Utilities, education, community services, training are some of the main gaps which have been identified during engagement and consultation.

Current requirements on the communities have been identified through plans and studies conducted by the community, such as 'On-Reserve Land Use Plans' (ORLUP) and Draft Community Based Land Use Plans (CBLUPs) (with some communities having developed the ToR currently and planning to proceed to develop the CBLUPs), and 'Community Well-being Pilot Project':

- Nibinamik First Nation 20-year housing: Housing plan developed by the community to address the issue of lack of housing within a 20-year period (CBC News, 2020a).



- Tripartite Framework Agreement to provide sustainable future for Kashechewan First Nation: Agreement between governments of Canada and Ontario, the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, and the Kashechewan First Nation for developing actions plans in support of short-, medium-, and long-term sustainability of the community, focusing on areas such as housing, socio-economic sustainability, health programs and facilities, infrastructure development, and schools and community facilities (Government of Canada, 2017).

Gaps

In Canada, as of February 2023, there were 32 long-term drinking water advisories affecting 24 communities in Ontario (ISC, 2021). In the LSA, four have long-term drinking water advisories, the longest of which has been in place since 1995, in Neskantaga First Nation (ISC, 2021). Construction is being finalized on Neskantaga's new water treatment facility, but hurdles still include the lack of trust the community has for the drinking water, and programs and studies are ongoing.

Eabametoong First Nation has been experiencing a boil-water advisory since 2001, and work is being carried out to upgrade the community's water treatment plant (ISC, 2021); however, there are concerns regarding the outdated wastewater treatment plant and the potential for the new plant to create sewage overflow (Bensadoun, 2019).

While Attawapiskat First Nation is not currently facing a boil-water advisory, the community has been plagued with water concerns. In 2019, the community faced potentially harmful levels of chemicals in the water, rendering it unusable (Barrera, 2019). On January 30, 2024, a member of Attawapiskat First Nation filed a human rights complaint to the United Nations Human Rights Council over the ongoing issue of lack of access to clean drinking water in the First Nation for decades (Penticton Herald, 2024).

Major Projects and New Projects

Neskantaga First Nation has been under a 25-year-old boil-water advisory, and construction of a water treatment system is under underway following the commissioning on December 2020. Indigenous Services Canada is also providing funding to the Ontario Clean Water Agency to provide full-time operational oversight of the system and to train local operators. Additionally, a Water Systems Infrastructure Assessment will be carried out to identify the long-term requirements (ISC, 2024b).

On March 5, 2024, Webequie First Nation and Marten Falls First Nation became parties to an agreement focused on development of community infrastructure projects to assist with future development opportunities in the area, including the development of all-season roads to the Ring of Fire region. The agreement was signed at the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada convention in Toronto, and the development focus will be on health and training facilities, recreation centres, commercial buildings and labour force development programs to improve the well-being and economy of First Nations communities (King's Printer for Ontario, 2024a).

Marten Falls First Nation is currently planning and carrying out EA for two projects, Northern Road Link (Northern Road Link, n.d.) and Marten Falls Community Access Road (Marten Falls First Nation Community Access Road, 2019).

Funding was allocated in 2021 to provide \$5.6M in federal and provincial infrastructure investments to improve COVID-19 resilience in community schools, which included Eabametoong First Nation, Marten Falls First Nation, Neskantaga First Nation, and Nibinamik First Nation (Matawa First Nations Management, 2021).



Neskantaga First Nation's rehabilitation and expansion of the community centre is currently planned with a federal contribution from the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program. The new additions will provide insulation, change rooms and will create an accessible gym by expanding the arena (Government of Canada, 2024a).

Closures

Currently, detailed information on project closures in other LSA communities are not available.

Equipment Availability

Specific details on current equipment and infrastructure availability are limited. Generally, remote First Nations face challenges related to accessibility, procurement and maintenance, and resource allocation.

Few of the First Nations such as Neskantaga First Nation, are still under boil-water advisories; Neskantaga First Nation has been having the boil-water advisory for 29 years as of 2024 (Ground Water Canada, 2024). Other First Nations under drinking water advisories are as follows:

- Attawapiskat First Nation: currently not under a long-term drinking water advisory but has been experiencing water quality issues. An Attawapiskat member filed a human rights complaint to the United Nations over the lack of access to potable water (Penticton Herald, 2024);
- Eabametoong First Nation: long-term boil-water advisory since August 2002 (CBC News, 2023); and
- Nibinamik First Nation: boil-water advisory starting from February 2013 and transitioned into a long-term drinking water advisory since February 2014 (ISC, 2024c).

Marten Falls First Nation has been under a long-term boil-water advisory since 2005. In response the water treatment facility was replaced in 2019. The system was commissioned in June 2019. It is understood that there are issues with the raw water intake at this time and there is a project currently underway to address the issue, after which the boil water advisory can be lifted. It is also understood that the wastewater treatment plant is in urgent need of upgrades.

Equipment for various services and facilities, including emergency services, urgently needs significant upgrades and new additions to keep up with the increasing demand in communities.

Energy Profile

Most of the other LSA communities rely primarily on diesel generators for energy; however, most are currently exploring other energy options such as solar and wind to reduce dependency on fossil fuels (Shantz, 2018; The Narwhal, 2022).

Kasabonika Lake First Nation recently connected to the provincial power grid system through Wataynikaneyap Power transmission system and are transitioning from diesel power to grid power (Watay Power, 2023).

There are other initiatives undertaken recently, such as the Ontario government working partnership with Webequie First Nation, Nibinamik First Nation, Neskantaga First Nation, Eabametoong First Nation and Marten Falls First Nation for exploring alternatives to diesel power and for supporting better economic self-determination and prosperity (King's Printer for Ontario, 2024b).

Access to Capital

Specific information on current access to capital of other LSA communities are limited, however these communities face significant challenges due to their remote locations and are actively seeking ways to improve access to capital and foster economic development.



Trends

Currently, detailed information on developmental trends in other LSA communities are not available.

Regional Study Area

Economic Development

The RSA is comprised of over 100 census subdivisions, all of which work towards economic development in their communities and Ontario. There are certain census subdivisions driving economic growth in the study area which include: the City of Kenora, the City of Dryden, the Municipality of Sioux Lookout, the City of Thunder Bay, the City of Timmins, and the Town of Cochrane. Combined, these census subdivisions account for approximately 64% of the RSA population.

The municipalities within the RSA are focused on economic development and sustainable growth. Common economic aspirations between the six previously mentioned municipalities include:

- Supporting and growing local businesses;
- Improving infrastructure;
- Attract skilled labourers to northern Ontario; and
- Support and increase tourism.

It is important to highlight that the City of Thunder Bay in particular is focused on becoming a hub for mining and forest products services, supply, and manufacturing.

The Kenora District is a census division in northwestern Ontario and is comprised of 57 census subdivisions, 47 of which are Indigenous communities. In the City of Kenora's 5-year Tourism and Economic Development Strategy, two economic development strategies are listed, which are to activate development on Kenora's vacant and underutilized lands and support the growth and retention of local businesses and emerging sections.

The Municipality of Sioux Lookout 2020-2025 Strategic Plan states the following goals for community innovation and development:

- Provide infrastructure and housing to meet the needs of our community, now and as it grows;
- Collaborate with community partners to foster growth and economic development;
- Enable community growth through innovative, proactive planning; and
- Strengthen and enhance Sioux Lookout's status as "Hub of the North".

The Thunder Bay District is a census division in northwestern Ontario and is comprised of 34 census subdivisions, 18 of which are Indigenous communities. The City of Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission 2023-2025 Strategic Action Plan states the following action items and economic development activities:

- Grow, expand, and promote the City of Thunder Bay as the regional centre and world leader for mining and forest products services, supply, and manufacturing;
- Attract, integrate, and retain a highly skilled workforce focusing on our youth, national and global immigrants, and regional Indigenous communities;
- Becoming Canada's premier outdoor city, weaving connectivity to natural environment to signature urban culinary and cultural attractions to create memorable leisure, corporate and sport event experiences for visitors;



- Drive the growth and progression of the City of Thunder Bay into a safe, welcoming community where people work, live, and play while having access to comprehensive health care, education, and employment opportunities with an affordable, high-quality lifestyle; and
- Be a cornerstone and catalyst for local and regional entrepreneur support to help drive the creation of new business, and higher quality employment opportunities that offer new services and products to markets everywhere.

The Cochrane District is a census division in northwestern Ontario and is comprised of 23 census subdivisions, seven of which are Indigenous communities. The Ontario government is providing more than \$6.3 million through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation to seven economic development projects in Cochrane District.

Capacity

Thunder Bay District is currently facing housing challenges and homelessness, and requirement of additional housing in the district. The district has plans for mitigating this issue with increased funding and other programs (TBnewswatch, 2023). The district has 'The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board, which works with communities and community organizations for supporting initiatives on housing and other social concerns, including childcare and early years, community housing, homelessness prevention programs' (TBDSSAB, 2023).

Kenora District is working on strategies for homelessness prevention and developing transitional and supportive housing programs (KDSB, 2023). The population is projected to grow, particularly among those aged 65 and over, which will impact healthcare and social assistance sectors (NPI, 2019a). The district encompasses diverse communities, each with unique economic capacities and challenges. Some communities have thriving economies, while others face significant hurdles (KDSB, 2021).

Cochrane District faces significant challenges with homelessness and housing shortages. There is a pressing need for more supportive housing units to accommodate the growing demand (NPI, 2019b). During peak summer months, residential water use can increase by up to 30% in Cochrane District, straining the community's capacity to meet essential needs like fire suppression (NPI, 2019b). The Cochrane District Social Services Administration Board (CDSSAB) collaborates with local organizations to address issues related to homelessness and affordable housing (NPI, 2016). The district is working on enhancing economic opportunities through various initiatives, including leveraging industrial clusters and promoting Indigenous labour market participation (NPI, 2019b). With an aging population, there is an increasing demand for healthcare services. The district is focusing on strategies to attract and retain healthcare professionals (NPI, 2019b).

Gaps

Currently, detailed information on developmental gaps in RSA communities are not available.

Major Projects and New Projects

Wataynikaneyap Power Project in Thunder Bay District aims at extending Ontario's power grid to connect with remote First Nations; the project is ongoing with over 1,600km of transmission lines being connected (CBC News, 2020b). Additionally, a bioeconomy development project aiming to establish an energy bio-hub to maximize forest biomass is ongoing with the project progressing from the feasibility studies (Daily Commercial News, 2024).

Cochrane District is undertaking economic development projects, with funding from the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund on investments for local businesses, and agricultural and industrial developments (Northern Ontario Business, 2023).



The largest housing build in 30-years is currently underway at Kenora District, with construction starting soon for a \$27 million, 56-unit mixed-market seniors housing facility (Kenora Online, 2022).

All three districts are actively involved in mining exploration and activities, with investments and planning work ongoing for the Ring of Fire region.

Closures

Currently, detailed information on project closures in RSA communities are not available.

Equipment Availability

Thunder Bay District emergency services are well-equipped with modern ambulances and fire trucks and assists with emergencies for the LSA communities as well (City of Thunder Bay, 2024). Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre is a major healthcare provider, equipped with advanced medical equipment, and smaller clinics and healthcare facilities also serving the community (City of Thunder Bay, 2024). The city's asset management plan covers transportation, drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, facilities, fleet and machinery, equipment, and land improvements (City of Thunder Bay, 2024).

Cochrane District's emergency services, including paramedic services, are managed by the (CDSSAB, 2024); equipment availability is generally adequate, but there are ongoing needs for modernization (CDSB, 2024). Facilities like Bingham Memorial Hospital are undergoing upgrades to improve service delivery, and the district also has several smaller healthcare centres (King's Printer, 2023). The district has various equipment rental services available for public and private projects, ensuring access to necessary machinery and tools.

The Kenora District Services Board (KDSB) oversees emergency medical services, which are well-equipped but face challenges due to the district's vast geography (KDSB, 2024a). The district has several healthcare facilities, including the Lake of the Woods District Hospital, which is equipped with modern medical technology (KDSB, 2024b). The district is actively working on improving housing and public facilities, with significant investments in affordable housing and community services (KDSB, 2024b).

Energy Profile

Thunder Bay District utilizes a mix of energy sources, such as hydroelectric power, natural gas and renewable energy including solar and wind. The district is working on developing Community Energy Emissions Plans, with increased use of local renewable energy (such as biomass, solar photovoltaic and wind) (Sustainability Solutions Groups, 2020).

In Cochrane District, the main source of energy is hydroelectric power, supplemented by natural gas and diesel in more remote areas. The remote areas of the district poses challenges for energy distribution and infrastructure advancement. Ongoing plans are in place in the district to explore and implement renewable energy projects and reduce reliance on diesel (Canada Energy Regulator, 2024).

Kenora District relies mainly on hydroelectric power, with natural gas and diesel used in more remote areas of the district. Kenora District is also exploring options for renewable energy sources, and for reduction of reliance on diesel. As is with Cochrane District, the vastness of the district and the remoteness of the majority of the district's landmass creates challenges for advancement of technological and sustainable initiatives (Canada Energy Regulator, 2024).



Access to Capital

Kenora, Cochrane and Thunder Bay districts are actively working to improve access to capital through various funding sources and economic development initiatives. Currently majority of investments for improvement of conditions of communities in RSA communities are through federal funding.

Trends

Currently, detailed information on developmental trends in RSA communities are not available.

15.2.2.2.3. Traditional Indigenous Economy

Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Traditional Indigenous Economy – Commercial

Currently, information on traditional Indigenous economy in Webequie First Nation is not available. However, in the past, Webequie First Nation members traded with European traders and explorers and engaged in trade networks which were present around 1960s to 1970s. Webequie First Nation ancestors traded fur, material goods and supplies, and following the signing of Treaty No. 9 the First Nation members received annual cash treaty payments (Stantec Consulting Inc., 2024).

Prior to 1980s, commercial trapping was one of the main income sources for First Nation communities; however, commercial Indigenous economy currently does not provide many profits due to costs associated with the activities such as transportation, selling, etc. Currently, there is very limited commercial trapping carried out. (Stantec Consulting Inc., 2024).

Traditional Indigenous Economy – Non-commercial

Traditional economic activity is typically not captured by commonly used data sources. It is therefore difficult to provide a complete picture of the labour market in Webequie as sources such as the Canada Census of Population do not gather specific information on traditional economic activities (Local Employment Planning Council, 2017).

Based on Webequie First Nation IKLRU information, community members used to practice traditional economy for sustenance and survival, harvesting from plants, animals and natural features in the landscape (Stantec Consulting Inc., 2024).

In surveys conducted by AtkinsRéalis in 2022, with 213 total respondents, Webequie residents were asked questions relating to the traditional culture in the area (AtkinsRéalis, 2022a). The findings are presented in **Table 15-18** and **Table 15-19**.

Table 15-18: Do you Have Concerns About the Loss of Traditional Culture in Webequie First Nation?

Yes/No/Unsure/Don't know	Count	Distribution
Yes	94	61.8%
No	31	20.4%
Unsure/Don't know	27	17.8%
Total	152	100%

Source: AtkinsRéalis, 2022a.



Table 15-19: If you Have Concerns About the Loss of Traditional Culture in Webequie First Nation, What are Those Concerns?

Concern	Count	Distribution
Loss of traditional land use activities	84	23.9%
Loss of traditional teachings	87	24.8%
Loss of traditional language	100	28.5%
Loss of traditional values	80	22.8%
Total	351	100%

Source: AtkinsRéalis, 2022a.

Potentially Affected Fisheries

The Project is located entirely within the Southwestern Hudson Bay Primary Watershed, and all waterbodies in this watershed generally flow northeast towards Hudson Bay. Major rivers in the watershed in Ontario include the Severn River, Winisk River, Ekwon River, and the Attawapiskat River. Winisk Lake that provides year-round fish habitat surrounding Webequie community. Other waterbodies in close proximity to the reserve include, Bender Lake, Morrison Bay and Odobas Lake.

A total of 31 large watercourses or waterbodies are projected to be crossed by the Project and there is a network of smaller connected headwater streams, ponds, and lakes, many of which are part of open fens. Along the proposed roadway there are 10 small, interconnected streams which are in the vicinity of the Project, some of these smaller streams and wetlands are ephemeral in nature and dries out during summer; however, these are still valuable as habitat for seasonal rearing and feeding, usually in early spring.

The large rivers have presence of walleye, lake sturgeon, brook trout, lake whitefish, and other fish species and most of these lower energy watercourses provide habitat for walleye and northern pike. The smaller streams and lakes also support a variety of smaller-bodied fish, including cyprinid species, brook stickleback, and mottled sculpin.

Webequie First Nation Elders recall that around the 1960s and 1970s, there were commercial fishing operations on Winisk, Chipai, Wapikopa and Kanachuan lakes and Winisk River which targeted walleye, whitefish and sturgeon (Stantec Consulting Inc., 2024). The fish harvest from the commercial fishery industry contributed to income, tourism, and trading and purchasing power of community members. Community members acted as guides for tourists, and also had outfits equipped with motorized boats and snowmobiles to cater to tourist requirements. The decline of the tourism and fishing industry occurred with loss of federal subsidies, inflation, and market decrease. Currently there is no market for commercial fishing following the discontinuation of purchasing by the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation, and community members expressed that the lack of opportunities for selling of fish as one of the reasons why there is a reduced engagement in traditional economic activities (Stantec Consulting Inc., 2024).

Specific information on traditional Indigenous economy-potentially affected fisheries is not available.

The Project Team is working with communities that are providing information, including the potentially affected fisheries of their community. This information will be incorporated as it becomes available.



Other Local Study Area Communities

Traditional Indigenous Economy – Commercial

Currently, information on commercialized traditional Indigenous economy in other LSA communities is not available.

Traditional Indigenous Economy – Non-commercial

Traditional culture is an important part of Indigenous communities, where community members are very connected to the lands on which they live, and this requires input on where economic activity can occur and how lands are used.

The traditional economy is another important cultural aspect within the LSA communities. Unfortunately, traditional economy activities are not widely reported on and therefore it is difficult to quantify the economic impact they have within the LSA communities.

Traditional economic activity is typically not captured by commonly used data sources and such it is difficult to provide a complete picture of the labour market in the LSA. In surveys conducted by AtkinsRéalis during 2022, 94 out of 152 respondents from Webequie First Nation indicated that they have concerns about the loss of traditional culture in Webequie First Nation. Respondents indicated that the main concerns were loss of traditional land use activities, traditional teachings, traditional language, and traditional values. Results from the corresponding survey for Marten Falls First Nation indicated 8 out of 13 respondents had concern of loss of traditional culture in their community.

Note: The Project Team is working with communities that are providing information, including the traditional economy of their community. This information will be incorporated as it becomes available.

Potentially Affected Fisheries

Commercial fisheries were present in other LSA communities as well during the 1930s, which dwindled down following the withdrawal of government subsidies. Fisheries are not considered an economical perspective at the moment due to issues related to transportation, storage, infrastructure, and market.

Currently, information on potentially affected fisheries in other LSA communities in terms of traditional economy is not available.

The Project Team is working with communities that are providing information, including the traditional economy of their community. This information will be incorporated as it becomes available.

Regional Study Area

Traditional Indigenous Economy – Commercial

There is no information available for traditional economy-commercial in the RSA.

Traditional Indigenous Economy – Non-commercial

There is no information available for traditional economy – non-commercial in the RSA.



Potentially Affected Fisheries

The RSA extends into three secondary watersheds including the Ekwan River – Coast, Winisk River – Coast, and Attawapiskat River – Coast. The RSA for the Project extends into four tertiary watersheds:

- Upper Winisk Watershed;
- Middle Winisk Watershed;
- Upper Ekwan Watershed; and
- Lower Attawapiskat Watershed.

There is no information available for traditional economy-potentially affected fisheries in the RSA.

15.2.2.2.4. Gross Domestic Product

Local Study Area

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is a monetary measure of the market value of all the final goods and services produced and sold in a specific time period, typically expressed annually, within a specified geographical region.

Data on GDP for the LSA is unavailable.

Regional Study Area

Both the Kenora and Cochrane Districts saw a decline in GDP over the reported years. The Kenora Districts GDP between 2006 and 2016 declined over 10%. This trend reflects changes in the size and occupational distribution of employment in the district (NPI, 2019a). Between 2016 and 2021, the Thunder Bay District saw consistent growth in GDP with an overall growth of 3.9%:

- The Kenora District had a 10% decline in GDP from 2006 to 2016;
- The Thunder Bay District had approximate growth in GDP of 4% from 2016 to 2021; and
- GDP in the Cochrane District decreased by approximately 0.8%.

15.2.2.3. Business Environment

15.2.2.3.1. Main Employers

Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Webequie First Nation faces unique business environment challenges due to its remote location and limited access. The community primarily relies on air transport and winter roads for connectivity, and economic activities are influenced by localized projects.

As per **Table 15-20** the 2-digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes for 2018 and 2022, within the geographical borders of Webequie First Nation in 2018 and 2022, the fastest-growing industries were public administration (68%), educational services (35%), and health care and social assistance (35%) (Lightcast, 2023b).



Table 15-20: All Industry Presence in Webequie First Nation (2018 – 2022)

Industry	2018 Jobs	2022 Jobs	2018 – 2022 Change	2018 – 2022 % Change
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	0	0	0	0%
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	0	0	0	0%
Utilities	0	0	0	0%
Construction	0	0	0	0%
Manufacturing	0	0	0	0%
Wholesale trade	0	0	0	0%
Retail trade	29	34	5	17%
Transportation and warehousing	<10	<10	-	-
Information and cultural industries	0	0	0	0%
Finance and insurance	0	0	0	0%
Real estate and rental and leasing	0	0	0	0%
Professional, scientific and technical services	0	0	0	0%
Management of companies and enterprises	0	0	0	0%
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	<10	<10	-	-
Educational services	44	59	15	35%
Health care and social assistance	36	48	12	35%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	0	0	0	0%
Accommodation and food services	0	0	0	0%
Other services (except public administration)	0	0	0	0%
Public administration	87	147	60	68%
Unclassified	<10	<10	-	-
Total	210	305	95	46%

Source: Lightcast, 2023b.

Based on Statistics Canada 2021 Census of Population, the majority of employed individuals work in the education, law and social, community and government services sector, which accounts for 27.8% of all jobs. Other significant sectors include sales and service occupations (25%) and trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations (19.4%) (Statistics Canada, 2023f).

Other Local Study Area Communities

According to 21 industries based on 2-digit North American Industry Classification System codes and their presence within the geographical borders of the other Indigenous communities in the LSA in 2018 and 2022, as shown in **Table 15-21**, the industries with the highest growth between 2018 and 2022 include retail trade (32%), public administration (28%), and health care and social assistance (25%) (Lightcast, 2023b).



Table 15-21: All Industry Presence in Other LSA Indigenous Communities (2018 – 2022)

Industry	2018 Jobs	2022 Jobs	2018 – 2022 Change	2018 – 2022 % Change
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	-	-	-	0%
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	<10	11		
Utilities	<10	<10		
Construction	36	42	6	17%
Manufacturing	-	-	-	0%
Wholesale trade	-	-	-	0%
Retail trade	67	88	21	32%
Transportation and warehousing	<10	<10		
Information and cultural industries	<10	<10		
Finance and insurance	-	-	-	0%
Real estate and rental and leasing	-	-	-	0%
Professional, scientific and technical services	-	-	-	0%
Management of companies and enterprises	-	-	-	0%
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	16	17	-	1%
Educational services	211	208	(3)	(1%)
Health care and social assistance	235	294	59	25%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	-	-	-	0%
Accommodation and food services	36	27	(9)	(24%)
Other services (except public administration)	-	-	-	0%
Public administration	496	635	139	28%
Unclassified	17	18	2	9%
Total	1,134	1,353	219	19%

Source: Lightcast, 2023b.

Regional Study Area

The RSA encompasses three census divisions: Kenora District, Thunder Bay District, and Cochrane District. These divisions are further divided into 114 census subdivisions, which include 72 First Nation communities. Among these, 14 Indigenous communities are part of the RSA for WSR, with the majority situated in the Kenora District.

Employment patterns within the RSA vary by district. In both the Kenora and Thunder Bay Districts, public administration is the leading industry in terms of job provision. Conversely, in the Cochrane District, the health care and social assistance sectors are the primary sources of employment.

As of 2022, the construction industry within the RSA supports nearly 8,000 jobs, with half of these positions located in the Thunder Bay District. This highlights the significant role of construction in the regional economy, particularly in Thunder Bay.



Between 2018 and 2022, the industries experiencing the most significant growth in Kenora District were professional, scientific, and technical services, which saw a 24% increase, and wholesale trade, which grew by 19%. However, not all sectors fared as well during this period. Out of the 21 industries analyzed, 9 reported a decline in employment (Lightcast, 2023b).

The Thunder Bay District experienced notable shifts in industry presence between 2018 and 2022. The management of companies and enterprises sector saw a remarkable growth of 93%, while the professional, scientific, and technical services industry grew by 24%. Despite these gains, the district faced challenges, with 11 out of the 21 reported industries experiencing a decline in job numbers during this period (Lightcast, 2023b).

From 2018 to 2022, the Cochrane District saw notable growth in the professional, scientific, and technical services industry (19%) and the finance and insurance sector (15%). However, 7 out of the 21 industries experienced a decline during this period, and about one third of the district’s supply chain purchases were made outside the region. The agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting industry had the highest percentage of in-region purchases at 65%, while the management of companies and enterprises sector had none of its purchases made locally. In 2020, the total supply chain purchases in the Cochrane District amounted to approximately \$3.4 billion (Lightcast, 2023b).

15.2.2.3.2. Local Economy

Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Data on industry supply chain details the purchases an industry makes from various other industries in Webequie First Nation in 2020. In 2020, only 6 out of 20 industries made in-region purchases, totaling less than \$200,000, or 1.4% of all purchases. The health care and social assistance industry had the highest in-region purchase rate at 5.7%. Overall, supply chain purchases were about \$14.2 million (Lightcast, 2023c).

As per **Table 15-22** the regional requirements or needs, the value of the goods and services demanded of Webequie First Nation by industry, a significant 97% of the demand for goods and services is fulfilled through imports. Among the various industries, educational services stand out by meeting 15.7% of their demand within the region. However, there are 13 industries that do not satisfy any of their demand locally and are entirely dependent on imports to meet their needs (Lightcast, 2023d).

Table 15-22: Regional Requirements / Needs to Meet Demand by Industry in Webequie (2020)

Industry	Demand met In-region	% Demand met In-region	Demand met by Imports	% Demand met by Imports	Total Demand
Manufacturing	\$-	0%	\$6,595,918	100%	\$6,595,918
Public administration	\$46,320	1.0%	\$4,756,744	99.0%	\$4,803,064
Health care and social assistance	\$318,254	7.9%	\$3,716,581	92.1%	\$4,034,834
Construction	\$-	0%	\$3,599,594	100%	\$3,599,594
Educational services	\$279,786	8.7%	\$2,921,227	91.3%	\$3,201,013
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	\$72,921	3.5%	\$2,039,972	96.5%	\$2,112,893



Industry	Demand met In-region	% Demand met In-region	Demand met by Imports	% Demand met by Imports	Total Demand
Retail trade	\$262,751	15.7%	\$1,408,102	84.3%	\$1,670,852
Finance and insurance	\$-	0%	\$1,654,540	100%	\$1,654,540
Real estate and rental and leasing	\$-	0%	\$1,643,565	100%	\$1,643,565
Professional, scientific and technical services	\$-	0%	\$1,544,083	100%	\$1,544,083
Information and cultural industries	\$-	0%	\$1,464,140	100%	\$1,464,140
Other services (except public administration)	\$-	0%	\$1,406,601	100%	\$1,406,601
Transportation and warehousing	\$77,025	5.9%	\$1,233,003	94.1%	\$1,310,028
Wholesale trade	\$-	0%	\$1,267,770	100%	\$1,267,770
Accommodation and food services	\$-	0%	\$957,239	100%	\$957,239
Utilities	\$-	0%	\$906,697	100%	\$906,697
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	\$-	0%	\$212,593	100%	\$212,593
Arts, entertainment and recreation	\$-	0%	\$189,625	100%	\$189,625
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	\$-	0%	\$120,581	100%	\$120,581
Management of companies and enterprises	\$-	0%	\$23,210	100%	\$23,210
Total	\$1,057,057	3%	\$37,661,785	97%	\$38,718,840

Source: Lightcast, 2023d.

Other Local Study Area Communities

In line with the industry supply chain, the purchases an industry makes from all other industries in the other Indigenous communities in the LSA for 2020, the proportion of in-region purchases across all industries is minimal. Out of 20 identified industries, 11 made in-region purchases, totaling less than \$4 million, which is 3.9% of the total purchases in 2020. The mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction industry had the highest in-region purchase rate at 21.6%. Overall, supply chain purchases were around \$101 million in 2020 (Lightcast, 2023c).

As per the regional requirements or needs, the value of goods and services demanded of the LSA Indigenous communities by industry, a substantial 92.3% of the demand for goods and services is satisfied through imports. Among the various sectors, the construction industry stands out by fulfilling 39.1% of its demand within the region. However, there are nine industries that do not meet any of their demand locally and are entirely dependent on imports to satisfy their needs (manufacturing, educational, other services (except public administration), transportation and warehousing, real estate and rental and leasing, finance and insurance, mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction, company and enterprise



management, and agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting). This heavy reliance on external sources underscores the limited local production capabilities and the significant role imports play in the localized economy.

Regional Study Area

In terms of supply chain needs, the Kenora District is the most dependent on imports, with 80% of its purchases being imported. This is followed by the Cochrane District, where 31% of purchases are imports, and the Thunder Bay District, with 40% of its purchases coming from outside the region.

Approximately 20% of total supply chain purchases for Kenora District occur within the district itself. The agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting industry leads with 71% of its purchases made in-region. In contrast, the management of companies and enterprises industry has the lowest in-region purchase rate at 0%. Overall, total supply chain purchases reached around \$2.7 billion in 2020 (Lightcast, 2023c).

In 2020, the total demand for goods and services for Kenora District was approximately \$7.26 billion, with the majority (82.8%) being met by imports. The agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting industry stood out by meeting 52.6% of its demand within the region. However, seven industries managed to fulfill less than 10% of their demand locally (Lightcast, 2023d).

In 2020, the Thunder Bay District's industry supply chain saw 40% of its purchases made within the region. The health care and social assistance sector led with 65% of its supply chain purchases sourced locally, while the management of companies and enterprises sector had the lowest in-region purchases at just 10%. Overall, the total supply chain purchases for the district amounted to approximately \$4.9 billion (Lightcast, 2023c).

The Thunder Bay District, in 2020, met approximately 30.5% of its demand for goods and services within the region. Four industries stood out by meeting over 60% of their demand locally: other services (except public administration) at 64.6%, accommodation and food services at 63.7%, utilities at 62.3%, and retail trade at 62%. Conversely, the management of companies and enterprises industry met less than 10% of its demand within the region. Overall, the total demand for goods and services in the Thunder Bay District was around \$13.85 billion (Lightcast, 2023d).

About one third of the Cochrane District's industry supply chain purchases were made locally in 2020. The agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting sector had the highest percentage of in-region purchases at 65%, while the management of companies and enterprises sector had none. Overall, the total supply chain purchases in the district amounted to approximately \$3.4 billion (Lightcast, 2023c).

The Cochrane District relied heavily on imports in year 2020, which accounted for 76.5% of the demand for goods and services. The agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting industry was the most self-sufficient, meeting 52.2% of its demand locally. Conversely, three industries managed to fulfill less than 10% of their demand within the region. Overall, the total demand for goods and services in the district was around \$9.68 billion (Lightcast, 2023d).



15.2.2.3.3. Mining, Aggregate and Forestry Activity



Webequie First Nation shared information on the old volcanic and gabbroic rocks with high economic potential and this is incorporated herein.

Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

The Ring of Fire which is a rich deposit of critical minerals such as nickel, copper, platinum and chromite, is a main investment and economic growth opportunity for the Matawa First Nations Management member communities, such as Webequie First Nation (Trethewey, 2024).

Based on the Webequie First Nation Draft CBLUP (in-progress/early version), an Area of Interest for Planning (AIP) was identified which includes potential activities in mining and related development. The proposed Webequie AIP consists of 856,000 ha (Webequie First Nation and MNRF, 2025). The Draft (in-progress/early version) CBLUP acknowledges adjacent First Nations – Attawapiskat First Nation, Weenusk First Nation, Kasabonika Lake First Nation, Nibinamik First Nation, Neskantaga First Nation, Eabametoong First Nation, and Marten Falls First Nation. The Webequie Draft (in-progress/early version) CBLUP also includes measures proposed for forestry activities, and industrial zoning measures.

The larger area of the AIP is underlain by old rocks of the Canadian Shield, with the eastern and northern parts overlain by flat-lying younger sedimentary rocks (on top of old rocks of the Canadian Shield). Both layers (old and young) are covered by glacial and recent sediments (Webequie First Nation and MNRF, 2025). The aggregate potential of the Webequie First Nation is currently limited, and it is assumed that the old volcanic and gabbroic intrusive rocks may have the potential to contain deposits of chromite, base metals, platinum, palladium, as well as gold and silver (Webequie First Nation and MNRF, 2025). However, the areas which are underlain by the old granitic intrusive rocks and old sedimentary rocks have reduced economic potential compared to the younger sedimentary rocks of the eastern portion of Webequie First Nation; the younger sedimentary rocks have lower potential for metals (compared to the older volcanic and gabbroic rocks) but likely have higher potential for mineral deposits or aggregates.

Forestry industrial ventures considered under the Webequie Draft (in-progress/early version) CBLUP are non-timber forest products, firewood, biofuel, local-scale sawmill, value-added production (Webequie First Nation and MNRF, 2025 and Webequie First Nation, 2023). Located within boreal forest region, the community has forestry sources such as white spruce, balsam fir, jack pine, trembling aspen, birch and black spruce (Webequie First Nation, 2023).

Webequie First Nation was involved in the forestry industry, where community members travelled for tree planting related employment opportunities. In 1970s, government investment was provided to Webequie First Nation for development of a sawmill which was not successful due to issues related to management and profitability (Stantec Consulting Inc., 2024).

Detailed information regarding current ongoing and planned mining, aggregate and forestry industry in Webequie First Nation is unavailable.

Webequie First Nation 2023 Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) (Webequie First Nation, 2023) highlights the need and interest of the community to engage and initiate mining, aggregate and forest industry related activities.





The review of the Webequie First Nation Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) was undertaken as part of the socio-economic baseline study and incorporated into the EAR/IS, as requested by ENDM and Webequie First Nation during engagement and consultation activities.

The CCP highlights the current capacity and knowledge of the community members, the need for businesses and trained individuals, and supporting ventures such as food and beverage and accommodation needs, which can pave way for the community's development based on the opportunities available through the Ring of Fire. The main reasoning for the Project is to provide access to the McFaulds Lake area, where the opportunities are yet to be developed.

Other Local Study Area Communities

While there are minimal to no existing mining, aggregate, and forestry industries in the other LSA communities, and information from public sources is limited regarding the existing conditions, Marten Falls First Nation manages the Ogoki Forest (although the forest is located outside of the LSA).

Based on the industry supply chain, mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction data available; there is roughly 7% of purchases related to the industries occurring within LSA communities in 2020 (Lightcast, 2023b, 2023c).

Regional Study Area

As of 2022, 13 mineral mines were operational in the Kenora, Cochrane, and Thunder Bay Districts of Ontario, according to the Ontario Mining Association (Ontario Mining Association, 2022). These include:

- Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd.;
- Barrick Gold Corp.;
- Bell Creek Mine (Gold);
- Black Fox Mine (Gold);
- Detour Lake Gold Mine (Gold);
- Evolution Mining Ltd.;
- Glencore PLC;
- Hollinger Mine (Gold);
- Hoyle Pond Mine (Gold);
- Impala Platinum Holdings Ltd.;
- Impala Canada Ltd.;
- Kidd Creek Mine (Base Metals);
- Lac des Iles Mine (Palladium);
- Lake Shore Gold Corp.;
- McEwen Mining Inc.;
- Musselwhite Mine (Gold);
- New Gold Inc.;
- Newmont Corp.;
- Pan American Silver Corp.;
- Pure Gold Mine (Gold);
- PureGold Mining Inc.;



- Rainy River Mine (Gold);
- Red Lake Gold Mines (Gold);
- Timmins West Mine (Gold); and
- Williams Mine (Gold).

Mining and mineral exploration have long been key economic activities in northwestern Ontario. In 2015, the mining industry directly contributed approximately \$6.9 billion to Ontario’s GDP, with the total impact, including indirect and induced benefits, reaching around \$12 billion. The Ontario Mining Association notes that mining is the largest private sector employer of Indigenous People in Canada (Ontario Mining Association, 2022). There are numerous agreements in place with Indigenous communities in northwestern Ontario, including Exploration Agreements, Impact Benefit Agreement, Memorandums of Understanding, Socio-Economic agreements, letters of intent, and other types of agreements (Government of Canada, 2023). Forestry has also been a primary industry in northern Ontario for over a century, and in some smaller communities, the local economy heavily relies on mill production and related jobs.

In Canada, around 9,000 Indigenous workers are employed in the forestry sector, with 70% of Indigenous communities situated in forested areas (Government of Canada, 2016). In Ontario, the forestry industry generates over \$18 billion in revenue and supports approximately 147,000 jobs. Indigenous ownership in the industry has been growing, with their share of total Canadian forest tenure volume increasing from 5% to over 10% between 2003 and 2013 (Government of Canada, 2016), and reaching around 18% by 2019 (CBC News, 2019). Since 2011, the Aboriginal Forestry Initiative has provided over \$10 million in funding to 50 projects across more than 100 Indigenous communities, delivering impactful on-the-ground programming (Government of Canada, 2016).

15.2.2.4. Public and Indigenous Community Finances



Section 15.2.2.4 presents the existing conditions information on public and Indigenous finances, in keeping with EAR/IS requirements set out in the TISG and ToR documents and was also requested by Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, Attawapiskat First Nation, Mushkegowuk Tribal Council, Neskantaga First Nation and Weenusk First Nation, during engagement and consultation activities.

Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Webequie First Nation, along with other First Nations in Canada are subject to the *First Nations Financial Transparency Act* (FNFTA), which requires First Nations to publish their audited consolidated financial statements and the Schedule of Remuneration and Expenses for chiefs and councillors’ year (Government of Canada, 2021).

Based on the information available for the FNFTA (Government of Canada, 2024b), Webequie First Nation received federal funding for economic development activities and projects, with the most recent recorded fund received in 2022--2023. The funding is used for components such as remuneration for Chief and Councillors, education, economic development, government and administrative support, community infrastructure and housing, social assistance and support, and for health and well-being (Government of Canada, 2024b).

Consolidated Statement of Operations for all First Nations in the LSA was provided to the team, but in the interests of confidentiality is not presented in this report.



Other Local Study Area Communities

The *FNFTA* mandates that each applicable First Nation must publish, or ensure the publication of, specific documents on an internet site within 120 days after the end of each financial year (Government of Canada, 2021). These documents include the audited consolidated financial statements, the Schedule of Remuneration and Expenses, the auditor's written report on the consolidated financial statements, and the auditor's report or review engagement report on the Schedule of Remuneration and Expenses.

Generally, the funding is used for components such as band and government support, economic development, and community development (operation and maintenance, utilities, water and sewerage systems, roads and bridges, schools, emergency services, and health services).

Consolidated Statement of Operations for all First Nations in the LSA was provided to the team, but in the interests of confidentiality is not presented in this report.

Regional Study Area

Both the Kenora and Cochrane Districts saw a decline in GDP over the reported years. The Kenora Districts GDP between 2006 and 2016 declined over 10%. This trend reflects changes in the size and occupational distribution of employment in the district (NPI, 2019a). Between 2016 and 2021, the Thunder Bay District saw consistent growth in GDP with an overall growth of 3.9%.

- The Kenora District had a 10% decline in GDP from 2006 to 2016;
- The Thunder Bay District had approximate growth in GDP of 4% from 2016 to 2021; and
- GDP in the Cochrane District decreased by approximately 0.8%.

15.3. Identification of Potential Effects, Pathways and Indicators

This section provides a description of potential effects of the Project on the subcomponents of Regional and Local Economy VC in consideration of the existing economic conditions (**Section 15.2**), their indicators of change (**Section 15.1.4**), the interactions with Project activities (**Section 15.1.6**) and the pathway of effects (**Section 15.3**).

The descriptions of effect pathways are grouped by their potential effect to avoid repetition since many of the same effect pathways may occur during different phases of the Project.

Following the description of each potential effect, a conclusion on the likelihood of occurrence of the potential effect is provided. A summary is provided in **Section 15.3.5**. The conclusions are based on the following qualitative ranking categories:

- **No effect:** there is **no potential** for the effect to occur. Further assessment is not considered.
- **Negligible:** the potential effect is **unlikely to occur**. Changes to the subcomponent are **not detectable**. No mitigation or enhancement measures are necessary. Further assessment is not considered.
- **Low:** the potential effect is **likely to occur** and changes to the subcomponent **may be detectable** in the absence of mitigation or enhancement measures. The effect is carried forward in the assessment.



- **Moderate:** the potential effect is **likely to occur** and changes to the subcomponent **will be evident** in the absence of mitigation or enhancement measures. The effect is carried forward in the assessment.
- **High:** the potential effect is certain to occur and changes to the subcomponent will be evident. In the absence of mitigation or enhancement measures. The effect is carried forward in the assessment.



Section 15.3 presents an analysis of potential effects of the Project on labour force, employment and income, overall economy, business environment and public and Indigenous finances. The assessment considered all existing information and currently publicly available for identification of effects, in keeping with EAR/IS requirements set out in the TISG and ToR documents, and was also requested by Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries (now Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism), Employment and Social Development Canada and MECP, Aroland First Nation, Neskantaga First Nation during engagement and consultation activities.



Table 15-23: Potential Effects, Pathways and Indicators for Regional and Local Economy Valued Component

Potential Effect	Project Phase	Effect Pathway	Effect Indicators	Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect)	Linked Other VCs
Change in labour force, employment and income	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Project will result in increased participation and employment in labour market due to increased opportunities for employment associated with the construction phase, with the effects mainly foreseeable in Webequie First Nation community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labour force participation 	Direct and indirect	The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14)
Change in labour force, employment and income	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project will increase employment and employment opportunities and subsequent employment income of community members, specifically the Webequie First Nation community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labour force participation Labour income 	Direct and indirect	The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14)
Change in labour force, employment and income	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Project will result in permanent Project employment and expenditures as well as a few permanent employment opportunities of community members during the operations phase, with the effects mainly foreseeable in Webequie First Nation community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labour force participation 	Direct and indirect	The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14)
Change in labour force, employment and income	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project will increase income of community members during operations phase as a result of increased employment and employment opportunities, specifically the Webequie First Nation community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labour force participation Labour income 	Direct and indirect	The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14)
Change in overall economy	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Project will result in increased employment and expenditures during mobilization of equipment and supplies, creating opportunities for local businesses to supply goods / services to the Project and subsequently resulting in increased GDP, specifically the Webequie First Nation community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Economic development 	Direct and indirect	The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14)



Potential Effect	Project Phase	Effect Pathway	Effect Indicators	Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect)	Linked Other VCs
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-Traditional Land and Resource Use (Section 16)
Change in overall economy	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Project will create increased employment opportunities for the communities, resulting in higher employment income, and thus increasing the GDP locally, specifically the Webequie First Nation community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Cost of living 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14)
Change in overall economy	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project's construction phase will involve vegetation clearing for development of ROW and access requirements, creating a disruption of natural environment and effects on the natural environment and land use. This will lead to effects on ability to participate in traditional economy of community members, with the effects felt mainly in the Webequie First Nation community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional Indigenous Economy 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vegetation and Wetlands (Section 11) Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat (Section 12) <p>The assessment of this VC informs the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous Peoples and the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights (Section 19) Cultural Heritage Resources (Section 20)
Change in overall economy	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Project will boost employment and spending, raising community employment levels. However, this may reduce the availability of community members to engage in the traditional economy, with effects observable mainly in the Webequie First Nation community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional Indigenous Economy 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vegetation and Wetlands (Section 11) Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat (Section 12)



Potential Effect	Project Phase	Effect Pathway	Effect Indicators	Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect)	Linked Other VCs
					<p>The assessment of this VC informs the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous Peoples and the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights (Section 19) Cultural Heritage Resources (Section 20)
Change in overall economy	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Project's labour, material, and equipment requirements will create a monopolizing supply of goods / services in the local area. This may result in limitations on capacity and supply for other projects locally, with results felt mainly in the Webequie First Nation community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic development 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14) Non-Traditional Land and Resource Use (Section 16)
Change in overall economy	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Project will generate demands for labour, materials, and equipment, offering more opportunities to supply goods and services. This will foster the growth of both existing and new businesses, boosting local business activity, with results seen mainly in the Webequie First Nation community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic development 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14) Non-Traditional Land and Resource Use (Section 16)
Change in overall economy	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Project's employment and expenditures will generate direct, indirect, and induced business and labour opportunities. This may boost employment and business activities, leading to higher business and labour income, increased household 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic development Cost of living 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14)



Potential Effect	Project Phase	Effect Pathway	Effect Indicators	Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect)	Linked Other VCs
		<p>spending, and a lower proportion of income spent on shelter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> These effects will be most noticeable in the Webequie First Nation community. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-Traditional Land and Resource Use (Section 16)
Change in overall economy	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The operation, maintenance, and repair of the road will generate employment and spending opportunities, leading to direct, indirect, and induced business and labour prospects. This boost in employment and business activity may increase business and labour income, which in turn will elevate household spending. These effects will be most noticeable in the Webequie First Nation community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost of living Economic development 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14) Non-Traditional Land and Resource Use (Section 16)
Change in overall economy	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The operation, maintenance, and repair of road will enable labour, material, and equipment requirements, resulting in increased employment / business opportunities (direct, indirect, and induced). This in turn will decrease time available to participate in the traditional economy for community members. These effects will be mainly observable in the Webequie First Nation community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional Indigenous Economy 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14) Non-Traditional Land and Resource Use (Section 16)
Change in overall economy	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operation, maintenance, and repair of the Project will create disruptions to the natural environment, effecting the community members' traditional economy activities. The effects will be seen mainly in the Webequie First Nation community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional Indigenous Economy 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vegetation and Wetlands (Section 11) Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat (Section 12)



Potential Effect	Project Phase	Effect Pathway	Effect Indicators	Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect)	Linked Other VCs
					<p>The assessment of this VC informs the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous Peoples and the exercise of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights (Section 19) Cultural Heritage Resources (Section 20)
Change in overall economy	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The operation, maintenance, and repair of road will create labour, material, and equipment requirements. This in turn will increase the local business opportunities, paving the way for new businesses and business growth. This will be observable mainly in Webequie First Nation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic development 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14) Non-Traditional Land and Resource Use (Section 16)
Change in overall economy	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The operation, maintenance, and repair of the road will generate employment and spending opportunities, leading to direct, indirect, and induced business and labour prospects. This boost in employment and business activity will increase business and labour income, which in turn will elevate household spending. These effects will be most noticeable in the Webequie First Nation community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost of living Economic development 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14) Non-Traditional Land and Resource Use (Section 16)
Change in business environment	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Project's construction phase will create increased employment opportunities, resulting in an increase in employment within industries. These effects will be most noticeable in the Webequie First Nation community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main employers 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14)



Potential Effect	Project Phase	Effect Pathway	Effect Indicators	Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect)	Linked Other VCs
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-Traditional Land and Resource Use (Section 16)
Change in business environment	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Project generated labour, materials, and equipment requirements, will increase the local potential for supplies, bidding on contracts, and meeting Project needs. This will be observable mainly in Webequie First Nation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local economy 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14) Non-Traditional Land and Resource Use (Section 16)
Change in business environment	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Project's labour, materials, and equipment requirements will create transportation channels, leading to increased supply chain channels, with the results mainly noticeable in Webequie First Nation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main employers Local economy 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14) Non-Traditional Land and Resource Use (Section 16)
Change in business environment	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements will subsequently also increase the aggregate and forestry related requirements in the area. This will lead to an increase in potential for local mining, aggregate, and forestry businesses to supply Project. This effect will be mostly detectable in Webequie First Nation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mining, aggregate, and forestry activity 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14) Non-Traditional Land and Resource Use (Section 16)
Change in business environment	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Project originated employment, and expenditures will lead to increased employment opportunities and increased availability of disposable income, and thus creating a rise in household spending. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local economy 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p>



Potential Effect	Project Phase	Effect Pathway	Effect Indicators	Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect)	Linked Other VCs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These effects will be most noticeable in the Webequie First Nation community. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14) Non-Traditional Land and Resource Use (Section 16)
Change in business environment	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements will generate employment opportunities, and in turn an increase in availability of skilled employees within aggregate and forestry sector. The effects will be focused on Webequie First Nation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mining, aggregate, and forestry activity Main employers 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14) Non-Traditional Land and Resource Use (Section 16)
Change in business environment	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The operation, maintenance, and repair of road will create a localized demand for goods and services. This will lead to new businesses and employment opportunities created to meet Project demand, resulting in continued participation of community members within Project related industries. This effect will be mostly detectable in Webequie First Nation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main employers 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14) Non-Traditional Land and Resource Use (Section 16)
Change in business environment	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The operations phase could result in opportunities to bid on contracts to supply the Project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local business 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14)



Potential Effect	Project Phase	Effect Pathway	Effect Indicators	Nature of Interaction and Effect (Direct or Indirect)	Linked Other VCs
Change in business environment	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The operations phase could result in increased transportation supply channels that could benefit communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local business 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14)
Change in business environment	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The operations phase could result in limited business opportunities associated with the Project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mining, aggregate and forestry activities 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14)
Change in business environment	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The operations phase could result in increased skilled labour that could find employment in mining, aggregate and forestry activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mining, aggregate and forestry activities 	Direct and indirect	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14)
Change in public and Indigenous community finances	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Project will generate a neutral effect for Webequie First Nation and other LSA communities with regard to expenses for Project construction, operation and maintenance (as it is assumed that commitments by the First Nations on Project expenses will be supplemented with an agreement with the province). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tax base Revenues (taxes, transfers, grants, etc.) 	Direct	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14)
Change in public and Indigenous community finances	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The operations phase of the Project will lead to higher employment and expenditure levels in the communities, which in turn will boost tax revenues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tax base Revenues (taxes, transfers, grants, etc.) 	Direct	<p>The assessment of this VC informs and is informed by the effects assessment for other VCs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Environment (Section 14)



15.3.1. Change to Labour Force, Employment and Income



Section 15.3.1 presents the potential effects of the Project on employment opportunities, in keeping with EAR/IS requirements set out in the TISG and ToR documents, and was also requested by Constance Lake First Nation, Marten Falls First Nation and Webequie First Nation during engagement and consultation activities. The assessment of potential project-driven changes to the labour force, employment and income VC has considered IKLRU information, community values, concerns and interests.

This section provides an analysis of Project effects on Labour Force and Employment subcomponent utilizing the indicators described below.

- **Labour force participation:** Information on employment age population, labour force participation rates, unemployment rates, barriers to employment and time spent on unpaid domestic work in the LSA and RSA provides an understanding of the economic activity and engagement of the communities. Labour force participation is generally affected by various factors, including unemployment levels reflecting number of people actively seeking but unable to find employment, barriers to employment such as discrimination and lack of skills which impact's a person's ability to find employment, and time spent on unpaid work such as domestic work and traditional activities which may fall disproportionately on certain groups such as women which also limits their availability for paid employment. Hiring and procurement for Project work could boost employment, income levels, and training opportunities, potentially altering income levels within the community.
- **Labour income:** Knowing the labour income and sources of income within a community provides insight into a community's economic health (with higher labour income and diverse sources of income present in robust and resilient economies), income distribution (to understand distribution of wealth across the population and identifying inequality and vulnerable groups which are economically disadvantaged), employment quality (with labour income showing the quality of employment within the community, with higher labour incomes suggesting better paying jobs and potentially working conditions), economic opportunities (as diverse sources of income provides perspective into the range of economic opportunities available within a community, with more varied incomes the community becoming economically dynamic and less vulnerable to economic shocks), and the social well-being of the community (with higher and more evenly distributed income levels leading to better quality of life).

Labour force, employment and income data provides insight into the effects of the Project, which are both positive (increased employment opportunities and disposable income), along with negative (limitation of capacity for other projects and monopolization of existing supply of goods/services). For an example, once the WSR is constructed it will create an access route to the Ring of Fire region, in turn increasing resource extraction from the mineral deposits, which may affect the economic conditions and working conditions of the local communities. In understanding these effects which may be brought forward by the Project, relevant mitigation measures can be developed and secure the appropriate sustainable practices, rights and interests for the communities within the LSA and RSA.



15.3.1.1. Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → New labour and business opportunities (direct, indirect, and induced) → Participation and employment in labour market

During the construction phase of the Project, workers within occupations such as construction, trades, and transport will be required for direct on-site work along with workers within areas such as information technology and health and safety for direct off-site work (see Section 04 – Project Description). Activities during this period will include the following:

- Field surveys, staking and layout;
- Vegetation clearing and grubbing;
- Construction and use of supportive infrastructure:
 - Construction camps with laydown/storage yards;
 - Access roads and temporary waterbody crossings;
 - Pits/Quarries – aggregate extraction and processing, including blasting; and
 - Maintenance and Storage Facility (establishment only, not use).
- Construction of road, including earth excavation, grading and hauling operations;
- Construction of permanent waterbody crossings;
- Emissions, discharges and waste; and
- Clean-up and site restoration, including the decommissioning and removal of temporary infrastructure (e.g., construction camps), excluding those which may be formalized and used for the operations phase of the Project.

Webequie First Nation community members are currently enrolled in Building Environmental Aboriginal Human Resources (BEAHR) training, so they can capture employment benefits from the construction of the Project. The Project will prioritize local hiring and training of labour, especially for members of Indigenous communities, and where possible opportunities for joint-venture partnerships will be explored.

The majority of Webequie First Nation's population is not in the labour force (61.7%); however, community members are hopeful that potential development in the area from the Project might help improve opportunities in education and employment for younger members (AtkinsRéalisis Inc, 2022a; 2022b; InterGroup, 2024). Currently the largest employer in the community is the First Nation itself (AtkinsRéalisis Inc, 2022a).

Due to the amount of labour and the type of positions required, the Webequie First Nation population alone will not be able to meet project labour requirements. Many of the employment positions required by the Project do not align with the availability of labour in Webequie First Nation and will need to be sourced from outside.

The Project will utilize a combination of union and non-union contractors, with a significant focus on utilizing local (Indigenous) labour to complete the work. Qualified trade contractors and their retained workforces will be utilized throughout the construction and operations phases. It is anticipated that much of the labour force may come from outside the community of Webequie First Nation (e.g., from elsewhere in Ontario or out-of-province) and could be non-unionized.

Due to the skills and education levels of Webequie First Nation residents it is unlikely that positions within the professional, scientific, and technical services category will be filled locally. The forestry and logging Project related positions may provide some employment; however, this will be limited as positions within this NOC category are not highly demanded. The employment in the mining, quarrying, oil and gas

extraction, construction, transportation, and warehousing NOC categories will provide labour opportunities to the Webequie First Nation community but available opportunities will fluctuate year to year and is likely to be concentrated within transportation and warehousing NOC categories due to the level of specialized skills. The accommodations and food services NOC category requirements for the Project is an area that has the potential to be dominated by Webequie First Nation residents and could be an opportunity to recruit Webequie First Nation women to the Project labour force. Along with the employment opportunity associated with accommodation and food services, it may also be an area for new business growth.

Table 15-24 outlines the forecasted direct, indirect, and induced labour contribution of Webequie First Nation community members based on the project labour requirements, availability of industry specific labour, and current employment rates.

Table 15-24: Full-Time Equivalent Direct, Indirect, and Induced Project Related Employment, Webequie First Nation, Construction Phase

Labour Type	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Direct	10	10	10	10	10
Indirect	0	0	0	0	0
Induced	7	4	3	3	3
Total	17	14	13	13	13

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

As shown in **Table 15-24**, during each year of construction, Webequie First Nation is estimated to fill approximately 10 direct employment positions which will be located on-site. Webequie First Nation is not forecasted to capture any of the direct off-site work attributed to the Project. Due to the nature of the indirect work requirements and with the lack of supply chain connections to Webequie First Nation, it is unlikely that Webequie First Nation will capture any indirect employment related to the Project. It is likely that the indirect labour positions will be filled by workers from the RSA, specifically the Thunder Bay District. Indirect labour may include positions related to manufacturing supplies; administration occupations; and senior management positions. Over the five-to-six-year construction period, 20 induced positions will be captured by Webequie First Nation due to the influx of spend within the community. Induced employment will peak during the first year of construction with seven positions and lower to three by the end. The total FTE employment will be approximately 70 positions which averages to 14 per year.

Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → Employment and business opportunities → Increased employment → Labour income

As a result of the construction phase there will be increased labour opportunities in the employed population. This will in turn increase employment and positively affect individual household incomes in the Webequie community. The magnitude of effects from increased labour income is expected to be at a medium to high level. The geographic extents of the effects will be at the site and localized. The timeframe and duration for construction effects is five to six years.

In 2020, the median income for Webequie First Nation individuals aged 15 years and over in private households was \$24,200, with approximately 23% of the population having individual incomes below \$10,000. This is significantly lower than the Ontario median for the same year which was \$41,200. The Project will provide an opportunity for some individuals to increase their income through Project employment, as well as additional employment income as described below.



WEBEQUIE FIRST NATION

Table 15-25 summarizes the estimated Webequie First Nation employment income generated by the Project based on FTE salaries and the labour requirement projected to be met within the community. FTE's measures the total hours of full-time, part-time, and various other types of employees into measurable 'full-time' units as a result of the economic shock.

Table 15-25: Project Related Employment Income, Webequie First Nation, Construction Phase

Labour Type	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Direct	\$1,801,004	\$1,748,848	\$1,883,612	\$1,919,317	\$2,020,209
Indirect	-	-	-	-	-
Induced	\$395,515	\$223,087	\$169,504	\$151,924	\$170,799
Total	\$2,196,519	\$1,971,935	\$2,053,116	\$2,071,241	\$2,191,008

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

The total labour income attributed to the Webequie First Nation workforce for the Project during the construction phase is approximately \$10.5 million. Approximately, 89% of this is attributed to the labour income received from direct on-site employment. Direct on-site jobs are expected to be very well paying bringing between \$1.8M to \$2M into the community each year. The average salary (calculated by total labour income divided by number of jobs) for direct workers is approximately \$187,460 which far exceeds the current salaries in the community.

It is not forecasted that Webequie First Nation will capture indirect employment therefore no employment income is associated with this category. The labour earned from induced employment is less than that earned from the direct Project employment and averages a salary of approximately \$58,464, which is still above Webequie First Nation's average salaries in the community.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project employment and expenditures → Increased employment opportunities

The Project will be operated for an indeterminate time period. During the operations phase of the Project, activities such as the assessment of the condition and operating performance of the road surface, drainage system and structures at waterbody crossings will be conducted regularly along the road corridor. Activities will include the following:

- Visual patrols and inspections of the road;
- Vegetation management;
- Repair and/or rehabilitation of culverts and bridges at water crossings;
- Resurfacing and repair to road surface and shoulders;
- Aggregate and rock extraction and processing at ARA-4 site;
- Dust control;
- Road drainage system maintenance and repairs – drainage cross-culverts, ditches and inlet/outlet areas;
- Access road maintenance;
- Winter maintenance – snow clearing;
- Spills and emergency response; and
- Waste and excess materials management.

In order to operate the WSR, 25 direct FTE positions will be required.



The Project will prioritize maintaining a local labour force into the operations phase of the Project, especially for members of Indigenous communities, and where possible opportunities for joint-venture partnerships will be explored.

The same types of opportunities that exist during the construction phase (economic development related to operations, maintenance workforce training, and youth employment) exist during the operations phase to a lesser extent. As part of maximizing local community participation, Webequie community members are currently in BEAHR training so that they may have the opportunity to work on the Project. The goal of training is to allow for Webequie community members and neighbouring Indigenous communities to fully capture the employment and economic benefits from the construction, operations and maintenance of the WSR. **Table 15-26** outlines the direct, indirect, and induced employment forecasted to be captured by the Webequie First Nation community during operations and maintenance.

Table 15-26: Project Related Employment, Webequie First Nation, Operations phase

Direct	Indirect	Induced	Total
3	0	1	4

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

As noted in **Table 15-26**, the total labour attributed to the Webequie First Nation workforce for the Project during operations and maintenance is estimated at 4 positions, with 3 being direct and 1 induced. It is not forecasted that Webequie First Nation will capture any of the indirect employment. The employment associated with direct Project operations and maintenance is likely to be on-site. It is estimated that all of the available direct employment positions will be filled by members of Webequie First Nation or members of the other LSA communities. If this does not happen positions will likely be filled from the RSA.

The interaction with other subcomponents/VCS includes Population and Demographics (Section 14.2.2.1 and 14.3.1), Housing and Accommodations (Section 14.2.2.2 and 14.3.2), and Overall Economy (Section 15.2.2.2 and 15.3.2).

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project employment and expenditures → Employment opportunities → Increased employment income

The operation, maintenance, and repair of WSR will result in Project employment and expenditures as well as labour opportunities and employment income.

During the operations phase, Webequie First Nation community members who secure full or part-time employment with the Project will benefit from the higher wages received from the proponent in relation to the current community average. As a result of this, there will be positive effects on employment income in the Webequie community. The labour requirement during operations and maintenance is low; however, the skills and education received by individuals during the construction phase may assist in securing employment within other organizations.

As the operations phase Project labour requirement is quite low (25 FTE per year) and requires specialized positions, the level of magnitude of effects on the Webequie community is deemed to be low to medium. The geographic extents of the effects will be localized. The timeframe and duration for operations and maintenance is indeterminate as the WSR continues to operate.

Table 15-27 outlines the projected direct, indirect, and induced employment income generated by Project based on FTE salaries and the labour requirement forecasted to be met within the community.



Table 15-27: Project Related Employment Income, Webequie First Nation, Operations phase

Direct	Indirect	Induced	Total
\$257,651	-	\$44,718	\$302,505

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

The total labour income attributed to the Webequie First Nation workforce for the Project during operations and maintenance is approximately \$302,505. About 85% of this is attributed to the labour income received from direct on-site employment. The average salary for direct on-site workers is approximately \$85,883 which far exceeds the current salaries in the community. It is not forecasted that Webequie First Nation will capture indirect employment during operations and maintenance and therefore no employment income is associated with this category. The labour earned from induced employment is less than that earned from the direct project employment and is forecasted at \$44,718.

Conclusion

Overall, there is overall **medium potential** for an increase in labour force, employment and labour income within Webequie First Nation as a result of the Project. The effect is carried forward to **Section 15.4** for further assessment.

15.3.1.2. Local Study Area: Other Communities

Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → New labour and business opportunities (direct, indirect, and induced) → Participation and employment in labour market

Project employment and expenditures will result in new labour and business opportunities (direct, indirect, and induced) and participation and employment in the labour market. During the construction phase, it is anticipated that there will be higher employment in the other LSA communities. The level of magnitude of these effects on the communities are estimated to be medium. The geographic extents of the effects will be at the site and localized. The timeframe and duration for construction is estimated to be approximately five to six years.

Members of the other LSA communities are currently enrolled in BEAHR training, to allow for these communities to fully capture the available employment benefits from the construction of the Project.

The majority of the LSA population is not in the labour force (54%) here is a potential for the Project to not only capture labourers currently seeking employment but also encourage entry into the labour force.

Although there are individuals who could meet Project requirements, the other LSA communities' population alone will not be able to meet the total Project labour requirements. Many of the employment positions required by the Project do not align with the availability of labour in the other LSA communities' and will need to be sourced from outside. The other LSA communities are most likely to be able to supply Project labour within trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations as positions within this field make up approximately 10% of other LSA communities' employment.

The other LSA communities may be able to supply some labour within the professional, scientific, and technical services field; however, currently these industries are not reported to be present in the communities as of 2022. The forestry and logging category may also provide some employment, but this will be limited, as positions within this category are not highly demanded and will be concentrated within the initial years of construction. Employment in the mining, quarrying, oil and gas extraction, and construction industries will provide labour to the other LSA communities however it will fluctuate year to



year and is likely to be concentrated within transportation and warehousing due to the level of specialized skills.

Table 15-28 summarizes the potential other LSA communities' labour contribution for direct, indirect, and induced employment during the construction phase.

Table 15-28: Full-Time Equivalent Project Related Employment, Other Local Study Area Communities, Construction Phase

Labour Type	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Direct	25	26	26	23	24
Indirect	1	0	0	0	0
Induced	17	10	7	6	7
Total	42	36	34	29	31

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

During construction, the other LSA communities are estimated to fill approximately 23 to 26 direct employment positions per year, all of which will be located on-site. The total direct labour estimated to be captured by the other LSA communities over the construction period is 124 FTE positions. The other LSA communities are not forecasted to capture any of the direct off-site work attributed to the Project. Due to the nature of the indirect work requirements, the other LSA communities will capture almost no indirect employment related to the Project. Over the five-to-six-year construction period, 47 induced positions will be captured by other LSA communities due to the influx of spending within the communities. Induced employment will peak during the first year of construction with 17 positions and lower to seven by the end. The total FTE employment will be approximately 172 positions which averages to 34 positions per year.

Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → Employment and business opportunities → Increased employment → Labour income

Project employment and expenditures will result in employment and business opportunities, increased employment, and labour income. More specifically, during the construction phase, there will be increased employment in the employed population. This will in turn increase labour and positively affect individual household incomes in the other LSA communities.

Table 15-29 summarizes the estimated other LSA communities' employment income generated by the Project based on FTE salaries and the labour requirement projected to be met within the community.

Table 15-29: Project Related Employment Income, Other Local Study Area Communities, Construction Phase

Labour Type	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Direct	\$4,507,978	\$4,513,160	\$4,955,454	\$4,390,782	\$4,811,438
Indirect	\$42,723	\$30,919	\$20,883	\$13,254	\$11,308
Induced	\$995,349	\$577,912	\$446,971	\$348,193	\$407,353
Total	\$5,546,050	\$5,121,991	\$5,423,308	\$4,752,229	\$5,230,099

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024



The total labour income attributed to the other LSA communities' workforce for the Project during construction is approximately \$26 million. Approximately, 88% of this is attributed to the labour income received from direct on-site employment. Direct on-site jobs are expected to be very well paying bringing in between \$4.5M to \$4.9M into the other LSA communities as a total each year. The average salary for direct on-site workers is approximately \$187,460 which far exceeds the current salaries in the other LSA communities. It is expected that the other LSA communities will capture almost no indirect employment therefore a very limited employment income is associated with this category for each year of construction. The labour earned from induced employment is less than that earned from the direct Project employment and averages a salary of approximately \$58,464, which is still greater than the other LSA communities' average.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project employment and expenditures → Increased employment opportunities

With the operation, maintenance, and repair of WSR, there will be Project employment and expenditures and some permanent employment opportunities for workers in the other LSA communities. During the operations phase, it is likely that workers who are not from the other LSA communities would not stay in the community permanently.

Table 15-30 outlines the direct, indirect, and induced employment forecasted to be captured by the other LSA communities during operations and maintenance.

Table 15-30: Project Related Employment, Other Local Study Area Communities, Operations phase

Direct	Indirect	Induced	Total
13	0	3	16

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

The total labour attributed to the other LSA communities' workforce for the Project during operations and maintenance is estimated at 16 positions, with 13 being direct and 3 induced. It is not forecasted that the LSA will capture any of the indirect employment. The employment associated with direct Project operations and maintenance is likely to be on-site. It is estimated that all of the available direct employment positions will be filled by members of Webequie First Nation or members of the other LSA communities.

The interaction with other VCs/subcomponents includes Housing and Temporary Accommodations (Section 14.2.2.2 and 14.3.2) and the Overall Economy (**Section 15.2.2.2 and 15.3.2**).

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project employment and expenditures → Employment opportunities → Increased employment income

The operation, maintenance, and repair of WSR will result in limited Project employment and expenditures as well as some permanent labour opportunities and employment income for the other LSA communities.

During the operations phase, members from other LSA communities who secure full or part-time employment with the Project will benefit from the higher wages received from the proponent in relation to the current community average. The labour requirement in this phase is low, however the skills and education received by individuals during the construction phase may assist in securing employment within other organizations.



During the operations phase, there will be labour opportunities that will have positive effects on employment income in the other LSA communities, although labour requirement is quite low (25 FTE per year) and requires specialized positions.

Table 15-31 outlines the projected direct, indirect, and induced employment income received by other LSA communities as a result of the Project's operations phase.

Table 15-31: Project Related Employment Income, Other Local Study Area Communities, Operations phase

Direct	Indirect	Induced	Total
\$970,937	\$798	\$168,566	\$1,140,301

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

The total labour income attributed to the other LSA communities' workforce for the Project during operations and maintenance is approximately \$1,140,301, and 85% of this is attributed to the labour income received from direct on-site employment. The average salary for direct on-site workers is approximately \$85,883 which far exceeds the current salaries in the other LSA communities but is nearly \$100,000 less than during the construction phase. The indirect employment captured by the other LSA communities is considered insignificant. The income earned from induced employment is less than that earned from the direct project employment and is forecasted at \$119,086, which is more in line with the current average individual incomes of the other LSA communities.

Conclusion

Overall, there is overall **medium potential** for an increase in labour force, employment and labour income within other LSA communities as a result of the Project. The effect is carried forward to **Section 15.4** for further assessment.

15.3.1.3. Regional Study Area

This section provides an analysis of Project effects on Labour Force and Employment in the RSA.

The RSA can supply the Project labour requirements that cannot be met within Webequie First Nation and the other LSA communities. It is anticipated that the RSA's Labour Force and Employment will be positively affected by the Project during both the construction and operations phases of the Project.

Employment and the labour market in the RSA are affected in three major ways during construction. The RSA will be an important provider of direct off-site labour to the Project. The RSA will also be a source for much of the on-site direct labour for the Project that cannot be sourced within the LSA. Much of the direct project inputs that are off-site (not located on) of the construction site will be sourced from the RSA. A large portion of the indirect industry supply chain that will support the businesses that directly support the Project with labour, equipment, and supplies will come from the RSA. Increased labour opportunities and associated increases in labour income in the RSA result in a further economic effect from increased household spending.

Most of the Project related effects on Labour Force and Employment during operations and maintenance will be focused on the LSA. Project Labour Force and Employment effects on the RSA during the operations phase will be very limited, to the point that the effects will barely be detectable.



Project related Labour Force and Employment effects on the RSA during operations and maintenance will come from the indirect jobs captured by the industry supply chain located in the RSA and a very small number of induced jobs created by increased household spending. This very small positive effect on jobs and labour income will persist throughout the duration of the operations phase of the project.

The effects of Project operations and maintenance on RSA Labour Force and Employment could be greater than it is presented, if the LSA fails to fully capture the direct Project employment as forecast.

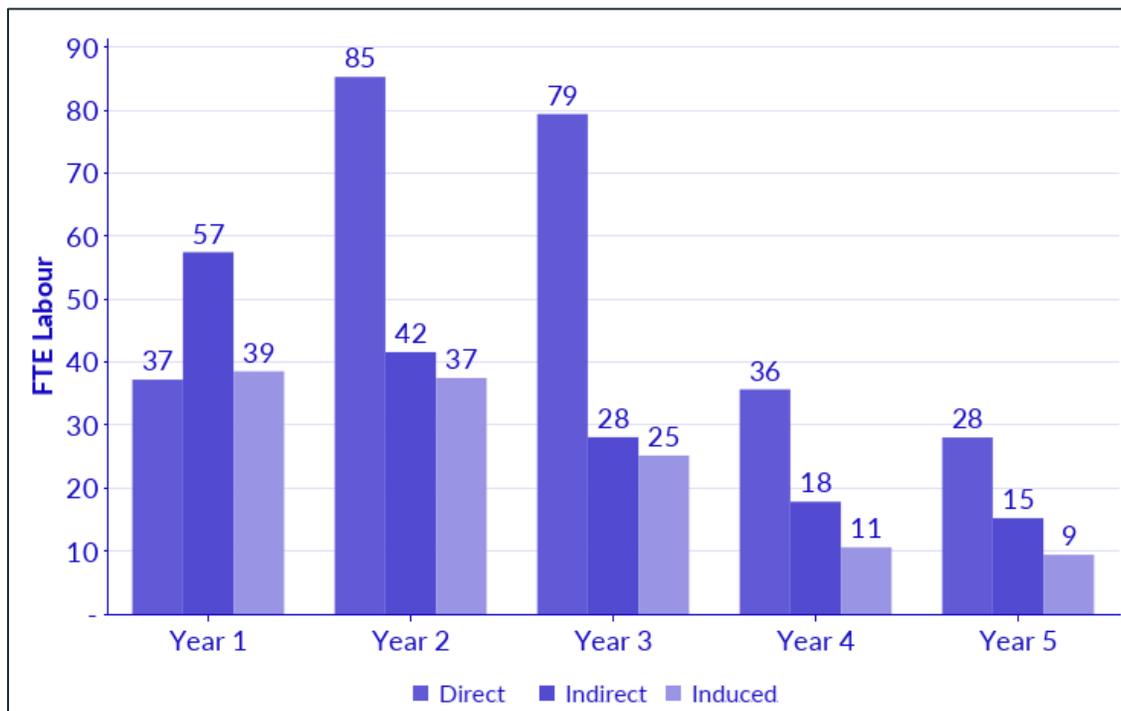
This section details Project effects on Labour Force and Employment in the RSA during the construction phase.

Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → New labour and business opportunities (direct, indirect, and induced) → Participation and employment in labour market

As a result of the construction phase there will be Project employment and expenditures that will result in new labour and business opportunities (direct, indirect, and induced). In turn this will result in participation and employment in labour market in the RSA. Project labour requirements that cannot be met by the LSA, will be sourced from the RSA communities.

Figure 15.4 and Table 15-32 outline the potential labour contribution of RSA community members based on the Project labour requirements, availability of industry specific labour, and current employment rates.

Figure 15.4: FTE Project Labour Participation, Regional Study Area, Construction Phase



Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

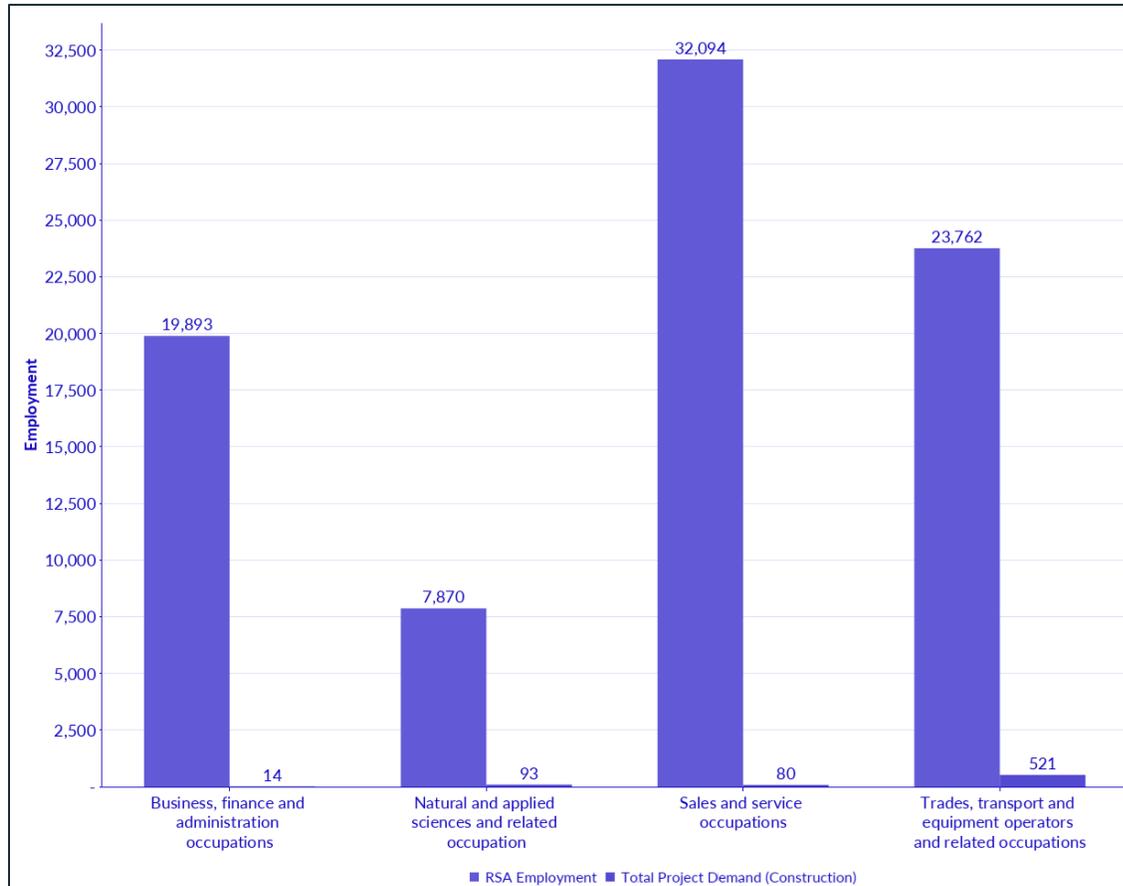
Table 15-32: Full-Time Equivalent Project Labour Participation, Regional Study Area, Construction

Labour Type	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Direct	37	85	79	36	28
Indirect	57	42	28	18	15
Induced	39	37	25	11	9
Total	133	164	133	64	53

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

The RSA has a large workforce relative to the Project’s labour requirements during the construction phase. **Figure 15.5** compares the Project’s direct labour requirements by NOC with the number of workers by NOC in the RSA.

Figure 15.5: Project Labour Requirements Compared to Regional Study Area Workforce by NOC



Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

As mentioned, the RSA has enough of the labour required to fill project positions that are unable to be filled by the labour in the LSA.

During construction, the RSA is estimated to fill approximately 266 direct employment positions which will be located on and off-site. Of the direct Project labour coming from the RSA, 181 positions are likely to be located on-site and 85 will be off-site. The RSA will capture an estimated 160 indirect employment

positions as well as 121 induced positions resulting from the Project. In total, 547 direct, indirect, and induced jobs are estimated to be associated with the construction phase of the Project and be captured in the RSA. The total FTE employment positions average to approximately 109 per year but will be highest in the second year of construction with 164 FTE positions.

The apportionment of jobs associated with the Project’s construction phase across communities in the RSA, is related to the relative size and occupations of the workforce in each of the three RSA districts.

An annual breakdown of jobs associated with the Project’s construction phase by RSA community is provided below in **Table 15-33**, **Table 15-34**, and **Table 15-35**.

Table 15-33: Construction Phase Total Jobs in the Regional Study Area by Year – Kenora

Labour Type	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Direct	7	16	15	7	5
Indirect	12	9	6	4	3
Induced	8	7	5	2	2
Total	27	32	26	13	10

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

Table 15-34: Construction Phase Total Jobs in the Regional Study Area by Year – Thunder Bay

Labour Type	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Direct	20	45	42	18	15
Indirect	29	21	14	9	8
Induced	20	20	13	5	5
Total	68	86	69	33	27

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

Table 15-35: Construction Phase Total Jobs in the Regional Study Area by Year – Cochrane

Labour Type	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Direct	10	24	22	10	8
Indirect	17	12	8	5	4
Induced	11	11	7	3	3
Total	38	47	38	19	15

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

Thunder Bay with the largest workforce of the three RSA districts and the largest representation of supply chain industries, is likely to capture the greatest portion of total jobs of the three RSA districts. Kenora is expected to capture the lowest number of the total jobs associated with construction due its smaller labour market and supply chain industry presence.

Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → Employment and business opportunities → Increased employment → Labour income

The Project’s construction phase will result in a considerable amount of labour income being captured by workers who are residents of the RSA. Although the associated Project labour income is substantial and the average labour income per job is expected to be high, the relative effect of labour income associated with the construction phase of the Project is relatively small, when compared with the total employment income being generated in the RSA. The magnitude of these effects is therefore negligible to low. These effects will persist throughout the construction phase. Employment income interacts with other VCs and subcomponents such as Housing and Temporary Accommodations (Section 14.2.2.2 and 14.3.2) and the Overall Economy (**Section 15.2.2.2 and 15.3.2**).

Table 15-36 summarizes the estimated RSA employment income generated by the Project during the construction phase projected to be met within the community.

Table 15-36: Project Related Employment Income, Regional Study Area, Construction Phase

Labour Type	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Direct	\$6,686,672	\$14,853,801	\$14,891,146	\$6,816,715	\$5,648,874
Indirect	\$3,867,682	\$2,799,097	\$1,890,503	\$1,199,903	\$1,023,708
Induced	\$2,308,495	\$2,245,080	\$1,507,314	\$633,811	\$563,599
Total	\$12,862,848	\$19,897,978	\$18,288,963	\$8,650,430	\$7,236,181

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

The total labour income attributed to the RSA workforce for the Project during construction is approximately \$66,936,400. Approximately, 73% of this is attributed to the labour income received from direct on and off-site employment. The average salary for direct workers is approximately \$183,824 which far exceeds the 2020 median salary in the RSA, which was reported at \$41,200, \$43,200, and \$42,400 for Kenora, Thunder Bay, and Cochrane, respectively [1]. The RSA is forecasted to receive approximately \$10,780,893 in indirect salaries from the Project, roughly \$67,380 per FTE Job. The income earned from induced employment is less than that earned from the direct and indirect project employment and averages approximately \$59,985 per FTE.

These Project effects are further distributed across the RSA regions based on the availability of labour to meet the Project’s direct staffing requirements, and the prevalence of industries in the Project’s supply chain. An annual breakdown of Project employment income effects by RSA community is provided below in **Table 15-37**, **Table 15-38**, and **Table 15-39**.

Table 15-37: Project Related Employment Income, Kenora, Construction Phase

Labour Type	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Direct	\$1,258,198	\$2,777,335	\$2,792,201	\$1,348,418	\$1,092,399
Indirect	\$813,219	\$588,538	\$397,497	\$252,292	\$215,245
Induced	\$453,069	\$428,069	\$286,496	\$126,556	\$110,450
Total	\$2,524,486	\$3,793,942	\$3,476,194	\$1,727,265	\$1,418,094

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024



Table 15-38: Project Related Employment Income, Thunder Bay, Construction Phase

Labour Type	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Direct	\$3,554,665	\$7,909,115	\$7,922,338	\$3,510,539	\$2,945,360
Indirect	\$1,922,025	\$1,390,998	\$939,476	\$596,286	\$508,727
Induced	\$1,197,886	\$1,182,780	\$795,961	\$324,695	\$291,749
Total	\$6,674,576	\$10,482,893	\$9,657,775	\$4,431,520	\$3,745,836

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

Table 15-39: Project Related Employment Income, Cochrane, Construction Phase

Labour Type	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Direct	\$1,873,809	\$4,167,351	\$4,176,608	\$1,957,758	\$1,611,115
Indirect	\$1,132,438	\$819,561	\$553,530	\$351,326	\$299,737
Induced	\$657,539	\$634,231	\$424,857	\$182,561	\$161,400
Total	\$3,663,786	\$5,621,143	\$5,154,995	\$2,491,645	\$2,072,251

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

The distribution of labour income by RSA community closely follows the distribution of employment by RSA community. In Kenora the average annual salary for an FTE direct job is \$185,370, for an FTE indirect job is \$66,670, and for an FTE induced job is \$61,070. In Thunder Bay the average annual salary for an FTE direct job is \$183,800, for an FTE indirect job is \$67,160, and for an FTE induced job is \$60,600. In Cochrane the average annual salary for an FTE direct job is \$183,800, for an FTE indirect job is \$67,160, and for an FTE induced job is \$60,600.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project employment and expenditures → Increased employment opportunities

Table 15-40 outlines the annual direct, indirect, and induced employment forecast to be captured in the RSA districts during operations and maintenance.

Table 15-40: Full-Time Equivalent Project Related Employment, RSA, Operations phase

Direct	Indirect	Induced	Total
0.0	1.1	0.2	1.3

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

Given the limited opportunities available, attempts were not made to allocate the information by RSA community.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project employment and expenditures → Employment opportunities → Increased employment income

Table 15-41 outlines the annual projected direct, indirect, and induced employment income received by RSA residents during the Project's operations phase.



Table 15-41: Project Related Employment Income, RSA, Operations phase

Direct	Indirect	Induced	Total
\$0	\$72,198	\$12,524	\$84,722

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

Given the limited opportunities available, attempts were not made to allocate the information by RSA community.

Conclusion

Overall, there will be **low to negligible Project effect** on both the labour force and employment as well as labour income within the RSA. This effect is not carried forward for further assessment.

15.3.2. Change to Overall Economy



Section 15.3.2 presents the potential effects of the Project on the overall economy, in keeping with EAR/IS requirements set out in the TISG and ToR documents and was also requested by Marten Falls First Nation during engagement and consultation activities. The assessment of potential Project-driven changes to the overall economy has considered IKLRU information, community values, concerns and interests, as well as the magnitude of effect on the traditional economy.

This section provides an analysis of Project effects on the overall economy during the construction and operations phases of the Project. These effects are then apportioned geographically across the study areas.

As the Project is anticipated to generate employment opportunities, increased potential for businesses and supply chains, and more avenues for mining, aggregate and forestry industries, there will be an overall positive benefit for the Project area. Assessing the potential changes to the overall economy subcomponent in consideration of the following indicators also facilitates the identification and development of strategies to mitigate, avoid or compensate for potential negative effects or enhance potential positive effects:

- **Gross Domestic Product (GDP):** The GDP of a community measures the total value of all goods and services produced within the community, showcasing the economic size and growth of the community. A higher GDP generally correlates with better job opportunities and higher incomes, providing perspective into improved standards of living for community members. GDP reflects the productivity of the community’s economy, with higher GDP indicating more efficient production, and changes in GDP showing effectiveness of economic policies. GDP is also used by investors and businesses to assess the economic environment of the community.
- The Project could influence community GDPs by creating increased job opportunities, boosting employment income, and enhancing procurement activities.
- **Cost of Living:** The cost of living in a community, measured by aspects such as Consumer Price Index (CPI), reveals how prices for goods and services change over time reflecting inflation, income threshold below which families are considered to be in financial hardship in a community, housing affordability and potential financial strain, the cost of essential items and living expenses, and overall consumption patterns and economic well-being within the community.
- WSR could potentially influence the price of goods by improving access to the community, especially when considering the impact of other planned projects.



- **Economic Development:** Identifying the economic development of a community entails understanding the community’s economic landscape. It showcases the overall growth and progress, community’s ability to support additional initiatives, understanding of improvements and investments, ongoing and upcoming opportunities driving economic growth, economic challenges and resources, sustainability, financial health and future economic patterns.
- The Project could alter the local economy and transform the industrial and commercial activities in the area. It will also necessitate the procurement of goods and services, potentially benefitting local businesses and investors.
- **Traditional economy:** Traditional economy of a community reflects a community’s reliance on customs, traditions, and sustainable practices for economic activities. The importance of gathering, hunting and fishing which provides food and resources, and resource management with a deep connection to the environment and sustainable living practices highlights a community’s resilience and adaptability while navigating economic challenges.
- Project works and activities have the potential to affect traditional land use activities due to activities such as vegetation clearing, and disturbances to natural environment. The Project has a potential to effect participation of Indigenous People in traditional economy with decreased availability of community members’ time and efforts.

Based on the study areas’ ability to meet Project requirements (i.e., labour availability, labour skill set, presence of industry supply chain, etc.) the direct, indirect, and induced effects of the Project can be apportioned by region to evaluate the effects to overall economy at a community level.

Construction Phase

The overall economy in both the LSA and RSA will be positively affected by the increased spending during the Project’s construction phase. During the construction phase, direct project spending will average close to \$130 million per year over five to six years. **Table 15-42** summarizes the forecast project spending during the construction phase of the project by year.

Table 15-42: Project Expenses by Year, Construction Phase

Year	Total Projected Expenses
2028	\$238,012,932
2029	\$172,253,392
2030	\$116,339,482
2031	\$73,840,726
2032	\$62,997,888

Source: Sigfusson Northern Ltd., 2023

This direct project spending is forecast to result in economic effects to the province of Ontario through direct effect, indirect supply chain spending, and economic effects induced through increased household spending. **Table 15-43** summarizes the provincial total overall economic effects related to Project expenditure by year during construction.



Table 15-43: Total Province of Ontario Effects related to Project Expenditure, Construction Phase

Year	GDP	Labour Income	Jobs
2028	\$199,579,810	\$28,068,191	249
2029	\$146,342,953	\$39,234,683	299
2030	\$99,364,489	\$38,890,142	262
2031	\$63,162,606	\$28,302,260	183
2032	\$53,846,652	\$22,498,506	142
Total	\$562,296,511	\$156,993,782	1,136

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

Operations phase

It is estimated that there will be a long-lasting but much smaller effects on the overall economy related to operational spending. Operational spending will likely continue for multiple decades. Based on the forecast staffing levels required to support the WSR’s operations and maintenance an annual direct spending budget of \$3,258,178 can be derived.

This direct spending could result in relatively smaller but long-lasting economic effects. **Table 15-44** summarizes annual direct, indirect, and induced effects of Project during the operations phase at the provincial level.

Table 15-44: Annual Direct, Indirect, and Induced Effects of Project Expenditure, Operations phase – Province of Ontario

Effect	GDP	Labour Income	Jobs
Direct	\$2,313,306	\$1,941,874	25
Indirect	\$469,178	\$293,236	5
Induced	\$957,904	\$387,723	7
Total	\$3,740,388	\$2,622,833	36

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

15.3.2.1. Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures / mobilization of equipment and supplies → Opportunity to supply goods / services to the Project → Increased GDP

Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → Increased employment opportunity → Increased employment income → Increased GDP

This section details the Project effects on the overall economy of Webequie First Nation during the construction phase. The quantification of the Project effects on Webequie First Nation is based on current levels of unemployment, workforce participation, and workforce skills and occupations. These are the factors that influence how much of the direct Project effects on the total economy Webequie First Nation captures.



The structure of indirect industry supply chains in (or lack thereof in the case of Webequie First Nation) influences the indirect effect of the Project on the total economy during construction. Finally, the labour income earned through direct and indirect activities induces increased household spending and compounds the effect on the total economy.

Table 15-45 outlines the direct, indirect, and induced effects of the Project on GDP, labour income, and jobs during the five-to-six-year construction phase.

Table 15-45: Direct, Indirect, and Induced Effects of Project Expenditure, Webequie First Nation, Total Construction Phase

Effect	GDP	Labour Income	FTE Years of Employment
Direct	\$38,401,630	\$9,372,990	50
Indirect	\$31,959	\$20,282	0
Induced	\$2,707,645	\$1,110,829	19
Total	\$41,141,235	\$10,504,100	69

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

Table 15-46 provides an annualized breakdown of the Project's construction phase effects on Webequie First Nation's overall economy.

Table 15-46: Total Effects of Project Expenditure, Webequie First Nation, Construction Phase by Year

Year	GDP	Labour Income	FTE Years of Employment
2028	\$18,042,972	\$2,203,795	17
2029	\$7,722,201	\$1,977,201	14
2030	\$5,357,010	\$2,056,673	13
2031	\$4,685,673	\$2,073,498	13
2032	\$5,333,380	\$2,192,934	13
Total	\$41,141,235	\$10,504,100	69

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

Webequie First Nation's capture of these effects to the overall economy could be increased through increased workforce participation and further development of existing and new businesses to participate in the supply chain.

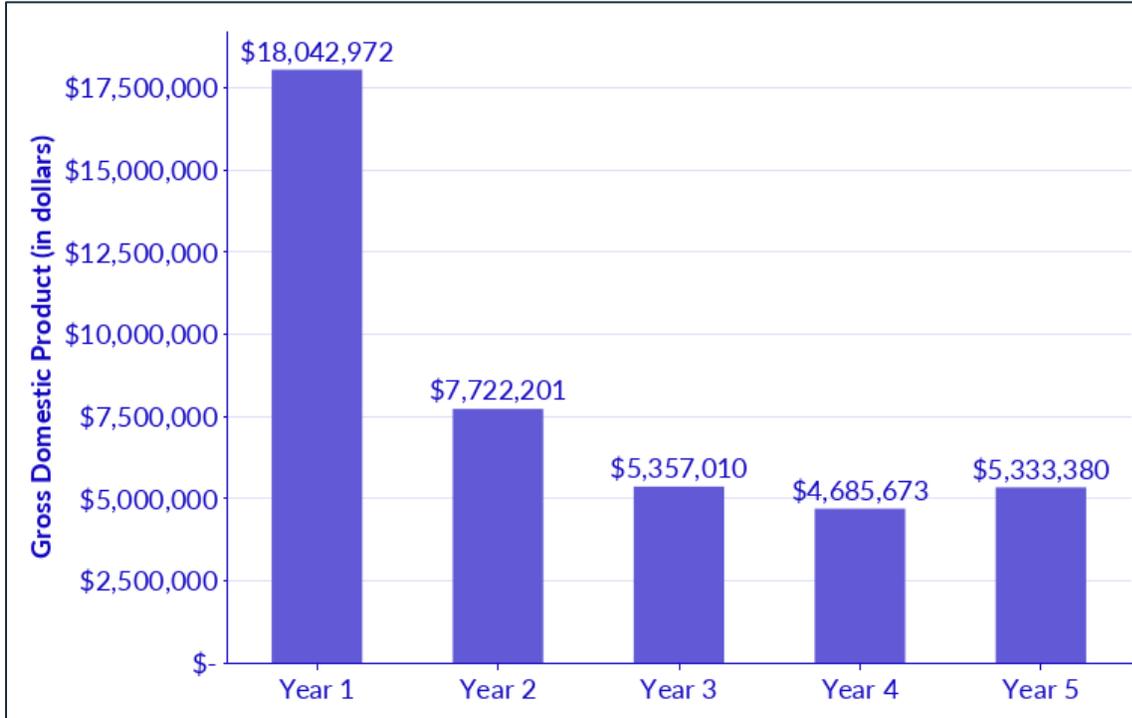
During the construction phase, there will be an increase in Project related employment and expenditures with the mobilization of equipment and supplies in Webequie. This includes an increased opportunity for individuals and businesses to supply goods and services to the Project. The increase in demand for goods and services will in turn provide an increase in employment opportunities and therefore employment income within the community, which will also increase GDP locally. The overall budgetary cost estimate for this phase of the Project is approximately \$682.8 million. This includes estimates for equipment, supplies, labour costs, transportation, demobilization, and restoration.

During the construction phase, there will be a total effect on GDP of \$41,141,235, approximately 44% of which is attributed to the first year of construction. 93% of the effects on Webequie First Nation's GDP is due to the direct Project activities and expenses. **Table 15-45** above, summarizes the direct, indirect, and



induced effects on GDP resulting from the Project construction phase attributed to Webequie First Nation. **Figure 15.6** shows the annual effects of the Project during the construction phase on Webequie First Nation's GDP.

Figure 15.6: Project Effect on GDP for Webequie First Nation, Construction Phase



Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

Construction activities → Project construction, clearing, and access requirements → Disruption of natural environment → Effect on the natural environment and land use → Effect on ability to participate in traditional economy

Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → Increase in employment → Decrease in availability to participate in traditional economy

The traditional economy is another important aspect of the overall economy within the LSA communities. Traditional economy activities are not widely reported on and therefore it is difficult to quantify the economic effects the Project will have on the traditional economy. In surveys conducted by AtkinsRéalis in 2022, 94 out of 152 respondents from Webequie First Nation indicated that they have concerns about the loss of traditional culture in Webequie First Nation. Respondents indicated that the main concerns were loss of traditional land use activities, traditional teachings, traditional language, and traditional values (AtkinsRéalis Inc, 2022a).

Project construction, clearing, and access requirements will result in the disruption of natural environment and will affect the natural environment and land use as well as the ability to participate in the traditional economy.

Webequie community member's ability to participate in traditional economic activities such as hunting, trapping, and fishing, could be lower during the construction phase of the Project. This will be due to clearing and grubbing of the natural environment that will need to be done within Webequie to allow for



access requirements and construction of the Project to begin. Clearing will involve the removal of vegetation that may prohibit the construction and/or the safe operation and maintenance of road. Vegetation clearing will consist of cutting tree trunks parallel to, and within 15 cm of the ground or lower, as well as the removal of all shrubs, debris, and other such materials. Grubbing is required at construction camp locations, aggregate source areas, access roads and along the road right-of-way (ROW), with the exception of west to east section (56 km) in the lowlands / peatlands where no grubbing is proposed and where no vegetation clearing outside the road footprint will be conducted. Construction and use of supportive infrastructure is required for the Project and will both temporarily and permanently change land use and affect the natural environment and wildlife. These activities include:

- Four temporary construction camps for non-local workers and storage purposes;
- Pits / quarries at aggregate source areas;
- Temporary access roads with waterbody crossings; and
- Permanent maintenance and storage facility.

In addition to the effects of construction, clearing, and grubbing activities, there will be emissions, discharges, and waste associated with the Project which could affect the natural environment. As a result of these proposed changes to the natural environment, and as previously stated, the ability of Webequie community members to engage in the traditional economy will be lower during the construction phase.

Additionally, during construction there is an expected increase in Project related employment. The new labour and business opportunities are expected to increase participation and employment in the labour market. Higher participation in the labour force could decrease the time available for Webequie community members to participate in the traditional economy.

Construction activities → Project labour, material, and equipment requirements → Project monopolizing supply of goods / services → Limitations on capacity for other projects

Construction activities → Project labour, material, and equipment requirements → Opportunity to supply Project goods / services → Growth in existing and new business → Increased local business activity

Webequie's overall economy will be positively affected by the Project in both the construction and operations phases of the Project.

Due to the remoteness of the Webequie First Nation and limited participation in industry supply chains, the majority of the positive effect that the Project has on the community will be related to direct project activities. Transportation challenges have contributed to cost of living that can be substantially higher in comparison to urban areas. In general, the Webequie First Nation and the other LSA communities are far from urban centres, which creates transportation challenges both for goods and services coming into the community as well as residents leaving the community for goods and services. This has limited Webequie First Nation's opportunities to participate in industry supply chains.

Economic development support within the community will help Webequie maximize the economic benefits they receive from the Project. Webequie First Nation council is responsible for stimulating local economy and developing economic initiatives and opportunities for the community (211 Ontario North, 2025). Included within these responsibilities are the following activities (211 Ontario North, 2025):

- Provide information, training, and educational workshops to enhance employability skills;
- Development of plans for the use of traditional lands for community members;
- Access funding for band-owned business ventures; and



- Provide coaching in areas such as business plan development and assistance in obtaining financial support for people wanting to start own business.

Economic Development could focus on supporting entrepreneurship and business development as well as workforce development to maximize the benefit to the community's overall economy. A significant portion of the economic development activities occurring within the LSA are focused on business development, access to services, advisory services, and employment counselling. Webequie First Nation would like to see the Project as an opportunity to form partnerships with other businesses that would supply the Project (e.g., trucking) and develop relationships that can be leveraged in future endeavours (e.g., work related to the Ring of Fire) (AtkinsRéalais Inc, 2022a).

The labour, material and equipment requirements for the Project could monopolize the local supply of labour and other resources during the construction phase. This could limit the capacity of labour, material, and equipment available for other economic activities in Webequie First Nation. Some businesses and other projects within the Webequie community may need to compete with the Project for resources.

Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → Direct, indirect, and induced business / labour opportunities resulting from Project → Employment and business activity → Business and labour income → Increased household spending and lower percentage of total income spent on shelter

During the construction phase of the Project, with increased local Project employment and expenditures, the increase in demand for goods and services will have direct, indirect, and induced effects on local business activities and labour opportunities locally. The new employment and economic activity will in turn positively influence business, employment, and household income, which could lead to increased household spending and a lower percentage of total income spent on shelter.

During the interviews and focus groups held by AtkinsRéalais in 2022, participants identified the cost of living and price of goods to be an issue experienced as a result of living in a remote northern community. With the potential of increased household incomes, there may be positive effects on the cost of living in the community. Residents are also looking for studies on the effects on wages as a result of the Project in hopes this will also address issues surrounding the cost of living (AtkinsRéalais Inc, 2022a).

The increase in employment income over the Project construction phase is summarized in **Section 15.3.1.1**. The employment income increase will in turn result in higher household incomes resulting in households having increased disposable income. Currently, the average annual income in Webequie First Nation is low in comparison to the provincial standard creating higher poverty levels and less spending within the community.

Project employment and expenditures will result in employment opportunities, increased availability of disposable income and therefore, increased household spending in the Webequie community.

During the construction phase, there will be a temporary increase in population. Non-local workers would not stay in the community permanently but would fly-in/out as needed in the Webequie community.

The interaction with other VCs/subcomponents includes Housing and Temporary Accommodations (Section 14.2.2.2 and 14.3.2), and Overall Economy (**Section 15.2.2.2** and **15.3.2**).

Community enhancements and mitigative attributes include increased housing and increased services in the Webequie community. Community members hope that the Project will also result in reduced gas prices and grocery cost which may in turn address the cost of living within the community to a certain extent (AtkinsRéalais Inc, 2022a).



The total income received by Webequie First Nation community members through direct, indirect, and induced employment resulting from the Project requirements is estimated at over \$10 million during the five-to-six-year construction phase. This is distributed between 69 employment positions, making the average salary just under \$145,000. This far exceeds the 2020 median income for individuals aged 15 years and over in private households of \$24,200. The higher incomes received as a result of the Project will translate into an increase in household spending. The increased spending will induce increased economic activity in the community. The effects of this is shown in **Table 15-45**.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Direct economic effects → Indirect economic effects → Induced economic effects → Increased GDP

This section details Project effects on the overall economy of the Webequie First Nation community during the operations phase. The Project effects on the overall economy are based on the forecast of the communities’ size and skills of workforce, unemployment, workforce participation and participation in the supply chain.

The effects of the Project during operations phase are much more modest than during construction. **Table 15-47** summarizes the annual direct, indirect, and induced effects of Project during the operations phase.

Table 15-47: Annual Direct, Indirect, and Induced Effects of Project Expenditure, Webequie First Nation, Operations phase

Effect	GDP	Labour Income	Jobs
Direct	\$306,933	\$257,651	3
Indirect	\$217	\$136	0
Induced	\$110,480	\$44,718	1
Total	\$417,630	\$302,505	4

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

There is an assumption that all the direct jobs in operations and maintenance will come from the LSA. This means that Webequie First Nation and the other LSA communities will capture a higher portion of the direct effects to the overall economy than they did in construction, but the size of the effect will be smaller.

Due to the current lack of indirect supply chain industries in the community, Webequie First Nation will see very little in terms of indirect economic impacts.

The increased direct employment and corresponding labour income in the community could contribute to the induction of an additional job.

During the operations phase, the operation, maintenance, and repair of the WSR will create direct, indirect, and induced impacts on the local economy. The operations phase of the Project will continue to demand the supply of labour and materials and create economic activity within the area.

Table 15-47 outlines the estimated annual impact of the operations phase on GDP. Based on Webequie First Nation’s ability to meet Project requirements, it is estimated that there will be a direct impact of \$306,933, indirect impact of \$217, and induced impact of \$110,480. The total annual impact on GDP is estimated at \$417,630.



Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project labour, material, and equipment requirements → Increased employment / business opportunities (direct, indirect, and induced) → Decrease in time available to participate in the traditional economy

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Disruption to the natural environment → Effects on traditional economy activities

The increase in employment of community members during the operations phase may decrease the time available, to participate in the traditional economy.

The operation, maintenance, and repair of the WSR during the operations phase will also allow for continued effects on the natural environment surrounding the site area. Operations and maintenance activities with an effect on the natural environment will include:

- Periodic extraction and blasting of aggregates;
- Processing operations (e.g., crushing, screening) and stockpiling of rocks and aggregate materials;
- Operation and repairs of maintenance yards/facilities and components (e.g., office buildings, parking lots, storage of equipment and materials);
- Vegetation management and control within the road corridor;
- Repairs/resurfacing of roads;
- Dust control;
- Winter/seasonal maintenance (e.g., snow clearing);
- Road drainage cleanout, repairs of culverts, ditches, and drainage outfalls; and
- Rehabilitation and repairs of culverts and bridges.

Additionally, noise, air emissions/GHGs, water discharge, and hazardous and non-hazardous wastes resulting from these activities may impact the natural environment.

Although will be anticipated effects on the natural environment from the Project, and this could lower participation in traditional economy activities such as hunting, gathering, and fishing by Webequie community members in the vicinity of the Project during the operations phase; however, the WSR will increase access opportunities to practice traditional economic activities that could result in higher participation.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project labour, material, and equipment requirements → Business opportunities → New businesses / business growth

As shown in **Table 15-47**, the Project effects on the overall economy of the Webequie community during the operations phase will provide direct, indirect and induced effects from Project expenditures.

As noted above, due to the current lack of indirect supply chain industries in the community, Webequie First Nation will see very little in terms of indirect economic impacts.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project employment and expenditures → Direct, indirect, and induced business / labour opportunities resulting from Project → Employment / business activity → Business / labour income → Increased household spending

The Project related employment and economic during the operations phase will have a positive effect on business, employment, and labour income. The increase in household income could lead to higher household spending over the course of operations and maintenance of the Project.



Conclusion

Overall, there is overall **medium potential** for improved overall economy within Webequie First Nation as a result of the Project. The effect is carried forward to **Section 15.4** for further assessment.

15.3.2.2. Local Study Area: Other Communities

The other LSA communities will be positively affected by the Project in both the construction and operations phases of the Project.

Due to the remoteness of the other LSA communities and limited participation in industry supply chains most of the positive effects of the Project on the overall economy will come from direct project effects.

Transportation challenges have resulted in a cost of living can be substantially higher in comparison with urban areas. In general, the LSA communities are far from urban centres, which creates transportation challenges both for goods and services coming into the community as well as residents leaving the community for goods and services. This has limited other LSA community opportunities to participate in industries that would be prominent in the supply chain.

A significant portion of the economic development activities occurring within the LSA are focused on business development, access to services, advisory services, and employment counselling. These economic development activities could increase the positive effect of the Project on the overall economy of the other LSA communities.

Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures / mobilization of equipment and supplies → Opportunity to supply goods / services to the Project → Increased GDP

Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → Increased employment opportunity → Increased employment income → Increased GDP

This section details the Project effects on the overall economy of the LSA communities during the construction phase. The direct effects of the Project on the other LSA communities are related to the levels of unemployment, size and skills of the workforce, workforce participation, and workforce occupations. The indirect effects of the Project on the other LSA communities are based on the presence of industries prevalent in the indirect supply chain. Finally, the labour income earned through both direct and indirect activities can induce further economic activity due to increased household spending.

Table 15-48 outlines the total direct, indirect, and induced effects of the Project on the other LSA communities' GDP, labour income, and jobs during the construction phase.

Table 15-48: Direct, Indirect, and Induced Effects of Project Expenditure, Other Local Study Area Communities, Construction Phase, five to six year Total

Effect	GDP	Labour Income	FTE Years of Employment
Direct	\$95,783,165	\$23,178,813	124
Indirect	\$187,651	\$119,086	2
Induced	\$6,765,958	\$2,775,778	46
Total	\$102,736,774	\$26,073,677	172

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024



Table 15-49 presents the total annual effects of the Project’s construction phase on the other LSA communities.

Table 15-49: Total Effects of Project Expenditure, Other Local Study Area Communities, Construction Phase

Effect	GDP	Labour Income	FTE Years of Employment
2028	\$45,213,911	\$5,546,050	42
2029	\$19,960,956	\$5,121,991	36
2030	\$14,114,040	\$5,423,308	34
2031	\$10,733,625	\$4,752,229	29
2032	\$12,714,239	\$5,230,099	31
Total	\$102,736,773	\$26,073,677	172

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

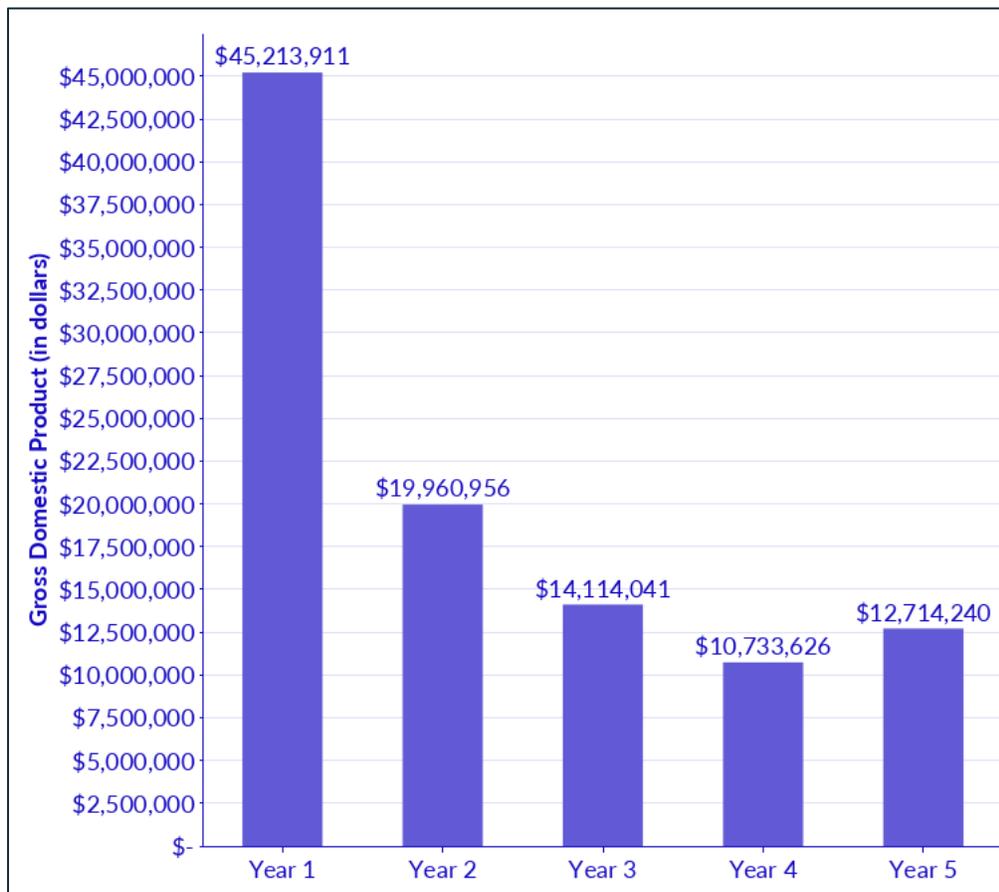
As in the case of Webequie First Nation, the other LSA communities can increase their capture of these economic effects through increased workforce participation, increased workforce training, and further development of new and existing industries to participate in the project supply chain.

During the construction phase, there will be an increase in Project related employment and expenditures with the mobilization of equipment and supplies to the Project site. This includes an increased opportunity for individuals and businesses to supply goods and services to the Project. The increase in demand for goods and services will in turn provide an increase in employment opportunities and therefore employment income within the community, which will also increase GDP in the other LSA communities.

During the construction phase, it is estimated that there will be a total effect of \$102,736,774 on the LSA GDP, approximately 44% of which is attributed to the first year of construction. Approximately 93% of the effect on the other LSA communities’ GDP is due to the direct Project activities and expenses.

Table 15-49 above, summarizes the direct, indirect, and induced effects on GDP resulting from the Project construction phase attributed to the other LSA communities. **Figure 15.7** shows the annual effects of the Project during the construction phase on other LSA communities’ GDP.

Figure 15.7: Project Effects on GDP, Other Local Study Area Communities, Construction Phase



Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

Construction activities → Project construction, clearing, and access requirements → Disruption of natural environment → Effect on the natural environment and land use → Effect on ability to participate in traditional economy

Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → Increase in employment → Decrease in availability to participate in traditional economy

Project construction, clearing, and access requirements will result in the disruption of natural environment and will affect the natural environment and land use as well as the ability to participate in the traditional economy.

Other LSA community member's ability to participate in traditional economic activities such as hunting, trapping, and fishing, could be lower during the construction phase for those affected spatially and temporally by the Project. As discussed further in Section 16 and Section 19 of the EAR/IS, areas of interest and traditional territories identified by Indigenous communities that coincide with the Project's potential effects include Marten Falls First Nation, Neskantaga First Nation and Attawapiskat First Nation.

Additionally, during the construction phase there is an anticipated increase in Project related employment. The new labour and business opportunities are expected to increase participation and employment in the labour market. Higher participation in the labour force could decrease the time available for other LSA community members to participate in the traditional economy.



Construction activities → Project labour, material, and equipment requirements → Opportunity to supply Project goods / services → Growth in existing and new business → Increased local business activity

Construction activities → Project labour, material, and equipment requirements → Project monopolizing supply of goods / services → Limitations on capacity for other projects

The labour, material and equipment requirements for the Project could monopolize the local supply of labour and other resources during the construction phase. This could limit the capacity of labour, material, and equipment available for other economic activities in other LSA communities. Some businesses and other projects within the other LSA communities may need to compete with the Project for resources.

However, the other LSA communities differ from the Webequie First Nation in that they are not the proponent for the Project, and therefore, the Project is unlikely to monopolize resources in the other LSA communities.

Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → Direct, indirect, and induced business / labour opportunities resulting from Project → Employment and business activity → Business and labour income → Increased household spending and lower percentage of total income spent on shelter

New employment and economic activity in the other LSA communities will positively influence business, employment, and labour income. This could result increased household spending and a lower percentage of total income spent on shelter. The level of magnitude of these effects are estimated to be medium, with the geographic extent of the effects concentrated locally within other LSA communities. The timeframe of these effects is anticipated to last during construction for approximately five to six years.

The increase in employment income over the Project construction phase is summarized in **Section 15.3.1.2**. The employment income increase will in turn translate into higher household incomes resulting in households having increased disposable income. Currently, the average annual income in the other LSA communities is low in comparison to the provincial standard, creating higher poverty levels and less spending within the community.

The total income received by LSA community members through direct, indirect, and induced employment resulting from the Project requirements is estimated at over \$26 million during the five-to-six-year construction phase. This is distributed between 172 employment positions, making the average salary over \$150,000. This far exceeds the 2020 median income for individuals aged 15 years and over in private households of \$24,200. The higher incomes received as a result of the Project may translate into an increased ability for households to meet their basic needs and increase their final consumption of goods and services.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Direct economic effects → Indirect economic effects → Induced economic effects

This section details Project effects on the overall economy of the other LSA communities during the operations phase. The Project effects on the overall economy during the operations phase is based on the forecast of the communities' workforce's size, skills, and occupations, as well as unemployment rates, labour participation rates, and presence of supply chain industries.

As noted above the effects of the Project's operations phase is much more modest on the overall economy than the during the construction phase. **Table 15-50** summarizes annual direct, indirect, and induced effects of Project during the operations phase.

Table 15-50: Annual Direct, Indirect, and Induced Effects of Project Expenditure, Other Local Study Area Communities, Operations phase

Effects	GDP	Labour Income	Jobs
Direct	\$2,006,373	\$1,684,223	22
Indirect	\$1,276	\$798	0
Induced	\$722,152	\$292,300	5
Total	\$2,729,801	\$1,977,320	27

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

It assumed that all the direct jobs in the operations phase will be from the LSA. This means that the other LSA communities will capture a higher percentage of the direct effects to the overall economy than they did during construction; however, the size of the effect will be smaller than in the previous phase.

Due to the limited presence of supply chain industries in the LSA, relatively few indirect effects will be captured by the other LSA communities. There will be some induced economic effects from increased labour income and corresponding increases in household spending.

During the operations phase, the operation, maintenance, and repair of the supply road will create direct, indirect, and induced effects on the local economy. The infrastructure investment and increased employment from the construction phase will continue to have positive economic effects due to the trickle-down effect. Along with the residual effects of the construction phase, the operations phase will continue to demand the supply of labour and materials and create economic activity within the area.

Table 15-50 outlines the estimated annual effects of the operations phase on GDP. Based on the LSA's ability to meet Project requirements, it is estimated that there will be a direct effect of \$2,006,373, indirect effect of \$1,276, and induced effect of \$722,152. The total annual effect on GDP is estimated at \$2,729,801.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Disruption of natural environment → Effect on the natural environment and land use → Effect on ability to participate in traditional economy

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project employment and expenditures → Increase in employment → Decrease in availability to participate in traditional economy

The increase in employment of community members during the operations phase may decrease the time available, to participate in the traditional economy.

The operation, maintenance, and repair of the Project during the operations phase will also allow for continued effects on the natural environment surrounding the site area. However, conversely, it is anticipated that increased access all the WSR route may enhance the ability of community members to participate in traditional economy activities.

The ability to use the increased disposable income for goods and services thereby increasing their household spending.



Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project labour, material, and equipment requirements → Business opportunities → New businesses / business growth

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project employment and expenditures → Direct, indirect, and induced business / labour opportunities resulting from Project → Employment / business activity → Business / labour income → Increased household spending

The operation, maintenance, and repair of road will provide employment and business income resulting from Project related activities. There will be increased household spending in the other LSA communities.

The interaction with other VCs/subcomponents includes Housing and Temporary Accommodations (Section 14.2.2.2 and 14.3.2), and Overall Economy (**Section 15.2.2.2** and **15.3.2**).

Community enhancements and mitigative attributes include increased housing and increased services in the other LSA communities.

During the operations phase, there will be just over \$1.14 million in annual income earned through direct, indirect, and induced Project related employment within the other LSA communities (See **Table 15-31**). This income is attributed to 16 employment positions. The community members employed directly through the Project will have the ability to use the increased disposable income for goods and services thereby increasing their household spending.

During the operations phase of the Project, with ongoing operation, maintenance, and repair of the supply road there will be continued need for Project employment and expenditures. The new employment and economic activity will in turn positively influence business, employment, and household income which will lead to higher labour income and higher household spending during Project operations and maintenance. Due to the labour demand during operations and maintenance, it is likely that only a select few local community members will benefit from the direct and indirect labour and business opportunities.

During the operations phase, there will be just over \$1,977,320 in annual income earned through direct, indirect, and induced Project related employment within the other LSA communities (See **Table 15-50**). This income is attributed to approximately 27 employment positions, 22 direct and 5 induced.

Conclusion

Overall, there is overall **medium potential** for improved overall economy within other LSA communities as a result of the Project. The effect is carried forward to **Section 15.4** for further assessment.

15.3.2.3. Regional Study Area

Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures / mobilization of equipment and supplies → Opportunity to supply goods / services to the Project → Increased GDP

Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → Increased employment opportunity → Increased employment income → Increased GDP

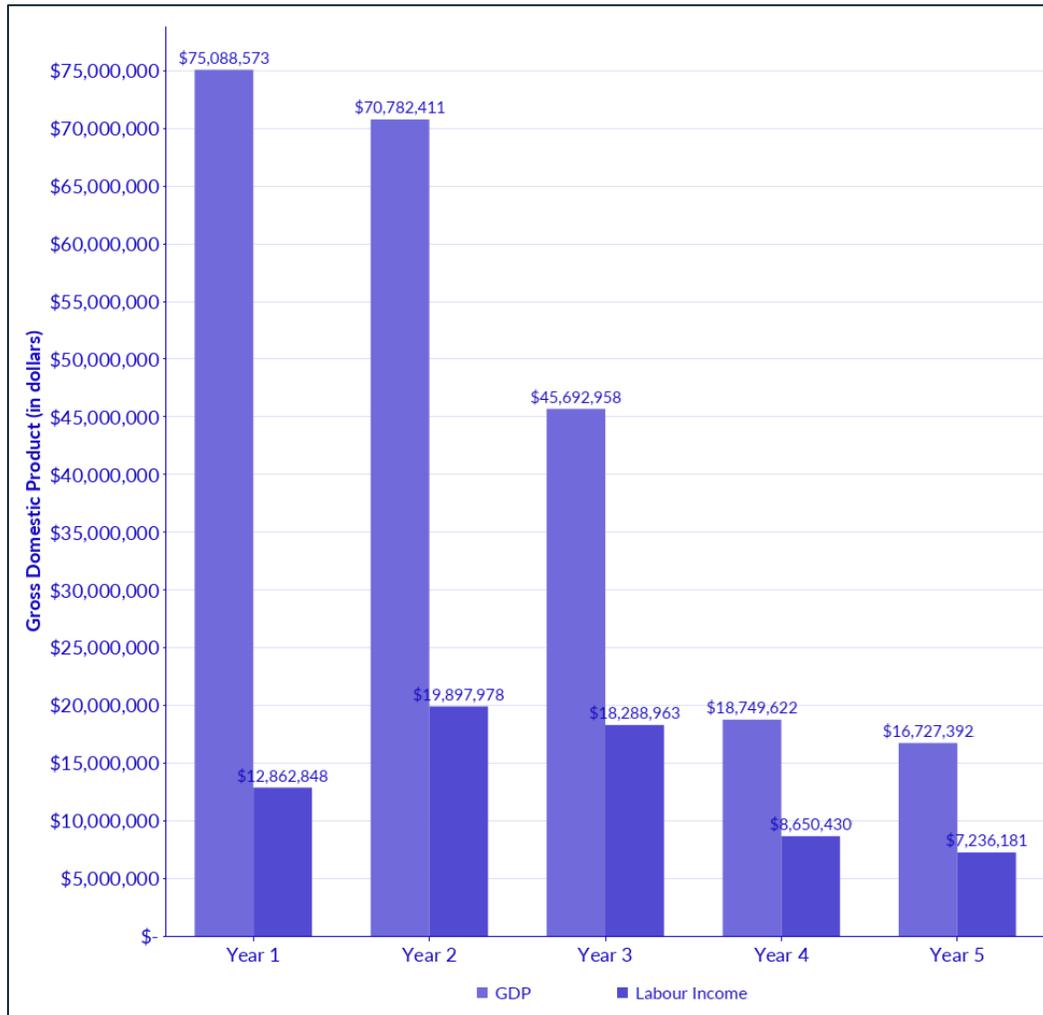
The economy of the RSA is affected in three major ways during construction. The RSA is a material provider of direct support to the project. The RSA provides the on-site direct labour to the Project that cannot be sourced within the LSA as well as being a material source for direct off-site inputs to the Project.



Much of the indirect industry supply chain that supports the direct Project inputs is located in the RSA. The increases in labour income in the RSA result induce a further economic effect from increased household spending.

The Project's construction phase effects are presented below in **Figure 15.8**, **Table 15-51**, and **Table 15-52**.

Figure 15.8: Construction Phase Total Economic Effect of Project Expenditure on the Regional Study Area by Year



Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

Table 15-51: Combined five to six year Construction Phase Economic Effect of Project Expenditure on the Regional Study Area by Source of Economic Activity

Effect	GDP	Labour Income	Jobs
Direct	\$192,360,778	\$48,897,207	266
Indirect	\$16,988,073	\$10,780,893	160
Induced	\$17,692,105	\$7,258,300	121
Total	\$227,040,957	\$66,936,400	547

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

Table 15-52: Construction Phase Total Economic Effect of Project Expenditure on the Regional Study Area by Year

Effect	GDP	Labour Income	FTE Years of Employment
2028	\$75,088,573	\$12,862,848	133
2029	\$70,782,411	\$19,897,978	164
2030	\$45,692,958	\$18,288,963	133
2031	\$18,749,622	\$8,650,430	64
2032	\$16,727,392	\$7,236,181	53
Total	\$227,040,957	\$66,936,400	547

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

These effects are further distributed across the RSA districts based on the availability of labour to meet the project direct staffing requirements, and the prevalence of industries in the Project's supply chain. An annual breakdown of economic effects by RSA community is provided below in **Table 15-53**, **Table 15-54** and **Table 15-55**.

Table 15-53: Construction Phase Total Economic Effect of Project Expenditure on the Regional Study Area by Year, Kenora

Effect	GDP	Labour Income	FTE Years of Employment
2028	\$14,309,262	\$2,524,486	27
2029	\$13,357,651	\$3,793,942	32
2030	\$8,644,966	\$3,476,194	26
2031	\$3,735,291	\$1,727,265	13
2032	\$3,265,583	\$1,418,094	10
Total	\$43,312,752	\$12,939,981	107

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024



Table 15-54: Construction Phase Total Economic Effect of Project Expenditure on the Regional Study Area by Year, Thunder Bay

Effect	GDP	Labour Income	FTE Years of Employment
2028	\$39,634,723	\$6,674,576	68
2029	\$37,501,606	\$10,482,893	86
2030	\$24,190,421	\$9,657,775	69
2031	\$9,617,575	\$4,431,520	33
2032	\$8,677,157	\$3,745,836	27
Total	\$119,621,482	\$34,992,599	283

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

Table 15-55: Construction Phase Total Economic Effect of Project Expenditure on the Regional Study Area by Year, Cochrane

Effect	GDP	Labour Income	FTE Years of Employment
2028	\$21,144,588	\$3,663,786	38
2029	\$19,923,155	\$5,621,143	47
2030	\$12,857,572	\$5,154,995	38
2031	\$5,396,757	\$2,491,645	19
2032	\$4,784,652	\$2,072,251	15
Total	\$64,106,723	\$19,003,820	156

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

Thunder Bay with the largest workforce of the three RSA districts and the largest representation of supply chain industries captured the greatest portion of total overall benefits to the economy. Thunder Bay will likely capture more of the overall economic benefits than Kenora and Cochrane combined.

The following sections further explore the effects of the Project's construction phase on Regional GDP and Household Spending.

During the construction phase, it is estimated that the RSA will have a total increase of GDP of \$227,040,957 over five to six years. The majority of this increase in economic value add coming from the RSA can be attributed to direct Project activities (\$192,360,778) although a material amount of the GDP can be attributed to indirect industry supply chain activities (\$16,988,073) and economic effects induced from additional household spending (\$17,692,105).

As mentioned above, Thunder Bay is forecast to have the biggest increase in GDP associated with the construction phase of the Project (\$119,621,482 over 5 years), followed by Cochrane (\$64,106,723 over 5 years), and then Kenora (\$43,312,752 over 5 years).

The Project's construction phase's effects on GDP are materially positive for all three of these communities in the RSA.



Construction activities → Project construction, clearing, and access requirements → Disruption of natural environment → Effect on the natural environment and land use → Effect on ability to participate in traditional economy

Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → Increase in employment → Decrease in availability to participate in traditional economy

Project construction, clearing, and access requirements will result in the disruption of natural environment and will affect the natural environment and land use as well as the ability to participate in the traditional economy.

RSA community member's ability to participate in traditional economic activities such as hunting, trapping, and fishing, are not anticipated to be affected during the construction phase by the Project.

Construction activities → Project labour, material, and equipment requirements → Opportunity to supply Project goods / services → Growth in existing and new business → Increased local business activity

Construction activities → Project labour, material, and equipment requirements → Project monopolizing supply of goods / services → Limitations on capacity for other projects

The RSA communities differ from the Webequie First Nation in that they are not the proponent for the Project, and therefore, the Project is unlikely to monopolize resources in the RSA communities.

Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → Direct, indirect, and induced business / labour opportunities resulting from Project → Employment and business activity → Business and labour income → Increased household spending and lower percentage of total income spent on shelter

Project related household spending at the regional level is highly correlated with labour income. The Project's construction phase will result in an increase of labour income in the RSA of \$66,936,400 over five to six years. This income is forecast to be associated with an average of just under 130 FTE jobs per year. This includes an annual average of just over 24 FTE jobs in the RSA induced by increased household spending. The total jobs associated with the Project's construction phase in the RSA have an average income of \$122,370/year.

Thunder Bay is the RSA district that captures the greatest amount of the Project's construction phase effects on household spending and labour income. Thunder Bay is forecast to capture \$34,992,599 of labour income over five to six years and induce an average of 12.6 jobs/year through increased household spending. This labour income will result in an average annual salary of \$123,500 per year. This is well above the median 2020 employment income of \$38,000 in the Thunder Bay District.

Cochrane is the RSA district that captures the second greatest amount of the Project's construction phase effects on household spending and labour income. Cochrane is forecast to capture \$19,003,820 of labour income over five to six years and induce an average of 6.4 jobs/year through increased household spending. This labour income will result in an average annual salary of \$121,500 per year. This is well above the median 2020 employment income of \$41,200 in Cochrane District.

Finally, Kenora captures the least amount of the Project's construction phase effects on household spending and labour income. Kenora is forecast to capture \$12,939,981 of labour income over five to six years and induce an average of 4.6 jobs/year through increased household spending. This labour income

will result in an average annual salary of \$121,500 per year. This is well above the median 2020 employment income of \$36,800 in Kenora District.

In all three of the communities that make up the RSA, the Project's construction phase has a material positive effect on household spending and labour income.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Direct economic effects → Indirect economic effects → Induced economic effects

The economy of the RSA is affected primarily indirectly during the Project's operations phase. While the direct support during operations and maintenance is forecast to be primarily provided from within the LSA, the RSA will likely be affected by the indirect industry supply chain requirements in this phase. The effects to the Project to the overall economy of the RSA during operations and maintenance will be much smaller than the effect during the construction phase.

If the LSA is unable to provide the full forecast direct inputs to the project, the economic effects to the RSA during operations and maintenance could increase.

A secondary effect to the RSA during operations and maintenance will be induced by the increased labour income associated with the indirect Project effects.

Table 15-56 presents the expected effects of the Project during the operations phase on the overall regional economy.

Table 15-56: Operations phase Annual Economic Effects of Project Expenditure on the RSA by Source of Economic Activity

Effect	GDP	Labour Income	Jobs
Direct	\$-	\$-	-
Indirect	\$115,516	\$72,198	1
Induced	\$30,942	\$12,524	0
Total	\$146,458	\$84,722	1

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

As the effects to the RSA are so relatively small, they have been presented at a regional level only, and not apportioned between the RSA communities.

The effects of the Project's operations phase on the overall economy in the RSA is very small and positive.

The Gross Domestic Product of the RSA is forecast to increase by \$146,458 per year related to indirect supply chain activities and economic activities induced due to increased labour and household spending during the Project's operations phase. This is a very small positive economic effect.

Project construction, clearing, and access requirements → Disruption of natural environment → Effect on the natural environment and land use → Effect on ability to participate in traditional economy



Project employment and expenditures → Increase in employment → Decrease in availability to participate in traditional economy

RSA community member's ability to participate in traditional economic activities such as hunting, trapping, and fishing, are not anticipated to be affected during the operations phase of the Project.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project labour, material, and equipment requirements → Business opportunities → New businesses / business growth

The operation, maintenance, and repair of road will provide employment and business income resulting from Project related activities. There will be increased household spending in the RSA communities.

The interaction with other VCs/subcomponents includes Housing and Temporary Accommodations (Section 14.2.2.2 and 14.3.2), and Overall Economy (Section 15.2.2.2 and 15.3.2).

Community enhancements and mitigative attributes include increased housing and increased services in the RSA communities.

During the operations phase, it is assumed that most annual income earned will be in the LSA and less than \$100,000 through direct, indirect, and induced Project related employment will be in the RSA (See Table 15-41). This income is attributed to approximately one employment position.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project employment and expenditures → Direct, indirect, and induced business / labour opportunities resulting from Project → Employment / business activity → Business / labour income → Increased household spending

Labour Income in the RSA is forecast to increase by \$84,722 per year during the Project's operations phase. This household spending will induce less than a quarter of a job. This is a very small positive economic effect and will unlikely be noticeable in the RSA.

Conclusion

Overall, there will be **low to negligible Project effect** on overall economy within the RSA. This effect is not carried forward for further assessment.

15.3.3. Change to Business Environment



Section 15.3.3 presents the potential effects of the Project on local businesses, including potential business development. This follows the TISG and ToR requirements and was also requested by Constance Lake First Nation, Ginoogaming First Nation, and Marten Falls First Nation during engagement and consultation activities.

This section provides an analysis of potential effects of the Project on the business environment of the LSA and the RSA. The following indicators are considered in the analysis of this section:

- **Main employers:** Understanding information on types of main employers, key industries and local construction businesses provides a picture of the community's economic landscape. It reflects sectors that drive local employment, economic strengths and areas of specialization within the community, areas for development, economic health, and development and infrastructure growth and potential. These are potential factors which impact economic opportunities and living standards.
- **Local economy:** Knowing the local economic conditions of a community provides an insight into the community's economic dynamics. The interconnectedness of local businesses of local businesses and reliance on each other for goods and services, government support for specific sections which

can drive growth and stability in industries, money flows within and out of community and local spending patterns, and economic patterns and shifts over time and prediction of future opportunities and challenges can be understood. Local economy helps assess a community's economic health, strengths and areas for improvement.

The Project could potentially impact local supply chains and potentially affect the local economic dynamics.

- **Mining, aggregate, and forestry activity:** This indicator provides a comprehensive view into a community's economic and environmental landscape. The scale and economic impact of the three industries, future and ongoing initiatives for growth, resource management, current levels of extraction activities, and environmental footprint and potential land use changes can be observed through this indicator.

The Project could potentially impact existing aggregate deposits through depletion or increased access, affect mining operations, and influence the mineral exploration industry. Additionally, there is a risk of uncontrolled access to mineral exploration areas with the new road.

15.3.3.1. Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → Employment opportunities → Increase in employment within industries

Webequie First Nation is heavily reliant on outside communities to meet the supply and demand for goods and services and community needs. Due to the remoteness of the community, there are supply chain challenges. In terms of jobs, public administration is the largest employment industry within the LSA with 147 jobs in Webequie First Nation in 2022. Of the 21 industries identified, there are seven present in Webequie First Nation.

Project employment and expenditures will result in employment opportunities and increased employment within industries in the Webequie community.

Based on the unemployment within Webequie and the current labour distributions between occupations, the projected distribution of the unemployed between occupation categories is estimated in the table below along with the Project occupational requirements and the forecasted ability of Webequie to fill the occupations. **Table 15-57** presents the estimated availability of labour, the Project demand, and estimated number of positions that will be filled by Webequie First Nation residents by NOC.

Table 15-57: Estimated Occupations of Unemployed, Project Labour Demand, and Estimated Labour Capture by NOC, Webequie First Nation

National Occupation Codes	Estimated Availability of Occupations Within Webequie First Nation	Total Project Occupation Requirement	Total Estimated Occupations Filled by Webequie First Nation Community
Legislative and senior management occupations	1	-	-
Business, finance, and administration occupations	2	6	6
Natural and applied sciences and related occupation	0	40	2
Health occupations	1	-	-
Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	3	-	-



National Occupation Codes	Estimated Availability of Occupations Within Webequie First Nation	Total Project Occupation Requirement	Total Estimated Occupations Filled by Webequie First Nation Community
Occupations in art, culture, recreation, and sport	0	-	-
Sales and service occupations	2	40	26
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	1	199	16
Natural resources, agriculture, and related production occupations	0	-	-
Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	0	-	-
Unclassified	0	-	-
Total Employment	10	285	50

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

It is projected that Webequie First Nation will be able to fill a total of 50 direct on-site employment positions over the course of the five-to-six-year construction period. Over 50% of this employment will be within the sales and service occupations category.

Construction activities → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Project transportation channels → Increased supply chain channels

Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements will result in Project transportation channels and increased supply chain channels within the Webequie community.

The interaction with other VCs/subcomponents includes Housing and Temporary Accommodations (Section 14.2.2.2 and 14.3.2), and Overall Economy (Section 15.2.2.2 and 15.3.2).

Construction activities → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Employment opportunities → Increased availability of skilled employees within aggregate and forestry

Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements will result in employment opportunities and the increased availability of skilled employees within aggregate and forestry in the Webequie community.

During the construction phase, there will be a potential increase in population, likely that non-local workers would not stay in the community permanently and would fly-in/out as needed.

Table 15-25 presents the projected number of FTE positions required during the construction phase for the forestry and logging and mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction industries. **Table 15-58** outlines the forecasted direct, indirect, and induced labour contribution of Webequie First Nation community members based on the project labour requirements, availability of industry specific labour, and current employment rates.

Table 15-58: Full-Time Equivalent Direct Project Related Employment, Webequie First Nation, Construction Phase

Labour Type	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Direct	10	10	10	10	10

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024



During construction, Webequie First Nation is estimated to fill approximately 10 direct employment positions which will be located on-site.

Construction activities → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Aggregate and forestry related requirements → Potential for local mining, aggregate, and forestry businesses to supply Project

Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements will enable the provision of aggregate and forestry related requirements. There will be the potential for local mining, aggregate, and forestry businesses to supply Project in the Webequie community. During the construction phase, there will be a potential increase in population, likely that non-local workers would not stay in the community permanently and would fly-in/out as needed in the Webequie community.

The interaction with other VCs/subcomponents includes Housing and Temporary Accommodations (Section 14.2.2.2 and 14.3.2), and Overall Economy (Section 15.2.2.2 and 15.3.2).

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project employment and expenditures → Employment opportunities → Increase in employment within industries

Project operations, expenditures, and employment opportunities will result in some increase in industry employment within the Webequie community. Based on the characteristics of the labour force, the forecast workforce capacity of the other LSA communities, and the presence of supply chain industries, the Webequie community is forecast to increase employment by 4 FTE positions (See Section 15.3.3).

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Potential to supply Project, bid on contracts, and meet Project needs

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Project transportation channels → Increased supply chain channels

The forecast labour, materials, and equipment requirement during the operations phase may result in very limited increased supply chain spending within the Webequie community, based on the limited presence of supply chain industries.

The forecast expenditures induced by labour income could create business opportunities to address increased household spending demand.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Mining, aggregate and forestry activities → Potential for local mining, aggregate, and forestry businesses to supply Project

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Employment opportunities → Increased availability of skilled employees within mining, aggregate and forestry

There may be some opportunity to provide needed aggregate during the operations phase. As the major forecast economic impact during operations is on in community labour employment. There are limited forecast impacts during the operations phase on the mining, aggregate, and forestry industries. In summary during the Project operations phase expenditures will result in limited business opportunities and increased employment with the Webequie community. The magnitude of these effects on the community are estimated to be low. These effects are estimated to last throughout the operations phase. There is a low significance of effects. The likelihood and predictive confidence of these effects are



deemed to be high. The interaction with other VCs/subcomponents includes Housing and Temporary Accommodations (Section 14.2.2.2 and 14.3.2) and the Overall Economy (**Section 15.2.2.2 and 15.3.2**).

Conclusion

Overall, there is **low to medium potential** for a positive increased change in the business environment of the Webequie First Nation as a result of the Project. The effect is carried forward to **Section 15.4** for further assessment.

15.3.3.2. Local Study Area: Other Communities

Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → Employment opportunities → Increase in employment within industries

The First Nation communities included in the other LSA communities are all heavily reliant on outside communities to meet their demand for goods and services. The other LSA communities are heavily dependent on larger outside communities to meet the supply and demand needs of the communities. As the other LSA communities are made up of remote First Nation communities there are supply chain challenges. In terms of jobs, public administration is the largest employment industry within the other LSA communities with a total of 635 jobs in 2022. Jobs within public administration make up 47% of all jobs in the other LSA communities. Of the 21 industries identified, there are 12 present within the whole of the other LSA communities.

Project employment and expenditures will result in employment opportunities and increased employment within industries in the other LSA communities.

The interaction with other VCs/subcomponents includes Housing and Temporary Accommodations (Section 14.2.2.2 and 14.3.2), and Overall Economy (**Section 15.2.2.2 and 15.3.2**).

Based on the unemployment within the other LSA communities and the current labour distributions between occupations, the projected distribution of the unemployed between occupation categories is estimated in the table below along with the Project occupational requirements and the forecasted ability of the other LSA communities to fill the occupations. **Table 15-59** presents the estimated availability of labour, the project demand, and estimated number of positions that will be filled by LSA residents by NOC.

Table 15-59: Estimated Occupations of Unemployed, Project Labour Demand, and Estimated Labour Capture by NOC, Other Local Study Area

National Occupation Code	Estimated Availability of Occupations Within LSA	Project Occupation Requirement	Estimated Occupations Filled by LSA Community
Legislative and senior management occupations	10	-	-
Business, finance, and administration occupations	40	6	-
Natural and applied sciences and related occupation	7	40	30
Health occupations	16	-	-

National Occupation Code	Estimated Availability of Occupations Within LSA	Project Occupation Requirement	Estimated Occupations Filled by LSA Community
Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	49	-	-
Occupations in art, culture, recreation, and sport	2	-	-
Sales and service occupations	32	40	14
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	18	199	78
Natural resources, agriculture, and related production occupations	3	-	-
Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	2	-	-
Unclassified	2	-	-
Total Employment	180	285	122

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

It is projected that the LSA will be able to fill a total of 122 direct on-site employment positions over the course of the five-to-six-year construction period. The majority of these positions will be within the sales and service occupations category at 64%.

Construction activities → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Potential to supply Project, bid on contracts, and meet Project needs

Construction activities → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Project transportation channels → Increased supply chain channels

Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements will result in Project transportation channels and increased supply chain channels within the other LSA communities.

The interaction with other VCs/subcomponents includes Housing and Temporary Accommodations (Section 14.2.2.2 and 14.3.2), and Overall Economy (Section 15.2.2.2 and 15.3.2).

Construction activities → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Employment opportunities → Increased availability of skilled employees within aggregate and forestry

Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements will result in employment opportunities and the increased availability of skilled employees within aggregate and forestry in the other LSA communities.

During the construction phase, there will be a potential increase in population, likely that non-local workers would not stay in the community permanently and would fly-in/out as needed in the Webequie community.

The interaction with other VCs/subcomponents includes Housing and Temporary Accommodations (Section 14.2.2.2 and 14.3.2), and Overall Economy (Section 15.2.2.2 and 15.3.2).

Table 15-60 presents the projected number of FTE positions required during the construction phase for the forestry and logging and mining and aggregate extraction industries in the other LSA communities.

Table 15-60: Direct Full-Time Equivalent Labour Requirements by Industry, Construction Phase, Other LSA Communities

Industry	Season	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Forestry and logging	Winter	8	2	-	-	-
	Summer	8	2	-	-	-
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	Winter	2	6	14	-	-
	Summer	27	12	8	-	-

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

Table 15-61 summarizes the potential LSA labour contribution for direct, indirect, and induced employment during the construction phase.

Table 15-61: Full-Time Equivalent Direct Project Employment, Other Local Study Area, Construction Phase, Other LSA Communities

Labour Type	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Direct	25	26	26	23	24

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

During construction, the LSA is estimated to fill approximately 23 to 26 direct employment positions per year, all of which will be located on-site. The LSA is not forecasted to capture any of the direct off-site work attributed to the Project. Due to the nature of the indirect work requirements, it is unlikely that other LSA communities will capture indirect employment related to the Project. Over the five to six -year construction period, 47 induced positions will be captured by LSA due to the influx of spend within the community. Induced employment will peak during the first year of construction with seven positions and lower to three by the end. The total FTE employment will be approximately 172 positions which averages to 34 per year.

Construction activities → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Aggregate and forestry related requirements → Potential for local mining, aggregate, and forestry businesses to supply Project

Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements will enable the provision of aggregate and forestry related requirements. There will be the potential for local mining, aggregate, and forestry businesses to supply the Project in the other LSA communities.

During the construction phase, there will be a potential increase in population, likely that non-local workers would not stay in the community permanently and would fly-in/out as needed in the Webequie community.

The interaction with other VC/subcomponents includes Housing and Temporary Accommodations (Section 14.2.2.2 and 14.3.2), and Overall Economy (**Section 15.2.2.2 and 15.3.2**).



Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project employment and expenditures → Employment opportunities → Increase in employment within industries

Project operations, expenditures, and employment opportunities will result in increases in industry employment within the other LSA communities. Based on the characteristics of the labour force, the forecast workforce capacity of the entire LSA communities, and the presence of supply chain industries, the other LSA communities are forecast to increase employment by 16 FTE positions (See **Section 15.3.1**). The other LSA communities are forecast to capture the majority of the direct employment.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Potential to supply Project, bid on contracts, and meet Project needs Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Project transportation channels → Increased supply chain channels

The forecast labour, materials, and equipment requirement during the operations phase may result in opportunities for supply chain spending within the other LSA communities.

The forecast expenditures induced by labour income could create business opportunities to address increased household spending demand.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Mining, aggregate and forestry activities → Potential for local mining, aggregate, and forestry businesses to supply

Project Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Employment opportunities → Increased availability of skilled employees within mining, aggregate and forestry

The Project may require supply chain inputs from the mining, aggregate and forestry industries during the operation. As the major forecast economic impact during operations is on in community labour employment. There are limited forecast impacts during the operations phase on the mining, aggregate, and forestry industries.

In summary during the Project operations phase expenditures will result in some business opportunities and increased employment within the other LSA communities. The magnitude of these effects on the community are estimated to be low. These effects are estimated to last throughout the operations phase. There is a low significance of effects. The likelihood and predictive confidence of these effects are deemed to be high. The interaction with other VCs/subcomponents includes Housing and Temporary Accommodations (Section 14.2.2.2 and 14.3.2), and Overall Economy (**Section 15.2.2.2** and **15.3.2**).

Conclusion

Overall, there is **low to medium potential** for a positive increased change in the business environment of the other LSA communities as a result of the Project. The effect is carried forward to **Section 15.4** for further assessment.



15.3.3.3. Regional Study Area

This section details the Project effects on the business environment in Thunder Bay, Kenora, and Cochrane during the construction and operations phases.

Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → Employment opportunities → Increase in employment within industries

Project employment and expenditures will result in employment opportunities and increased employment demand that can not fully be met within the LSA. Labour requirements will therefore need to be met by workers in the RSA.

Based on the number of positions that could not be met within the LSA and the size of industries within the RSA, the projected distribution of the unemployed between occupation categories is estimated in the table below along with the Project occupational requirements and the forecasted ability of Thunder Bay, Kenora, and Cochrane to fill the occupations. **Table 15-62** presents the estimated number of positions that will be filled by Thunder Bay, Kenora, and Cochrane by NOC.

Table 15-62: Estimated Labour Capture by NOC, Thunder Bay, Kenora, and Cochrane, Construction Phase

National Occupation Codes	Thunder Bay	Kenora	Cochrane
Legislative and senior management occupations	-	-	-
Business, finance, and administration occupations	-	-	-
Natural and applied sciences and related occupation	7	2	3
Health occupations	-	-	-
Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	-	-	-
Occupations in art, culture, recreation, and sport	-	-	-
Sales and service occupations	-	-	-
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	57	19	30
Natural resources, agriculture, and related production occupations	-	-	-
Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	-	-	-
Unclassified	-	-	-
Total Employment	64	21	32

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

It is projected that Thunder Bay will be able to fill a total of 64 direct on-site employment positions over the course of the five-to-six-year construction period. It is projected that Kenora will be able to fill a total of 21 direct on-site employment positions over the course of the five-to-six-year construction period. It is projected that Cochrane will be able to fill a total of 32 direct on-site employment positions over the course of the five-to-six-year construction period.

Table 15-63 outlines the forecasted direct labour contribution of the RSA based on the project labour requirements, availability of industry specific labour, and current employment rates.



Table 15-63: Full-Time Equivalent Direct Project Related Employment, Thunder Bay, Kenora, Cochrane, Construction Phase

Labour Type	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Thunder Bay	14	35	32	8	9
Kenora	5	12	10	3	3
Cochrane	7	18	16	4	5

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

During construction, Thunder Bay is estimated to fill approximately 8 to 35 direct employment positions depending on the year which will be located on-site. Kenora is estimated to fill between 3 and 12 direct employment positions which will be located on-site. Cochrane is estimated to fill approximately 18 to 4 direct employment positions which will be located on-site. The peak employment for Thunder Bay, Kenora, and Cochrane will occur during the second year of construction (assumed to be 2029) and the lowest requirement will come in year four (assumed to be 2031).

Construction activities → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Project transportation channels → Increased supply chain channels

It is estimated that some of the Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements will result in Project transportation channels and increased supply chain channels within the RSA due to the limited capacities available in LSA communities.

The interaction with other subcomponents includes the Overall Economy (**Section 15.2.2.2 and 15.3.2**).

Construction activities → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Employment opportunities → Increased availability of skilled employees within aggregate and forestry

Construction activities → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Aggregate and forestry related requirements → Potential for local mining, aggregate, and forestry businesses to supply Project

Considering the scale of the RSA considered under the assessment, and current conditions of most of the RSA communities, it is estimated that Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements will result in low employment opportunities within aggregate and forestry in the RSA. As such it is not predicted to have a significant effect on the RSA's availability of skilled employees within aggregate and forestry industry.

Additionally, as the LSA communities have limited capacities in terms of local mining, aggregate, and forestry businesses to supply the WSR, a degree of the Project's requirements will be met by businesses in the RSA.

The interaction with other VC/subcomponents includes Housing and Temporary Accommodations (Section 14.2.2.2 and 14.3.2), and Overall Economy (**Section 15.2.2.2 and 15.3.2**).

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project employment and expenditures → Employment opportunities → Increase in employment within industries

There is an anticipated negligible effect from the Project during the operations phase at the RSA, considering the scale of the RSA and requirements of the Project predicted to be supplied through the LSA communities.



Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Project transportation channels → Increased supply chain channels

There is a negligible impact from Project supply chain spending during the operations phases of the Project. The relatively larger RSA is forecast to capture a very small portion of supply chain spending.

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Mining, aggregate and forestry activities → Potential for local mining, aggregate, and forestry businesses to supply Project

Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Employment opportunities → Increased availability of skilled employees within mining, aggregate and forestry

The lack of Project employment and supply chain spending within the RSA means there is likely no impact on mining, aggregates, and forestry industries.

During the Project operations phase expenditures will result in negligible business opportunities and very limited increases in employment within the RSA communities. The magnitude of these effects on the community are estimated to be low. These effects are estimated to last throughout the operations phase. There is a low significance of effects. The likelihood and predictive confidence of these effects are deemed to be high. The interaction with other VCs/subcomponents includes Housing and Temporary Accommodations (Section 14.2.2.2 and 14.3.2), and Overall Economy (Section 15.2.2.2 and 15.3.2).

Conclusion

Overall, there will be **low to negligible Project effect** on overall economy within the RSA. This effect is not carried forward for further assessment.

15.3.4. Change to Public and Indigenous Community Finance



Section 15.3.4 presents the potential effects of the Project on public and Indigenous finances. This follows the TISG and ToR requirements and was also requested by Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, Attawapiskat First Nation, Mushkegowuk Tribal Council, Neskantaga First Nation and Weenusk First Nation during engagement and consultation activities.

The potential effect of the Project on change in public and Indigenous community finances has following indicators that have been identified:

- **Public and Indigenous community finances:** Understanding a community's financial health and resource allocation is revealed through this indicator. Aspects such as the community's capacity to generate revenue through taxation, financial support availability, overall financial inflow, and revenue allocation within a community can be understood through this indicator. Project's impact on the community's economic stability, development potential and financial management can be assessed through this indicator. The Project could lead to adjustments in government spending and generate tax revenue.

15.3.4.1. Local Study Area: Webequie First Nation

At the time of this assessment, details on Webequie First Nation's role in the construction and operation of the WSR are not available. It is assumed however, that any commitments that Webequie First Nation makes that have expense obligations with regard to the construction and operation of the WSR, will be paired with agreements between the province and Webequie First Nation for matching amounts of revenue. As a result, it is anticipated that there will be no negative effects on Webequie First Nation's public finance from the Project.

In terms of community readiness planning, Webequie First Nation has identified community services and infrastructure needs in its Comprehensive Community Plan and other planning documents. In order for the community to meaningfully participate in the Project and experiences benefits, Project enhancements related to community services and infrastructure are discussed in **Section 15.4.4**.

Conclusion

The Project effect on Public and Indigenous Community Finance is **negligible** within the Webequie First Nation. This effect is not carried forward for further assessment.

15.3.4.2. Local Study Area: Other Communities

At the time of this assessment, details on the role of the other LSA communities in the construction and operation of the WSR are not available. It is assumed however, that any commitments that the First Nation communities make that have expense obligations with regard to the construction and operation of the WSR, will be paired with agreements between the province and the applicable communities for matching amounts of revenue. As a result, it is anticipated that there will be no negative effects on public finance from the Project on these First Nation communities.

Conclusion

The Project effect on Public and Indigenous Community Finance is **negligible** within the other LSA communities. This effect is not carried forward for further assessment.

15.3.4.3. Regional Study Area

Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → Employment opportunities → Increased availability of disposable income → Increase in tax revenues

Project Regional Study Area

There are no potential public finance effects for the RSA communities related to the Project. The Districts of Kenora, Thunder Bay, and Cochrane are census divisions comprised of several municipalities with individual community finances.

Ontario

At the time of this assessment, details on the province's responsibility and ownership of the WSR is not available. Regardless of this, the province will be responsible for the cost of construction, operation and maintenance of the WSR, whether they are directly or indirectly responsible (e.g., funding through one or more First Nations, or an economic development structure).



It is anticipated that the total provincial cost for the construction of the WSR will be \$663,444,420 (Sigfusson Northern Ltd., 2023), with the duration of construction being five to six years. **Table 15-64** provides the total direct project expenditures by year during the construction phase of the Project. Per **Table 15-64** below, the operational cost of the WSR to the province is anticipated to be \$3,258,178 annually, and \$32,581,780 total is forecasted over 10 years (Avaanz Ltd., 2024).

The majority of expenses will be in year 1 and year 2 with over 60% of expenses occurring during this time. **Table 15-64** provides the forecasted direct Project expenses and distribution by year during construction.

Table 15-64: Forecasted Direct Project Expenses by Year, Construction Phase

Year	Direct Expense	Distribution
Year 1	\$238,012,932	36%
Year 2	\$172,253,392	26%
Year 3	\$116,339,482	18%
Year 4	\$73,840,726	11%
Year 5	\$62,997,888	9%
Total	\$663,444,419	100%

Source: Sigfusson Northern Ltd., 2023

The majority of expenses will be in year 1 and year 2 with over 60% of expenses occurring during this time. **Table 15-65** provides the forecasted direct Project labour expenses and distribution by year during construction.

Table 15-65: Forecasted Direct Project Labour Expenses by Year, Construction Phase

Year	Direct Expense	Distribution
Year 1	\$19,113,114	15%
Year 2	\$31,972,568	25%
Year 3	\$33,770,007	26%
Year 4	\$25,013,157	19%
Year 5	\$19,709,240	15%
Total	\$129,578,086	100%

Source: Sigfusson Northern Ltd., 2023

The majority of expenses will be in year 1 and year 2 with over 60% of expenses occurring during this time.

Table 15-66 provides the Project contingency expenses that may be incurred during construction. Contingency activities that are expected to incur the highest expenses are silt fencing, demobilization, and equipment standby.



Table 15-66: Estimated Project Operations and Maintenance Expenses

	Direct Project Expenditure – Operations and Maintenance
Annual	\$3,258,178
10-Year Forecast	\$32,581,780

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

The province will receive tax revenue associated with direct¹, indirect², and induced³ economic activity generated as a result of the Project during construction and operations phases. **Table 15-67** shows the estimated provincial tax revenue associated with economic activity over the 15-year time period for construction (five to six years) and operations and maintenance (10 years) of the WSR. Even with the estimated total provincial tax revenue of \$11,136,419, the cost of construction, operations and maintenance of the WSR exceeds the total tax revenue generated and will have a negative effect on provincial public finance.

Table 15-67: Effect of the Project on Provincial Tax Revenue Over a 15-year Time Period (5 Years of Construction + 10 Years of Operations and Maintenance)

Effect Level	Provincial Tax Revenue
Direct	\$3,480,131
Indirect	\$696,026
Induced	\$6,960,262
Total	\$11,136,419

Source: Sigfusson Northern Ltd., 2023

The majority of expenses will be in year 1 and year 2 with over 60% of expenses occurring during this time.

Table 15-68 provides the Project contingency expenses that may be incurred during construction. Contingency activities that are expected to incur the highest expenses are silt fencing, demobilization, and equipment standby.

¹ Direct: The direct multiplier measures the initial requirements for a unit of output by an industry. It may also be referred to as an industry input coefficient.

² Indirect: The indirect multiplier is defined as the simple multiplier less the corresponding direct multiplier. The simple multiplier measures the total value of production required from all industries across all stages of production to produce one unit of output for final use.

³ Induced: The induced multiplier measures the value of production driven by household expenditures associated with labour income (for example, wages) generated from the direct and indirect effects. Induced effects tend to exaggerate the impacts of final expenditures within a one-year production cycle.

Table 15-68: Project Contingency Expenses, Construction Phase

Contingency Activity	Value
Equipment Standby	\$3,367,960
Winter Road Access Construction	\$2,958,789
Turnaround Construction	\$1,279,250
Turnaround Removal	\$505,750
Silt Fencing	\$5,437,800
Demobilization	\$3,999,556
Fish Habitat Restoration (Cash Allowance)	\$1,250,000

Source: Sigfusson Northern Ltd., 2023

Canada

The WSR Project does not have a pathway that would create additional costs for the federal government. The federal government will receive tax revenue associated with direct, indirect, and induced economic activity generated as a result of the Project during construction and operations phases. **Table 15-69** shows the estimated federal tax revenue associated with economic activity over the 15-year time period for construction (five years) and operations and maintenance (10 years) of the WSR. As there is no pathway for additional federal costs, the WSR will have a positive effect on federal public finance with the estimated federal tax revenue it will generate.

Table 15-69: Effect of the Project on Federal Tax Revenue Over a 15-year Time Period (5 Years of Construction + 10 Years of Operations and Maintenance)

Effect Level	Federal Tax Revenue
Direct	\$8,352,314
Indirect	\$2,088,078
Induced	\$8,352,314
Total	\$18,792,707

Source: Avaanz Ltd., 2024

Operation, maintenance and repair of road → Employment opportunities → Increased availability of disposable income → Increase in tax revenues

The annual expenses directly related to the Project are estimated at approximately \$3.26 million. This value has been estimated based on the 2020 Statistics Canada input-output multipliers for the repair construction industry. Using the multipliers to solve for output when jobs are equal to one gives an estimate of the spend involved in creating one job within the industry. With a projected direct workforce of 25 during operations this value can be applied to create an estimate of the annual operations spend.

Table 15-70 presents the reported 2020 Statistics Canada input-output multipliers for the repair construction industry as well as the calculated rate for one job.



Table 15-70: Repair Construction Industry Multipliers

Multiplier	Output	Jobs (per output value)
Statistics Canada Multiplier	\$1	0.000007673
Calculated Rate	\$130,327	1

Sources: Statistics Canada, 2023; Avaanz Ltd., 2024

Conclusion

Overall, there is predicted to have a **low effect** on Public and Indigenous Community Finance in the RSA during the construction and operations phase. This effect is not carried forward for further assessment.

15.3.5. Summary

Below is a summary of conclusions made for each of the identified potential effects by VC subcomponents. Potential effects that were assessed as having a medium to high potential to occur were carried forward to **Section 15.4** for further assessment. Potential effects that were assessed as negligible or with no potential to occur were not carried forward in the assessment. **Table 15-71** summarizes the potential effect pathways and effect indicators for Regional and Local Economy VC.

Table 15-71: Potential Effects, Pathways and Indicators for Regional and Local Economy Valued Component

Potential Effect	Study Area	Potential for Occurrence	Carry Forward in Assessment?
Change in Labour Force, Employment and Income	LSA: Webequie	Medium	Yes
	LSA: other communities	Medium	Yes
	RSA	Low	No
Change in Overall Economy	LSA: Webequie	Medium	Yes
	LSA: other communities	Medium	Yes
	RSA	Low	No
Change in Business Environment	LSA: Webequie	Low to medium	Yes
	LSA: other communities	Low to medium	Yes
	RSA	Low	No
Change in Public and Indigenous Community Finance	LSA: Webequie	Negligible	No
	LSA: other communities	Negligible	No
	RSA	Low	Yes

15.4. Mitigation and Enhancement Measures

Based on activity and interactive pathways described in **Section 15.3**, the Regional and Local Economy VC is anticipated to experience potential effects arising from the Project. Where project effects are anticipated to have a positive influence on Webequie First Nation and the other LSA communities, no mitigation measures are required. If positive effects are anticipated, commitments to support the beneficial effect are included. Alternatively, where project effects may result in unfavourable changes to



the economic environment, mitigation measures are provided in the below subsections to reduce, limit, control or eliminate an unfavourable effect.

The following subsections describe key mitigation (or enhancement) measures outlined in the Community Readiness Plan (Appendix N of the EAR/IS). These mitigation measures have been developed in consideration of the community strategies developed by Webequie First Nation and reflects the values and principles of the community. Further related measures will be provided in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and the Operation Environmental Management Plan (OEMP) that will be developed for the Project. Refer to Section 4.6 for details of the proposed framework for the development of the CEMP and the OEMP.

15.4.1. Labour Force, Employment, and Income

Although there are no negative effects associated with this subcomponent, the following aspects are provided as enhancement measures under the Project for the social and economic well-being of Webequie First Nation and other Indigenous communities.

Indigenous People, particularly men, are employed in the natural resources sector in higher numbers than the general Canadian population (Statistics Canada, 2017b; 2018). Indigenous women, and female youth in particular, have a higher level of post-secondary completion rates (FNIGC, 2021), but report barriers to employment in the natural resources sector (NWAC, 2025). Similarly, construction workforces are predominantly composed of men and present various barriers to female participation. Indigenous women in Webequie face barriers to employment that include gender norms, familial responsibilities and lack of childcare options, discrimination, and risks to their personal safety (Dalseg et al., 2018). Additionally, Indigenous women may face lack of work experience and lack of appropriate skill sets or education in order to take advantage of Project related employment opportunities (NWAC, 2025).

“Most females don't want to work in construction, but some do. So, it depends on the field that they want to get into like construction related work like accommodations, hospitality, maintenance in the camp. I think everybody can greatly benefit from that. Also, the spin off, when you have young families that are wanting to work, we're going to need daycare, somewhere for the kids to go. Even those people are going to need training and need to go to school, early childhood education, first aid and stuff like that.” (AtkinsRéalisis Inc., 2022b)

“Everybody in the community is affected by the issues in the community, including the lack of homes and overcrowded nature of homes. Women are affected by raising their kids, while Elders in the homes deal with negative feelings, including feeling sad and worried.” (AtkinsRéalisis Inc., 2022b)

Lack of work experience is a greater barrier for Indigenous women than men (Statistics Canada, 2018). Work experience is also a major barrier for Indigenous youth. Nearly 75% of Aboriginal Youth Employment and Training Survey participants agreed that lack of specific work experience prevents them from becoming employed (NWAC, 2025). As described in **Section 15.3.1**, the present skill set and education of the Webequie labour force is not well-positioned to take advantage of Project related employment.

Proposed measures are recommended to help underrepresented Webequie groups overcome various barriers to employment and increase diversity in the project workforce while supporting the sustainability of Webequie members beyond the Project. These include:



- Procurement policies for the recruitment, development, and retention of underrepresented groups (i.e., women, Indigenous Peoples, minorities) of Webequie First Nation, other LSA communities and the RSA in the Project. This may include setting Mandatory Minimum Indigenous Requirements to hit targets for employment of specific groups like women and youth.
- Creation and implementation of workplace policies and programs, including a diversity and inclusion strategy, zero-tolerance policies for racism and workplace violence, codes of conduct, workplace safety programs and cultural training programs (e.g., Indigenous Awareness Training), as a means to retain employees through positive work experience.
- Supporting full-time paid employment of underrepresented groups (i.e., youth and women) through opportunities such as job shadowing, mentorship programs, and paid internships to improve employment outcomes, such as Indigenous women as mentors to junior female employees.
- To the extent practicable, ensuring working shifts and hours consider childcare responsibilities to help remove barriers to employment for women.
- Policies supporting flexibility in work schedule and/or opportunities for leave for Indigenous employees in order to support important cultural practices, such as harvesting which may allow them to continue to participate in the traditional economy (i.e., hunting, trapping, fishing).
- Screening of employees during hiring process for suitability for shift work as well as educating potential employees on shift work and its potential effects on way of life.
- Continued engagement and improvements to workforce with North Superior Workforce Planning Board efforts for supporting Webequie First Nation and Marten Falls First Nation youth and workforce members via the Employment Readiness Strategic Plan (North Superior Workforce Planning Board, n.d.). Improved access to education and employment opportunities will result in increased engagement and opportunities for employment for the community members, especially with the job openings available through WSR.

The Project will carry out appropriate environmental and cultural awareness training to all personnel involved in the Project, as described in Section 04 of the EAR/IS. An 'Environmental and Cultural Awareness and Education Plan' will be included as a component of the CEMP and will include inputs and feedback from Indigenous Knowledge holders and will provide information for the orientation.

Additional information on employment and economic development is provided in the CRP (Appendix N).

15.4.2. Overall Economy

15.4.2.1. Traditional Economy

The proponent and its contractors will have procurement policies that allow Webequie First Nation and other LSA community members flexibility in their work schedules. Procurement policies that ensure suppliers provide schedule flexibility for community members of Webequie First Nation and other LSA communities to have time available to participate in the traditional economy.

Flexibility in community members' work schedules would allow them to continue to engage in traditional economy activities, such as harvesting, hunting, and other cultural activities (InterGroup, 2024). Flexible work schedules and consideration for community member involvement within culturally specific activities will allow for workers continued involvement in the traditional economy. Traditional economies play an important role in the health and well-being within First Nation communities and therefore must be taken into account in economic development strategies. Allowing for flexible schedules will incentivise community member involvement in the Project as their involvement in traditional economy activities will be affected to a lesser degree.



Environmental issues and the social and economic well-being of Webequie First Nation and other Indigenous communities were considered in the earliest stages of Project planning and design and is an integral part of Webequie First Nation's overall approach for developing the Project. This approach allows for potential issues and interactions to be identified early so they can be considered in a proactive manner through appropriate Project planning and design. The objectives are to avoid adverse effects where possible and, where they cannot be avoided, establish mitigation measures to reduce potential effects to acceptable levels.

To the extent practical, the Project design incorporated the following design considerations, while also considering technical and cost factors:

- Minimize the length of the road to the degree possible and practical;
- Avoid difficult or poor-quality terrain, where possible and/or practical;
- Minimize the requirements for access roads and other supportive infrastructure;
- Minimize waterbody crossings;
- Avoid or minimize effects to identified sensitive land and resource use areas of value or interest to Indigenous communities;
- Avoid interactions with designated environmentally sensitive areas or critical habitats for wildlife, where practical; and
- Avoid and/or minimize effects to areas and sites of known archaeological and/or cultural heritage importance.

Following completion of construction, areas outside the Project Footprint of the WSR will be restored by the proponent, minimizing lasting effects on the ability of Webequie community members to engage in the traditional economy.

15.4.2.2. Capacity for Other Projects

The Webequie community had plans for an airport redevelopment study with the goal to make Webequie Airport a hub for the Ring of Fire so the community would get contracts to haul materials to the site by the winter road system (AtkinsRéalis, 2022a). There have been initial thoughts on how a variety of projects could have synergies with the Project to bring further benefits to the community. The road development will be helpful for the community to further support their economic planning objectives and bring new industries into the community (e.g., hospitality and transportation companies) (AtkinsRéalis Inc, 2022a). These investments in infrastructure along with training and increased experience of the workforce will increase Webequie First Nation's capacity for addressing other projects in the future.

15.4.3. Business Environment



Section 15.4.3 presents the proposed mitigation and enhancement measures related to economic growth potential designed using feedback from First Nations. The mitigation and enhancement measures are intended to be compatible with IKLRU information received including Webequie First Nation's CCP and On-Reserve Land Use Plan.

Although there are no negative effects associated with this subcomponent, the following aspects are provided as enhancement measures under the Project for the social and economic well-being of Webequie First Nation and other Indigenous communities.



Indigenous procurement improves the well-being of Indigenous People and plays a key role in closing the economic gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous People (CCAB, 2021 as cited in InterGroup, 2024). Building business relationships through sustainable and meaningful participation of local and Indigenous-owned businesses supports the process of reconciliation by acknowledging the rights of Webequie as the hosting community (Mines Canada, 2024 as cited in InterGroup, 2024). The procurement of goods and services from local and Indigenous-owned businesses is critical for economic development in the community, as goods and services compose the largest flow of finances from a project to a host (InterGroup, 2024). Procurement of local and Indigenous businesses also helps build their capacity and competitiveness for sustainability into the future, creating benefits for the community, including employment of community members (InterGroup, 2024).

Procurement policies for Indigenous-owned businesses can be daunting for some Indigenous owners, such as those that are new (Government of Canada, 2024 as cited in InterGroup, 2024). Having robust procurement policies in place will create a safe environment for local and Indigenous businesses, and they will be more inclined to participate and grow the businesses, which in turn will be a critical opportunity for the success of the business and the community. Procurement policies will create a stimulating environment for First Nations and community members to initiate new Project supply chain businesses and participate in profits of supply chain market. Although there are limited existing businesses available to participate in the Project supply chain, new Webequie First Nation and other LSA businesses can be formed to supply goods and services to the Project (InterGroup, 2024). If the required goods and services are not able to be directly supplied by the new companies, the new community-based companies can subcontract to provide these services and still participate in the Project supply chain (InterGroup, 2024).

As a component of the Project's planned mitigation measures, contractors that will be involved in the Project must establish and enforce formal policies for local and Indigenous hiring and procurement during the Project's construction. These policies should outline strategies to enhance local and Indigenous employment in line with industry best practices. The prime Contractor will provide an annual report to the proponent on recruitment, retention, and local and Indigenous hiring to assess progress, measure policy effectiveness, and address any challenges. The proponent will continue collaborating with Indigenous communities and organizations to explore employment and contracting opportunities related to the Project. Further details regarding this mitigation measure are provided in Appendix E – Mitigation Measures.

Proposed measures that may be taken by the proponent to procure local and Indigenous businesses for the Project include:

- Provide advanced notice of procurement opportunities (e.g., public announcements, advertisements) and establish clear and equitable certification processes for local and Indigenous businesses (Mines Canada, 2024; CCAB 2021). This would include providing a clear definition and requirements of local and Indigenous businesses and/or asking Webequie First Nation to define eligibility criteria for their businesses, maintaining a list of qualified businesses, increasing the time to submit bids, and reducing technical requirements in order to reduce barriers for Indigenous business participation and encourage new Indigenous business owners (ISC, 2019).
- Procurement policies for joint ventures with Indigenous-owned entities. Joint ventures would benefit Indigenous businesses by providing the financial and human resources support that may be required to carry out a contract that they otherwise may not be capable of participating in (Mines Canada, 2024). However, for Indigenous partners to benefit, Indigenous ownership (i.e., at least 51%) and retention of majority gross profit margin by the Indigenous partner must be evident and monitored (ISC, 2019; CCAB, 2021).

- Set-aside procurement, whereby certain contracts are set-aside for local and Indigenous businesses to guarantee procurement opportunities by limiting competition (Mines Canada, 2024; OPO, 2023). Due to the limited number of existing businesses in Webequie, set-aside procurement may be conditional as it is uncertain whether local and Indigenous businesses have the capacity to fulfill the contract (OPO, 2023).
- Provide options for scalable contracts and training. Providing scalable contracts and options for training to develop skills would aid reduce barriers to participation and help build capacity of local and Indigenous businesses to increase opportunities with the Project as well as support their sustainability beyond the Project (CCAB, 2021; ISC 2019).

15.4.4. Public and Indigenous Community Finances



Section 15.4.4 presents the public and Indigenous finances mitigation measures. This follows the TISG and ToR requirements and was also as requested by Attawapiskat First Nation, Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario, Mushkegowuk Tribal Council, Neskantaga First Nation and Weenusk First Nation during engagement and consultation activities.

The construction and operations of the WSR will be a cost to the provincial government, and no mitigation or enhancement measures are proposed.

As the federal tax revenue generated as a result of the WSR will have a positive effect on federal public finance, no mitigation or enhancement measures are proposed.

Currently, Webequie First Nation either does not have the community assets to best participate in the Project economically and best capture its benefits, or their assets are not in a condition that would allow Webequie First Nation to participate fully (Radloff and Saulteaux, 2023). While key capital performance indicators derived from Webequie First Nation's financial statements suggest that asset condition is relatively good, and that capital investment is exceeding depreciation in assets, this is countermanded by the findings of the Extended Asset Condition Reporting System (E-ACRS) report. The financial statements likely have understated the real depreciation of capital assets and fail to account for inflation. To allow Webequie First Nation to best participate in the Project and capture its benefits, enhancement of community assets is proposed. Action items from Webequie First Nation 2023 CCP include projects with a total cost of \$60 million that include the development, repair and enhancement of community assets that will in turn enhance community capital and enable the community to (Webequie First Nation, 2023):

- Increase the size of the workforce and have higher workforce participation rates;
- Decrease barriers for community members to achieve higher educational attainment;
- Create space from Project related on-reserve training and train and develop skills that will allow the community to fill more employment roles;
- Increase opportunities and lower barriers for community members to participate in cultural activities;
- Sustain worker participation in the traditional economy; and
- Have more business and administration capacity to develop entrepreneurship, partnership and supply relationships to benefit from the Project.



These new and upgraded community assets will not only enable Webequie First Nation to better participate in the benefits of the WSR, but they will also allow Webequie First Nation to participate in future regional economic opportunities positively affecting the community's financial position. See **Table 15-72** for potential Project related interactions with CCP action items and how the enhancement measures will positively affect the community and in turn Webequie First Nation's public finance.



Table 15-72 presents the Project related interactions with CCP action items, reflecting the review of the CCP as part of the socio-economic baseline study and integration into the EA/IA, as requested by ENDM and Webequie First Nation during engagement and consultation activities.

Table 15-72: Potential Project Related Interactions with Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) Action Items⁴

CCP Action Items	VC Subcomponent	Indicators	Related Mitigation and Enhancement Measures	Potential Effects
Add a high school building.	Labour Force and Employment	Labour market participation; Skilled workforce; Training opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate barriers to workforce participation. Webequie First Nation on-reserve training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase size of workforce and participation rate. Decreases barriers for community members to achieve a higher educational attainment. Creates a space for Project related on-reserve training.
Build a cultural/recreation centre/ arena.	Overall economy Labour Force and Employment	Traditional economy; Training opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Webequie First Nation on-reserve training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates a space for Project related on-reserve training. Increases opportunities and lowers barriers for community members to participate in cultural activities. Sustained worker participation in the traditional economy.
Start a craft co-operative and develop a craft shop.	Overall economy Business environment Labour Force and Employment	Training opportunities; Traditional economy; GDP; New and existing business activity; Employment, business, and household income.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Webequie First Nation on-reserve training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential to function as a business training opportunity, developing entrepreneurship skills and bookkeeping. Increased likelihood that the communities will see benefit to the business environment. Creates a space for Project related on-reserve training. Potential for local vendors to benefit from the increase in community population during construction.

⁴ Note, this table does not include all of the action items identified in the CCP, and some items have been combined for ease of reporting.



CCP Action Items	VC Subcomponent	Indicators	Related Mitigation and Enhancement Measures	Potential Effects
Study different types of housing and upgrade water, sewer and energy systems.	Labour Force and Employment	Labour market participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase the quantity and quality of housing. ▪ Investigate barriers to workforce participation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improvements to housing and infrastructure will allow more community members to enter and participate in the workforce. ▪ Increases potential for Webequie First Nation community members living off-reserve to return to the community and participate in the Project.
Cultural and Environmental Related Activities and Projects. (Continue to hold camping and canoe trips; hold cultural and recreation activities. environmental stewardship; do community cleanups and landscaping projects).	Overall economy Labour Force and Employment	Traditional economy; Training opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Procurement policies that ensure flexible work schedule. ▪ Webequie First Nation on-reserve training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sustained worker participation in the traditional economy.
Education, Training, and Program Improvements (hold life skills workshops; coordinate detox and aftercare program; increased office and programming space; start community garden program and build a community greenhouse).	Labour Force and Employment	Labour market participation; Training opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Investigate barriers to workforce participation. ▪ Webequie First Nation on-reserve training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increases the likelihood of community members joining the workforce and supplying the Project. ▪ Creates a space for Project related on-reserve training.
Start a daycare.	Labour Force and Employment	Labour market participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Investigate barriers to workforce participation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increases ability of caretakers to participate in the workforce and supply Project labour. ▪ Employment opportunity within facility.
Build an Elder's home.	Labour Force and Employment	Labour market participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Investigate barriers to workforce participation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increases ability of caretakers to participate in the workforce and supply the Project. ▪ Employment opportunity within facility.



CCP Action Items	VC Subcomponent	Indicators	Related Mitigation and Enhancement Measures	Potential Effects
Build community sawmill.	Business environment Overall economy Labour Force and Employment	Supply chain; Project related employment; labour force participation; Employment income; Skilled workforce; Training opportunities. Capacity for other projects; GDP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Procurement policies that favourably consider Webequie First Nation and other LSA businesses. ▪ Webequie First Nation on-reserve training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increases training and employment opportunities which could be applicable to the Project. ▪ Increased community participation in the supply chain. ▪ Increased likelihood that the communities will see benefit to the business environment. ▪ Increased size of GDP through increase labour participation and increased supply chain participation. ▪ Increased household spending from increased labour income. ▪ Increased capacity of community workforce and supply chain for future projects.
Community Health Facility and related projects.	Labour Force and Employment	Labour market participation; Skilled workforce; Training opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase the quantity and quality of housing. ▪ Investigate barriers to workforce participation. ▪ Webequie First Nation on-reserve training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increases ability of caretakers to participate in the workforce and supply Project labour. ▪ Improvements to housing and infrastructure will allow more community members to enter and participate in the workforce. ▪ Increases potential for Webequie First Nation community members living off-reserve to return to the community and participate in the Project. ▪ Increased community participation in industries.



CCP Action Items	VC Subcomponent	Indicators	Related Mitigation and Enhancement Measures	Potential Effects
Open a community-owned grocery store.	Business environment Labour Force and Employment Overall economy	Supply chain; Project related employment; labour force participation. Employment income; GDP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement policies that favourably consider Webequie First Nation and other LSA businesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased community participation in the supply chain. Increased likelihood that the communities will see benefit to the business environment. Community employment opportunities.
Expanding Community Core Capacity including expanding/repairing band office, band hall, and community kitchen building.	Labour Force and Employment Overall economy	Labour market participation. Employment and household income. Community feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow-up and monitoring programs. Updated policies and procedures. Webequie First Nation on-reserve training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased opportunities for community members to provide Project related feedback and voice concerns. Community employment opportunities. Creates a space for Project related on-reserve training.



15.4.5. Summary

Table 15-73 identifies key mitigation measures to eliminate, reduce potential adverse effects, or enhance positive effects of the Project for Regional and Local Economy VC as identified in **Section 15.3**. Further measures are provided in the CRP (Appendix N), as well as the CEMP and OEMP component plans.

Table 15-73: Summary of Potential Effects, Mitigation Measures and Predicted Net Effects for Regional and Local Economy VC

VC Subcomponent	Indicators	Project Phase (C, O)*	Project Component or Activity	Potential Effect	Mitigation and Enhancement Measures	Predicted Net Effect
Labour force, employment and income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Labour market participation; ▪ Skilled workforce; and ▪ Employment income. 	C, O	All construction and operation and maintenance activities.	Change in Labour Force and Employment.	<p>Subcomponent results in positive effects due to employment and expenditures. Following mitigation measures are included for social and economic well-being of communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Environmental and Cultural Awareness and Education provided to Project personnel. 	Yes (positive only).
Overall economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GDP; ▪ Traditional Indigenous Economy; ▪ Cost of living; and ▪ Economic development. 	C, O	All construction and operation and maintenance activities.	Change in overall economy.	<p>Subcomponent results in positive effects due to increased employment and business opportunities and increased expenditures. Following mitigation measures are included for enhancing Project benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Procurement policies that favourably consider Webequie First Nation and other LSA businesses; ▪ Construction Effect Management for effects on natural environment; and ▪ Dynamic and Sustainable Approach for Project Planning and Design. 	<p>Yes (positive mainly). Yes (adverse effect on traditional Indigenous economy).</p>



VC Subcomponent	Indicators	Project Phase (C, O)*	Project Component or Activity	Potential Effect	Mitigation and Enhancement Measures	Predicted Net Effect
Business environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Main employers; ▪ Local economy; and ▪ Mining, aggregate, and forestry activities. 	C, O	All construction and operation and maintenance activities.	Change in business environment.	<p>Subcomponent results in positive effects due to increased opportunities for business development and growth. Following mitigation measures are included for enhancing Project benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Procurement Policies that consider Webequie and Local Study Area Businesses. 	Yes (positive only).
Public and Indigenous community finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tax base; ▪ Indigenous community funding/ grants; ▪ Revenues (taxes, transfers, grants etc.); and ▪ Public expenditures. 	C, O	All construction and operation and maintenance activities.	Change in revenue and tax conditions.	Enhancement measures are proposed to improve community readiness of Webequie First Nation and other LSA communities, as needed. Refer to Section 15.4.4 for a discussion of potential enhancement measures from CCP action items.	Yes (positive only).

* C = Construction; O = Operations



15.5. Characterization of Net Effects

This section characterizes the predicted net effects on Regional and Local Economy VC.

The effects assessment follows the general process described in Section 05 (Environmental Assessment / Impact Assessment Approach). The focus of the effects assessment is on predicted net effects, which are the effects that remain after application of the proposed mitigation measures (**Section 15.4.5**).

Table 15-74 presents definitions for net effects criteria, developed with specific reference to the Regional and Local Economy VC. These criteria are considered together in the assessment, along with context derived from existing conditions (**Section 15.2**), description of effects (**Section 15.3**), and proposed mitigation measures (**Section 15.4**), to characterize predicted net effects from the Project on the economic environment (**Section 15.5.2**).

Table 15-74: Criteria for Characterization of Predicted Net Effects on Regional and Local Economy VC

Characterization Criteria	Description	Quantitative Measure or Definition of Qualitative Categories
Direction	Direction relates to the value of the effect in relation to the existing conditions.	<p>Positive – Net gain or benefit; effect is desirable.</p> <p>Neutral – No change compared with baseline conditions and trends.</p> <p>Negative – Net loss or adverse effect; effect is undesirable.</p>
Magnitude	Magnitude is the amount of change in measurable parameters or the VC relative to existing conditions.	<p>Negligible – No measurable change.</p> <p>Low – The effect is limited to smaller number of individuals in a community.</p> <p>Moderate – The effect is distributed to a moderate number of individuals within a community.</p> <p>High – The effect is applicable to majority or all of the individuals within a community.</p>
Geographic Extent	Geographic extent refers to the spatial area over which a net effect is expected to occur or can be detected within the Project Footprint, Local Study Area, and Regional Study Area.	<p>Project Footprint – The effect is confined to the Project Footprint.</p> <p>Local Study Area – The effect is confined to the LSA communities.</p> <p>Regional Study Area – The effect extends beyond the LSA boundary but is confined within the RSA communities.</p>
Timing	Timing criteria indicate the timing (e.g., dates or seasons) importance of the net effect.	<p>Not time sensitive – The net effect is not sensitive to the timing of a Project phase and/or specific Project activity.</p> <p>Time sensitive – The net effect is sensitive to the timing of a Project phase and/or specific Project activity.</p>
Duration	Duration is the period of time required until the measurable indicators or the VC returns to its existing (baseline) condition, or the net effect can no longer be measured or otherwise No problem perceived.	<p>Short-term – Net effect restricted to no more than the duration of the construction phase (approximately 5-years).</p> <p>Medium-term – Net effect extends through the Operations phase of the Project (75-year life cycle).</p> <p>Long-term – Net effect extends beyond the Operations phase (greater than 75 years).</p> <p>Permanent – Recovery to baseline conditions unlikely.</p>



Characterization Criteria	Description	Quantitative Measure or Definition of Qualitative Categories
Frequency	Frequency refers to the rate of occurrence of an effect over the duration of the Project or in a specific phase.	Infrequent – The effect is expected to occur rarely. Frequent – The effect is expected to occur intermittently. Continuous – The effect is expected to occur continually.
Context	Context considers sensitivity and resilience of the VC to project related change.	Low resilience – Subcomponent has low resilience or ability to adapt to changes in the indicator and is susceptible to potential changes caused by the Project. Moderate resilience – Subcomponent has a moderate resilience or ability to adapt to changes in the indicator and has moderate susceptibility to potential changes caused by the Project. High resilience – Subcomponent has high resilience or ability to adapt to changes in the measurement indicator and low susceptibility to changes caused by the Project.
Input from Indigenous People	Views of the Indigenous communities and groups in assigning the criteria to be used and in characterizing the effects.	Inputs received during engagement and consultation, and participation in the EA/IA process, in assigning the criteria to be used and in characterizing the effects.
Reversibility	Reversibility describes whether a measurable indicator or the VC can return to its existing condition after the project activity ceases.	Reversible – The net effect is likely to be reversed after activity completion and rehabilitation. Irreversible – The net effect is unlikely to be reversed.
Likelihood of Occurrence	Likelihood of occurrence is a measure of the likelihood that an activity will result in an effect.	Unlikely – The effect is not likely to occur. Possible – The effect may occur but is not likely. Probable – The effect is likely to occur. Certain – The effect will occur.

15.5.1. Potential Effect Pathways Not Carried Through for Further Assessment

Positive effects of the Project on the Regional and Local Economy VC are carried forward as positive residual effects following enhancement measures (**Section 15.5.2**).

Potential effects that remain following the implementation of mitigation measures are carried forward for further assessment in **Section 15.5.2**.

Change in labour force, employment and income in Regional Study Area:

- Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → New labour and business opportunities (direct, indirect, and induced) → Participation and employment in labour market;
- Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → Employment and business opportunities → Increased employment → Labour income;
- Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project employment and expenditures → Increased employment opportunities; and
- Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project employment and expenditures → Employment opportunities → Increased employment income.



Change in overall economy in Regional Study Area:

- Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures / mobilization of equipment and supplies → Opportunity to supply goods / services to the Project → Increased GDP;
- Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → Increased employment opportunity → Increased employment income → Increased GDP;
- Construction activities → Project construction, clearing, and access requirements → Disruption of natural environment → Effect on the natural environment and land use → Effect on ability to participate in traditional economy;
- Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → Increase in employment → Decrease in availability to participate in traditional economy;
- Construction activities → Project labour, material, and equipment requirements → Opportunity to supply Project goods / services → Growth in existing and new business → Increased local business activity;
- Construction activities → Project labour, material, and equipment requirements → Project monopolizing supply of goods / services → Limitations on capacity for other projects;
- Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → Direct, indirect, and induced business / labour opportunities resulting from Project → Employment and business activity → Business and labour income → Increased household spending and lower percentage of total income spent on shelter;
- Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Direct economic effects → Indirect economic effects → Induced economic effects;
- Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Disruption of natural environment → Effect on the natural environment and land use → Effect on ability to participate in traditional economy;
- Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project employment and expenditures → Increase in employment → Decrease in availability to participate in traditional economy;
- Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project labour, material, and equipment requirements → Business opportunities → New businesses / business growth; and
- Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project employment and expenditures → Direct, indirect, and induced business / labour opportunities resulting from Project → Employment / business activity → Business / labour income → Increased household spending.

Change in business environment in Regional Study Area:

- Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → Employment opportunities → Increase in employment within industries;
- Construction activities → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Project transportation channels → Increased supply chain channels;
- Construction activities → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Employment opportunities → Increased availability of skilled employees within aggregate and forestry;
- Construction activities → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Aggregate and forestry related requirements → Potential for local mining, aggregate, and forestry businesses to supply Project;
- Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project employment and expenditures → Employment opportunities → Increase in employment within industries;
- Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Project transportation channels → Increased supply chain channels;



- Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Mining, aggregate and forestry activities → Potential for local mining, aggregate, and forestry businesses to supply Project; and
- Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Employment opportunities → Increased availability of skilled employees within mining, aggregate and forestry.

15.5.2. Predicted Net Effects

Positive effects, as well as adverse effects, on the Regional and Local Economy VC may still occur or remain after the implementation of enhancement and mitigation measures (also known as the net effects or residual effects). The following sections provide detailed descriptions and characterizations of the predicted net effects.

15.5.2.1. Changes to the Labour Force, Employment and Income

- Construction phase:
 - Employment participation:
 - Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → New labour and business opportunities (direct, indirect, and induced) → Participation and employment in labour market.
 - Employment income:
 - Construction activities → Project employment and expenditures → Employment and business opportunities → Increased employment → Labour income.
- Operations phase:
 - Employment participation:
 - Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project employment and expenditures → Increased employment opportunities.
 - Employment income:
 - Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project employment and expenditures → Employment opportunities → Increased employment income.

Direct employment opportunities during the Project's construction phase are expected to be temporary and tied to specific construction activities, including non-local labour from the RSA. Given the size of the labour force in the LSA communities, the new direct employment generated by the Project is expected to peak at around 70 workers. Therefore, the Project's positive direct employment effect during construction is considered to be low to medium magnitude, and most noticeable in Webequie First Nation to negligible in regional in extent. Effects will occur over the duration of the construction phase on continual (as needed) basis in frequency and are considered to be certain in occurrence.

Indirect and induced employment related to the Project is expected to have a similar labour market effect as direct employment. These effects are expected to be focused in Webequie First Nation and the other LSA communities. Given the size of the labour force in the LSA communities and RSA, the indirect and induced employment generated by the Project is expected to be moderate. Consequently, the Project's positive indirect and induced employment effect during the construction phase is considered to be of low to medium magnitude, local to regional in extent, short-term in duration, continual (as needed) in frequency, and certain.



Incomes from Project related direct, indirect, and induced employment are expected to align with local industry and medians. Given the relatively small scale of direct, indirect, and induced employment generated by the Project, and the median incomes associated with most construction employment (which are not substantially higher than the overall median incomes in the region), this effect is considered to be of modest benefit to a small number of employed individuals. This effect is expected to extend beyond the LSA communities to the RSA. Direct, indirect, and induced employment incomes associated with the Project are expected to continue through the operations phase. The Project effects on employment incomes are expected to be of medium magnitude, most noticeable in the local context and to a lesser extent regionally and will occur throughout the construction phase and operations phase in duration on a continual (as needed) basis in frequency and are certain to occur.

During the Project's operations phase, employment effects are expected to be lower due to the small number of maintenance positions (25 FTEs per year) and are expected to have a negligible effect on the labour market in the LSA communities or RSA, although more noticeable in the Webequie community.

The effects on labour force, employment and income are characterized as follows.

- **Direction:** The effects are considered to be positive as the Project may increase employment, labour, and consequently, household income. There may be a potential increase in population, however it is likely that non-local workers would not stay in the Webequie community permanently and would fly-in/out as needed.
- **Magnitude:** The magnitude of the effect is low to medium in terms of employment opportunities and medium-high to high in terms of employment income. During operations phase the effect is low in terms of employment opportunities and low to medium in terms of employment income.
- **Geographic Extent:** The extent of effects will be contained to Webequie First Nation, with negligible effects in other LSA communities and the RSA.
- **Timing:** The effects are expected to be time sensitive during construction phase and not time sensitive during operations phase.
- **Duration:** The effects are expected to occur over a five-to-six-year short-term timeframe during construction phase. Over the operations phase, the effects are assumed to continue on a permanent basis.
- **Frequency:** The effects will occur frequently in terms of employment opportunities, and on an as needed basis.
- **Context:** The effects are considered to have low resilience and thus is susceptible to changes by the Project.
- **Input From Indigenous People:** Received for this indicator. Please refer to **Section 15.2.2.2**.
- **Reversibility:** The effects are irreversible.
- **Likelihood of Occurrence:** The effects are likely to occur with a high likelihood (certain).

15.5.2.2. Change in the Overall Economy

- Construction Phase:
 - Gross domestic product:
 - Project employment and expenditures / mobilization of equipment and supplies → Opportunity to supply goods / services to the Project → Increased GDP.
 - Project employment and expenditures → Increased employment opportunity → Increased employment income → Increased GDP.



- Traditional economy:
 - Project construction, clearing, and access requirements → Disruption of natural environment → Effect on the natural environment and land use → Effect on ability to participate in traditional economy; and
 - Project employment and expenditures → Increase in employment → Decrease in availability to participate in traditional economy.
- Economic development:
 - Project labour, material, and equipment requirements → Opportunity to supply Project goods / services → Growth in existing and new business → Increased local business activity.
 - Project labour, material, and equipment requirements → Project monopolizing supply of goods / services → Limitations on capacity for other projects.
- Cost of living:
 - Opportunities resulting from Project → Employment and business activity → Business and labour income → Increased household spending and lower percentage of total income spent on shelter.
- Operations phase:
 - Gross domestic product:
 - Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Direct economic effects → Indirect economic effects → Induced economic effects → Increased GDP.
 - Traditional economy:
 - Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project labour, material, and equipment requirements → Increased employment / business opportunities (direct, indirect, and induced) → Decrease in time available to participate in the traditional economy; and
 - Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Disruption to the natural environment → Effect on traditional economy activities.
 - Economic development:
 - Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project labour, material, and equipment requirements → Business opportunities → New businesses / business growth.
 - Cost of living:
 - Operation, maintenance, and repair of road → Project employment and expenditures → Direct, indirect, and induced business / labour opportunities resulting from Project → Employment / business activity → Business / labour income → Increased household spending.

The construction phase of the project will stimulate the economic activities in the region, and especially within the Webequie First Nation and other LSA communities via material procurement, labour and employment, services contracting and similar which in turn will increase GDP levels. Due to the remoteness of the LSA and some regions of the RSA, the effect on GDP can be particularly pronounced. These effects are estimated to be medium to high in magnitude, short-term in nature, continual (as needed) in frequency, and certain.

During the operations phase, by improving connectivity and reducing transportation costs, the project will boost GDP through enhanced economic activity and productivity. Businesses can benefit from reduced travel time and expenses to McFaulds Lake, leading to increased disposable income and higher spending on goods and services. Additionally, the WSR can attract businesses and investors, fostering economic development and creating new job opportunities. Improved road access can also make land more



accessible for development, increasing its value and potential for new residential, commercial, and industrial projects. Overall, the Project effects on overall economy during the operations phase are expected to be of medium to high magnitude, local to regional in extent, long-term in duration, continual (as needed) in frequency, and certain.

The effects on the overall economy are characterized as follows:

- **Direction:** There could be lower traditional economy activity / participation by community members due to increased involvement in Project related occupations. There will be positive effects in terms of GDP, cost of living, and economic development.
- **Magnitude:** The magnitude of the effect is low for ability to participate in the traditional economy during construction and operations phases. The magnitude of positive benefits in terms of higher GDP, lower cost of living, increased household spending, and increased economic development, which are induced effects due to the Project, will be medium to high.
- **Geographic Extent:** The effects will be limited to the project study areas (Project Footprint, LSA and RSA), with higher concentration on Project Footprint.
- **Timing:** The effects are expected to be time sensitive during construction phase and not time sensitive during operations phase.
- **Duration:** The effects are expected to occur over a five-to-six-year short-term timeframe during construction phase. Over operations phase, the effects are assumed to continue on a permanent basis.
- **Frequency:** The effects will be occurring on a continuous basis.
- **Context:** The effect is considered to have moderate resilience and ability to adapt to potential changes caused by the Project within the Project Footprint and LSA, and high resilience with low susceptibility within the RSA region.
- **Input From Indigenous People:** Received for this indicator. Please refer to **Section 15.2.2.3**.
- **Reversibility:** The effects are irreversible.
- **Likelihood of Occurrence:** The effects are likely to occur (probable).

15.5.2.3. Changes in the Business Environment

- Construction Phase:
 - Main employers:
 - Project employment and expenditures → Employment opportunities → Increase in employment within industries.
 - Local economy:
 - Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Potential to supply Project, bid on contracts, and meet Project needs; and
 - Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Project transportation channels → Increased supply chain channels.
 - Mining, aggregate and forestry activities:
 - Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Aggregate and forestry related requirements → Potential for local mining, aggregate, and forestry businesses to supply Project; and
 - Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Employment opportunities → Increased availability of skilled employees within aggregate and forestry.



- Operations phase:
 - Main employers:
 - Project employment and expenditures → Employment opportunities → Increase in employment within industries.
 - Local economy:
 - Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Potential to supply Project, bid on contracts, and meet Project needs; and
 - Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Project transportation channels → Increased supply chain channels.
 - Mining, aggregate and forestry activities:
 - Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Aggregate and forestry related requirements → Potential for local mining, aggregate, and forestry businesses to supply Project; and
 - Project labour, materials, and equipment requirements → Employment opportunities → Increased availability of skilled employees within aggregate and forestry.

The construction phase of the Project is anticipated to source some of its goods and services from existing contractors within the LSA communities. This will likely continue the economic activities for local and Indigenous contractors, resulting in a short-term boost in business revenues during construction phase. Local businesses might need to temporarily expand their capacity to meet the Project's demands, leading to a rise in short-term employment. The procurement of goods and services from the LSA communities during construction phase will also be temporary, providing a short-term revenue increase for businesses awarded contracts. Given the size of the economy in the LSA and RSA communities, the economic development opportunities from the Project's construction phase are expected to be modest. The Project is forecasted to positively affect the revenues of businesses in the LSA and RSA communities that secure contracts, though this effect will be of low to medium magnitude—noticeable but not substantial enough to alter the local or regional economies. This effect will be local to regional (negligible), short-term, frequent during construction, and certain.

During the operations phase, there will be substantially fewer direct procurement opportunities associated with the Project, and the effect will be low to medium in magnitude, local to regional (negligible), permanent, frequent and certain.

The effects on the business environment are characterized as follows:

- **Direction:** The effects are considered to be positive, as the Project will create direct and induced business and employment opportunities.
- **Magnitude:** The magnitude of the effects is low to medium (in terms of increased employment within industries, potential to supply the Project, increased supply chain, potential for local industry to have continued participation and supply the Project).
- **Geographic Extent:** The extent of effects will be contained to Webequie First Nation, with negligible effects in other LSA communities and the RSA.
- **Timing:** The effects are expected to be time sensitive during construction phase and not time sensitive during operations phase.
- **Duration:** During construction phase, the effects will occur at a short-term timeframe, and during operations phase the effects are assumed to operate on a permanent basis.
- **Frequency:** The effects will align with Project demand for goods and services; therefore, the effects will be occurring on an as needed basis (frequent).



- **Context:** The effect is categorized as having moderate resilience to adapt to changes caused the Project within the Project Footprint and LSA, and high resilience with low susceptibility within the RSA region.
- **Input From Indigenous People:** Not received for this indicator.
- **Reversibility:** The effects are irreversible.
- **Likelihood of Occurrence:** The effects are likely to occur with a high likelihood (certain).

15.5.2.4. Changes in the Public and Indigenous Community Finances

- Construction Phase:
 - Increase in local tax revenues:
 - Project employment and expenditures → Employment opportunities → Increased availability of disposable income → Increase in tax revenues.
- Operations phase:
 - Increase in local tax revenues:
 - Operation, maintenance and repair of road → Employment opportunities → Increased availability of disposable income → Increase in tax revenues.

It is anticipated that there will be no negative effects on Webequie First Nation and the other LSA communities' public finance from the Project. At the time of this assessment, it is unclear who will take on construction, ownership, operations, and maintenance of the road. It is assumed that any expenses related to the project incurred by Webequie First Nation and other First Nation communities will be paired with new funding arrangements from the province and or other funders. The net result, it is that there will be no net negative effects on Webequie First Nation and the other LSA communities public finance from the Project.

The construction and operation of the WSR will positively impact tax revenue for the provincial and federal government. The impact to the provincial and federal government will be low in magnitude in comparison to the total tax revenue. The construction and operation of the WSR will create new employment and business opportunities. This will increase direct and indirect business and employment income. Taxes on these incomes will further contribute to provincial and federal tax revenues.

The effects on the public and Indigenous community finances are characterized as follows:

- **Direction:** The effects are considered to be neutral under the assumptions mentioned in **Section 15.4.4.**
- **Magnitude:** The magnitude of the effects is low.
- **Geographic Extent:** The extent of effects is considered to extend beyond the RSA.
- **Timing:** The effects are expected to be time sensitive during construction phase and not time sensitive during operations phase.
- **Duration:** During construction phase, the effects will occur at a short-term timeframe, and during operations phase the effects are assumed to operate on a permanent basis.
- **Frequency:** The effects will be continuous during construction phase and operations phase.
- **Context:** The effect is categorized as having low resilience or ability to adapt to changes and is susceptible to potential changes caused by the Project.
- **Input From Indigenous People:** Not received for this indicator.
- **Reversibility:** The effects are irreversible.
- **Likelihood of Occurrence:** The effects are likely to occur with a high likelihood (certain).



15.5.3. Summary

A summary of the characterization of net effects is provided in **Table 15-75**.

Table 15-75: Summary of Predicted Net Effects on Regional and Local Economy VC

Predicted Net Effect	Net Effects Characterization									
	Project Phase	Direction	Magnitude	Geographic Extent	Timing	Duration	Frequency	Reversibility	Likelihood of Occurrence	Context
Change in labour force, Employment and income	Construction	Positive	Low to Medium (employment opportunities); and Medium to High (employment income).	Webequie First Nation and other LSA communities (Negligible in RSA)	Time sensitive	Short-term	Frequently	Irreversible	Certain	Effect has low resilience and high susceptibility within the Project Footprint and LSA, and high resilience and low susceptibility within the RSA region.
	Operations	Positive	Low (employment opportunities); and Low to Medium (employment income).	Webequie First Nation and other LSA communities (Negligible in RSA)	Not time sensitive	Permanent	Frequently	Irreversible	Certain	
Input from Indigenous People: Received for this indicator. Please refer to Section 15.2.2.2 .										
Change in overall economy	Construction	Negative (Traditional Indigenous Economy) Positive	Low (ability to participate in traditional Indigenous economy); and Medium to High (GDP, cost of living, household spending, economic development and utilization of land).	Webequie First Nation and other LSA communities (Negligible in RSA)	Time sensitive	Short-term	Frequently	Irreversible	Certain	Effect has moderately sensitivity and susceptibility within the Project Footprint and LSA, and high resilience and low susceptibility within the RSA region.
	Operations	Negative (Traditional Indigenous Economy) Positive	Low (ability to participate in traditional Indigenous economy); and Medium to High (GDP, cost of living, and economic development).	Webequie First Nation and other LSA communities (Negligible in RSA)	Not time sensitive	Permanent	Frequently	Irreversible	Certain	
Input from Indigenous People: Received for this indicator. Please refer to Section 15.2.2.3 .										
Change in business environment	Construction	Positive	Low to Medium	Webequie First Nation and other LSA communities (Negligible in RSA)	Time sensitive	Short-term	Frequently	Irreversible	Certain	Effect has moderately sensitivity and susceptibility within the Project Footprint and LSA, and high resilience and low susceptibility within the RSA region.
	Operations	Positive	Low to Medium	Webequie First Nation and other LSA communities (Negligible in RSA)	Not time sensitive	Permanent	Frequently	Irreversible	Certain	
Input from Indigenous People: Not received for this indicator.										
Change in public and Indigenous community finances	Construction	Neutral	Low	RSA	Time sensitive	Short-term	Continuous	Irreversible	Certain	Effect has low resilience or ability to adapt to changes in the indicator and is susceptible to potential changes caused by the Project.
	Operations	Neutral	Low	RSA	Not time sensitive	Permanent	Continuous	Irreversible	Certain	
Input from Indigenous People: Not received for this indicator										

Note: Refer to **Table 15-74** for definitions of categories for net effects characterization.

15.6. Determination of Significance

Significant effects are those of sufficient magnitude, spatial extent, duration, frequency, irreversibility and likelihood to cause a change in the economic environment beyond an acceptable standard.

Several methodologies can be used to determine whether an adverse environmental effect is significant or not significant, as outlined in the Interim Technical Guidance Determining Whether a Designated Project is Likely to Cause Significant Adverse Environmental Effects under the Canadian *Environmental Assessment Act* (CEA Agency, 2018). A qualitative aggregation method is used for determination of significance based on the sequential interaction among the magnitude, geographic extent, duration, frequency, reversibility, and likelihood of occurrence criteria for effects.

The following sequential interactions form the basis for determination of significance of net effects on Regional and Local Economy VC:

- A predicted net effect is considered not significant if the effect is:
 - Low to moderate in magnitude, local to regional in extent, short-term to permanent in duration, infrequent to continuous occurrence, reversible to irreversible in nature, and unlikely to certain to occur.
- A predicted net effect is considered significant if the effect is:
 - Moderate to high in magnitude, regional in extent, long-term to permanent in duration, continuous in occurrence, irreversible in nature, and probable (likely) or certain to occur.

Project's net effects fall into the categories of both positive and negative, as demonstrated in **Section 15.1.6**, and **Section 15.5.2**.

- Adverse consequences resulting from changes to overall economy would include:
 - Reduced opportunities to participate in traditional economic activities (during construction and operations phases).
- Positive net effects resulting from changes to labour force, employment and income would include:
 - Increased employment, enhanced labour opportunities, and, as a result, raised household income.
- Positive net effects resulting from changes to overall economy would include:
 - Increased GDP, higher household spending, changes in the cost of living, and enhanced economic development.
- Positive net effects resulting from changes to business environment would include:
 - Increased business opportunities and growth, enhanced supply chain channels, and increased trades and industries (including mining).
- Positive net effects resulting from changes to public and Indigenous community finance:
 - The Project will generate a neutral effect with respect to expenses for the Project construction and operation, as it is assumed that Indigenous community finance will be supplemented with an agreement from the province.

15.6.1. Adverse Net Effects

Traditional economy will be affected due to reduced time availability of community members to engagement with Project activities (such as employment, businesses, trades, and other), and also due to Project's environmental disturbances and change in wildlife patterns which may affect the traditional practices.

Currently no mitigation measures are proposed for this effect; however, potential effects on traditional land and resource use and associated impacts on Aboriginal and Treaty Rights are considered in Section 19 of the EAR/IS.

This net effect during construction phase is low in magnitude, short-term, frequent, certain and predicted to be not significant. The Project effect will continue the same for workers from LSA or RSA employed during operations phase.

15.6.2. Positive Net Effects

15.6.2.1. Labour Force, Employment and Income

Labour force, employment and income will be affected positively as a result of the Project, and measures to enhance the positive effects are described in **Section 15.4.1**. The effect is not anticipated to be significant.

15.6.2.2. Overall Economy

Overall economy will be affected positively as a result of the Project, and measures to enhance the positive effects are described in **Section 15.4.2**. The effect is not anticipated to be significant.

15.6.2.3. Business Environment

Business environment will be affected positively as a result of the Project, and measures to enhance the positive effects are described in **Section 15.4.3**. The effect is not anticipated to be significant.

15.6.2.4. Public and Indigenous Community Finance

Public and Indigenous community finance will be affected positively as a result of the Project, and measures to enhance the positive effects are described in **Section 15.4.4**. The effect is not anticipated to be significant.

15.7. Cumulative Effects

In addition to assessing the net environmental effects of the Project, the assessment for Local and Regional Economy VC also evaluates and assesses the significance of net effects from the Project that overlap temporally and spatially with effects from other past, present and reasonably foreseeable developments (RFDs) and activities (i.e., cumulative effects).

For a valued component that has identified net effects where the magnitude was determined to be higher than negligible, it is necessary to determine if the effects from the Project interact both temporally and spatially with the effects from one or more past, present RFDs or activities, since the combined effects



may differ in nature or extent from the effects of individual Project activities. Where information is available, the cumulative effects assessment estimates or predicts the contribution of effects from the Project and other human activities on the criteria, in the context of changes to the natural, health, social or economic environments.

For the assessment of the Regional and Local Economy VC, the predicted net effects characterized in **Section 15.6** are considered not significant and are not carried forward to the cumulative effects assessment, as the net effects are expected to be low in magnitude and localized in nature.

15.8. Prediction Confidence in the Assessment

The level of confidence in net effect predictions in assessments depends on the degree of uncertainty associated with the basis for the determination of significance. Uncertainty will be influenced by factors such as the adequacy of available data, the level of knowledge and understanding about the environmental component being assessed, the characteristics of the proposed Project, the effectiveness of mitigation strategies and more.

Economic modelling often faces uncertainties due to the complexity of human behaviour and market dynamics. Based on the data availability and other aspects such as assumptions in place of data gaps, consumer preferences, accuracy of secondary data, and regional advancements and geopolitical events, the economic model's certainty is determined.

The confidence in the net effects assessment of the economic environment is moderate. Economic forecasts seek to predict how output, employment, and other key economic variables will interact with an economic shock, in this case the Project. Unexpected events, social changes, and changing environments all have the potential to lead to forecast inaccuracies. As the economic environment effects assessment relies on the historical data and forecasts available, there is the potential for unforeseen interactions. Although there are some uncertainties in the assessment, they have been minimized or reduced by making some conservative assumptions and using professional judgements based on past experiences in economic assessments for other projects.

15.8.1. Assumptions

A conservative approach was used in assessing potential effects where there is uncertainty.

A number of assumptions have been used in the assessment of effects including:

- **Workforce composition:** it is assumed that job positions for the WSR Project will first be filled using the available labour within Webequie First Nation, followed by the other LSA communities, and lastly the RSA;
- **Availability of Labour:** it is assumed that the unemployed labour market is proportionally equal to the employed labour market in terms of industry involvement;
- **Labour Skill Requirements:** it is assumed that WSR Project related jobs within specific labour categories are unskilled labour positions and require limited training or qualifications;
- **Operations On-Site Labour:** it is assumed that during WSR Project operations and maintenance, the on-site Project labour demand will be met by Webequie First Nation with any additional available jobs' gaps being filled by LSA workers; and



- **Housing and Accommodations:** it is assumed that the temporary work-camps will fully meet the housing requirements for the additional temporary worker population created through project employment.

15.8.2. Gaps and Uncertainties

A number of key informational gaps exist with respect to the socio-economic environment that contribute to the uncertainty of effects prediction. These include:

- Statistics Canada Census of Population:
 - For privacy reasons, the Census of Population does not always publish full data sets to protect the identities of respondents;
 - Undercounting within Indigenous communities is a common complaint of the Census; and
 - Other errors likely to occur within the Census of are coverage errors, non-response errors, response errors, processing errors, and sampling errors.
- Traditional Economy Activities:
 - Due to traditional means of data collection used by the Census of Population and Lightcast, it is likely that activities involved in the traditional economy were not captured within factors such as labour force involvement and supply chain valuations.
- Skills and Qualification of Labour Force:
 - Detailed data for occupation of employment, employment ratios, and other labour force related indicators were not available for all communities; and
 - Due to the availability and level of detail of the data available, it is not possible to describe the current level of skills, training, and qualifications of the labour force.
- Duration of Project Operations phase:
 - Due to the extended timeline of the Project, the certainty of the potential effects become difficult to measure;
 - The long-term changes within the local and regional communities are difficult to predict and could affect mitigation strategies; and
 - Other future projects could have effects on the study area communities and the evaluated VCs.

15.9. Predicted Future Condition of the Environment if the Project Does Not Proceed

Should the Project not proceed, the regional and local economic conditions within the proposed Project site area will likely continue on the current trajectory.



15.10. Follow-Up and Monitoring

Follow-up and monitoring related to Regional and Local Economy VC will be initiated at each phase of the Project. These activities will inform a precautionary approach and contribute to the understanding of changing existing conditions of the VC, and effects prediction. This includes the Project related and cumulative effects and the effectiveness of mitigation measures in addition to effects that were not initially identified or expected.

The follow-up and monitoring of Project effects will be the responsibility of the Project proponent and will need to be conducted consistently throughout each stage of the Project. This will include engagement with community members and those in surrounding areas to address community concerns.

The monitoring and follow-up of the Regional and Local Economy VC will require constant and consistent monitoring to evaluate the effectiveness of the Project mitigation measures. Regular evaluation will allow the Project proponent to identify areas of concern or success in a timely manner and pivot mitigation measures if necessary.

The purposes of the economic follow-up and monitoring programs are to:

- Ensure the project construction contributes to the economic empowerment of the Webequie and other local First Nation communities by creating job opportunities and supporting local businesses.
- Maintain transparency in the execution of the Project and ensure accountability in how the economic benefits are distributed among communities.
- Collect community input into how the Project is contributing to the economic growth and self-sufficiency within the community through skill development and capacity building initiatives associated with the Project.

The recommended economic monitoring program could include the following components:

1. **Employment Tracking:** Implement a system to track the employment of local community members in the Project, including job roles, duration of employment, and wage levels, with the objective to assess if the Project meets or exceeds the set targets for local hiring.
2. **Business Participation:** Monitor the involvement of local businesses in the Project. This includes direct contracts, subcontracts, and other procurement opportunities extended to local enterprises.
3. **Economic Impact Assessment:** Conduct regular assessments to evaluate the broader economic impact on the Indigenous communities, such as increased local spending and improvements in local infrastructure that support other economic activities.
4. **Feedback Mechanisms:** Establish robust feedback mechanisms to collect insights and concerns from the community of Webequie regarding the Project's economic effects. This could include surveys, focus groups, and public meetings.
5. **Reporting and Adjustment:** Regularly report findings to the Webequie First Nation and other Project stakeholders and rightsholders. Use this data to make any necessary adjustments to the Project approach to enhance local benefits.
6. **Post-Project Evaluation:** After the completion of the road construction, perform a final evaluation to measure the long-term effects and success in achieving the economic goals set out at the Project's initiation.



This monitoring program is designed to be dynamic, allowing adjustments based on ongoing findings and community feedback, ensuring that the Project aligns with the economic interests and sustainable development of the Webequie First Nation and other LSA communities.

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15.11.5. Section 15.4 Mitigation and Enhancement Measures

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15.11.6. Section 15.5 Characterization of Net Effects

None

15.11.7. Section 15.6 Determination of Significance

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15.11.8. Section 15.7 Cumulative Effects

None

15.11.9. Section 15.9 Prediction Confidence in the Assessment

None

15.11.10. Section 15.10 Predicted Future Condition of the Environment if the Project Does Not Proceed

None

15.11.11. Section 15.10 Follow-Up and Monitoring Programs

None



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