

# 2026/27 Operations Plan



**OFNEDA**

ONTARIO FIRST NATIONS ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPERS ASSOCIATION

March 12, 2026  
Annual General Meeting  
(AGM)  
Sudbury, ON

# 2026/27 OPERATING PLAN

## PRIORITIES

1. EDO Training and Skills Development
2. Procurement Engagement and Increased Access
3. FN Business Directory and Community Infrastructure Asset Analysis
4. Increased Member and Entrepreneur Support
5. Expanded Networking
6. Food Sustainability Support and Development
7. Community Planning Training
8. On-Demand Transit Pilot Projects
9. Community Capacity Funding
10. Research and Advocacy



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# 2026/27 PLAN OBJECTIVES

## EDO/Entrepreneur Training and Skills Development

- Continue to deliver CANDO TAED discipline sessions with the current cohort of 10 EDO's moving towards completion of TAED certification by 2027
- Coordinate the delivery of the EDAC EC.D. program at the University of Waterloo for minimum of 5 students/yr towards achievement of professional designation of EC.D.
- Source funding and training partner to move forward with a new specialized EDO training program that is micro-certified, comprehensive and flexible to meet the needs of all FN EDO's and be ready to deliver the program in 2027.
- Deliver at least 6 online professional skills development programs and 8 workshops at the annual conference and include on-site training sessions within communities or central locations
- Deliver at least 6 online professional training sessions for FN entrepreneurs, as well at conference
- Collaborate with EDCO to offer additional training opportunities to our EDO's throughout the year
- Collaborate with potential trainers on providing training sessions on CCP's
- Working with training facility on updating EDO "Training Manual"



# 2025/26 PLAN OBJECTIVES



## Procurement Engagement and Increased Access

- Continue with systems navigation training, which consists of 1-1 and group sessions on tools for success, ie Supply Ontario website etc.
- Increase our research and provision of historical procurement data to our members
- Continue to participate in procurement sessions, training and panels as possible to advocate for Indigenous procurement opportunities and encourage system reviews

# **New Website Enhancement for 2026**

## **New EDO & Community Project of the Year Nominee Pages**

- Introduced dedicated sections showcasing:
- **Economic Development Officer (EDO) of the Year Nominees**
- **Community Project of the Year Nominees**
- **These pages celebrate excellence, increase visibility for community achievements, and support nomination-based engagement year-to-date.**

# 2026/27 PLAN OBJECTIVES

## **FN Business Directory and Community Infrastructure Asset Analysis**

- Continue to support the Chiefs Of Ontario in the completion/promotion of the certified FN business directory for Ontario
- Review existing and required research on FN infrastructure asset analysis to determine the major needs for capacity and infrastructure funding support for 2026-28.
- Provide Federal and Provincial Procurement data analysis to EDO's and FN businesses so that they can explore partnerships for increased supply opportunities
- Conduct research and analysis on FN community plans to determine use and effectiveness in economic development and determine training required



# 2026/27 PLAN OBJECTIVES

## Increased Member and Entrepreneur Support

- Expanded member support in access to funding opportunities and assistance in proposal development
- Indigenous and economic forum database; improved business planning and financial templates; improved membership process and portal tools
- Addition of FAQ section on our website to support our members with immediate assistance
- Additional member support for FN entrepreneurs with a focus on the needs of FN entrepreneurs for training, research, networking and support



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# 2026/27 PLAN OBJECTIVES



## Expanded networking

- Monthly coffee meet-up sessions on relevant funding, business and networking opportunities for both EDO's and FN entrepreneurs
- Monthly EDO Entrepreneur virtual networking opportunities with sector specific breakout rooms
- Access to more FN forums, gatherings, events and conferences, both provincially and nationally with negotiated discounts for members
- Annual economic development conference (FNEAC)
- FN entrepreneurship forum; Discounted EDCO membership, access to member events and additional training, EDCO conference participation
- Establishment of a News section on our website to broadcast our updates as well as those of our FN communities and entrepreneurs
- Establishment of 4-6 regional chapter meetings with EDO's annually to discuss details of community needs and supports

# Training Next Steps 2026–2027

- **Launch pilot AI training projects** based on needs identified by First Nations communities.
- **Deliver in-person, hands-on training to 4 chapters** across Ontario focusing on practical, community-relevant AI skills.
- **Collect surveys and feedback** after each session to measure impact and refine content.
- Identify top-requested training topics to shape a long-term, community-driven AI training roadmap.
- **Provide enhanced in-person training to support Comprehensive Community Planning (CCP)** using AI tools and methods.

# 2026/27 PLAN OBJECTIVES



## Food Sustainability Support and Development

- Coordinating engagement sessions on developing food sustainability programs with FN communities with federal, provincial and private industry experts.
- Helping in securing funding for start ups and business plan development for on-going operational success.
- Exploring working models(co-ops, etc.)
- Aiding in relationship building between FNs on food securement

# 2026/27 PLAN OBJECTIVES



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## Community Planning Training

- Provide in-person community planning training for EDOs and other community members, equipping them with the knowledge and tools needed to develop thorough and inclusive community plans that support and guide economic development in their communities.
- This training will help build planning skills within the community instead of relying on external consultants. It will encourage greater knowledge, engagement, and ownership of the plans, while creating skills that can be applied in the future and serve as a foundation for the First Nation community's economic development plan.

# 2026–2027 Marketing Initiatives

- **Grow Organic Demand with Public-Facing Blog**
  - **Why:** 68% of online experiences begin with search; organic search can drive 10× more traffic than organic social.
  - **Action:** Publish 2–3 expert blogs/month highlighting OFNEDA programs, success stories, and toolkits.
  - **Impact:** Higher sustained traffic + stronger authority as Google holds >90% search share and long-term SEO delivers triple-digit ROI.
- **Expand Reach with EDAC & EDCO Partnerships**
  - **Why:** EDAC = national network (~1,000+ members); EDCO = Ontario's largest provincial association with weekly bulletins + events.
- **Add Member-Rate Advertising to OFNEDA Newsletter**
  - **Why:** Email is a top-performing channel; global email marketing revenue exceeded \$9.5B in 2024.
- **Invest in CRM (Constant Contact or Microsoft Dynamics)**
  - **Why:** CRM + automation improves revenue and reduces manual work; Dynamics 365 Customer Insights shows 324% ROI
- **Launch Paid Social for Membership and Conference (Meta: Facebook & Instagram)**
  - **Why:** Meta platforms reach billions monthly; Facebook/Instagram maintain competitive CPCs + strong CTR

# 2026/27 PLAN OBJECTIVES



## On-Demand Transit Pilot Projects

- We will continue to pursue funding opportunities and explore partnerships to run up to three(3) pilot projects for FN communities for on-demand transit
- We will collaborate to develop solutions that strengthen connections between Fns and neighbouring municipalities to improve access to employment opportunities, education, medical appointments, and essential social and support services.
- Stronger connections with larger urban centres that offer better access to essential services and employment opportunities would greatly improve quality of life and economic sustainability for these FNs. This approach could also serve as a model for similar communities seeking to build capacity and strengthen their local economies.

# 2026/27 PLAN OBJECTIVES

## Community Capacity Funding

- Delivery of Indigenous Affairs And First Nations Economic Reconciliation(IAFNER) continued FN community capacity funding support for economic development positions, departments and projects
- Increase the number of FNs who access this funding through continued promotion and follow-up
- Funding will be used for continued EDO salary support, departmental equipment, community and business meetings on economic development opportunities, training, travel to economic development forums/conferences, entrepreneurial support and other departmental assistance



The next year?

- **Toolkit**
  - Compilation of engagement results
  - Launch of tool at FNEAC (Sept)
  - Disseminate to members
  - Evaluate usage and how to edit/update as required



The next year?

- **Entrepreneurship**
  - Committee development of workshops
  - Develop an 'onboarding' resource for new members
  - Work with SuccessionOntario for First Nation specific content



The next year?

- **Procurement**

- Participate with CANDO at CANSEC
- Coordinate with First Nation Procurement Authority on activities
- Participate in the I-Trade discussions and direction for Federal IBDB
- Continue to partner with partners on events and resources (PAC, OECCM, NACCA, CCIB, etc...)



The next year?

- **Anything else?**
  - An increasing interest in 'export readiness' - monitor resources
  - Continue with our regional meetings to meet with and learn from our members
  - Increase outreach to our members

# 2026-2027 Budget

<b>REVENUES</b>	<b>2026/2027 Budget</b>	<b>2025/2026 Budget</b>
ISC	\$ 944,722.00	848,572
IAFNER	\$ 2,743,355.26	3,934,000
Memberships	\$ 91,100.00	77,000
Corp Sponsors	\$ 125,000.00	125,000
Conference Fees	\$ 70,000.00	60,000
Workshop Fees	\$ -	0
Other Funding	\$ -	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 3,974,177.26</b>	<b>5,044,572</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Salaries/Benefits	\$ 553,942.00	601,125
Contracted Services	\$ 130,470.00	146,040
Audit Fees	\$ 15,500.00	15,000
Phone/Internet/Office Supplies	\$ 29,000.00	23,400
Website Support	\$ 10,000.00	6,000
Insurance	\$ 8,700.00	8,400
Marketing	\$ 22,000.00	12,000
Travel – Board & Staff	\$ 260,000.00	225,000
Workshops	\$ 125,000.00	122,000
Travel & Meeting Costs – EDO Training	\$ 150,500.00	190,980
Regional Meetings x 4	\$ 84,000.00	
Conference Costs	\$ 400,000.00	700,000
Entrepreneur Forum	\$ 140,000.00	
FN EC Dev Capacity Support	\$ 1,995,000.00	2,995,000
Admin Expenses	\$ 50,000.00	
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$ 3,974,112.00</b>	<b>5,044,945</b>
<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>\$ 65.26</b>	<b>-373</b>