



# How can we help First Nations to achieve greater financial sustainability and independence?

## Business Opportunity Assessment Dene Tha' First Nation 2019-2020

**Through community engagement and research, Ballard identified business opportunities that will create employment and new revenue streams for Dene Tha' First Nation and its members.**

Located in northwest Alberta, Dene Tha' First Nation is made up of approximately 2,400 members living in three communities. With several economic advantages, including a large land base and proximity to the regional hub of High Level, DTFN is a highly entrepreneurial Nation that has benefitted from the establishment of its corporate arm, N'deh Limited Partnership. In 2019, DTFN sought to establish an ambitious business opportunity assessment that would set out the Chief & Council's focus, intention, and ideas for economic development over a five-year period.

This initiative sought to support several of the Nation's goals: to create a sustainable economic base for the Nation through growth in business and training opportunities; to provide an inclusive and united vision for the Nation's social and economic life, capable of maintaining broad support through changes of circumstance such as council and administrative turnover; to facilitate interaction and collaboration within and between the three Dene Tha' communities, with additional consideration for their transportation needs; and to improve transparency and communications with the Nation membership. To achieve these outcomes, Ballard led a comprehensive engagement process with members in all three communities, ensuring that the plan would represent the needs of each. This grassroots input informed research examining the suitability of identified business opportunities for both the Nation and its members.

Based on this study, Ballard recommended nine business opportunities that would allow the Nation to pursue greater financial independence. The plan also established four strategic priorities in areas of administration and organization that would also build a stronger foundation for the Nation's economic success. Since completing this plan in 2020, DTFN and Ballard have continued to collaborate on business development, bringing many of these recommendations to life and generating positive economic outcomes for the Nation and its members.

## What We Heard

*“Ballad Group is an exceptional service provider that has exceeded all expectations. Over the past year, Dene Tha' First Nation has had the pleasure of working with the Ballard team on several projects that will have positive impacts on our communities. It has been our experience that the Ballard Group has been professional, punctual, communicative, respectful, and trustworthy. Dene Tha' First Nation looks forward to working with Ballard Group on future projects.”*

