

McKENZIE COUNTY

★ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ★

ECONOMY

AT A GLANCE

April 2026

UPDATED MONTHLY	February 2026	February 2025	January 2026	January 2025
McKenzie County Unemployment Rate	N/A	3.0%	2.9%	2.7%
North Dakota Unemployment Rate	3.1%	3.2%	3.2%	3.1%
McKenzie County Labor Force	N/A	7,958	8,133	7,912
North Dakota Labor Force	432,617	425,120	430,494	423,490
Online Job Openings-McKenzie County	231	293	198	221
West Texas Intermediate Oil (Price/Barrel)	\$64.51	\$71.53	\$60.04	\$75.74
Oil Production-McKenzie County (Barrels)	9,240,663	10,015,144	10,438,251	11,150,502
Farmers Prices Received Index 2011 Base (Percent)	130.6	147.3	116.4	129.8
Farmers Prices Paid Index 2011 Base (Percent)	159.4	147.4	158.4	146.9

SOURCES: Unemployment, labor force, and online job openings data from Job Service North Dakota; Oil price from US Energy Information Administration; Oil production from North Dakota Department of Mineral Resources; Farmers price index from United States Department of Agriculture.

MONTHLY/YEAR TO DATE	March 2026	March 2025	Jan-Mar 2026	Jan-Mar 2025
Occupancy Tax Distribution-Watford City	\$3,920	\$8,896	\$47,336	\$54,104
City Sales Tax Distribution-Watford City	\$307,213	\$603,832	\$1,264,228	\$1,602,766
City Sales Tax Distribution-Alexander	\$47,086	\$59,694	\$210,656	\$249,486
Restaurant/Lodging Tax Distribution-Watford City	\$14,979	\$23,551	\$100,464	\$91,100
Permits-Watford City	10	9	26	22
Permits Value-Watford City	\$68,200	\$702,448	\$2,015,200	\$1,048,503
Permits-McKenzie County	4	6	9	8
Permits Value-McKenzie County	\$1,253,000	\$1,958,380	\$2,901,100	\$2,508,380
Landfill Daily Average (tons)-McKenzie County	67.4	66.9	198.9	180.3
LoadPass Permits	2,951	3,024	6,800	7,092
Births (mother's residence-McKenzie County)	15	28	65	73
Deaths (McKenzie County)	8	6	21	15
Thdr. Roosevelt National Park-North Unit Visits	3,200	3,600	6,200	6,800
Rough Rider Center Visits	24,900	21,900	77,100	76,700

SOURCES: Building permit data from City of Watford City or McKenzie County; "Permits" for City of Watford City includes building, moving, sign, excavation, w/s access, demolition, fence, general, private septic, storage, and construction and repair. LoadPass numbers from McKenzie County Public Works; NR = Non Reportable; Visit data is from Placer.ai, visits >10 min

HOTEL OCCUPANCY RATE	March 2026	March 2025	February 2026	February 2025
Watford City Hotels	41.5%	36.8%	34.0%	36.1%

SOURCES: Hotel occupancy data from CoStar consisting of 8 hotels in Watford City

APARTMENT OCCUPANCY RATE	2026 Q1	2025 Q1	2025 Q4	2024 Q4
McKenzie County Apartments	89.9%	92.1%	91.3%	91.9%

SOURCES: Apartment occupancy data from CoStar consisting of 28 properties in McKenzie County

UPDATED YEARLY (for McKenzie County)	2025	2024	2023	2022
Births	287	263	247	206
Deaths	80	76	87	93
K-12 Fall Public School enrollment	3,169	3,042	2,775	2,590
Median Age-County residents	N/A	31.8	31.7	31.5
Oil Extraction and Transport employment	N/A	3,395	3,425	3,188
All other employment	N/A	8,090	7,615	6,939
All cattle and calf inventory	69,000	68,000	71,000	79,000
US Hwy 85 Oversize/overweight permits	N/A	45,878	44,829	37,398

SOURCES: Births/Deaths from ND Dept of Health; School enrollment data from North Dakota Department of Public Instruction; Median age from US Census Bureau; Employment data from QCEW for All Employers, "Oil Extraction and Transport" cover NAICS codes 21, 48, 49 and "All other employment" cover any others besides what is included in oil extraction and transport; Cattle inventory is from USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service; Total true and full value is provided by the McKenzie County Recorders Office

TAXABLE SALES & PURCHASES	2025 Q4	2025 Q3	2024 Q4	2024 Q3
Watford City	\$63,238,773	\$67,768,589	\$73,314,348	\$73,812,286
McKenzie County	\$73,008,290	\$77,152,272	\$85,140,027	\$88,073,715
North Dakota	\$7,085,342,917	\$7,251,663,052	\$7,243,596,055	\$7,250,883,059

SOURCE: North Dakota State Tax Commissioner Office