McKENZIE COUNTY ★ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ★

ECONOMY AT A GLANCE

November 2026

UPDATED MONTHLY	September 2026	September 2025	August 2026	August 2025
McKenzie County Unemployment Rate	1.9%	2.4%	2.2%	2.5%
North Dakota Unemployment Rate	1.8%	2.1%	2.2%	2.5%
McKenzie County Labor Force	8,075	8,327	8,115	8,502
North Dakota Labor Force	432,510	433,233	434,032	435,528
Online Job Openings-McKenzie County	219	196	194	179
West Texas Intermediate Oil (Price/Barrel)	$97.31	$63.96	$83.90	$64.86
Oil Production-McKenzie County (Barrels)	12,050,356	10,865,055	12,003,692	11,263,356
Farmers Prices Received Index 2011 Base (Percent)	133.2	132.5	135.5	138.3
Farmers Prices Paid Index 2011 Base (Percent)	160.5	152.6	159.9	151.8

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' Monthly Production Report; Farmers price index from United States Department of Agriculture.

MONTHLY/YEAR TO DATE	October 2026	October 2025	Jan-Oct 2026	Jan-Oct 2025
Occupancy Tax Distribution-Watford City	$19,337	$19,695	$165,342	$166,322
City Sales Tax Distribution-Watford City	$435,017	$518,181	$4,106,400	$4,842,708
City Sales Tax Distribution-Alexander	$145,672	$75,872	$843,333	$792,686
Restaurant/Lodging Tax Distribution-Watford City	$29,246	$34,515	$331,968	$317,116
Permits-Watford City	17	22	202	259
Permits Value-Watford City	$1,777,938	$1,052,425	$30,435,328	$22,499,788
Permits-McKenzie County	3	2	34	37
Permits Value-McKenzie County	$355,000	$406,000	$13,371,100	$12,404,940
Landfill Daily Average (tons)-McKenzie County	116.9	106.2	1,517.65	963.8
LoadPass Permits	2,658	2,554	24,066	24,143
Births (mother's residence-McKenzie County)	20	23	233	239
Deaths (McKenzie County)	NR	NR	59	52
Thdr. Roosevelt National Park-North Unit Visits	6,800	6,100	106,800	103,600
Rough Rider Center Visits	19,100	14,600	180,100	164,600

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	October 2026	October 2025	September 2026	September 2025
Watford City Hotels	51.1%	62.9%	53.9%	65.9%

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

APARTMENT OCCUPANCY RATE	2026 Q3	2025 Q3	2026 Q2	2025 Q2
McKenzie County Apartments	85.2%	88.6%	85.5%	90.0%

SOURCE: Apartment occupancy data from CoStar consisting of 27 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	32.5	32.2	31.7	31.5
Oil Extraction and Transport employment	3,440	3,395	3,425	3,188
All other employment	8,320	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	45,882	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	2026 Q2	2026 Q1	2025 Q2	2025 Q1
Watford City	$69,488,318	$59,204,556	$72,364,732	$64,425,637
McKenzie County	$77,097,337	$67,665,776	$82,944,111	$74,001,769
North Dakota	$7,396,241,933	$5,988,690,823	$7,113,546,453	$5,713,755,228

SOURCE: North Dakota State Tax Commissioner Office

More data available at: https://econdev.mckenziecounty.net/data-resources/data-center

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