

McKENZIE COUNTY

★ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ★

ECONOMY AT A GLANCE September 2026

UPDATED MONTHLY	July 2026	July 2025	June 2026	June 2025
McKenzie County Unemployment Rate	2.2%	2.3%	2.6%	3.0%
North Dakota Unemployment Rate	2.1%	2.6%	2.5%	2.8%
McKenzie County Labor Force	8,030	8,317	8,072	8,336
North Dakota Labor Force	434,171	437,151	436,022	437,558
Online Job Openings-McKenzie County	236	184	216	194
West Texas Intermediate Oil (Price/Barrel)	\$80.46	\$68.39	\$84.81	\$68.17
Oil Production-McKenzie County (Barrels)	10,174,064	11,731,250	9,939,588	11,169,552
Farmers Prices Received Index 2011 Base (Percent)	133.0	136.6	138.7	138.7
Farmers Prices Paid Index 2011 Base (Percent)	162.1	150.5	163.1	149.7

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	August 2026	August 2025	Jan-Aug 2026	Jan-Aug 2025
Occupancy Tax Distribution-Watford City	\$33,851	\$20,150	\$135,568	\$130,086
City Sales Tax Distribution-Watford City	\$510,091	\$562,774	\$3,277,647	\$3,924,978
City Sales Tax Distribution-Alexander	\$93,938	\$81,781	\$627,537	\$654,453
Restaurant/Lodging Tax Distribution-Watford City	\$46,558	\$34,432	\$270,812	\$237,281
Permits-Watford City	26	31	154	209
Permits Value-Watford City	\$2,852,134	\$4,206,786	\$27,088,267	\$19,860,710
Permits-McKenzie County	2	7	31	33
Permits Value-McKenzie County	\$815,000	\$1,669,500	\$13,016,100	\$10,420,940
Landfill Daily Average (tons)-McKenzie County	97.0	116.3	1,263.20	724.0
LoadPass Permits	2,751	2,437	19,182	19,122
Births (mother's residence-McKenzie County)	24	27	194	197
Deaths (McKenzie County)	9	8	52	43
Thdr. Roosevelt National Park-North Unit Visits	20,000	19,100	84,100	82,900
Rough Rider Center Visits	10,600	6,700	145,200	133,500

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	August 2026	August 2025	July 2026	July 2025
Watford City Hotels	54.7%	56.7%	58.1%	56.3%

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

APARTMENT OCCUPANCY RATE	2026 Q2	2025 Q2	2026 Q1	2025 Q1
McKenzie County Apartments	87.9%	91.1%	88.4%	91.2%

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 Records 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