



RMED tool aimed at local investment

By: Abiola Odutola

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The Rural Manitoba Economic Development Corporation (RMED) has unveiled a market intelligence and economic research tool to attract investments to Brandon and across rural Manitoba.

The initiative, according to RMED chief executive officer Margot Cathcart, is designed to provide a transformative impact on local economic decision-making and investment attraction.

In an interview with the Brandon Sun, Cathcart highlighted the significance of this initiative in addressing a crucial need expressed by leaders in Brandon and across the province.

“We heard from leaders across the province about their challenges with a lack of accurate local economic information,” Cathcart explained. “This game-changing tool is our response to that need, and we have no doubt it will help drive sustainable growth in our communities.”

Cathcart explained that the Data Services tool offers an all-encompassing data and analytics resource designed to provide a more comprehensive and robust dataset compared to what is commonly available for most communities.

“This resource aims to empower economic development leaders by furnishing them with the tools needed to attract new investment, foster business growth and inform local project plans effectively,” she said.

“Being able to access and maintain current economic data for their communities is a challenge many leaders face. With the Data Services, it’s going to provide real-time access to current and updated information.”

She added that the feature would be immensely valuable for organizations such as economic development branches, chambers of commerce, community futures, businesses, and other stakeholders.

“They’ll be able to take a look at it as graphs or charts, download it for their own reports, manipulate the data to answer their questions with more accurate information,” Cathcart said.

She told the Sun that the data within Data Services is sourced using the same methodology as Invest Canada, making it consistent and reliable for potential investors and businesses seeking information on Manitoba and its localities.

Cathcart also shared insights into the initial response from the business community, particularly in Brandon.

“The response has generally been fantastic, from our provincial colleagues all the way through to local economic development officers, businesses, academics, and researchers,” she said.

However, Cathcart acknowledged a challenge encountered across the country.

“One challenge that we do have, and this is a challenge all across Canada, is being able to access really good information for First Nation communities,” she said.

RMED is actively engaging in discussions to find solutions to this

challenge.

As Data Services continues to gain traction, Cathcart expressed excitement for its future development.

“It’s early days for the tool, less than a month old,” she said. “We’re already working on incremental phases and looking forward to adding new features based on feedback. This is just the beginning of Data Services, with lots of reports in peer review and a full lineup of programming and data services on the horizon.”

Cathcart underlined the significance of context in transforming raw data into actionable insights.

“Data is very important. But it’s not King until it becomes contextualized and usable. This tool takes data and puts it in a visual, usable, easily searchable, and manipulatable format.” she said.

» aodutola@brandonsun.com

» X: [@AbiolaOdutola](https://twitter.com/AbiolaOdutola)

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