

NEWS RELEASE

Workforce Planning Underway in the Grande Prairie-Greenview Region Takes a Collaborative and Community-Driven Approach

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, October 7, 2021

A Regional Workforce Development Strategic Action Plan is underway, aimed at ensuring there are enough workers with the right skills and supports to drive strong economic growth across the City of Grande Prairie, County of Grande Prairie and MD of Greenview.

The project is a collaborative initiative led by the Grande Prairie & District Chamber of Commerce in partnership with the City, County, Greenview, Grande Prairie Regional College (GPRC) and Alberta Labour and Immigration.

The Plan includes strengthening community collaboration through a shared vision and common framework to map out best practices to meet employment demands and address training needs, skills gaps and workforce development in the region over the next five years.

A key component to the development of the Plan will be the involvement of local industry from the region's key sectors. Over the next few months, industry stakeholders will meet with others in their sector, taking part in conversations to provide a better understanding of their challenges and to work with project partners to help drive potential solutions.

Recommendations for action will be strengthened by in-depth research that took place over the past year as part of a Regional Labour Market Needs Assessment. The study offers a current picture of the region's labour market needs and opportunities, and includes the insights of over 700 stakeholders. Stakeholders include job seekers; employers; employment service agencies; community agencies; Indigenous public administration and agencies; GPRC; and local government economic development staff.

Economic development firm McSweeney & Associates will work with project partners to guide the project.

Visit grandeprairiechamber.com/labour-market-study to stay updated on the Regional Workforce Development Strategic Action Plan and to view the Regional Labour Market Needs Assessment Executive Summary.

Quotes:

The Honourable Tyler Shandro, Alberta Minister of Labour and Immigration

"We are pleased to support projects that will help Albertans gain the skills needed in today's job market and strengthen Alberta's economic recovery. This collaborative effort will help identify existing workforce needs and develop new opportunities in the Grande Prairie region to support local industries and grow our economy now and in the future."

Larry Gibson, Board Chair, Grande Prairie & District Chamber of Commerce

“The Plan brings together the ideas and voices of the workforce, local industry, Indigenous organizations, community and government to collectively address the region’s labour market needs. It’s a path forward that advances community-based solutions, fosters new opportunities and drives a strong economy.”

Glenn Feltham, Acting President And CEO, Grande Prairie Regional College

“GPRC is committed to working with our community partners to bridge skill gaps, strengthen regional connections and enhance pathways for employment. As a polytechnic, we are looking forward to having even more runway to instill core skills, develop competencies, and advance work-integrated learning opportunities with our diverse local industries.”

Mayor Jackie Clayton, City of Grande Prairie

“This collaboration is essential to set the region up for ongoing economic success into the future. The Action Plan will help us to collectively attract, retain and train talent that fits the needs of the region, and we look forward to see it come to life.”

Reeve Leanne Beaupre, County of Grande Prairie

“This Plan truly focuses on amplifying local voices to address the region’s labour market needs. Growing our local workforce will increase regional prosperity and help us attract new and innovative investment. By working together on aligned goals in a coordinated and integrated way, we will reach the Plan’s ultimate goal of boosting our region’s economy.”

Reeve Dale Smith, Municipal District of Greenview

“This Regional Workforce Development initiative is the next logical step toward generating solutions for gaps identified in the regional labour market needs assessment. Greenview is pleased to continue collaborating with our partners and industry stakeholders to create the framework necessary for a more robust, more diverse regional economy.”

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BACKGROUND

Purpose of the Plan

The **Regional Workforce Development Strategic Action Plan** aims to strategically map out best practices to meet employment demands and address training needs, skills gaps and workforce development in the region over the next five years. The project will be complete around April 2022.

What is the geographic area included in the region?

The City of Grande Prairie, County of Grande Prairie, MD of Greenview and area communities.

Who are the project partners?

The Grande Prairie & District Chamber of Commerce is the project lead. Partners include the City of Grande Prairie, County of Grande Prairie, MD of Greenview, Grande Prairie Regional College (GPRC), and the Government of Alberta (Alberta Labour and Immigration).

A Steering Committee consists of representation from the Chamber, Alberta Labour and Immigration, GPRC, and the three partner municipalities. This Committee will engage the insights and expertise of community stakeholders throughout the project.

Who will be involved in the project?

The project will be driven by partner and community insights, expertise and solutions. As part of the Plan's development, local industry from the region's key sectors will take part in stakeholder engagement to share their priorities and help drive the recommendations.

The project is also informed by the voices of over 700 community stakeholders who took part in surveys and interviews as part of the recently-completed **Regional Labour Market Needs Assessment (LMNA)**. The LMNA provides pertinent and usable labour market data and reporting tools for the benefit of the local business community; project partners; educators and educational institutions; and stakeholders within the City, County and Greenview region and the province.

What challenges are driving these initiatives?

The region's labour market challenges are hampering sustainable business growth and stalling the development of a healthy, sustainable economy. Challenges include: a shifting and evolving economic climate; skilled labour shortages; the need for better current and future labour market data and trends; recruitment, retention and succession challenges; and the need for a coordinated approach to address labour market development.

How can I learn more about the project?

Project information will be updated on the Chamber's website:
grandeprairiechamber.com/labour-market-study