

# **Alberta HUB Regional Labour Attraction Initiative**

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

***November 6, 2012***

**Project Name:** Northeast Alberta Regional Collaboration Project (NEARCP): REGIONAL LABOUR ATTRACTION INITIATIVE

### **Project Objective:**

To develop a strategy and set of tools that will allow Alberta HUB's 29 member communities to work collaboratively in addressing the urgent need to for labour in order to fill present demand for workers, and foster future investment attraction opportunities. Labour attraction is the most pressing issue for regional businesses, and the communities that hope to maintain and grow their economic base via new business development. Businesses cannot be retained, attracted, or expanded without an adequate labour pool.

### **Project Scope and Activities:**

Each of the three proposed Initiative phases are heavily interlinked and build each other:

1. *Phase 1 - Identifying the Challenge: Labour Capacity Study:* We will use our 2010 Labour Capacity Study as a baseline for regional labour data, and augment it with new data from the 2011 census. While the structure of this report is very good, much of the data represents a snapshot of 2008 and 2009, when Alberta was experiencing an economic downturn. We need to update this data and talk to regional businesses to get a picture where their about issues lie. This data will be the foundation of our Labour Attraction Strategy.
2. *Phase 2 – Proposing a Solution to the Challenge: Labour Attraction Strategy:* This phase will take the data from Phase 1 and present a set of solutions to help attract investment to the region in all of our 6 Key Industry Sectors. The solution will be focused on methods of identifying underemployed populations across Canada (and the rest of the world) and targeting them with information about work opportunities in our region. An overriding objective of this phase will be developing a strategy that allows our communities to collaboratively target these potential labour pools without spending prohibitive amounts of money on physically visiting each labour pool location.
3. *Phase 3 – Developing the Solution: Labour Attraction Tools Development:* This phase will take the solutions from Phase 2 and make them a reality. One of our focuses will be on augmenting our existing labour attraction site - <http://makeyourmovealberta.ca> .This website provides a great basic framework describing the region and our opportunities, but much more needs to be done to create a tool that would in effect take the place of having to physically attend work fairs across the country and elsewhere. For instance, our communities might be able to target external labour pools and hold on-line job fairs. Our website also needs to have updated and expanded information about our communities, housing, education, transportation, quality of life, taxes...and most of all, employment opportunities. Other tools will be developed as per the strategies identified in Phase 2.

**Project Workforce:**

- *Project Manager:* A project manager from Alberta HUB will be in charge of the project, as well as undertake a number of organizational and communication activities. The success of this project depends heavily on regional collaboration which requires stakeholder consultations and conference calls, meetings with businesses, research program set up (surveys and focus groups), etc. It is significantly more economical and effective to have a local Program Manager from Alberta HUB manage these tasks (as well as the project as a whole), than have a consultant manage them.
- *Consultants:* Alberta HUB works with a roster of management consultants with specializations in economic development, marketing, labour attraction, website development, and marketing material development. We will hire consultants to carry out the research, data analysis, strategy development, and tool development for this project.

**Project Outcomes/Benefits:**

This initiative aligned with two key program outcomes:

1. *Improved overall municipal capacity to respond to municipal priorities and to build and maintain effective intermunicipal relations through joint and collaborative activities:* The aim of this Initiative is to address the most pressing regional economic issue (labour shortages) in a collaborative fashion by developing a strategy and tools to attract labour. New workers will move to a region that can provide a multitude of services and employment options. Our members understand that working collaboratively is the only way to attract these workers. What benefits one of our communities, benefits all of our communities.
2. *Strong intermunicipal relations that result in strengthened community identities and improved quality of life:* Furthering the regional nature of our partnership through a collaborative effort to tackle a common issue strengthens our intermunicipal relations. This project will promote the region and its communities as attractive places for workers to relocate. A vibrant new work force is attracted to a good quality of life, but also enhances the quality of life for our existing communities.

This initiative features other important outcomes/benefits:

3. *Building on Success:* This Initiative will build on significant labour projects to date by Alberta HUB. Labour attraction is a large-scale regional challenge and we have always recognized that a single project will not solve the issue. So our organization has been working for several years building capacity in this area. We will build on existing studies, data, and marketing tools to complete this Initiative. The Initiative will be *more effective, finished faster, less expensive* and all due to the previous labour force work we will be building on.
4. *Regional Collaboration:* By its very nature, this Initiative and our organization are all about collaboration. We have spent significant time and effort promoting the benefits of regional collaboration, and they payoff is obvious in our strong 29 member community partnership. This Initiative provides the opportunity to tackle a serious regional issue in a collaborative fashion, and produce real results.
5. *Other Benefits:* The Initiative will help solve an existing regional challenge, but also set the table for us to confront the looming labour shortage that could stifle the future business development our members seek. Alberta HUB is working on multiple projects to encourage

investment attraction, but without a labour pool, or a means to attract new labour, it is difficult to convince new businesses to relocate to our region. This is a project with **long term** benefits.

#### **Project Budget and Timing:**

PROJECT PHASE	TIMING	COST
1. Phase 1 - Labour Capacity Study	April 1, 2013 – June 28	\$36k
2. Phase 2 - Labour Attraction Strategy	July 1 – Oct 31	\$60k
3. Phase 3 - Labour Attraction Tools Development	Nov 1 – March 31, 2014	\$72k
4. Project Management	April 1, 2013 – March 31, 2014	\$30k
<b>TOTAL*</b>		<b>\$198k</b>

\* See "Project Workforce" above

\*\*Includes all consultant travel expenses and clearing costs. This project will require in-kind contributions from Alberta HUB and its members, see next section

#### **In-Kind Contributions:**

This is an expansive Initiative designed to address our most significant regional challenge: attracting new labour. The project will require extensive consultation work with the 29 community members, many government agencies, dozens of regional businesses, relocation specialists, human resource professionals from across Canada, web technology experts, and a multitude of regional stakeholders.

This effort will require extensive travel and conference calling. We estimate:

IN KIND CONTRIBUTIONS	ESTIMATED COST
<i>30 Regional Trips @ cost of \$90 per trip (avg. round trip 180km*\$.50/km)</i>	\$2,700
<i>20 Conference Calls @ \$120 per call</i>	\$2,400
<i>4 Regional Stakeholder Meetings @ \$950/meeting for food and rent</i>	\$3,800
<i>Clearing Costs – communications, printing, supplies</i>	\$1,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$10,400</b>

***"Be it resolved that we authorize your municipality's name to participate in an application for the Alberta HUB Regional Labour Attraction Initiative Project, submitted by Robert Jorgensen, CAO County of Two Hills under the Regional Collaboration Program.***