

NORTHERN SECWPEMC TE QELMUCW, TSILHQOT'IN, AND SOUTHERN CARRIER / DAKEHL FIRST NATIONS – CARIBOO REGIONAL DISTRICT

GROWING INDIGENOUS/LOCAL GOVERNMENT RELATIONS



PATHWAY OVERVIEW

Spanning over 80,000 square kilometres, the Cariboo Regional District spans an area of south-central BC roughly two-and-a-half times the size of Vancouver Island. Containing the municipalities of Quesnel, Williams Lake, 100 Mile House, and Wells, the region is also home to two large Indigenous nations – Northern Secwepemc Te Qelmuw (NsTQ) and Tsilhqot'in, and the Southern Carrier / Dakehl First Nations. At a time of economic transition with forestry in decline, the Cariboo Regional District (CRD) is partnering with the municipalities and First Nations in the Cariboo Chilcotin region to undertake a regional labour market study. The two main goals of this study are to assess the labour market trends in the region and to identify labour gaps and future job needs, as well as provide a strategy to facilitate capacity building among the regional labour force.

PATHWAY ACTIVITIES

The collaborative pathway activities undertaken by the Cariboo Regional District and Northern Secwepemc Te Qelmuw, Tsilhqot'in, and Southern Carrier / Dakehl First Nations included the following.



Joint Economic Development Initiatives

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Announced in May 2019, the labour study started as a partnership between the CRD and municipalities of Quesnel, Williams Lake, 100 Mile House, and Wells, as well as member communities of NsTQ, Tsilhqot'in, and Southern Carrier / Dakehl First Nations. Prior to the start of the project, representatives from these communities gathered and formed a steering committee in order to provide input and information sharing throughout the study. Additionally, two local representatives were hired from North, South, and Central Cariboo to help guide the process. With help from an outside consulting company with relevant community experience, the study started in May 2019 with expected completion by December 2019.

Funded by the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia, this project has begun to accumulate responses from labour participants across the region. The goals of the study are to assess the labour market in the region, to identify labour gaps and future job needs, to provide an evidence-based strategy to facilitate capacity building among the regional labour force and business sectors, and to give insight into which job sectors are projected to grow in the region for future adaptation and preparation.

OUTCOMES

Engagement results from this study are to be pulled from four core areas: (1) current business owners and how labour, recruitment, and capacity impacts their businesses; (2) job seekers and how employment opportunities and support services impact them; (3) an education and training sector roundtable for educational institutions, faculty, staff, and administration; and (4) informant interviews with various interested and relevant parties.

This project aims to result in a knowledge-based support system for employers, job seekers, and support organizations. The results will likely be used to support workforce participants to better understand what jobs are available in the area and what skills employers are seeking. It also aims to support employers to access skilled talent to fill job vacancies. Additionally, alongside supporting economic actors and community organizations, including participating First Nations communities, the resulting strategy hopes to strengthen economic activity and program and services planning throughout the Cariboo Chilcotin region.

LESSONS LEARNED AND KEYS TO SUCCESS

One of the main takeaways from this project is to make sure you are working from a point of shared knowledge of your current context in order to create a navigable path forward, especially in the context of economic planning for a large region. As this study is still in progress at the time of writing, other lessons learned and keys to success are pending.

“This labour market study will help all the local governments and First Nations governments in the Cariboo Chilcotin, along with our community partners like Community Futures and Work BC, understand those labour market gaps. The study will also give insight into which job sectors are projected to grow in the region and what Canadians think about the Cariboo, so we can adapt and prepare.”

Margo Wagner, CRD chair

PATHWAYS TO COLLABORATION

Pathways to Collaboration is a joint initiative of the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), the Province of British Columbia, and the First Nations Summit with funding from the Indigenous Business & Investment Council (IBIC). The project aims to showcase the growing number of successful economic development collaborations and partnerships between First Nations and local governments, while highlighting lessons learned and key steps to success.

The pathways to collaboration communities take are unique, reflecting the context of the communities involved, and involve different activities. Common pathway activities include protocol and communications agreements; servicing agreements and shared infrastructure projects; collaborative land use planning and development projects; joint economic development initiatives; and shared tourism projects. Like signposts along a pathway, these pathway activities are identified in the case study series.

For more information on the project, please contact the communities profiled, or visit www.ubcm.ca



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