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For Immediate Release

Employment study of Cariboo Chilcotin region identifies gaps and opportunities in local labour market

Attraction and retention of skilled workers key to building a resilient and diverse economy

A recently completed study of the labour market in the Cariboo Chilcotin region identifies skilled workers as a critical missing piece of the regional economy. A partnership between the Cariboo Regional District, the municipalities of Quesnel, Williams Lake, 100 Mile House and Wells, and member communities of Northern Secwepemc, T̓silhqot'in and Southern Carrier/Dakelh First Nations, this project was funded by the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia.

“As we begin to move forward through these difficult times, the economies of rural communities that have already been affected by the downturn in the forest sector will be challenged,” said Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, Shane Simpson. “The Cariboo Regional District and local partners have completed a labour market study over the past year to identify opportunities and needs specific to the region. With this information, communities and businesses in the region will be better positioned to support people to get back to work and build economic stability.”

“The Cariboo Chilcotin has always been a place where people balance work and play, self-sufficiency and community,” notes CRD chair Margo Wagner. “But when current restrictions are lifted and we adapt to a world impacted by the COVID-19 virus, there will be more reasons than ever to consider the Cariboo Chilcotin home. The rural space to spread out, combined with the businesses and amenities of our major centres, means we can deliver a “best of both worlds” lifestyle to both individuals and businesses seeking economic opportunities coupled with a healthy work/life balance.”

Over 1200 survey responses were gathered as part of the data collection. Regional employers, job seekers, and respondents from across the country offered their perspectives on labour trends and future job needs in the Cariboo Chilcotin.

Findings of the Cariboo Chilcotin labour market study include:

- At least 1835 new workers will be needed over the next 5 years
- The healthcare sector has the biggest shortfall of applicants to current job postings
- Post-secondary education will be a key qualification for 78% of future jobs
- BC and the Cariboo Chilcotin are considered desirable places to live by out-of-province respondents
- Both employers and job seekers cite difficulties finding childcare and housing as major obstacles.

“As a large and semi-remote region, attracting and retaining people can be difficult,” notes Darron Campbell, Manager of Community Services for the CRD. “But we also offer a diverse array of employment, lifestyle, and recreation choices. For the right person, the Cariboo is the perfect place to start a business, raise a family, build a career, or all three. Our next challenge is to get the word out about the opportunities we can offer.”

Implementation of the tactics and strategies identified in the report will be the next phase of the project. Key actions will include an annual survey of employer job demand, training and retraining initiatives, marketing and recruitment campaign for workers in key sectors such as healthcare, and support for important supporting factors such as rental housing initiatives, expanded broadband capability, and collaborations with regional post-secondary institutions.

Visit cariboord.ca/labourstudy to view [CRD Strategy – 2019/2020](#).



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