Tri-Municipal Region

Labour Market Strategy & Action Plan
Project Description & Terms of Reference

May 1, 2018

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1.0   Project Background

In August 2017, the City of Spruce Grove, the Town of Stony Plain, and Parkland County (Tri-Municipal Partners) initiated a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the development of a Tri-Municipal Labour Force Profile, the first phase of a multi-phase Labour Market Strategy & Action Plan (the Strategy).   The successful proponent to the RFP was Applications Management Consulting Ltd. (AMC) who completed the first phase in December 2017.

The Phase 1 Tri-Municipal Labour Force Profile is comprised of four (4) profiles that provide a current snapshot of the labour market for the Tri-Municipal Region as well as for the three individual communities that comprise the region – the City of Spruce Grove, the Town of Stony Plain, and Parkland County. In addition, labour force information pertaining to the two indigenous communities within the region – Paul First Nation and Enoch Cree Nation – form part of the profile.

The Phase 1 Labour Force Profile will be used to inform AMC in the development of this 2nd phase – a comprehensive Labour Market Strategy & Action Plan.

2.0   Objectives

There are a number of objectives of the Strategy, described as follows:
- To provide a comprehensive understanding of the labour market specific to the Tri-Municipal Region
- To determine the labour force challenges being experienced by employers in the Tri-Municipal Region specific to municipal geography and key sector
- To deliver methods to potentially address the gaps and issues of the tri regional labour market as well as to capitalize on opportunities that may exist
- Provide existing and potential employers a clear understanding of the labour market characteristics within the Tri-Municipal Region

3.0   The Tri-Municipal Region

The Tri-Municipal Region encompasses the City of Spruce Grove, the Town of Stony Plain and Parkland County with a combined population of approximately 85,000 people. Located west of Edmonton, the Tri-Municipal Region forms part of the Greater Edmonton Metropolitan Region - a growing area characterized by a robust, diverse economy and a youthful, affluent population of around 1.25 million.

The City of Spruce Grove is located 11 km west of Edmonton, situated between the TransCanada Yellowhead Highway and Highway 16A, connected to the Town of Stony Plain and surrounded by Parkland County. With a current population of 34,066, Spruce Grove has witnessed sustained rapid growth in its population, with an average annual growth rate of 5.1% over the previous 5 years.

The Town of Stony Plain is an urban municipality located in the Edmonton Metropolitan Region and is approximately 17 km west of the City of Edmonton. Incorporated in 1908, the community has an official population of 17,189 and encompasses about 37 square kilometers of land.

Parkland County is a rural municipality located immediately west of Edmonton. Covering an area of 242,595 hectares (599,500 acres), it is one of the largest in size and one of the highest populated of all rural municipalities in Alberta with over 32,000 residents. The County extends approximately 80 km to the Pembina River. The southern boundary is marked by the North Saskatchewan River, while the northern boundary separates Parkland County from Lac Ste. Anne and Sturgeon Counties.

Within Parkland County, the Paul First Nation (PFN), part of Treaty No. 6 Territory, occupies a tract of land along Wabamun Lake, AB approximately 70 kms west of Edmonton. PFN is comprised of 1926 members of which 1110 live on-reserve. Enoch Cree Nation (ECN) is situated in Central Alberta, Treaty No. 6 Territory. Bordering Edmonton's west side, ECN is in a unique geographical location that has allowed them to become a leader in economic development among First Nations.

3.1   Map of the Tri-Municipal Region

4.0   Target Audience

The primary target audience of the Strategy will be the Tri-Municipal Partners (Council and Administration), the Spruce Grove and Stony Plain Chambers of Commerce, Community Futures Capital Region and other business stakeholder groups, educational institutions such as Norquest College and NAIT, indigenous community leaders, and potential investors.

5.0   Terms of Reference

The scope of services required will include the following deliverables:

5.1   Background Research

Meet with the Steering Committee to develop an understanding of the desired outcomes for the Strategy.

Refer to the Phase 1 Labour Market Profile(s) to determine what data and information - imperative to a complete and comprehensive labour analysis for the Tri-Municipal Region - was not compiled due to gaps in existing statistical data; determine what sources and methods will be used to gather this data and communicate this to the Steering Committee.

Review documents, strategies, studies, and other relevant information sources provided to AMC by the Tri-Municipal Partners.

5.2   Data Collection & Analysis

To provide a comprehensive understanding of the labour force in the Tri-Municipal Region AMC will consider data compiled for the development of Phase 1 and collect additional data and complete additional analysis through the following means:

5.2.1   Stats Can Specialized Runs
Preparation by Stats Canada several special data runs specific to the three (3) communities that comprise the Tri-Municipal Region (Spruce Grove, Stony Plain, and Parkland County) as well as the two (2) indigenous communities (Paul Band and Enoch Cree).

5.2.2   Employer Survey & Survey Analysis
Conduct a survey of 375 local/regional employers to fill information gaps discovered during the development of the Phase 1 Tri-Municipal Labour Force Profile.

These employer surveys will consist of a stratified sample of approximately 125 surveys from each municipality, 15 to 20 in each major industry group and a representative sample of large, medium, and small businesses to give reasonable coverage across all relevant components of the employment base in the region.

AMC will:

- Complete all work pertaining to the telephone and online surveys
- Develop survey questions, vet to the Steering Committee and get approval prior to going public.
- Contact all respondents to the surveys via telephone to solicit their participation
- Create and make available an online survey to be used at respondent's request
- Check all online surveys for completeness and where necessary follow up to clarify or complete any responses
- Analyze the results of the survey and document these results in a working paper

5.2.3   Employment Forecast

Provide a five (5) year project of employment growth in the Tri-Municipal Region (as one entity and not broken down by municipality) at the same level of detail as the Edmonton Region Forecast. This forecast will identify employment growth by 2 digit NAICS and 4 digit NOC.

5.2.4   Working Group Workshops

Conduct two (2) Working Group Workshops described as follows:
- <u>Working Group Workshop #1</u>: work with the Steering Committee to identify strategic directions to be tested in some conversations with employers through both interviews and in a "focus group" type setting; this will involve two meeting s with the Steering Committee and/or Tri-Municipal Partners
- <u>Working Group Workshop #2:</u> work with the Steering Committee to finalize strategic and policy directions based on the analysis and "focus group" type meetings with employers ; this will include the development of an action plan and indicators to track how the strategy is working

5.2.5   Employer/Stakeholder Interviews

Consult with the Steering Committee to develop a listing of a select group of employers and stakeholders in the region that will include representatives of organizations that are engaged with the under-employed groups identified in Phase 1 (Indigenous, youth, mature workers, and newcomers). In addition to employers, stakeholders will include selected representatives of employees (e.g. local union representatives, HR reps, employees), educators (e.g. local high school CALM teachers, NAIT, other university college representatives) and employment services providers. Having all perspectives of the local labour market will help to ensure that strategies are reflective of the issues and practical.

Conduct a series of "one-on-one" type interviews with these selected employers and stakeholder groups in the region; these interviews will explore labour market issues and strategies and how they may benefit employers in the region.

5.2.6   Focus Groups

Conduct two (2) to three (3) "focus group" type meetings with selected employers in the region to discuss practical strategic and policy options to address local labour market needs and focus on specific issues. The Focus Groups will be comprised of selected representatives of the stakeholder groups included in the one-on-one interviews.

5.3   Strategy Design & Presentation

Final Strategy design will reflect similar/complimentary elements of the Phase 1 Tri-Municipal Labour Force Profile and will incorporate images authentic to the Tri-Municipal Region.

The Strategy will be presented as one document containing a section pertaining to the Tri-Municipal Region and sections pertaining to each of the individual communities of the Tri-Municipal Region.

The Strategy will be organized in a manner where the Partners will have an understanding of what information can be provided to stakeholders in general and what information should or should not be divulged to potential investors.

5.4   Data Delivery and Interpretation

Data and information collected will provide a comprehensive understanding of the labour market characteristics in the Tri-Municipal Region, the three individual communities and the two indigenous communities separately. Information will be presented in statistical and graphical form and provide interpretation of results and trends. Where appropriate, comparisons to other individual jurisdictions, other regions, and the province will be made, including the City of Edmonton.

The data will provide insight into:
- Specific labour force challenges being experienced by employers in the Tri-Municipal Region by municipal geography and by key sector such as employee attraction/retention, gaps in skillsets, recruitment of skilled labour
- Labour force strengths and weaknesses pertaining to industrial attraction
- Current and future employment demand and employment opportunities likely to emerge (ex: if there are increased job opportunities in the Tri-Region, will there be enough skilled labour within commuting distance to fill those jobs?)
- Barriers and gaps in the existing labour market and ability to meet these demands
- Emerging trends (such as automation and loss of "low skill" labour jobs) that may impact future demand for labour
- Barriers of target groups (immigrants, youth, students, other hidden labour markets)
- Wage and salary rates for specific positions in key sectors within the region
- Commute patterns of employees in the Tri-Municipal Region
- Local economic growth opportunities labour market improvements can help facilitate.

Additional information will be gathered as necessary for a complete and thorough Labour Market Strategy & Action Plan

5.5   Action Plan

As part of the Strategy and in response to the current labour market situation in the Tri-Municipal Region, a series of action items will be identified that will guide stakeholders in addressing gaps and issues or to capitalize on opportunities within the tri regional labour market.

AMC, as part of the Action Plan, will suggest a series of metrics or goals to support the Steering Committee in monitoring the effectiveness of the Strategy and action items.

6.0   Steering Committee

The project will be managed by a Steering Committee consisting of the Tri-Municipal Partners administration, representatives from the Spruce Grove & Stony Plain Chambers of Commerce, Community Futures Capital Region, Norquest College, and Alberta Labour.

7.0   Final Reports & Presentations

The consultant will be responsible for managing and undertaking all aspects of the project and will ensure that sufficient resources are in place to complete the project and generate a quality product on time and budget.   Specific reporting requirements are as follows:

- AMC will be expected to meet in person with the Project Steering Committee four (4) times in the course of the project – Project initiation, two (2) interim progress reports, and presentation of draft Strategy.
- AMC will attend a Stakeholder Meeting (arranged by the Steering Committee) to present the final Strategy, solicit feedback, and answer questions
- AMC will provide 10 hard copies of the final Strategy as well as an electronic PDF file on memory stick or via Dropbox or other file sharing application.
- The final Strategy will include appropriate graphics and photos, and will be in a format suitable for reproduction.

8.0   Budget

The budget for this project is in the range of $59,000 for consulting fees plus GST. In addition to this amount, eligible expenses up to $3,000 may be claimed for reimbursement on submission of receipts.

9.0   Timeline & Requirements

The start date of the Tri-Municipal Region Labour Market Strategy will be April 30th, 2018 with a completion date of December 14th, 2018. Detailed breakdown of the project development including timelines:

Milestone	Target Date
Project Kick Off – Chamber Luncheon	May 17, 2018
Acquire Stats Can specialized runs – Tri Region	May 31, 2018

Finalize Employer Surveys	June 30, 2018
Compile Survey Results and Analysis – Incorporate in Working Paper	July 6, 2018
Complete 5-year employment forecast	July 6, 2018
Meeting with AMC team – Present Working Paper	July 15, 2018
Conclude Workshop #1 & compile results	July 27, 2018
Conclude Employer/Stakeholder Interviews & compile results	August 24, 2018
Conclude Focus Groups & compile results	September 7, 2018
Conclude Workshop #2 & compile results	September 21, 2018
Meeting with AMC team – interim progress report	October 1, 2018
Compile data and prepare DRAFT strategy	October 12, 2018
Committee review of DRAFT strategy & implement changes	November 2, 2018
Present DRAFT strategy to LMP Committee	November 14, 2018
Implement final changes and finalize strategy	November 30, 2018
Provide copies of final strategy to Steering Committee	December 7, 2018
Presentation of Strategy to Stakeholder Group	December 7, 2018