

NEWS RELEASE

Employees Give High Scores to Northwestern Alberta Region's Quality of Life, Earning Potential and Job Opportunities: Workforce Study

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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An overwhelming majority of workers are satisfied with the region as a place to work (92 per cent) and with the quality of life (86 per cent) it offers, says a new regional workforce study. Conducted across the City of Grande Prairie, County of Grande Prairie, MD of Greenview and area communities, the study dug deep into the insights of employees, job seekers and employers to guide programs and actions aimed at growing the local workforce.

The research shows the region's family-friendliness, K-12 education and recreation options along with job opportunities, job security, commute times and access to health benefits/sick pay are top factors attracting people to work and stay in the region.

The three municipalities are collaborating with the Grande Prairie & District Chamber of Commerce and Northwestern Polytechnic to put the data to work. Partners are building attraction and retention programs and marketing tools, which will be available to local employers and communities starting spring 2024.

Tanya Oliver, Grande Prairie & District Chamber of Commerce CEO and spokesperson for the project partners, says that as the region's economy continues to rebound post-Covid, the pressure for a number of sectors to find skilled workers is increasing, and coordinated efforts to address the issue are critical.

Fifty-eight (58) per cent of local employers feel that required labour has been more difficult to find over the past year. Half report that middle/semi-skilled jobs are the most difficult to fill.

The research also highlights priorities to address to overcome labour challenges. Both employers and employees cite availability of public transportation, availability of child care and cost of living (aside from housing) as key priorities. Work-related training and professional development are also priorities: 75 per cent of employees say they would benefit from more opportunities for career progression.

Other study highlights:

- Recently-relocated employees to the region were most likely to cite job opportunities (42 per cent), nearby family/friends (34 per cent) and higher wages (30 per cent) as reasons for moving.
- Over one-third (38 per cent) of employers report that their total number of employees has increased over the past 12 months and 55 per cent expect their employee numbers to increase over a one-year period.
- Nearly half (48 per cent) of employers who have directed recruitment efforts outside the region were not successful in hiring workers from outside local borders.
- Employers are more satisfied with the region as a place to retain workers (69 per cent) than the region as a place to attract workers (50 per cent).

- Job declines due to the Covid-19 pandemic are expected to reverse between 2022 and 2028, resulting in a projected growth of approximately 4 per cent in overall jobs.
- Though population growth is projected for the City, County and areas Greenview, the region will need to rely on external labour to meet local job demand.

The partners also conducted an inventory of the region's lifestyle assets, providing an important tool to help market the region's strengths and livability.

The City of Grande Prairie, County of Grande Prairie, MD of Greenview, Grande Prairie & District Chamber of Commerce, and Alberta Jobs, Economy and Trade commissioned research-firm Deloitte for the study. A total of 195 employers and 465 employees and job seekers from across the region participated in surveys conducted earlier this year.

Access a summary of the report [here](#).

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The Province of Alberta is working in partnership with the Government of Canada to provide employment support programs and services.