



# WORKFORCE ANALYSIS INITIATIVE

## CITY OF PRINCE GEORGE

AUGUST 2019





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# 1. Executive Summary

Prince George is poised for continued growth as the city's economy thrives with new investments, projected population growth, and adaptation influenced by global economic shifts including growth in the services sector, and the emergence of Industry 4.0. As developed countries, economies continue to shift to the service sector, developing countries are influencing the global economic climate, as is the rise in consumer markets as a driver to product demand. Further factoring into this shift is the influence of technologies that enable a free flow of information worldwide and, increasingly, global labour markets<sup>1</sup>.

Recognizing the influence of available talent as a key contributor to economic growth and competitive positioning for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), the City of Prince George has undertaken this labour analysis study. This report presents and develops a strategic, evidence-based approach to strengthen talent attraction and retention, better align talent with local demand, and support FDI inquiries and opportunities.

The challenge of recruiting and retaining talent in the region is not new; initiatives such as "Move Up Prince George" have been promoted for several years, in response to employers having identified lack of talent as a barrier to business operations. Access to talent is often the first question asked by potential investors, emphasizing the importance of being able to demonstrate local availability. Prince George faces challenges with public perceptions related to its ability to recruit and retain talent, and this perception continues to bring this issue to the forefront, impeding the city's ability to foster business development through growth and foreign direct investment.

## Purpose of the Workforce Analysis and Strategy

This report presents a comprehensive workforce analysis study that will inform and support local businesses and the City of Prince George to grow and strengthen the local workforce. The goal is to further strengthen the city's competitiveness for foreign direct investment in this global economy. The following chapters present:

- A detailed overview of the existing workforce situation, including the identification of high demand occupations within existing and potential future businesses (FDI); examination of commuting patterns, in-migration, and e-migration; identification of regions that serve as a source for labour supply that is in demand locally
- Recommendations that will support greater alignment of supply and demand, inform local businesses of best and promising practices for talent attraction and retention, inform on strategies to retain post-secondary graduates (growing the labour pool and the population), and strengthen business competitiveness and

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/five-forces-reshaping-the-global-economy-mckinsey-global-survey-results>

the attraction of foreign direct investment to expand the local economy and the competitiveness of the City.

### Considerations and Key Findings

- Prince George is a major centre of economic activity in the northern part of British Columbia. The city is also a service hub, providing health care, retail, public administration, and education services to the surrounding region.
- The median age in Prince George is 38, which is quite young when compared with the provincial median age of 43, suggesting a relatively young workforce. That said, the 50-55 age group in Prince George is quite significant and signals an ageing population which often spurs the need for increased health care services.
- There is a broad mix of occupations across all skill levels projected to be in demand over the next ten years. The largest gains by industry will occur in health care and social assistance, accommodation and food services, educational services, transportation and warehousing, and construction.
- Current employer job postings from the last year are indicative of this trend. The health care and social assistance sector had the strongest demand for workers.
- Post-secondary institutions (University of Northern British Columbia and the College of New Caledonia) are producing graduates in key in-demand areas, such as health and skilled trades. Continued emphasis is necessary to ensure alignment of post-secondary programming with employer demand.
- Emphasis on graduate retention within the Prince George area is a significant opportunity to support talent retention (for example, UNBC's Arts and Sciences graduates).
- Migration, especially from other parts of the province, will spur population growth.
- Prince George's relatively low-cost housing is evidence that the city has a strong affordability factor, a key consideration for talent attraction.
- Internationally, Prince George has a significant representation of recent immigrants from the Philippines, when compared with the province and the rest of the country.

### Business Survey – Key Findings

- Most businesses have plans to hire new employees, 78% in the next 12 months, and 84% in the next 24 months. Over 85% indicate a skilled workforce is important for current operations and future growth.
- The respondents indicated relatively low levels of satisfaction with local workforce employability factors, with 55% indicating they are satisfied with “Staffing, employment and recruitment services and organizations” and “Educational, certification, and training opportunities.”

- The most identified barrier to hiring and retaining employees is a lack of qualified candidates.

## 1.1 Project Methodology

The methodology underpinning the Workforce Analysis Initiative utilized both qualitative and quantitative data, based on two forms of information gathering:

- Secondary data gathering and analysis comprised of background documents, base economic statistics, and studies conducted by the community, including Prince George's corporate strategy, economic-related documents, and planning and other strategies.
- Primary data gathering and analysis comprised of stakeholder engagement activities, including round table discussions and surveys. The City of Prince George team undertook an extensive email outreach campaign to foster increased participation in the on-line business survey, resulting in participation of 197 businesses.

### Secondary Data Analysis Methodology

- Labour Market Profile and Supply and Demand Analysis: This analysis was developed utilizing Statistics Canada Data, economic projections, and Vicinity Jobs Labour Market information to provide a profile of the supply and demand in Prince George.
- Economic Base Analysis: This analysis is designed to examine the socio-economic characteristics of the community. A profile focused on relevant socio-economic indicators – demographics, income, workforce, and business climate. This process identified key trends and informed the stakeholder engagement process.
- Economic Forecast and Impact of Market Trends: This section reviewed trends in the clean technology, forestry, and tourism sectors and assessed potential impact and opportunities to Prince George.
- Education Pipeline and Graduation Rates: This analysis included collecting data from education institutions to inform the current and future talent pipeline.
- Recruitment and Retention - Best and Promising Practices Analysis: This analysis was a wide-ranging study of community, business, and marketing strategies used to recruit and retain talent.

### Primary Data Gathering: Stakeholder Engagement Methodology

- A Workforce Roundtable discussion was held in Prince George on May 14th, 2019, bringing together local workforce stakeholders to share perspectives, insights, and experiences on the state of the local labour force in Prince George.
- An online business survey was available between May and June of 2019, resulting in a completion rate of 197 participants. The respondents informed their talent, recruitment needs, experiences, challenges, and practices.

## 1.2 Strategic Pillars and Priorities

Emerging through the research and analysis is a series of strategic themes and recommendations for action, forming a workforce strategy that will guide the City's efforts to respond to local labour supply and demand needs. The strategy was developed with a clear understanding that the City has limited resources and cannot single-handedly solve the workforce challenges of the community. Within the strategy, actions are identified that must be led by the business community and educational institutions to be successful. City led actions are designed to encourage and support the business community and educational institutions by facilitating conversations, sharing information, and providing tools to support their success. By working to create a responsive talent pipeline, the City and partners create the conditions for successful FDI attraction, by having the data, tools, and support in place to compete for new investment.

### 1.2.1 Strategic Pillar: Get The Right Talent Here

Strategic Pillar: Get The Right Talent Here
Strategic Priority 1: Maximize Targeted Recruitment Efforts
Strategic Priority 2: Articulate a Strong Value Proposition for Prince George
Strategic Priority 3: Treat Visitors as an Opportunity

Employers in Prince George have identified difficulty with accessing the right talent to support business operations and growth, with 61% indicating they are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the availability of qualified workers in the region. Input captured through the engagement activities indicated that there are barriers to hiring local talent, with competition increasing between employers, a scarcity of the skills needed, and a broadly recognized employability skills gap within the local workforce. The current environment is not ideal for FDI attraction, which often looks first for a talent pool and pipeline before choosing to invest. These conditions reiterate the importance of targeted recruitment efforts in external markets, beyond Prince George.

The opportunity of external recruitment to the area is not achievable through a single tactic or a single organization. Rather it creates the opportunity for coordination and collaboration among key stakeholder groups all sharing a common message and maximizing resources. While the statement of "Get the Right Talent Here" is simplified in nature, its implementation is complex and multi-faceted. It requires a clear understanding of the value proposition offered in Prince George, the influencing factors that make up key points of consideration by the mobile job seeker, and an evidence-based assessment of the employment opportunities in the local economy. Success requires support for initiatives that improve and promote quality of life, affordable housing, access to transit, unique tourism, and cultural attractions in a credible labour market. To achieve this, valid, accessible, useful information that showcases the opportunities for employment is necessary.



## 1.2.2 Strategic Pillar: Keep Talent Here

Strategic Pillar: Keep Talent Here
Strategic Priority 1: Foster Community Collaboration
Strategic Priority 2: Onboard New Employees to Prince George
Strategic Priority 3: Promote Student Retention & Workforce Alignment
Strategic Priority 4: Focus on Retaining Young Professionals

As the demand for talent continues to escalate, significant efforts will be necessary to ensure that local talent stays local and that those that have migrated to Prince George are encouraged to stay. The projected population growth is part of a good news story, one that can supplement the local labour force. Talent growth requires that Prince George keep its efforts targeted. Touting the types of employment opportunities, access to local education and training, and the value proposition of lifestyle and affordability is a priority. The story needs to take centre stage and be celebrated.

The local population includes students attracted to the City's excellent educational institutions and workers attracted to career opportunities. It will be necessary to track and monitor job opportunities and promote them both within the city and externally in select markets from which migrants tend to select Prince George. The consultation also indicated a clear opportunity to enhance the employability of the local workforce through supporting soft skills development.

A major concern raised during the consultation was that retaining new talent has been challenging. Individuals who relocate for a career opportunity are mobile and not restrained by the possibility of another relocation if their needs are unmet. These needs go beyond careers to include lifestyle choices, community integration, and affordability. By showcasing these assets of Prince George, the value proposition is clear. Coupled with the promotion of career pathways and opportunities for career advancement, Prince George can promote the long-term viability of the city as home. The key is to enable talent to see their future self and family in Prince George.

The City has an opportunity to equip and inform employers with best practices, local labour market information, tools, and resources that support both the attraction and retention of talent.

## 1.2.3 Business Strategies for Talent Attraction and Retention

Talent attraction and retention efforts are challenged by changing demands and desires of the workforce. The business community benefits from a greater understanding of the make-up of its employee base and then adapting practices to reflect changing trends such as multi-generational workforce, integration of diverse populations, and technology influences. The public sector, in turn, is positioned to

support these efforts, making available tools and resources to assist employers with such a transition through the promotion of best and promising practices, and access to local support systems.

The following checklist can be utilized by businesses to support talent attraction and retention practices.

#### **Employer Support Initiatives for Recruitment & Retention**

- Present competitive employment packages, offering transparent communication about pay, other forms of compensation, company benefits, and workplace culture
- Consider flexible workplace arrangements (i.e. telecommuting and non-traditional work weeks)
- Highlight job security & career advancement opportunities, showcasing real examples of staff that have experienced career stability and growth in the community
- Offer effective people management approaches (such as real-time feedback mechanisms, as compared to annual performance reviews for staff)
- Utilize in-house training and professional development opportunities supporting employee's desire for continuous improvement and life-long learning
- Consider mentorship and experiential learning opportunities
- Strategically consider geographies that offer "best bets" for talent recruitment, reflecting on talent needs, education and skill levels, and all that Prince George has to offer those considering relocation

Employers who can align their labour needs and business strategies with locations and markets with enough labourers will be in a better position to fill key positions. This labour first approach, along with adequate compensation and flexible work hours, will help employers adapt to the changing workforce and ultimately remain competitive in a changing economy.





## 2. City of Prince George Economic Context and Projections

### 2.1 Economic Base Analysis

The economic base analysis completed for Prince George presents an overview of the socio-economic, labour force, and industry composition in the City of Prince George. The results are derived from the following sources:

- Statistics Canada, Census Profile, 2016
- Statistics Canada, Census Profile, 2011
- Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Counts, December 2018

Prince George is presented in comparison to other broader areas: The Regional District of Fraser-Fort George, and the Province of British Columbia.

The key findings were as follows:

- Between the 2011 and 2016 Census, Prince George's population grew at a rate of 2.8%, slower than British Columbia's growth rate (5.6%) but similar to the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George (2.9%). The population of Prince George is slightly older than that of British Columbia.
- In terms of age, the City of Prince George's median age is 38, which is quite young compared to the provincial median age of 43. That said, Prince George has a significant proportion of the 50-55 age group compared with the province.
- Most people in Prince George live in single-detached housing. The median value of dwellings in Prince George grew approximately 15% between 2011 and 2016, compared to 14% for the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George and 12% in British Columbia. Median values suggest that Prince George houses are cheaper compared to the province, which speaks to its affordability for those looking to purchase housing. Similarly, those seeking rental housing would likely find cheaper rents in Prince George, with median rent prices approximately \$170 lower than the provincial median rent prices.
- In 2016, the median income of Prince George residents had remained slightly lower than Fraser-Fort George, but higher than the province. This trend is also observed in median household income. Significantly, when we observe median individual income growth, Prince George's has grown by 21% since 2011, which is similar to Fraser-Fort George, but three times the provincial growth of 6%.
- In terms of highest educational attainment, Prince George's largest single group of the labour force have attained no higher than a secondary (high) school diploma. Of those aged 25-64, 30.6% of people have attained that level of education; only 19.5% of that age group have attained a university certificate,

diploma or degree at bachelor level or above, compared with 29.9% in the province. These factors, combined with the city's 21% median income growth, may indicate that one may not need significant education to live comfortably in Prince George.

- Major fields of study include architecture, engineering, and related technologies (13.5%), followed by business, management and public administration (11.2%), and health and related fields (9.5%). These are also the main three fields of study in Fraser-Fort George and British Columbia.
- Of those who live in Prince George who moved residence within the last five years, the strong majority moved within the city. 12% were internal migrants (people who moved from somewhere else in Canada), and 2.2% were from other countries. In terms of recruits for jobs available in Prince George, migrants from other parts of British Columbia account for most recruits (63 percent for Prince George from 2011 to 2016) followed by migrants from the rest of Canada (21 percent) and the rest of the world (15 percent).

## 2.2 Projections on the Economy of Prince George

- The 2018 unemployment rate in Prince George was 5.2%, which is among the lowest achieved in British Columbia. It suggests that the local labour market is currently tight.
- Prince George is a major centre of economic activity in the northern part of British Columbia. It employs residents and those who reside in surrounding communities. Export-based employment (i.e., employment in industries that service the economy outside Prince George) account for 28% of all jobs. Many of those jobs are in manufacturing, agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, mining, oil, and gas. Those sectors account for 37% of all export-based jobs.
- Exportable service sectors* account for a much greater share of the City's economic base jobs (63 percent) with strong representation in health care and social assistance (1,757 jobs), retail trade (1,268 jobs), public administration (890 jobs), education (645 jobs), transportation and warehousing (638 jobs), accommodation and food services (196 jobs) and construction (180 jobs). The strong service sector representation within the city's economic base reflects the city's role as a major centre for the provision of such services not only to those living in Prince George but also to those living in nearby communities within the Regional District and throughout northern BC.
- Long-term historical trends reveal that export-based jobs are declining, while service-jobs (i.e., jobs in industries that service the community) is rapidly

Prince George is a major centre of economic activity in the northern part of British Columbia. It not only employs its residents, but also those who reside in surrounding communities. The city is also a service hub, providing health care, retail, public administration, and education services to the surrounding region.



increasing. This trend of the area's job profile away from goods to services is projected to continue through to 2031.

## 2.3 Population & Employment Projections

By industry, the largest projected employment gains in Prince George will occur in the health care and social assistance, food services, educational services, transportation and warehousing, and construction sectors.

- Prince George's population is projected to grow at a modest pace in the years ahead. *metroeconomics* projects the population will reach 85,000 in 2031 compared to 74,003 in 2016.
- The key factor behind population growth is net migration, as natural change (fewer births than deaths) is low, and the population is ageing. Most migration flows to the Prince George area result from people moving there from another location within the province.

### 2.3.1 Employment by Industry Projections

- The largest gains will occur in health care and social assistance (790 and 840, respectively).
- Other major gains will occur in accommodation and food services (560 and 630), educational services (240 and 220), transportation and warehousing (140 and 140) and construction (110 and 110).

### 2.3.2 Employment by Occupation Projections

- The total projected labour demand by 2029 will be 7,796 new workers to Prince George, based on retirement replacement need and economic growth needs. Over the first five-year period (2019-2024), 3,299 workers are needed, and 4,497 are needed over the following five years (2024-2029).
- The top ten occupations based on total number of recruits required include: food counter attendants (338), cooks (324), food and beverage servers (279), transport truck drivers (265), nurse aides (226), registered nurses (205), light-duty cleaners (180), early childhood educators (172), administrative officers (167) and administrative assistants (158).



### 3. Regional Labour Supply and Demand Profile

An assessment of current job postings within Prince George and the surrounding region was conducted, reporting on the period January 1, 2018, to March 31, 2019, using a job demand reporting platform. MDB Insight, in partnership with Vicinity Jobs, offers real-time monitoring of online job postings across all of Canada. The key findings of this report include:

- The Health Care and Social Assistance sector had the strongest demand for workers, with 18% of the region's job postings classified to a sector.
- Retail Trade (893 job postings) and Manufacturing (821 job postings) were also sectors with strong demand for workers.
- Accommodation and Food Services had the highest number of job seekers (34% of job seekers with an online profile).
- The Sales and Service Occupation category (NOC 6), accounted for 26% of all job postings and 30% of job seekers.
- 43% of all jobs required a college degree. Meanwhile, 33% of job seekers had a college diploma or degree.
- The top private-sector employer in terms of online job postings was Canadian Forest Products (Canfor) with 519 postings in Prince George (10.5% of identified online job postings).

The full Vicinity Jobs Report is provided in the appendix.





## 4. Targeted Workforce Attraction

To support Prince George's workforce attraction efforts, MDB Insight has undertaken an assessment of ten Canadian cities for their workforce mobility and suitability as targeted geographies.

The table below offers a matrix of labour attraction factors paired with source cities for migration to assess which cities have a workforce that would be more likely to consider relocating to Prince George.

The criteria considered:

- the recent unemployment rate,
- unemployment rates specific to Prince George's projected top 10 occupations,
- affordability of target cities (defined by the percentage of population paying above 30% of income on housing costs),
- the proportion of the target demographic population aged 25-44,
- the skilled labour percentage of that demographic.

Finally, a qualitative assessment of "Culture Fit" was undertaken to account for the unique lifestyle factors that Prince George offers. As a northern community with ample outdoor recreation opportunities and a semi-remote location, Prince George would be appealing to the talent that values this similar lifestyle. For this reason, three Northern Ontario cities with similar lifestyle factors were assessed for this exercise.

Affordability was assessed based on Prince George's affordability as an identified value proposition. Cities with higher costs of living create the opportunity for Prince George to leverage their lower housing costs.

Provincial migration patterns (see Figure 6) have shown that Alberta and Ontario have been the greatest importers of interprovincial migrants to British Columbia from 2013-2018. Further, as was determined in section 2.3, most migration flows to Prince George occur from other locations within those provinces. Prince George is the service hub of Northern BC, and as such, the talent that values a northern lifestyle will likely live and work in Prince George due to access to its unique balance of amenities and outdoor assets.

For these reasons, this exercise assessed the Census Metropolitan Areas and Census Agglomeration Areas of:

- |             |               |
|-------------|---------------|
| ▪ Vancouver | ▪ Calgary     |
| ▪ Victoria  | ▪ Edmonton    |
| ▪ Kelowna   | ▪ Red Deer    |
| ▪ Kamloops  | ▪ Thunder Bay |



■ North Bay

■ Greater Sudbury

From Figure 1 below, the following assessments are made:

- The Vancouver CMA has ample representation of skilled young people, a high cost of living, and a high number of unemployed individuals in Prince George's top 10 occupations. Based on Prince George's affordability alone, this gives Prince George a value proposition to those priced out of the Vancouver CMA. However, it lags in areas such as culture fit. As a major city, residents of the Vancouver CMA may hold the perception that Prince George is remote and disconnected, as was noted in previous studies.<sup>2</sup>
- In terms of the overall unemployment rate, Calgary, Edmonton, and Kelowna had the highest unemployment rates. Calgary and Edmonton had the total most estimated unemployed persons in Prince George's top ten in-demand occupations. As population centres in Alberta, the strongest importer of interprovincial migrants, these two cities are strong target areas for labour attraction efforts.
- A city with excellent culture fit was Greater Sudbury, Ontario. Greater Sudbury had the highest median unemployment rate of Prince George's top ten occupations. As a northern Ontario city, its lifestyle assets are similar to Prince George, and it is close in population size.
- Alberta cities are likely a good bet for targeted attraction. Calgary and Edmonton emerged in the top ten of the *Move Up Prince George* website's visitors. These cities have a good representation of a young workforce that is likely mobile and would place value on the quality of life that Prince George offers.
- Ontario is the second highest importer of interprovincial migrants. Toronto was ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in *Move Up Prince George* website visits, though despite its ample population size, it lacks qualitative culture fit. Marketing in Ontario should be adjusted to population centres that are more likely to value the lifestyle assets that Prince George offers.

In the matrix below, boxes highlighted in green signify the highest performing indicators in each category. For example, Kamloops, Calgary, and Edmonton had the highest recent unemployment rates, which made those communities most competitive in that category.

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<sup>2</sup> Perceptions of Prince George Survey, 2017.

Figure 1 Target Cities Matrix

CMA or Census Agglomeration Area	Recent Unemployment Rate	Population 2016	Median Unemployment Rate for Prince George's Top 10 Occupations	Total Estimated Unemployed Persons in Top Ten Occupations	% Pop. Aged 25-44	% Skilled Labour Aged 25-44	% of Population Paying +30% of Income on Housing	Culture Fit	Website User Traffic Ranking <sup>3</sup>
Vancouver	4%	2,463,431	5%	617.5	28%	73%	32%	Medium	1
Victoria	4%	367,770	4%	105	25%	69%	29%	Medium	8
Kelowna	4.4%	194,882	8%	85	24%	66%	26%	Good	7
Kamloops	7.8%	103,811	6%	57.5	25%	64%	22%	Good	10
Calgary	7%	1,392,609	8%	695	32%	72%	22%	Medium-Good	3
Edmonton	7%	1,321,426	3%	642.5	31%	69%	22%	Medium	6
Red Deer	5.7%	100,418	8%	55	31%	60%	22%	Medium-Good	N/A
Thunder Bay	5.4%	121,621	4%	62.5	23%	69%	19%	Good	N/A
North Bay	6*%	70,378	2%	30	23%	66%	26%	Good	N/A
Greater Sudbury	5.3%	164,689	10%	67.5	24%	72%	21%	Good	N/A

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of the Population; Statistics Canada, Table 14-10-0294-01

Figure 2 below offers some insight to unemployment rates for Prince George's top ten occupations in the identified target cities as of 2016. A granular analysis such as this assists with understanding which occupations to target in specific cities.

- Interestingly, Red Deer had 16% unemployment for transport truck drivers as of the last census, suggesting it may be a good target for like occupations.

<sup>3</sup> From Top 10 'Move Up Prince George' website users since the page was launched.

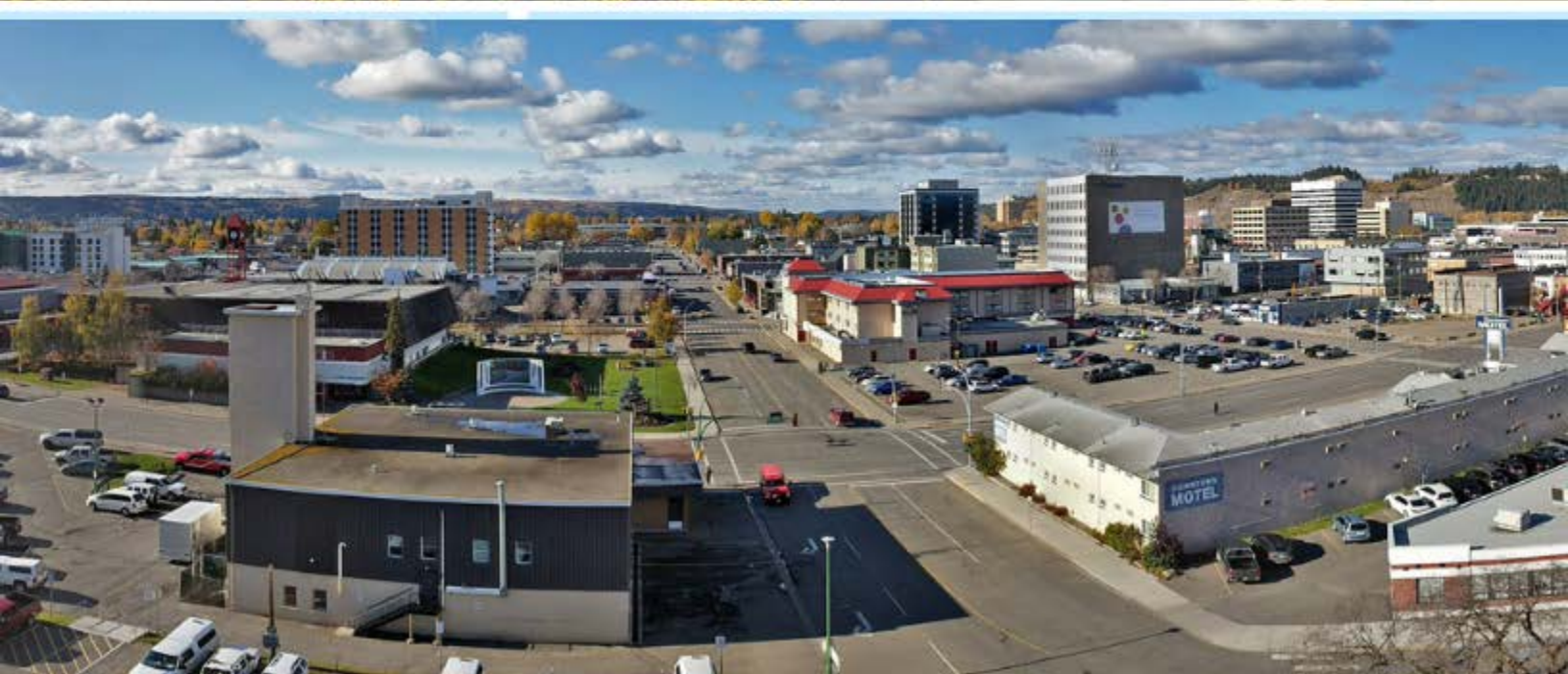
- North Bay had high unemployment for food counter attendants, kitchen helpers, and related support occupations, cooks, registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses, light duty cleaners, and early childhood educators. It is worth considering targeting North Bay for these types of occupations

**Figure 2 Unemployment Rates for Prince George's Top 10 Occupations**

Top 10 Occupations	Unemployment Rates									
	Thunder Bay	Vancouver	North Bay	Edmonton	Victoria	Calgary	Red Deer	Kelowna	Kamloops	Sudbury
6711 Food counter attendants, kitchen helpers and related support occupations	9%	6%	11%	8%	8%	10%	8%	8%	9%	11%
6322 Cooks	11%	5%	12%	8%	6%	8%	9%	9%	8%	6%
6513 Food and beverage servers	9%	5%	10%	8%	6%	9%	9%	7%	8%	12%
7511 Transport truck drivers	10%	3%	13%	11%	5%	8%	16%	11%	8%	12%
3413 Nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates	5%	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%	2%	5%	5%	4%
3012 Registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	1%	2%
6731 Light duty cleaners	6%	6%	9%	7%	5%	7%	5%	6%	8%	9%
4214 Early childhood educators and assistants	6%	4%	8%	5%	2%	6%	4%	3%	2%	6%
1221 Administrative officers	4%	4%	5%	6%	4%	7%	8%	4%	4%	4%
1241 Administrative assistants	5%	4%	5%	5%	3%	8%	4%	6%	6%	5%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of the Population







## 5. Education Pipeline and Graduation Rates

### Secondary School Cohort Assessment:

At the secondary school level, the 2017-18 School District 57 graduation cohort totaled 1,158 students, with an 80% completion rate, resulting in 868 total students graduating. The projected total labour force demand indicates 7,796 recruits by 2029. If the 2017-18 graduate cohort were to remain constant over the following decade, the Prince George labour force would have exceeded its need for new workers by 884 workers. However, this is not a valid assumption as it is likely not achievable to maintain the same graduate rate and to then retain all of those graduates in Prince George. It is common for graduates not all to remain local, but rather leave the region for post-secondary opportunities and employment, further validating the need to attract talent in the short-term and over the longer-term.

### Post-Secondary Education Pipeline:

The data assessed for this analysis was derived from the B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills, and Training Student Transitions Project, 2018 Data Submission. This analysis examined credentials awarded for the 2017-18 academic year, for the University of Northern British Columbia and College of New Caledonia. Data for that academic year were assumed to be a snapshot of constant graduate trends, instead of long-term projection data.

Credentials were broken down by program areas that align with the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) areas. Those program areas are:

- **Arts & Sciences:** liberal arts, humanities, and social and physical sciences
- **Business & Management:** business, management, marketing, office administration, and related. Does not include computer and information sciences
- **Developmental:** Adult Basic Education, Adult Special Education, English as a Second Language training, and other pre-post-secondary level education
- **Education:** including preschool and aides, and library services programs
- **Engineering & Applied Sciences:** agriculture, natural resources, and conservation, architecture, computing, engineering, and science technologies
- **Health:** health professions and related clinical sciences as well as residency programs
- **Human & Social Services:** legal professions, family and consumer sciences, parks, recreation and fitness, security services, public administration, and social services
- **Other:** programs not associated with a specific program; sometimes general studies



- **Personal Improvement & Leisure:** primarily leisure and recreational courses, interpersonal and social skills courses, personal awareness and self-improvement courses, and some health-related courses such as First Aid
- **Trades:** apprenticeship programs and other trades training, also transportation
- **Visual & Performing Arts:** visual art, music, drama, and other fine arts

These high-level data were assessed alongside projected in-demand occupations to gain a broad view of workforce alignment if students pursued appropriate programs within broad program areas.

Each in-demand occupation was applied its appropriate Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) Skills Classification. The ESDC Skills Classification identifies each 2016 National Occupation Classification (NOC) with a skill level, identified by letters A to D:

- **A:** Occupations usually require a university education
- **B:** Occupations usually require college education or apprenticeship training
- **C:** Occupations usually require secondary school and occupation-specific training
- **D:** On-the-job training is usually provided for occupations

Projected in-demand occupations were applied to a common program area through a qualitative assessment. Occupations with an ESDC Skills Classification A were assessed alongside University of Northern British Columbia credentials awarded only. Occupations with an ESDC Skills Classification B were assessed alongside the College of New Caledonia credentials awarded only.

The remaining occupations, classified by ESDC C and D, were not assessed for this exercise, as they do not usually require post-secondary education. Some occupations were omitted from this analysis as they require specific education credentials, such as early childhood educators, and the data available did not lend to that level of granularity.

As the data available was not specific, this exercise is meant to be regarded as a high-level assessment. The key findings from this analysis were as follows:

- Demand for occupations with ESDC Skills Classification C and D will be the strongest to 2029.
- Demand for occupations in ESDC Skills Classification B that commonly require a trades education will likely be addressed by trades program offerings at the College of New Caledonia. In the 2017-18 academic year, trades program credentials accounted for 29% of all credentials awarded. Special attention should be given to the College of New Caledonia's trades programs offerings to ensure workforce alignment with projected in-demand occupations.
- Health occupations at all skill levels are a significant area of demand. The College of New Caledonia and University of Northern British Columbia each granted an equal amount of health program area credentials for the 2017-18 academic year

(125 each). Special attention should be given to these institutions' health-related programs to ensure workforce retention in the region.

- The University of Northern British Columbia produced a significant amount of arts and sciences credentials (29% of all credentials awarded, 215 total credentials). It is difficult to apply these credentials directly to specific occupations through this exercise, and as such, those credentials are not well reflected in this assessment. That said, these credentials correlate with highly skilled occupations in EDSC Skills Classification A. Most in-demand occupations are classified by ESDC B, C, and D. It is possible that many University of Northern British Columbia credentials holders are over-skilled for the local workforce.

Note: The tables below compare the aggregated credentials awarded in the region by program area and compares them to the top in demand occupations, highlighting potential shortages. This is a high-level analysis and not intended to provide an exact accounting of NOC specific credentials awarded.

**Figure 3 In-Demand Occupations**

NOC	Top 50 In-Demand Occupations	ESDC Skills Classification	Total Projected Prince George Labour Demand by 2029
6711	Food counter attendants, kitchen helpers, and related support occupations	D	338
6322	Cooks	B	324
6513	Food and beverage servers	C	279
7511	Transport truck drivers	C	265
3413	Nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates	C	226
3012	Registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses	A	205
6731	Light duty cleaners	D	180
4214	Early childhood educators and assistants	B	172
1221	Administrative officers	B	167
1241	Administrative assistants	B	158
4032	Elementary school and kindergarten teachers	A	153
631	Restaurant and food service managers	B	145
6421	Retail salespersons	C	134
6611	Cashiers	D	128
621	Retail and wholesale trade managers	B	121
1243	Medical administrative assistants	B	120
4031	Secondary school teachers	A	109
1414	Receptionists	C	106
4212	Social and community service workers	B	101
4412	Home support workers, housekeepers and related occupations	C	101
7321	Automotive service technicians, truck and bus mechanics, and mechanical repairers	B	98
7514	Delivery and courier service drivers	C	97
6733	Janitors, caretakers, and building superintendents	D	97
3112	General practitioners and family physicians	A	87
6341	Hairstylists and barbers	B	79
1311	Accounting technicians and bookkeepers	B	78
4021	College and other vocational instructors	A	76
3233	Licensed practical nurses	B	71

NOC	Top 50 In-Demand Occupations	ESDC Skills Classification	Total Projected Prince George Labour Demand by 2029
16	Senior managers - construction, transportation, production and utilities	A	70
4011	University professors and lecturers	A	70
1411	General office support workers	C	69
4152	Social workers	A	66
3111	Specialist physicians	A	65
7512	Bus drivers, subway operators, and other transit operators	C	65
4413	Elementary and secondary school teacher assistants	C	60
6232	Real estate agents and salespersons	B	59
1111	Financial auditors and accountants	A	58
7452	Material handlers	C	53
1431	Accounting and related clerks	C	52
6541	Security guards and related security service occupations	C	51
5254	Program leaders and instructors in recreation, sport, and fitness	B	50
3113	Dentists	A	46
7271	Carpenters	B	46
3222	Dental hygienists and dental therapists	B	44
4215	Instructors of persons with disabilities	B	42
4112	Lawyers and Quebec notaries	A	41
3219	Other medical technologists and technicians (except dental health)	B	40
6321	Chefs	B	40
3411	Dental assistants	C	39
6562	Estheticians, electrologists and related occupations	C	37

Source: Statistics Canada and metroeconomics

**Figure 4 Education Pipeline Matrix**

Common Program Areas	Top Projected Occupations by Common Program Areas	Total Credentials Awarded within Common Program Areas 2017-18*	Total Prince George Projected Labour Demand by 2029	Workforce Gap
Arts & Sciences	Lawyers and Quebec notaries	210	41	+169
Business & Management	Receptionists	145	1,083	-938
	Administrative officers			
	Administrative assistants			
	Senior managers - construction, transportation, production and utilities			
	Restaurant and food service managers			
	Retail and wholesale trade managers			
	General office support workers			
	Accounting technicians and bookkeepers			
	Real estate agents and salespersons			
	Financial auditors and accountants			
	Accounting and related clerks			
Education	College and other vocational instructors	85	640	-555
	Early childhood educators and assistants			
	Secondary school teachers			
	University professors and lecturers			
	Elementary school and kindergarten teachers			
	Elementary and secondary school teacher assistants			
Health	Licensed practical nurses	140	1,044	-904
	General practitioners and family physicians			
	Nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates			
	Registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses			
	Home support workers, housekeepers and related occupations			
	Medical administrative assistants			
	Specialist physicians			
	Dentists			
	Dental hygienists and dental therapists			
	Other medical technologists and technicians (except dental health)			



Common Program Areas	Top Projected Occupations by Common Program Areas	Total Credentials Awarded within Common Program Areas 2017-18*	Total Prince George Projected Labour Demand by 2029	Workforce Gap
	Dental assistants			
Human & Social Services	Social and community service workers	90	209	-119
	Social workers			
	Instructors of persons with disabilities			
Trades	Chefs	200	982	-782
	Carpenters			
	Bus drivers, subway operators, and other transit operators			
	Automotive service technicians, truck and bus mechanics, and mechanical repairers			
	Hairstylists and barbers			
	Cooks			
	Transport truck drivers			
	Bus drivers, subway operators, and other transit operators			

Source: Student Transitions Project - Fall 2018 Data Submission<sup>4</sup>

\*Credentials awarded are the total number awarded by all UNBC and CNC campuses.

<sup>4</sup> Interactive Reporting | B.C. Public Post-Secondary Institutions by Sector, [aved.gov.bc.ca/interactive\\_reporting/welcome.htm#programBreakdown](https://aved.gov.bc.ca/interactive_reporting/welcome.htm#programBreakdown)

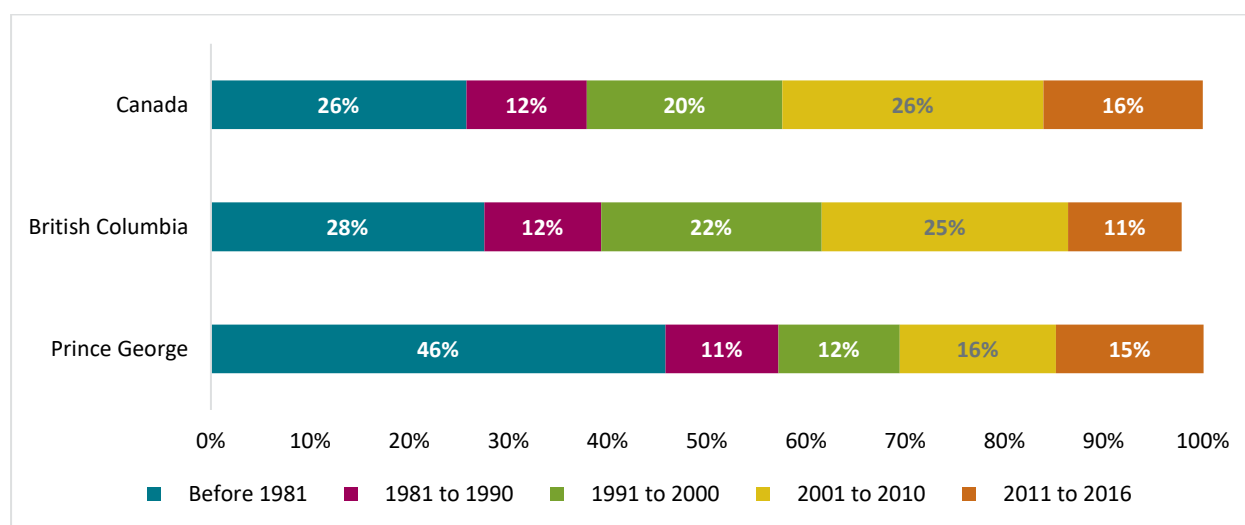




## 6. Commuting and Migration Patterns

Most of the immigration to Prince George occurred before 1981 (46%), which is almost double the proportion of immigration to the rest of B.C. and Canada during that period. However, more recently, Prince George's proportion of immigrants to the city has surpassed the province and more closely matched immigration rates in Canada during the 2011 to 2016 period. This signals that there may be an influx of recent immigrants participating in Prince George's labour market.

**Figure 5 Period of Immigration to Prince George, British Columbia & Canada, 2016**



In determining where those migrants have come from, Statistics Canada's 'Recent Immigrants by Selected Places of Birth' report offers some insight. The graph below shows the top places of birth for Prince George. Migrants from the Philippines are particularly strongly represented in Prince George, at 35% of all recent immigrants identifying it as their place of birth. This proportion more than doubles B.C. and Canada's proportion of immigrants born in the Philippines.

In terms of the broader forces that have influenced Filipino migration to Canada, the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, and in particular, the Live-In Caregiver<sup>5</sup> program has brought many Filipino-Canadians to Canada.<sup>6</sup> These programs are successful in part because of additional programs available to those immigrants that allow foreign workers to apply for permanent residency and sponsor family members, such as parents and grandparents to work in Canada.<sup>7</sup> Filipino migrants work in a variety of

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/foreign-workers.html>

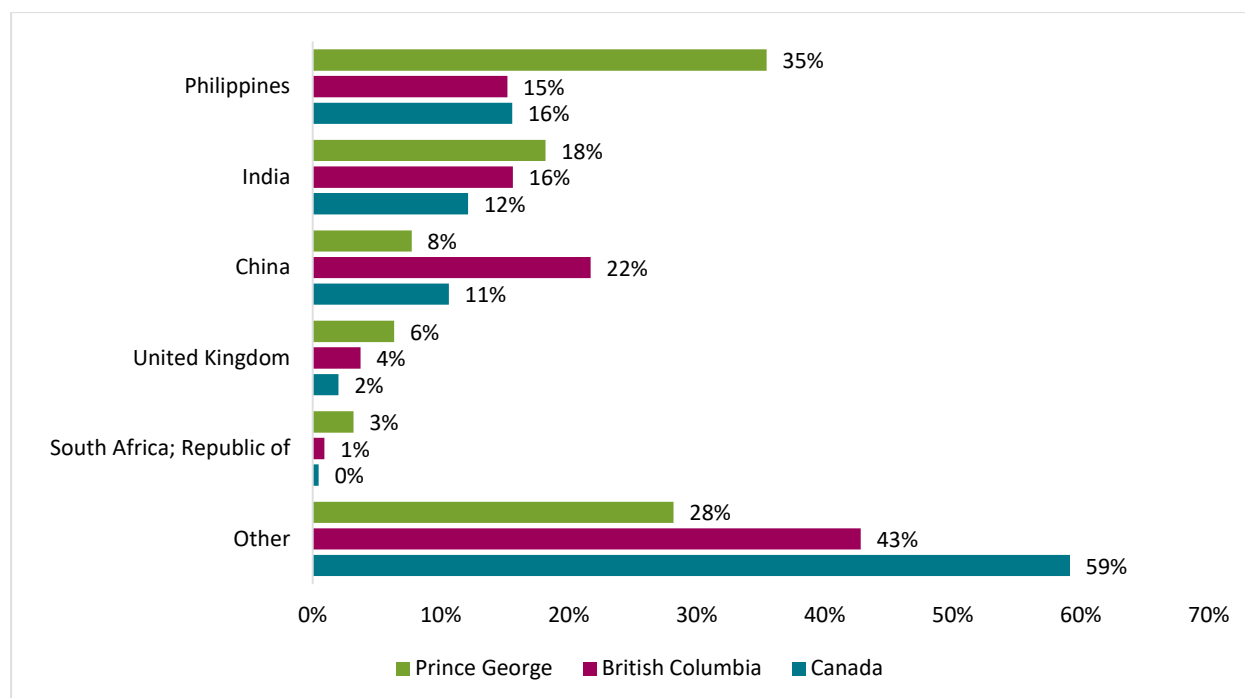
<sup>6</sup> <https://www.cicnews.com/2014/01/story-filipino-immigration-canada-013193.html#gs.lD7uy1>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/family-sponsorship/sponsor-parents-grandparents/apply.html>

disciplines and sectors nationally, though many work in the health care sector as nurses and live-in caregivers. As seen above, health-related occupations and the health care and social assistance sector will see major gains over the next decade.

Many Filipino migrants reside in major urban centres, such as Winnipeg and Toronto. Filipino-Canadians, their families, and Filipino international immigrants present an opportunity for Prince George's workforce targeting efforts.

**Figure 6 Recent Immigrants by Selected Places of Birth, Prince George, British Columbia, and Canada, 2016**



Assessments of mobility to Prince George reveal that of the 12,760 immigrants who moved to Prince George over the 2011 to 2016 period, 8,190 (64%) moved from another location in the province, 2,995 (23%) from another location in Canada and 1,590 (12%) from a location outside of Canada.

In terms of interprovincial migrants, Statistics Canada tracks interprovincial migrants by the province of origin and province of destination annually. The figure below shows the sources of interprovincial migrants to British Columbia, sorted highest to lowest. Most interprovincial migrants come from neighbouring Alberta (24,453 in 2017/18), followed by migrants from Ontario. Factors that appear to be significantly related to relocation decisions include the diversity of the population in the host community, income, and poverty rates. Secondary out-migration may also be a reflection of general population change, being most pronounced in cities that are



experiencing slow population growth and out-migration generally.<sup>8</sup> Determining the driving forces that influence migrants from Alberta and Ontario to relocate to British Columbia will be essential to developing targeted labour attraction marketing strategies. This will require targeted research beyond the scope of this study.

**Figure 7 Interprovincial Migrants to British Columbia**

Province of origin	Total by Location	2013 / 2014	2014 / 2015	2015 / 2016	2016 / 2017	2017 / 2018
Alberta	130,059	22,757	26,901	29,304	26,644	24,453
Ontario	81,057	15,039	17,905	17,666	15,846	14,601
Saskatchewan	21,344	3,822	4,438	4,551	4,062	4,471
Manitoba	19,595	3,427	3,943	4,090	3,856	4,279
Quebec	17,105	3,235	3,662	3,788	3,295	3,125
Nova Scotia	7,091	1,446	1,474	1,663	1,198	1,310
New Brunswick	3,880	762	881	872	651	714
Yukon	2,621	596	587	554	433	451
Newfoundland and Labrador	2,535	439	512	496	507	581
Northwest Territories	1,943	414	367	423	395	344
Prince Edward Island	1,550	262	266	330	266	426
Nunavut	379	82	90	51	57	99
<b>Total</b>	<b>289,159</b>	<b>52,281</b>	<b>61,026</b>	<b>63,788</b>	<b>57,210</b>	<b>54,854</b>

Source: Statistics Canada

<sup>8</sup> <http://p2pcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Analysis-of-Immigrant-Attraction-and-Retention-Patterns-West-Cdn-CMAs.pdf>



## 7. Summary of Consultation Findings

### 7.1 Workforce Roundtable Summary

An overview of the consultation process and key findings (detailed results are provided in the appendix)

A Workforce Development Roundtable was held on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019, where local workforce stakeholders were invited to share thoughts on the state of the local workforce in Prince George. A summary of the results is below, with a full summary provided in the appendix.

- The sense from stakeholders at the workshop was that the labour market is tight in Prince George. There is a perception of a skills mismatch, where many workers skills do not align with what employers are seeking.
- Workers and employers' expectations also appear to be misaligned. Many employers feel that entry-level workers expect too much in terms of salary, and local businesses often cannot meet those expectations. Employers are concerned about losing employees to larger firms that can offer more competitive wages. Retention issues also make employers wary of investing in young employees, because they are concerned that after training and some experience, they will lose those employees to larger businesses – the oil and gas sector was referenced as a “poacher” of employees.
- It was noted that many of those who are unemployed in Prince George's tight labour market lack workforce readiness skills and experience barriers to employment.
- The group felt that employers use a variety of resources to market job opportunities. However, job seekers in Prince George do not always know where to look for opportunities beyond employer websites. A central employment website and educating job seekers on where to look for opportunities were offered as potential solutions to address this gap.
- Housing affordability and steady employment were recognized as factors that keep workers in Prince George over the long term.
- Factors that exacerbate talent attraction and retention challenges included:
  - the perception of Prince George as remote and isolated
  - young workers are changing attitudes towards work and local employers' workplace cultures being 'outdated'
  - spouses/partners being unable to find work when relocating
  - a sense that Prince George is perceived as a career 'pit stop' for young people to gain their early career experience and then leave

- the participants suggested people reach the career ceiling sooner in Prince George and must move to larger cities to advance in their careers

Solutions discussed included:

- Gathering and making easily accessible accurate Labour Market Information
- Working with post-secondary institutions to strengthen the relationship between business and education to align the workforce
- Working with post-secondary institutions to address workforce readiness issues with students and to educate students on what employers are seeking in employees, skills in demand, and where to look for job opportunities
- Creating a central website for job postings

## 7.2 Prince George Employment Survey

The Prince George Employer online survey was active May and June of 2019 and gathered 197 completes. The respondents were representatives of businesses and shared information related to their experience in labour attraction, recruitment, and retention.

### Respondent Profile

- A wide variety of industries were represented with the largest groups being Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (16%), Health Care and Social Assistance (16%), and Accommodation and Food Services (10%)
- Most respondents were from locally owned and operated businesses or self-employed (68%) with a small minority from externally owned businesses, non-profits or other.
- Nearly half of all businesses have been in operation for over ten years and have 1-5 employees.

### Workforce Needs

- Most respondents have plans to hire new employees: 78% in the next 12 months, and 84% in the next 24 months.
- Most businesses surveyed agreed that a skilled workforce is important for current operations (85%) and future growth (89%).
- The respondents indicated relatively low levels of satisfaction with local workforce factors with most respondents indicating they are satisfied with only two factors “Staffing, employment and recruitment services and organizations” and “Educational, certification, and training opportunities” at 55% satisfaction. The lowest-performing factors related to available worker experience, qualification, and education, with career experience being the lowest factor at 28% satisfaction.



- The most identified barrier to hiring, and retaining employees was a lack of qualified candidates.
- The most in-demand occupations identified: “Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations” (37%) and “Sales and service occupations” (21%).
- The top three methods to overcome recruitment and retention barriers were “increased training” (22%), “higher salaries/benefits” (21%), and “greater focus on out of community recruitment” (13%).
- Respondents indicated their businesses required a wide variety of education levels with technical and trades training (39%) and high school education and below (30%) making up the two largest groups, followed by degree level education at 19%.
- Respondents were evenly split on the training they would like to see in Prince George with trades the most mentioned at 30%, followed by technology at 17%. Employability and health care tied at 14%.
- Respondents offered a variety of resources and strategies to recruit talent with the most mentioned being “Word of mouth” (158 mentions), “Online job boards” (140 mentions), and “Social media” (131 mentions). Tapping into employee recommendations received (115 mentions), broadly falling into the word of mouth category.



## 8. Strategic Pillars, Actions and Performance Measures

This strategic plan is designed to support Prince George's talent development, attraction, and retention by leveraging the community's strengths and showcasing the opportunities for organizations to work together to maximize results.

The action plan offers a comprehensive framework that identifies specific actions or activities to be undertaken to advance the validated strategic priorities. To support plan execution, potential partners and a proposed timeline have been included. As part of the implementation process, it is important to ensure that actions are being monitored and measured for impact. Suggested performance measures accompany each priority. This section also offers a plan for community improvement funding and support.

### Interpreting the Implementation Plan: Timing and Priority

The level of priority should consider:

1. The level of immediacy based on City capacity
2. The potential to contribute to an increase in the attraction and retention of talent in Prince George

The timeline assigned to each action may be operationalized as:

- Short-term – within a year
- Medium-term – 1-3 years
- Longer-term – 3-5 years

### Interpreting the Implementation Plan: Lead

The strategic plan identifies lead organizations or groups of organizations that will be critical to engage in implementing the actions identified.

The lead organization should consider:

- The capacity of the organization to complete the action
- The responsibility of that organization to address the raised concerns

### Strategic Themes

Themes form the foundation on which the areas of importance and urgency are based. Emerging through this research are two specific foundational elements that will ground the strategy and support positive impacts through its implementation.





## 8.1 Strategic Pillars and Priorities

Emerging through the research and analysis is a series of strategic themes and recommendations for action, forming a workforce strategy that will guide the City's efforts to respond to local labour supply and demand needs. The strategy has been developed with a clear understanding that the City has limited resources and cannot single-handedly solve the workforce challenges of the community. Within the strategy, actions have been identified that must be led by the business community and educational institutions to be successful. City led actions are designed to encourage and support the business community and educational institutions by facilitating conversations, sharing information, and providing the tools to support their success. By working to create a responsive talent pipeline, the City and partners create the conditions for successful FDI attraction, by having the data, tools, and support in place to compete for new investment.

### 8.1.1 Strategic Pillar: Get the Right Talent Here

Strategic Pillar: Get the Right Talent Here
Strategic Priority 1: Maximize Targeted Recruitment Efforts
Strategic Priority 2: Articulate a Strong Value Proposition for Prince George
Strategic Priority 3: Treat Visitors as an Opportunity

Employers in Prince George have identified difficulty with accessing the right talent to support business operations and growth, with 61% indicating they are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the availability of qualified workers in the region. Input captured through the engagement activities indicated that there are barriers to hiring local talent, with competition increasing between employers, a scarcity of the skills needed, and a broadly recognized employability skills gap with the local workforce. The current environment is not ideal for FDI attraction, which often looks first for a talent pool and pipeline before choosing to invest. These conditions reiterate the importance of targeted recruitment efforts in external markets, beyond Prince George.



The opportunity of external recruitment to the area is not achievable through a single tactic or a single organization. Rather it creates the opportunity for coordination and collaboration among key stakeholder groups all sharing a common message and maximizing resources. While the statement of “Get the Right Talent Here” is simplified in nature, its implementation is complex and multi-faceted. It requires a clear understanding of the value proposition offered in Prince George, the influencing factors that make up key points of consideration by the mobile job seeker, and an evidence-based assessment of the employment opportunities in the local economy. To be successful, the City needs to support initiatives that improve and promote quality of life, affordable housing, access to transit, unique tourism, and cultural attractions in a credible labour market. This requires valid, accessible, useful information that showcases the opportunities for employment.

### 8.1.2 Strategic Priority 1: Maximize Targeted Recruitment Efforts

Prince George is experienced in talent recruitment and recognized for its award-winning “Move Up Prince George” initiative designed to support those efforts. Such programs are important as they shine a lens on the community, and all it has to offer. However, utilizing the economic make-up of Prince George provides an opportunity to target recruitment efforts where there is the greatest need for talent. Targeted recruitment also highlights a simple truth that Prince George cannot be everything to all people; the city offers a specific lifestyle and opportunities that will resonate with the right targets.

“Move Up Prince George” highlights key sectors and could strengthen its information base with the inclusion of in-depth labour market information (LMI) on skills and jobs that are in greatest demand. By showcasing in-depth labour market information such as what jobs are in demand and offering described career pathways in specific sectors and at varying skill levels, potential new talent will be better informed. This information could be shared on the “Move Up Prince George” website in the form of an infographic, making it easy to understand and access. By showcasing local intel, and tailoring messages to entry-level, mid-level and executive job seekers, the city is sharing its story, promoting its assets, and feeding inquisitive minds as they examine their next career path.

#### Key Sectors

By focusing on key sectors including Health Care, Manufacturing, and Professional, Scientific and Technical services, Prince George will benefit from economic activity in these growth sectors, and the employment opportunities that accompany them. Talent considers many factors when exploring possible areas to relocate, and while remuneration is not necessarily at the top of the priority list, the opportunity for a good job or opportunity to advance receives high consideration.

#### Aligning Talent Preference for Rural Lifestyle

Those most receptive to Prince George’s message will be intrigued by mid-sized cities that offer an urban-rural impression. They may have a desire to experience that

smaller-town style living but would still like access to the amenities of living in a mid-sized city. By focusing on being a community of choice for individuals with or seeking this rural/urban mix, Prince George leverages its attractiveness to those seeking this lifestyle.

### Key Lifestyles

These individuals include mobile workers (individuals who can move), individuals seeking an urban/rural lifestyle, and middle-aged millennials (late 20s early 30s) living in cities where they cannot afford to live and raise a family such as the Lower Mainland or Toronto. By focusing on these target groups, Prince George is selecting those individuals who are most likely to respond to the lifestyle proposition of the city and provide high value as residents. These individuals are strong targets because they bring a combination of in-demand skills and energy into the community; they are more likely to engage with local lifestyle assets and attract more residents. These individuals are also more likely to be entrepreneurs and drivers of economic activity, creating opportunities for investment and new business in the city. Middle age millennials with families are looking for the combination of affordability and amenities that Prince George offers.

### Landed Immigrant Groups

Migrants from the Philippines are strongly represented in Prince George, at 35% of all recent immigrants identifying this as their place of birth. This percentage reflects more than double that of B.C. and Canada. Filipino migrants work in a variety of disciplines and sectors nationally, though many work in the health care sector as nurses and live-in caregivers. As reported, health-related occupations and the health care and social assistance sector will see major employment gains over the next decade. Filipino international immigrants present an opportunity for Prince George's workforce targeting efforts.

#### Strategic Priority 1: Maximize Talent Recruitment Efforts

Action 1: Revisit & refine target audiences of Move Up Prince George campaign by aligning current, and future growth industries and skillsets using LMI gathered from employers, labour force participants, and educational institutions.

Action 2: Develop a recruitment strategy that includes targeting small to medium-sized community born professionals.

Action 3: Establish collaborative approaches to engage with the local Filipino community to support information and knowledge exchange in efforts to increase this population living in Prince George.

Action 4: Target recruitment ads in urban centres such as Vancouver, Winnipeg & Toronto to inform landed immigrants about Prince George as they seek a secondary destination & better quality of life.

### 8.1.3 Strategic Priority 2: Articulate a Strong Value Proposition for Prince George

An influencing factor for businesses successfully recruiting talent is the narrative and persona surrounding Prince George. The city is often perceived to be challenged with attracting and retaining residents. It is important to inform this perception with facts that tell the real story.

The “Move up Prince George” program showcases best practices by mapping key lifestyle assets in the city. To build on the success of this program, Prince George must elevate this data and make it useful and usable for local businesses to support their recruitment and attraction efforts. By focusing on Prince George’s value proposition that resonates with the mobile demographics, the city can maximize its attraction efforts. Also, to continue to showcase success stories of those that have chosen Prince George and benefited from expedited career advancement, promoting the availability of jobs across all levels of skill (entry, mid-skill, professional) is evidence that opportunities are progressive and available. By highlighting the career paths and quality of life opportunities in Prince George, the city can convert a challenge into a strength.

#### Strategic Priority 2: Articulate a Strong Value Proposition for Prince George

Action 5: Actively promote Prince George as a “Place to Elevate Your Career” by highlighting key opportunities with opportune career pathways.

Action 6: Promote Prince George as a place that values/enables independence by offering affordability, opportunity, and a sense of belonging to those that call it home.

Action 7: Develop tools and resources for businesses to use in their attraction and recruitment efforts. This may include a welcome package for new arrivals and their families, a guide to support international recruitment, information on accessing government support programs, HR concierge services, return on investment guides to showcase benefits of hiring apprentices, immigrants, new graduates, etc.

### 8.1.4 Strategic Priority 3: Treat Visitors as an Opportunity

Major events such as the Canada Winter Games bring thousands of new visitors to Prince George, many for the first time. Regionally individuals first experience the City through sports tourism, which is a key economic driver. International visitors are a key driver of FDI; each visitor is an opportunity. Tapping into these regional and national events presents a direct connection to promote the city to a captive audience. Tourism is a significant driver of the community’s reputation and contributor to the attractiveness of the city.

Recognize that every visitor can be presented with an opportunity to truly capture the essence of all Prince George has to offer. Present it as not just a place to visit and showcase it as the “next place to call home.”

### Priority 3: Treat Visitors as an Opportunity

Action 8: Explore opportunities to profile success stories of new residents; profile career pathways available in Prince George.

Action 9: Promote unique cultural and community assets.

Action 10: Partner with Tourism Prince George to synergize brand alignment, determine tourist markets to target & convert visitors to residents.

## 8.2 Strategic Pillar 1: Get the Right Talent Here Implementation Plan

Priority 1	Maximize Talent Recruitment Efforts	Priority Timing			Lead
		S	M	L	
Action 1	Revisit & refine target audiences of Move Up Prince George campaign by aligning current, and future growth industries and skillsets using LMI gathered from employers, labour force participants, and education institutions.	✓			City
Action 2	Develop a recruitment strategy that includes targeting professionals with origins in smaller to medium-sized communities.		✓		City
Action 3	Establish collaborative approaches to engage with the local Filipino community to support information and knowledge exchange in efforts to increase this population living in Prince George	✓			City
Action 4	Target ads in urban centres such as Vancouver, Calgary, and Edmonton to inform landed immigrants about Prince George as they seek a secondary destination & better quality of life	✓	✓	✓	City
Action 5	Target ads to top five workforce attraction cities: Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, Red Deer, and Kelowna focusing on the quality of life, affordability, and in-demand occupations.	✓	✓		City
Priority 2	Articulate a Strong Value Proposition for Prince George	Priority Timing			Lead
		S	M	L	
Action 6	Actively promote Prince George is a Place to Elevate Your Career by highlighting key opportunities with opportune career pathways	✓			Private sector
Action 7	Promote Prince George as a place that values/enables independence through affordability, opportunity, and a sense of belonging to those that call it home		✓		Private sector
Action 8	Develop tools and resources to use by businesses in their attraction and recruitment efforts	✓	✓	✓	City
Priority 3	Treat Visitors as an Opportunity				



		Priority Timing			Lead
		S	M	L	
Action 9	Explore opportunities to profile success stories of new residents; profile the variety of career pathways that are available in Prince George.	✓			City
Action 10	Promote unique cultural and community assets.	✓	✓	✓	City
Action 11	Partner with Tourism Prince George to synergize brand alignment, determine tourist markets to target & convert visitors to residents.	✓			City

### Strategic Pillar 1 – Performance Indicators and Strategic Partners

**Municipal Role:** The City needs to be the leader in gathering data, setting the message and coordinating resources

**Strategic Partners:** Northern BC Tourism Association, Tourism Prince George, Chamber of Commerce, Hubspace, UNBC, Business Community, Immigrant & Multicultural Services Society

#### Quantitative Indicators

- Total number of existing and new assets, festivals, activities and attendance rates in Prince George; Number of companies assisted through workforce attraction efforts

#### Qualitative Indicators

- Reputation as a good location for things to do for residents and visitors; Feedback on the range of assets developed; Level of engagement with partners; Perception of the city as a destination

## 8.3 Strategic Pillar: Keep Talent Here

### Strategic Pillar Two: Keep Talent Here

Strategic Priority 1: Foster Community Collaboration

Strategic Priority 2: Onboard New Employees to Prince George

Strategic Priority 3: Promote Student Retention & Workforce Alignment

As the demand for talent continues to escalate, significant efforts will be necessary to ensure that local talent stays local and that those who have migrated to Prince George are encouraged to stay. The projected population growth is part of a good news story, one that can supplement the local labour force. To achieve talent growth, it is imperative that Prince George implement targeted efforts. Touting the types of

employment opportunities, access to local education and training, and the value proposition of lifestyle and affordability is a priority. The story needs to take centre stage and be celebrated.

The local population includes students attracted to the city's excellent educational institutions and workers attracted to career opportunities. It will be necessary to track and monitor job opportunities and promote them both within the city and externally in select markets from which migrants tend to select Prince George. The consultation also indicated a clear opportunity to enhance the employability of the local workforce through supporting soft skills development.

A major concern raised during the consultation was that retaining new talent has been challenging. Individuals who relocate for a career opportunity are mobile and not restrained by the possibility of another relocation if their needs are not met. These needs are not restricted to careers, rather span lifestyle choices, community integration, and affordability. By showcasing these assets of Prince George, the value proposition is clear. Coupled with the promotion of career pathways and opportunities for career advancement, Prince George can promote the long-term viability of the city as home. The key is to enable talent to see their future self and family in Prince George.

There is an opportunity to equip and inform employers with best practices, local labour market information, tools, and resources that support both the attraction and retention of talent.

### 8.3.1 Strategic Priority 1: Foster Community Collaboration

As the old saying goes, "Once they're here, they're yours to lose" every individual that comes to Prince George is a potential resident or ambassador. By working together to ensure that residents understand Prince George's valued assets and embrace the community as a city of choice, a culture of positive experience can be created. A positive first impression is essential in securing FDI, as delegations or individuals scout for potential new areas to invest. As previously discussed, a specific subset of the workforce will be attracted to the lifestyle of Prince George. Understanding that community development is an all-encompassing experience for visitors and residents, the City can focus on key activities that will help retain the current workforce in the community. Targeting and enhancing the experiences of local populations such as professional associations, entrepreneurs, underemployed residents, and businesses can provide the highest return on investment. These networks are essential for the continued growth of the community; they create opportunities for expansion and anchor people to the city.

#### Strategic Priority 1: Foster Community Collaboration

Action 1: Partner with local networking organizations to create opportunities for those new to the area; encourage networking, and create opportunities to hear directly from residents and newcomers about all Prince George has to offer. This may take the form of Wing Wednesdays at a local establishment, with long term residents inviting new residents for a meet and greet type event.

#### Strategic Priority 1: Foster Community Collaboration

Action 2: Embrace and leverage Prince George's existing networks by promoting collaboration, partnership, and investment opportunities for local businesses.

Action 3: Through dissemination of relevant information, inform the development of employability programming to address gaps in soft skills.

Action 4: Promote the return on investment for employers when they actively support employee skills development.

Action 5: Document and share with employers' best practices in modernizing workplaces and adapting to the needs of changing labour market.

### 8.3.2 Strategic Priority 2: Onboard New Employees to Prince George

This priority is critical to the future success of workforce retention in Prince George. By equipping businesses with the tools and data to support the onboarding of new employees, the City creates a welcoming environment that strengthens workforce retention. These initiatives are particularly important when FDI investment is secured and providing aftercare to retain their business.

#### Strategic Priority 2: Onboard New Employees to Prince George

Action 6: Investigate best practices for a dual-career family program that ensures a more holistic approach to support successful candidates relocating to Prince George with their family.

Action 7: Collaborate with the Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society to foster greater engagement and integration of immigrants into the workplace of local businesses. Produce a Return on Investment case study that can be shared with local employers to raise awareness and dispel myths related to hiring immigrants.

Action 8: Implement a local ambassador program that acknowledges residents for their efforts to share the Prince George story. This initiative could be initiated with students at the secondary and post-secondary level as they welcome new students to their schools, social gathering places, and sporting activities.

Action 9: Educate employers on the practice of workplace onboarding while encouraging them to actively contribute to community onboarding. Help employers showcase the whole "living" experience of Prince George.

### 8.3.3 Strategic Priority 3: Promote Student Retention & Workforce Alignment

Consultations indicated that retaining students and aligning their training is a high priority for Prince George. Concern by the business community reiterated that while new graduates have the hard skills required for their businesses, they lack practical

experience in real-world settings and are often unprepared for the working environment. A negative perception of the local workforce increases the difficulty of attracting FDI. Prince George can facilitate better alignment between academia and businesses, with a focus on experiential learning to make sure that both the hard and soft skills students are learning do prepare them for the available local jobs.

### Strategic Priority 3: Promote Student Retention & Workforce Alignment

Action 10: Support the development of deeper alignment between educators and employers, ensuring career paths are reflective of the local opportunities, and both job seekers and educators understand required skills.

Action 11: Create an information exchange to be held annually (or semi-annually) targeting representatives from the College of New Caledonia, University of Northern British Columbia, industry representatives & the Chamber of Commerce. The focus is to increase communication and information sharing between education & businesses to inform and align training and education with talent demand needs.

Action 12: Maintain and promote an accessible database of local labour market information targeting such users as government, business, job seekers, and educators to inform on labour demand needs of local businesses, salaries, employment types, skills demand, etc. Consideration of such platforms as Vicinity Jobs is suggested (Vicinity Jobs was utilized as a part of this project to inform on local labour job postings).

Action 13: Support and help facilitate experiential learning opportunities such as co-ops and internships to link graduates to local businesses. These include maker spaces, familiarization tours, and hands-on learning at the secondary and post-secondary level.

Action 14: Work with businesses to educate students and educators on the modernized work environments, particularly in manufacturing and those sectors traditionally perceived as low-paying and having limited future growth, or less than ideal working conditions. Suggestions to support the rebrand include, highlighting success stories of current employees, demonstrating the strength of career paths in these traditional industries, and working with educational institutions (grade school, high school, and post-secondary) to demonstrate potential career paths in these industries beyond general labour.

### 8.3.4 Strategic Priority 4: Retaining Young Professionals

Young professionals are key contributors to the future of Prince George, and retaining this target group is a necessity for the community's long-term economic viability. As the economy continues to shift towards higher levels of education and services, young professionals will be well-positioned to meet local labour demand, foster entrepreneurial ventures, and participate as contributing members of society. Being able to attract and retain these individuals is critical to FDI attraction. Both the municipality and the business community must understand their specific needs and be equipped to support them.



#### Strategic Priority 4: Focus on Retaining Young Professionals

Action 15: Conduct a study of Prince George's transient young professionals to inform on retention barriers and factors that influence their career decisions.

Action 16: Offer workshops on employee recruitment & retention, highlighting workplace culture shifts and best practices to employers.

Action 17: Connect local businesses with services like Succession Matching to promote the benefits of succession planning and mentorship.

## 8.4 Strategic Pillar Two: Keep Talent Here Implementation Plan

Priority 1	Foster Community Collaboration	Priority Timing			Lead
		S	M	L	
Action 1	Partner with local networking organizations to create opportunities for those new to the area; encourage networking and creating opportunities to hear directly from residents and newcomers about all Prince George has to offer. This may take the form of Wing Wednesdays at a local establishment, with long term residents inviting new residents for a meet and greet type event.	✓	✓	✓	City
Action 2	Embrace and leverage Prince George's existing networks by promoting collaboration, partnership, and investment opportunities for local businesses.	✓			Private sector
Action 3	Through dissemination of relevant information, inform the development of employability programming to address gaps in soft skills.	✓	✓		City
Action 4	Promote the return on investment for employers when they actively support employee skills development.	✓	✓		Private sector
Action 5	Document and share with employers' best practices in modernizing workplaces and adapting to the needs of changing labour market.	✓	✓		Private sector
Priority 2	Onboard New Employees	Priority Timing			Lead
		S	M	L	
Action 6	Investigate best practices for a dual-career family program that ensures a more holistic approach to support successful candidates relocating to Prince George with their family.	✓			Private Sector
Action 7	Collaborate with the Immigrant and Multicultural Services Society to foster greater engagement and integration of immigrants into the workplace of local businesses. Produce a "Return on Investment" case study that can be shared with local employers to raise awareness and dispel	✓			City

	myths. Determine if the Local Immigration Partnership is still active; if so, seek out partnership opportunities to achieve the same.				
Action 8	Implement a local ambassador program that acknowledges residents for their efforts to share the Prince George story. This initiative could be initiated with students at the secondary and post-secondary level as they welcome new students to their schools, social gathering places, and sporting activities.	✓	✓		City
Action 9	Educate employers on the practice of workplace onboarding while encouraging them to contribute to community onboarding actively. Help employers showcase the whole “living” experience of Prince George.	✓	✓		Private Sector
Priority 3	Promote Student Retention & Workforce Alignment	Priority Timing			Lead
		S	M	L	
Action 10	Support the development of deeper alignment between educators and employers, ensuring career paths are reflective of the local opportunities, and both job seekers and educators understand required skills.	✓	✓	✓	Private Sector, Education
Action 11	Create an information exchange to be held annually (or semi-annually) targeting representatives from the College of New Caledonia, the University of Northern British Columbia, industry representatives & the Chamber of Commerce. The goal is to increase communication and information sharing between educational institutions & businesses to inform and align training and education with talent demand needs.	✓	✓	✓	Private Sector, Education
Action 12	Maintain and promote an accessible database of local labour market information targeting such users as government, business, job seekers, and educators to inform on labour demand needs of local businesses, salaries, employment types, skills demand, etc. Consideration of such platforms as Vicinity Jobs is suggested (Vicinity Jobs was utilized as a part of this project to inform on local labour job postings).	✓	✓	✓	City
Action 13	Support and help facilitate experiential learning opportunities such as co-ops and internships to link graduates to local businesses. These include maker spaces, familiarization tours, and hands-on learning at the secondary and post-secondary level.	✓			Private Sector, Education
Action 14	Work with businesses to educate students and educators on the modernized work environments, particularly in manufacturing and those sectors traditionally perceived as low-paying and having limited future growth, or less than ideal working conditions. Suggestions to support the rebrand include, highlighting success stories of current employees, demonstrating the strength of career paths in these traditional industries, and working with educational institutions (grade school, high school, and post-secondary) to demonstrate potential career paths in these industries beyond general labour.	✓	✓	✓	Private Sector, Education

Priority 4	Focus on Retaining Young Professionals	Priority Timing			Lead
		S	M	L	
Action 15	Conduct a study of Prince George's transient young professionals to inform on retention barriers and factors that influence their career decisions.	✓			City
Action 16	Offer workshops on employee recruitment & retention, highlighting workplace culture shifts and best practices to employers.	✓	✓	✓	City
Action 17	Connect local businesses with services like Succession Matching to promote the benefits of succession planning and mentorship.	✓			City

## Strategic Pillar 2 – Performance Indicators and Strategic Partners

**Municipal Role:** The City needs to be the leader in gathering data, setting the message and coordinating resources

**Strategic Partners:** Northern BC Tourism Association, Tourism Prince George, UNBC, WorkBC, WelcomeBC, Chamber of Commerce, Business Community, College of New Caledonia, Secondary Schools

### Quantitative Indicators

- Total number of workshops delivered, number of businesses engaged, partnerships developed, number of students placed in local co-ops/internships

### Qualitative Indicators

- Feedback on the range of information products in demand by the business community; Level of engagement with the business community

## 9. Supporting Business Strategies

### 9.1 Promoting Prince George Lifestyle Assets

Utilizing Prince George's key lifestyle assets and selling points to support targeted recruitment through key messages is an influencing factor for successful talent attraction. Prince George is well positioned with its attractive lifestyle assets and a strong value proposition. Businesses should be encouraged to promote these assets, particularly when their recruitment efforts are targeting geographies beyond Prince George.

#### Key Lifestyle Assets and Messaging for Prince George

- Lower cost of living/housing
- Access to world class education facilities
- Urban (malls, restaurants) and Nature (trails, rivers) amenities
- Access to medical services
- Access to transportation networks
- Access to widest variety of retail outside of the lower mainland
- Access to diverse mix of career opportunities

### 9.2 Best and Promising Practices for Successful Recruitment and Retention

A key success factor to talent attraction and retention is the understanding of how recruitment has changed, and the changing dynamics of a multi-generational workplace. Businesses need to examine their internal practices and the strategies they are utilizing to bring new talent into their workplace and retain the talent they have. The following offers a checklist of tested employer initiatives that have netted positive results for businesses.

Employers who demonstrate an understanding of what people are seeking in the workplace, and who promote their workplace culture and values, are best positioned to attract talent and fill job vacancies. It is important to recognize that in today's competitive labour market, job seekers are looking for the right fit, not just the right job.



#### **Employer Initiatives for Recruitment & Retention**

- Competitive employment packages, transparent communication about pay, and team bonuses
- Flexible workplace arrangements (i.e. telecommuting and non-traditional work weeks)
- More job security
- Career advancement opportunities
- More effective management approaches (such as real-time feedback mechanisms rather than annual performance reviews for staff)
- In-house training and professional development supporting employee higher education interests
- Mentorship and experiential learning opportunities





## 10. Appendix A: Economic Base Analysis

See Attached



## 11. Appendix B: The Economic Prospects for Prince George

See Attached



## 12. Appendix C: Best & Promising Practices - Case Studies

### 12.1 Recruitment and Retention: Best and Promising Practices

#### TD Bank Group – Financial Services (Canada)<sup>9</sup>

In 2019, TD Bank Group was recognized as one of Canada's top 100 employers, top employers for Canadians over 40, and Greater Toronto's top employers.

The banking industry has been particularly impacted by AI and automation practices. Machines are especially effective at compiling and sifting through swaths of data and analyzing contracts, which makes AI adoption fitting in the banking sector.<sup>10</sup> The workforce is changing too, with millennial workers valuing flexibility, something that has historically not been a component of banking culture, which was highly structured. Bank employees used to follow a straight line up through one business, while millennials expect to make multiple career changes throughout their lives.

TD Bank Group's challenge was to remain a competitive employer in this changing workforce. To do this, the company took an intentional, holistic approach to diversity and inclusion. Examples of this include its recruitment and retention program development targeted at millennial women, and LGBTQS+, and multicultural HR program development. TD Bank Group partners with community organizations to connect with diverse candidates.

TD Bank Group invests in its people for the changing world. It offers its employees new courses, programs, and tools to adapt to technologies and to instill confidence. The company offers a series of leadership-focused training programs and mentorship opportunities.

That TD Bank Group was recognized as one of Canada's Top Employers for Canadians Over 40 and one of Canada's Top Employers for Young People simultaneously in 2019 is a testament to the company's investment in a diversity of its employees, at all phases of life.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://content.eluta.ca/top-employer-td-bank>

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/ey-the-future-of-talent-in-banking/\\$FILE/ey-the-future-of-talent-in-banking.pdf](https://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/ey-the-future-of-talent-in-banking/$FILE/ey-the-future-of-talent-in-banking.pdf)

#### Applicability to Prince George

Establishing an attractive company culture that goes beyond financial incentives is a critical component in attracting talent to TD and ensuring long-term employee satisfaction. Acknowledging and rewarding performance and providing continuous learning opportunities to support the professional development of employees and management are important parts of the culture TD has built. Taking a holistic approach to inclusion and diversity has meant that employees remain engaged and feel valued at every stage of their career.

Aligning talent management approaches with the broader business strategy of the company is a very important part of attraction and retention to ensure that the right skills are available to support the firm into the future.

#### Epocal Inc. – Medical Device Manufacturing (Ottawa, Ontario)<sup>1112</sup>

Epocal is an Ottawa-based medical device manufacturer that developed and commercialized a smart-card-based blood-testing tool for critical-care situations. The company has experienced very rapid growth (a three-year growth rate of 162%) and has been expanding over the past few years from 100 employees to over 300.

Epocal's management firmly believes that there is no way that the company could have grown as rapidly and hit its milestones without the benefit of internationally educated doctors, biologists, software developers, mechanical engineers, and other savvy professionals from Canada's immigrant communities. The firm has recognized the importance and opportunities associated with hiring immigrant talent by developing a company culture which supports employees from a range of cultural backgrounds. Epocal works to break down employment barriers for immigrants through several initiatives, including:

- Recognizing international academic, professional, and work experience qualifications at face value
- Reviewing and standardizing interview procedures to ensure all interview questions focus solely on the candidate's qualifications (and not subjective biases the interviewers may have)
- Establishing flexibility regarding various holidays and cultural observances, with accommodations for traditional and religious dress
- Subsidizing English-language training
- Pairing and mentoring new staff with existing staff from the same cultural background for one year to create a confidant in the company and relieve the stress of starting a new job

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.budget.gc.ca/aceg-ccce/pdf/immigration-eng.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.hireimmigrantsottawa.ca/downloads/EmployersGuide-English/EmpGuide\\_EN\\_2011.pdf](http://www.hireimmigrantsottawa.ca/downloads/EmployersGuide-English/EmpGuide_EN_2011.pdf)

- Running a performance-recognition program, rewarding employees financially and with peer recognition (most especially understanding that recognizing employees in front of their peers has a large positive impact on staff morale)
- Epocal has received awards for its efforts and systems of recruiting and integrating immigrant talent into the company, most recent of which is the 2015 Employer Excellence Award at the 2015 Employer Council of Champions Summit. Epocal has recognized the importance of building the right business culture to support employees of all backgrounds, focused on ongoing communications, little tolerance for office politics, and reducing barriers between departments and employees. The initiatives offered by Epocal help to support not only the business' growth but also the employment of skilled knowledge workers from around the world.<sup>13</sup>

#### Applicability to Prince George

Epocal represents a great example of a company that prioritizes the contributions that talented professionals from immigrant communities play in helping the company to find the necessary talent to help it continue to grow. Having the right company culture to enable immigrants to integrate effectively into the company is a critical element of Epocal's success in recruiting and retaining its skilled immigrant workforce.

Prince George has a growing immigrant community, and its post-secondary institutions represent a growing international student population. It would be worth exploring how best to work with these sections of the workforce to retain those people as permanent residents, and members of the workforce.

### Attracting Health care Professionals to Rural Towns and Small Cities

In developed countries, urbanization has become a commonly observed trend. This is generally focused on young adults, moving to urban centres in search of education, jobs, and amenities. Even in mid-sized cities like Prince George with educational institutions and many amenities, it can be hard to retain talent, particularly in highly educated and professional roles.

This 'brain-drain' to urban centres has become such a common phenomenon that it has become a popular topic for research studies. Doctors and health care workers are one group of interest since access to family physicians, and health care in rural areas has become a concern across much of Canada and the United States.

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<sup>13</sup> Hire Immigrants Ottawa, "Epocal Honoured with 2015 Employer Excellence Award for Immigrant Recruitment and Integration Programs", 2015

### 12.1.1 Attracting Health Care Professionals to Rural Areas of the US – A UCLA Study

While many studies are being carried out to determine which factors affect health care professionals' decisions to practice in a rural setting, the different areas and populations studied in these projects tends to lead to varying conclusions. For this reason, a group of UCLA researchers conducted a systematic review of all 55 similarly themed studies conducted in the US before 2017, to uncover factors which have consistently been shown to attract health care professionals to rural areas.

Across the studies, some clear themes emerged. The rural upbringing was found to be one of the most consistent and important factors which affected health care professionals' decisions to practice in a rural setting. This was not necessarily limited to professionals who were brought up in the same setting they practiced in, but rural upbringing anywhere predicted professionals settling in any rural setting. Across studies, another finding was that completing training in a rural setting made health care professionals, approximately 44% more likely to practice in a rural setting. Third, primary care and family physicians were the most likely type of doctors to practice in a rural setting. When asking doctors for their concerns, many studies found that urban doctors' decisions to locate in a rural setting were limited by a lack of opportunities for their spouses and lower opportunities for their continuing education.

The non-consistent findings across studies were equally interesting. There was no good evidence that finances (student debt, scholarships) played a role in professionals' decisions to relocate to rural areas. The race also didn't seem to have an observable effect once rural upbringing and other factors were considered. There was only weak evidence that recreation and lifestyle played a role in health care professionals' decisions to practice in a rural setting.



### **Applicability to Prince George**

- The Northern Medical Program and associated Healthcare Travelling Roadshow program are already great starts to utilizing the findings of this study. Training Doctors at the University of Northern British Columbia gives them exposure to Prince George, which the study acknowledges as beneficial. By exposing would-be students in rural communities to this program through the Travelling Roadshow, the likelihood that they will come to the program is increased, and this group of people is statistically more likely to practice in a rural setting ultimately.
- To attract established doctors to the area, the findings suggest that targeting doctors who grew up in a rural setting or small city would yield the highest returns. This same idea goes for doctors who had some training in a rural setting. While they should not be the only focus of marketing and recruitment, these groups of individuals are much more likely to settle in a small city ultimately.
- The study underlines the importance of ensuring the families of newcomers to the area have a positive experience on landing. While Prince George has a lot of opportunities to offer, as a small city (compared to a rural town), these should be marketed aggressively, and solutions to the anticipated anxieties of newcomers and their spouses should be consolidated and presented on arrival (See Best Practice 1.4 for more detail).
- This research was specific to health care professionals, but there is no reason to believe the same concepts couldn't be applied to the attraction strategy of other highly educated professions currently underrepresented in Prince George (Lawyers, Senior Managers, Dentists, etc.)
- The study also highlights the lack of evidence for direct financial support of health care workers as a talent attraction strategy, suggesting giving tax breaks or student loan assistance may not pay off and hence may be a bad option

### **Northern Medical Program – University of Northern British Columbia**

The Northern Medical Program at UNBC was specifically created as a response to the shortages of health care workers in northern areas of the province. Conceptualized at a public rally in Northern BC, the program's curricula and placements are designed to give them experience in various rural and Indigenous communities. Many of the graduates from this program have remained in the area to practice or teach in the program. Within the program, there are two initiatives called the Healthcare Travelling Roadshow and the Northern Pathways to Medicine. Healthcare Travelling Roadshow brings health care students into secondary schools around the northern and rural areas of BC to showcase and promote the potential for health care careers. The Northern Pathways to Medicine Bursary supports students who demonstrate financial need to become health care professionals.

#### **Applicability to Prince George**

- The Northern Medical Program and associated Healthcare Travelling Roadshow/Northern Pathways to Medicine programs are already utilizing the findings of the previously mentioned UCLA study. By training Doctors at the University of Northern British Columbia, they are exposed to Prince George, which the study acknowledges as beneficial. By exposing would-be students in rural communities to this program through the Travelling Roadshow, the likelihood that they will come to the program is increased, and this group of people is more likely to practice in a rural setting ultimately.

Source: <https://www.unbc.ca/northern-medical-program>

## **12.2 Succession Planning for Rural Businesses**

Urbanization and population ageing are major trends affecting rural settings across Canada. When young adults leave to go to school and do not return, this puts stress on the established businesses in these areas. This also means many retiring business owners have no one to sell their businesses to and end up closing, further worsening the dwindling services in these areas. Meanwhile, with average education at the highest level in centuries across Canada, logic would predict that there would be an abundance of qualified candidates to take over these businesses.

There is evidence of a small business succession crisis in Canada. In 2016, over 98% of businesses had under 100 employees. Most of these business owners are baby boomers, more than half are over the age of 50, and more than 10% are over the age of 65. Thus, over 700,000 small business owners will be looking to exit their businesses in the next 15 years in Canada. Over 4 million jobs could be lost. Presently, there is a high risk of a large number of unplanned business closures across the country. Research shows small business owners are not succession planning, and culturally over time, family succession is happening less and less with the changing labour market and globalization.

Services like Succession Matching work with rural small businesses to match businesses with interested international buyers. This kind of small business succession strategy has the added benefit of bringing new people to the community.

Succession Matching – Canada

<https://successionmatching.com/>

### **12.2.1 RedTire Program – University of Kansas**

A group at the University of Kansas identified a similar trend in their state and developed a program to help the situation of closing rural businesses. The 'REDefine your reTIREment' program acts as a matchmaker between pre-retirement business owners and qualified university Alumni. Pre-retirement business owners are referred to the program through banks, attorneys, or economic development officials. Alumni are notified and can fill out applications describing their experience, abilities, and why they are a good fit to take over the business. If selected, the business owner and buyer negotiate the terms on their own, with support from the RedTire team. If the

candidates are not selected, their records are kept on file in case other opportunities arise which they are more qualified for.

#### **Applicability to Prince George**

- While the RedTire program is university-run, the City of Prince George could set-up a similar program in partnership with the college and university.

The program would help solve two main problems: Preventable loss of businesses due to retirement, and the loss of talent due to a perceived lack of opportunities. Over time, as more young professionals and families run businesses in the area, more demand for businesses and services will also grow (a virtuous cycle).

The model could be applied to any businesses (shops, dentist offices, forestry operations, etc.)

Source: <http://redtire.org/>

## **12.3 Retaining Newcomer Students in the Area**

Post-secondary education is seen by many young adults as a means to leave the safety of their childhood home and have new experiences. Huge amounts of students every year travel outside of their cities, province, and countries to find that new experience. When their schooling is complete, some of these students will choose to stay and lay down roots. Researchers and policymakers have been highly interested in the factors which make some of these students decide to stay, and some decide to return home or move on.

### **12.3.1 VALOA and TOOLKIT for Higher Education Institutions – Finland**

A team of researchers at the University of Helsinki in Finland conducted a study to uncover the challenges faced by newcomers to the region. The goal was to uncover points of friction, which made the individuals less likely to work and live in the area. The findings lead to the design of a guidebook called the TOOLKIT for Higher Education Institutions (HEI's - their equivalent to post-secondary institutions). The TOOLKIT is a package of information and ideas to help HEI's alleviate three common challenges for newcomer retention: Integration, Career Guidance, and Employer Collaboration. The guidebook provides best practices and advice regarding the promotion of a sense of belonging and support, through career guidance particularly aimed at international students. It also advises on the potential for collaboration between universities and employers, to market the local employers to the students and show the benefits of international talent to the companies.

#### **Applicability to Prince George**

- The toolkit is designed for universities, with many helpful practices based on research
- These could be applied/facilitated by the City of Prince George, in conjunction with local companies to help retain international talent which arrives to go to school at one of the post-secondary institutions in the city

Source: <http://www.studentintegration.fi/>

## 12.4 Soft Landing for Newcomers to the Area

As found in some of the previously mentioned studies, a significant factor in the successful integration of families into a community is whether the spouse and children of the recruited individual succeed in finding work and a social network. This can add stress to the decision to move to an area, particularly in rural communities, where the perceived employment opportunities may be limited to certain industries. Various strategies have been used in Canadian cities and abroad, some of which we will highlight here.

### 12.4.1 International House, Copenhagen

The International House in Copenhagen is a physical building in the centre of the city, designed as a one-stop-shop for newcomers to Denmark. It was created in collaboration between the municipality and local companies. In the same building that newcomers file their paperwork, business is recruiting spouses, and services which help families get connected within the community. The program is beneficial in ensuring that the recruited individuals have the best start possible to their employment and social lives in the new area. The program also helps to streamline the process for newcomers, since all the businesses, agencies and functions are forced to work together under one roof, limiting administrative burden for newcomers. The International House required some initial set-up costs for the municipality but is currently paid for by the rent coming from the tenants in the building.

Source: <https://ihcph.kk.dk/>

### 12.4.2 Global Expat Centre – Stockholm, Sweden

This centre is a similar concept to the International House in Copenhagen, with an important addition. The Global Expat Centre is run almost entirely by volunteer expats in the area, who themselves relocated to the area for work permanently. These volunteers are highly involved in the design and implementation of the centre's programs and functioning. The advantage of running the centre under the advisement of expats is that they have experienced many of the anxieties and hardships that come along with relocating to the area. They have learned first-hand which practices and policies were especially helpful (and not helpful) to them settling in. They are living success stories of recruitment and retention, all gathered under one roof as a welcoming party to newcomers. The centre also organizes support groups and social events to help families feel a sense of community and minimize feelings of loneliness and alienation.

Source: <https://www.yourlivingcity.com/stockholm/essentials/education/swedish-language-courses/global-expat-centre/>



#### Applicability to Prince George

To give newcomers the best chance of success settling into the area, an accessible all-encompassing centre to handle incoming residents would be very beneficial. Like the Expat Centre in Stockholm, the outcomes would be enhanced if previous newcomers were highly involved in the programming and set-up. Bringing together all the services and requirements for newcomers under one roof ensures that the process is streamlined and well-organized. It also makes it easy to ensure newcomers have all the information possible about services and supports available to them during their transition. While there would be initial set-up costs purchasing a location to house the centre, the rent charged to companies occupying the building should offset any operating costs.

## 12.5 Mental Health Lens to Talent Retention

Aside from employees actively choosing to leave the area on employment or social grounds, the issue of talent loss to mental health and addiction problems has a substantial impact on companies and communities. Northern and resource-based communities tend to have higher rates of addiction, crime, and mental health problems. In workplaces and communities, there is a significant amount of research building around how to prevent some of the adverse consequences of mental health and addiction.

### 12.5.1 The National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace (the Standard) – Mental Health Commission of Canada

The Mental Health Commission of Canada has laid out a framework to help governments and organizations identify, prevent, and deal with mental health and addictions problems in their workforce. The Standard is a voluntary guideline (not mandated by law) which advises organizations on the identification of psychological risks, along with the assessment and control of risks that can't be eliminated. Organizations can use the guidelines to promote a culture of psychological health and safety and establish measurement systems to monitor the progress. The Standard encourages more open discussions and dialogue within workforces about signs of mental health and addiction, and where to find supports. They conducted case studies of over 40 Canadian organizations, including communities, private companies, and post-secondary institutions. They found the greatest degree of success in organizations which adopted a culture of openness across all levels. For instance, employees felt more willing to express their concerns and ask mental health questions when their management and upper management had made an active effort to share their struggles and lead by example. The impact study of the Standard has found a great deal of success in its implementation, increasing employee productivity and retention along with the many other positive social impacts for society as a whole.

Source: [https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/2017-03/case\\_study\\_research\\_project\\_findings\\_2017\\_eng.pdf](https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/2017-03/case_study_research_project_findings_2017_eng.pdf)

#### Applicability to Prince George

Promoting the concepts from the Standard to organizations would help lessen the impact of mental health problems and addiction. Aside from the clear benefits, this would have from a social perspective; it would also improve the productivity and retention of workers in the area. Such an initiative would be most effective as a collaboration between the city's economic development officials, public health offices, and organizations. Additional workforce-implemented prevention strategies for the impacts of mental health and addiction would be a good complement to the harm reduction strategies being taken by the public health officials in the area.

## 12.6 Remote Working and Entrepreneurship in Rural Cities

With the rise of internet connectivity and technologies like 3D printing, individuals are becoming more able to work from anywhere they want. This, coupled with a trend of rapidly rising real estate costs and commuting distances in the large urban centre, is beginning a trend of (mostly young) workers seeking to work remotely. These workers may decide on where to live based on the amenities and quality of life aspects of a location rather than the industry in the area. Further to this, for families where one spouse is hired to work in a specific industry in a region, this move may not mean switching jobs for the other spouse if the amenities are sufficient to allow them to work remotely. While the community does not get the benefits of additional industry money/economic activity from remote workers, these workers still live and spend money in the local community.

### 12.6.1 Rural on Purpose

Rural on Purpose is a company that helps rural communities in Canada set-up and enhance coworking opportunities to attract youth and tech workers. They aim to bring effective coworking spaces, which until recently have been limited to large urban centres, into non-urban locations as a potential remedy to population ageing and urbanization. They currently run a participant-funded pilot program called the Rural Coworking Takeover Challenge, during which they guide communities through the creation of an intensive week in the community to test the full potential of coworking in the area.

Source: <https://www.ruralonpurpose.com/>

### 12.6.2 The Hubspace – Prince George

The Hubspace is a coworking and events space in Prince George. It is cited by the Move Up Prince George website, advertising its potential for remote work in the area. Space offers members the use of desk space through monthly payments with a variety of packages. It is in the core of downtown Prince George, near restaurants, pubs, and other amenities. The space offers regular events and talks, aimed at

fostering ideas of entrepreneurship and collaboration in the community.

Source: <http://www.thehubspace.ca/>

#### Applicability to Prince George

The Hubspace in Prince George is already a highly promising practice for the attraction of workers with a flexible location seeking a quality of life enhancements away from the urban centres. This practice should be continued and expanded where possible, and lessons learned from other communities should be applied. Rural on Purpose is an example of a service which can help guide how to expand and advertise the coworking community in an area. The Hubspace and remote work in general should also be advertised to additional stakeholders. To businesses, it should be advertised as a place to set-up remote hubs, where its workers can be productive and have enhanced quality of life. Coworking could also be integrated into a newcomers centre since the spouse's success plays a highly important role in worker's longevity in an area. A lack of 'white-collar' jobs in an area doesn't mean highly educated individuals have to either work at home or move away; they can be a part of a vibrant entrepreneurial community right in Prince George.

## 12.7 Community Marketing Strategies:

### Case Study: Prince Edward County, Ontario: Build a New Life Campaign

The Build a New Life campaign was launched by Prince Edward County (PEC), Ontario in 2011, beginning with the community's website. The website leveraged PEC's rural quality of life, and affordability in comparison to the Greater Toronto Area, from which PEC is roughly two hours driving distance.

In 2016, the County's Community Development office leveraged the original website's brand equity and built out the campaign to include:

- Promotional videos
- A strong local ambassador program
- Advertising in Toronto print media publications
- A partnership with a local organization to create a concierge service to meet and welcome new residents

PEC's economic development efforts took a holistic community development approach to economic development, recognizing that "Community development, unlike traditional economic development, is looking at social, cultural and environmental impacts and assets of economic development. It's making sure those things are in balance and recognizing that you will get a better end-product considering those things and economic development is not just about numbers of jobs. It's about a vibrant community and a great quality of life."

The campaign has well-defined target audiences, which are:

- A) 'Creative Young Entrepreneur or Working Professional' 28-41 years of age, desire to become more family-focused, works hard but enjoys the simple things in life, passionate about naturally sourced/organic/green foods/drinks and lifestyle, stays active and believes regular activity is important, strongly believes that having a social outlet is important
- B) 'Incubator/New Grad Startup' 25-36 years of age, is educated and has some experiential knowledge, looking for a rustic living environment that allows for small business growth, passionate about naturally sourced/organic/green food/drinks and lifestyle, strong appreciation for the artisan community, interested in a work/life balance, ambitious
- C) 'Rural Family' 35-50 years of age, family-focused (with children or planning), has a passion for the outdoors and an active lifestyle, looking to create lasting memories for their children, values time with family

The campaign leveraged PEC's existing tourism market to convert tourists into permanent residents, which proved very successful. It has been hailed as a success in community marketing strategies.

#### Applicability to Prince George

Defining clear and achievable target markets for workforce attraction is key in executing successful marketing campaigns. Attracting entrepreneurs would create new growth in the local economy. Focusing on markets that have already had a taste of Prince George, such as graduates of Prince George's post-secondary institutions, may prove most valuable. Further, focusing on community development and identifying local ambassadors would likely make Prince George a more attractive place to stay for those who have passed through.



## 13. Appendix D: Global and Regional Trends for Talent Attraction

### 13.1 The Global Competition for Talent

The global economy is continuing to shift from an industrial base to one that values knowledge and talent, placing a greater emphasis on human capital rather than physical<sup>14</sup>. Firms previously predominantly selected locations for business based on raw materials, transportation networks and markets. In recent years, the availability of talent has increased in importance in the site selection process.

Access to skilled workers is becoming as important as preferable tax rates and transportation for the growing knowledge-intensive drivers of the domestic economy. As scarce assets, these workers have a new ability to generate and attract, rather than chase, economic opportunities. As the mobility of the skilled workforce intensifies, they are choosing places with distinct and attractive quality of place.

A major global trend in talent competition is the increasing importance of entrepreneurialism. The 2019 Global Talent Competitiveness Index (GTCI) identified the following major trends in talent competition:

- Entrepreneurial talent has become a key differentiator in relative talent competitiveness
- Talent still is drawn to small, high-income economies and the United States
- Washington, DC is the top performer in the cities ranking
- The five-year analysis shows the talent gap widening between unequal economies

The index stresses the importance of entrepreneurial talent – that is, empowered, innovative, and adaptable talent that is “futureproof” to the onslaught of change that the new economy may bring. It is also important to note the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on skilled workers, especially those in entry-level positions. The effects of AI are such that many entry-level positions are now automated, eliminating what have historically been key steps in early career development. This creates challenges for workers lacking the experience to step into what were previously higher-skilled positions.<sup>15</sup> This is another factor that has made those attributes of entrepreneurialism so important.

Such progress is especially true in the cities, where ‘Smart cities’ ecosystems are increasingly acting as talent magnets. The index’ results further show:

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<sup>14</sup> The Global Creativity Index 2015 [www.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A868391&dswid=-8025](http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A868391&dswid=-8025)

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.wsj.com/articles/a-wake-up-call-for-grads-entry-level-jobs-arent-so-entry-level-any-more-11557480602>

- The highest-ranking countries and cities tend to be the most open to entrepreneurial talent;
- Digitalization and globalization are increasing the role of entrepreneurial talent.

Shifting to a talent-driven strategy is not without its challenges. Globally, firms and their executives are focused on their talent pipelines and human capital strategy in the face of a shifting workforce. These same business leaders are unsure about how to go about changing their strategy with 93% recognizing the need to change, but 61% of CEOs haven't made real changes to their practices<sup>16</sup>. This global trend is reflected at the local level, where smaller employers often struggle with adapting to the changing workforce culture, as this report found is the case in Prince George.

Global talent trends are making it more difficult for businesses to source the highly skilled knowledge workers they need to compete. The following major demographic shifts exacerbate these trends:

- Ageing populations;
- Depopulation of rural areas;
- Increased urbanization;
- Increased talent mobility (over 250 million international migrants in 2015);
- Declining birth rates.

These conditions have created new challenges in both the attraction and retention of talent, with 42% of employers reporting difficulty filling jobs due to talent attraction issues<sup>17</sup>.

## 13.2 Community Competition

Further, cities, rather than countries, are developing stronger roles as talent hubs. This growing importance of cities is due to their greater flexibility and ability to adapt to new trends and patterns where policy can be changed swiftly. Entrepreneurial talent can interact more readily with municipal systems than national policymakers.<sup>18</sup>

The GCTI also found that talent competitiveness is strengthening in groups of countries where it is already comparatively high and weakening in those where it is relatively low. The talent gap is widening on a global scale.

The following are the top 20 countries ranked against the GCTI index, with Canada sitting at 15<sup>th</sup> place.

OVERALL RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE
1.	Switzerland	81.82

<sup>16</sup> PWC CEO Survey Talent Challenge [www.pwc.com/gx/en/services/people-organisation/publications/ceosurvey-talent-challenge.html](http://www.pwc.com/gx/en/services/people-organisation/publications/ceosurvey-talent-challenge.html)

<sup>17</sup> Global Talent Shortage Survey- Press Release.

<sup>18</sup> <https://gtcistudy.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/GTCI-2019-Report.pdf>

OVERALL RANK	COUNTRY	SCORE
2.	Singapore	77.27
3.	United States of America	76.64
4.	Norway	74.67
5.	Denmark	73.85
6.	Finland	73.78
7.	Sweden	73.53
8.	Netherlands	73.02
9.	United Kingdom	71.44
10.	Luxembourg	71.18
11.	New Zealand	71.12
12.	Australia	71.08
13.	Iceland	71.03
14.	Germany	70.72
15.	Canada	70.43
16.	Ireland	70.15
17.	Belgium	68.48
18.	Austria	68.31
19.	United Arab Emirates	65.90
20.	Israel	63.26

As workforce mobility has increased, talent increasingly relocates where demand is highest and where the most attractive work incentives exist<sup>19</sup>. Increased mobility has accelerated the migration of talent away from rural settings towards urban hubs. Individuals are now choosing the lifestyle they want and are now considering the personal quality of life as a key consideration of where to work<sup>20</sup>.

### 13.3 Diversity: Ethnocultural and Generational

Organizations are recognizing the benefits of increased talent diversity with studies showing just a 1% increase in ethnocultural diversity was associated with an average 2.4% increase in revenue and a 0.5% increase in workplace productivity. The relationship was strongest in sectors that depend on creativity and innovation, communications and utilities and business services.<sup>21</sup> The increased demand for international talent has fueled highly skilled emigration and international student

<sup>19</sup> Beechler, S., and Woodward, I. (2009), "The global war on talent"

<sup>20</sup> Tech Crunch "Rural Tech StartUps See Success Across US" [techcrunch.com/2016/08/01/rural-tech-startups-see-success-across-us/](http://techcrunch.com/2016/08/01/rural-tech-startups-see-success-across-us/)

<sup>21</sup> Diversity Dividend Canada's Global Advantage  
[www.cigionline.org/sites/default/files/documents/DiversitySpecial%20Report%20WEB\\_0.pdf](http://www.cigionline.org/sites/default/files/documents/DiversitySpecial%20Report%20WEB_0.pdf)

mobility<sup>22</sup> creating a series of specific HR challenges.

On the other hand, generational diversity can create conflict with managers reporting challenges with millennial workers sharing stories of increased neediness, lack of loyalty, entitlement, and overall casualness<sup>23</sup>.

This research indicates that millennials want different things from their employers as they enter the workforce, or their needs are not met. A study of Canadian millennials found both pre-career and in career millennials place a higher value in:

- A collegial work environment;
- A socially responsible corporate culture;
- Interesting work;
- Better work-life balance;
- Information worker support to do their jobs effectively<sup>24</sup>.

Studies show the value of leisure and family life have gained increasing importance among all generations<sup>25</sup> highlighting the need for employers to become more attractive to modern talent.

These findings were reaffirmed in a study by PwC of their employees who found millennials were more willing to question the way work was conducted, for example, working from home when the project allowed it<sup>26</sup>. The study also found non-millennial workers wanted the same things, and when their “flexibility plan” option was introduced 90% of the company’s employees took advantage of improved flexibility<sup>27</sup>. Other strategies for successfully attracting and retaining modern talent have included developing and promoting an organization corporate social responsibly (CSR) initiatives<sup>28</sup>. These initiatives can provide a deeper sense of purpose, belonging,

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<sup>22</sup> Global Migration of Talent: Drain, Gain, and Transnational Impacts  
[link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007%2F978-3-319-62734-2\\_11](http://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007%2F978-3-319-62734-2_11)

<sup>23</sup> Managing Millennials: A Framework for Improving Attraction, Motivation, and Retention  
[www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10887156.2012.730444?scroll=top&needAccess=true](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10887156.2012.730444?scroll=top&needAccess=true)

<sup>24</sup> Millennials’ work values: differences across the school to work transition  
[www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/pdfplus/10.1108/PR-01-2014-0024](http://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/pdfplus/10.1108/PR-01-2014-0024)

<sup>25</sup> The Millennial Generation  
[journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244017697158#article](http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244017697158#article)

<sup>26</sup> PwC’s NextGen: A global generational study [www.pwc.com/gx/en/hr-management-services/pdf/pwc-nextgen-study-2013.pdf](http://www.pwc.com/gx/en/hr-management-services/pdf/pwc-nextgen-study-2013.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> PwC’s millennial employees led a rebellion—and their demands are being met  
[work.qz.com/1217854/pwcs-millennial-employees-led-a-rebellion-and-their-demands-are-being-met/](http://work.qz.com/1217854/pwcs-millennial-employees-led-a-rebellion-and-their-demands-are-being-met/)

<sup>28</sup> Overcoming Regional Retention Issues: How Some Michigan Organizations Use CSR to Attract and Engage Top Talent [www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/abs/10.1108/978-1-78714-585-620181004](http://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/abs/10.1108/978-1-78714-585-620181004)



and identity as millennials value integrating social consciousness into their work and will choose employers that meet that need.

## 13.4 Talent Attraction in Canada

Following prevailing global demographic trends, Canada faces real challenges in population growth with projections showing in approximately 20 years, and immigration will account for all net growth in Canada's population and workforce (Statistics Canada, 2017).

In terms of its global positioning, Canada ranks 12th overall in the World Economic Forum Country Analysis with a score of 79.9, behind three Scandinavian countries: Sweden (9th), Denmark (10th) and Finland (11th). Canada's performance across its twelve pillars (institutions, infrastructure, Information & Communication Technology adoption, macroeconomic stability, health, labour market, financial system, market size, business dynamism, innovation capability) is generally strong. Canada is particularly recognized for two pillars: macroeconomic stability, and its labour market.

Canada's labour market is characterized by high flexibility, combined with very strong workers' protections and gender parity for labour force participation. The country is innovative, but not yet an innovation powerhouse like some of its counterpart countries. It lags the United States and other leaders like Germany, Switzerland, and Taiwan (China) due to Canada's relatively low spending on R&D. As for softer drivers of innovation and competitiveness, Canada ranks first in terms of diversity. Its level of information and communications technology adoption is very low and represents the weakest aspect of Canada's performance in the World Economic Forum Country Analysis. The cost of mobile data and services is one of the highest among advanced economies, which hinders adoption.<sup>29</sup>

Overall, Canada is competitive in terms of talent attraction and has very real assets in that area. It may not be at the very top of the list in terms of cutting-edge talent attraction, but it is certainly competitive.

Canada continues to face some significant labour attraction challenges, including:

- **Urban/Rural divide:** Attracting talent to remote regions is difficult without a diversified economy and consumer base. Similarly, attracting talent to major cities is increasingly difficult, given the increased urban competition for talent.
- **Canada needs a diversity strategy and to simplify immigration:** Although Canada's immigration policy has prioritized highly educated migrants, onerous immigration requirements and credential recognition continue to frustrate immigrants, contributing to skilled immigrants facing poorer labour market outcomes compared to the non-immigrant population.

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<sup>29</sup> <https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-global-competitiveness-report-2018>

- **Improve workforce planning and labour market forecasting:** Strategic alignment across jurisdictions for policy development remains a barrier with provincial or federal governments taking the lead with little input from local governments.
- **Improve location promotion:** Strong reputations and positive overall place branding are important in piquing the interest of talent (especially for the quality of life migrants).
- **Promote and support attractive local employers and jobs:** Places that can demonstrate they have a variety of good employers and job opportunities are seeing success in talent attraction, and retention as talent actively seeks new challenges and increased opportunities for advancement or variety.
- **Showcase unique lifestyle and strong quality of place assets:** Above and beyond employment opportunities; talent seeks communities that can demonstrate the quality of place, such as a vibrant cultural scene, opportunities to participate in the social activities, interconnectedness through transportation infrastructure, and a pleasant physical environment.
- **Skilled, ready to work talent:** Companies are increasingly looking to hire skilled workers rather than provide training or apprenticeship opportunities. As such, educational institutions are focusing on developing work-ready graduates ready to bring their talent, knowledge, and skills to their employer. It is also becoming increasingly more important to develop targeted policies around skill development for high-demand industries <sup>30</sup>.

Further, the Manpower Group 2018 Talent Shortage Survey revealed:

- 41% of employers are having difficulty filling jobs in Canada
- Large companies have the most difficulty filling roles, followed by medium-sized enterprises (50-249 employees)
- The hardest skills to find are skilled trades, IT, sales representatives, office support, drivers, health care professionals, technicians, professionals (project managers, lawyers, researchers), engineers, and teachers
- The top drivers of talent shortages are lack of applicants (26%), followed by lack of experience (19%), followed by lack of required hard skills (17%)<sup>31</sup>

## 13.5 Talent Attraction in British Columbia

British Columbia's talent attraction trends mirror what is occurring in the Canadian workforce with a very real urban, rural divide between clusters of cities and bedroom communities which are rapidly expanding and small communities which are shrinking. Northern BC, with its relative distance from major urban centres, has experienced

<sup>30</sup> Adecco Group (n.d.), The global war on talent is on, but who's winning it. Retrieved from: <http://www.adeccogroupuk.co.uk/news-and-analysis/the-global-war-for-talent.aspx>. Accessed: Nov. 16, 2016.

<sup>31</sup> [https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/2942250/Country%20PDFs/2018\\_TSS\\_Infographics-Canada.pdf?t=1529961557955](https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/2942250/Country%20PDFs/2018_TSS_Infographics-Canada.pdf?t=1529961557955)

some of that rural shrinkage.

Unaffordable housing is a factor that deters workers from locating in British Columbia.<sup>32</sup>

## 13.6 Talent Attraction in Prince George

If British Columbia's unaffordable housing market is deterring prospective workers from putting down roots, the good news is that Prince George is exempt from that broader provincial challenge. If BC's housing market reveals anything, it is that BC is a highly desirable province to live. Prince George's value proposition in this context is that it offers many of the quality of life assets that attract people to the province, without the price tag. As the largest city in Northern British Columbia, Prince George has the opportunity to attract the types of mobile workers who experience barriers to career growth and housing challenges in the lower mainland. Campaigns like Move Up Prince George are essential to presenting Prince George as a liveable option to workers, where professional opportunities, affordability, and quality of life are attainable.

As a regional hub in Northern B.C., Prince George sits in a niche that is attractive to the modern worker: it offers a wide range of professional opportunities, the vibrancy that comes with a local university and outdoor recreational assets.

The opportunity lies in leveraging regional assets and developing the lifestyle conditions that are attractive to the modern workforce, and luring companies to the area by highlighting Prince George's quality of life assets, its low cost of living and doing business. Those individuals located in the Lower Mainland experiencing challenges in housing affordability and a competitive job market would be able to grow their career, own a home and a cabin in Prince George while maintaining an active social life.

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<sup>32</sup> Conference board of Canada. Mid-Sized Cities Outlook: Economic Insight into Select Canadian Cities (2018)