



For Immediate Release

Shifts in Manitoulin District's Economy Require Shifts in Education

May 25, 2017 – As the economy swings from manufacturing and resource related jobs to service and knowledge based jobs, Manitoulin District will need to examine how education is delivered if communities are to grow and be sustainable into the future.

That is one of the main recommendations stemming from the latest report from the *Northern Projections: Human Capital Series* by James Cuddy and Bakhtiar Moazzami.

While Manitoulin District's goods-producing sector has remained relatively constant for the past three decades, the services-producing sector has grown by roughly 50 percent. Since 2001, health care, public administration, and support industries have expanded considerably – the information and cultural industries by 110 percent alone. At the same time, the report shows the human capital composition – the level of knowledge and skills that affect productivity - of the total working-age population in the District is below that in Northeastern Ontario, and the province as a whole.

“Significant growth in the service-producing sector is changing the necessary educational requirements for many jobs in the District,” said Reggie Caverson, Executive Director, Workforce Planning for Sudbury and Manitoulin. “Findings of the report lead to several recommendations, including creating more opportunities for postsecondary education.”

Other notable findings of the report show an overall population that is aging and in decline. The share of individuals under age 20 is expected to decline from 22.9 percent in 2013 to 19.4 percent in 2041 and the share of seniors is expected to rise from 21.7 percent in 2013 to 36.2 percent in 2041. The District is also experiencing low and declining immigration. As of 2015, the District attracted 1.5 immigrants per 10,000 people compared to 64.8 in Ontario, the lowest of any district in Northern Ontario.

“Greater investment in attracting and increasing the success of immigrants and newcomers may be another key to a sustainable future for the Manitoulin District. This has happened in other regions in the Northeast,” says Northern Policy Institute President & CEO Charles Cirtwill. “Replicating that success in the Manitoulin District will be another important factor in future growth for the region.”

Opportunities for the Manitoulin District can be found within a growing Indigenous population which is expected to increase from 5,408 in 2013 to 7,192 in 2041, a growth rate of about 33 percent.

Based on these findings, the authors make several recommendations to promote the long-term sustainability of the Manitoulin District:

1. Respond to the needs of the Indigenous population

The human capital indexes for the Indigenous labour force in the Manitoulin District are comparable to the rest of the population in the area and higher than in Canada as a whole.



Given that the Indigenous share of the population is increasing, and given that their human capital composition is lower than total working-age population in the Northeast and the province as a whole, future labour productivity will decrease if education levels do not rise among this segment of the population. There is strong evidence showing that higher skill levels increase the likelihood of participation in the workforce and reduce unemployment rates. Addressing these issues for the Indigenous population will have positive benefits for the entire region.

2. *Address the educational needs of men and reengage them in the workforce*

This study has highlighted a particular trend in relation to declining workforce participation and high unemployment among the male population in the Manitoulin District and among the Indigenous male population on-reserve in particular. Responding to this challenge will require re-evaluating approaches to education to make it more relevant and accessible to this population. Ongoing challenges by this population in accessing education and achieving educational success will have serious consequences in a world increasingly demanding ever higher levels of education, even for entry level jobs. This of course needs to be supported by employment opportunities.

3. *High School is not enough*

The shift in the economy, from manufacturing and resource related jobs to service and knowledge based jobs, requires higher levels of educational achievement. Postsecondary credentials offered in a workplace environment including, but not limited to, apprenticeship and apprentice style training programs might assist in increasing the presence of education over and above high school in the general population of this District. Nearby districts have had success in this area; replicating that success should be a priority in the District of Manitoulin.

The full report, *Northern Projections: Human Capital Series – Manitoulin District*, is available on our websites:

Northern Policy Institute www.northernpolicy.ca

Algoma Workforce Investment Corporation www.awic.ca

Far Northeast Training Board www.fnetb.com

The Labour Market Group – Nipissing Parry Sound www.thelabourmarketgroup.ca

Northwest Training and Adjustment Board www.ntab.on.ca

North Superior Workforce Planning Board www.nswpb.ca

Sudbury and Manitoulin Workforce Planning Board www.planningourworkforce.ca

Northern Projections: Human Capital Series highlights all of the 11 districts in Northern Ontario, and is part of an ongoing, collaborative effort between the *Northern Policy Institute* and *Northern Ontario Workforce Planning Boards* to provide evidenced based analysis for effective decision making in the region.

Reports will examine past and present characteristics and trends in each district's economy in order to forecast future challenges and opportunities.



Media Interviews: Northern Policy Institute President & CEO, Charles Cirtwill and Reggie Caverson, Executive Director, Workforce Planning for Sudbury and Manitoulin, are both available for comment.

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About Northern Policy Institute:

Northern Policy Institute is Northern Ontario's independent think tank. We perform research, collect and disseminate evidence, and identify policy opportunities to support the growth of sustainable Northern communities. Our operations are located in Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, and Sudbury. We seek to enhance Northern Ontario's capacity to take the lead position on socio-economic policy that impacts Northern Ontario, Ontario, and Canada as a whole.

About Northern Ontario Workforce Planning:

Workforce Planning Ontario is a network of 26 Workforce Planning Boards covering four regions across the province. Workforce Planning Boards gather intelligence about the supply and demand side of the local labour market and work in partnership with employers, employment services, educators, researchers, economic development, government and other stakeholders to identify, understand and address labour market issues. This includes supporting and coordinating local responses to meet current and emerging workforce needs.

Given the unique geography and labour market issues that impact Northern Ontario, all 6 planning boards in the north have collaborated to form Northern Ontario Workforce Planning. They include: Algoma Workforce Investment Corporation (AWIC); Far Northeast Training Board (FNETB); The Labour Market Group (LMG); Northwest Training and Adjustment Board (NTAB); North Superior Workforce Planning Board (NSWPB); and Workforce Planning for Sudbury & Manitoulin (WPSM). FNETB and NSWPB are currently pilot sites for Local Employment Planning Councils (LEPC).