

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 4, 2010

CAMPBELL RIVER CHAMBER ANNOUNCES LAUNCH OF LOCAL BUSINESS ENABLING RESEARCH PROJECT

The Campbell River and District Chamber of Commerce (CRDCC) announces today the launch of their *Workforce Development Within a Rural Transitioning Economy* project. This research project was developed through CRDCC's partnership with North Island Employment. Funding for this initiative is made possible through the support of a Labour Market Partnership agreement with the Employment and Labour Market Services Division of the Ministry of Housing and Social Development.

"This project will undertake research to describe the existing, declining and emerging industries and employer base of our community and those occupations that are in demand, transition, or decline", states Colleen Evans, Executive Director CRDCC. *"And, it will identify the needed skills and training for these occupations as a vital component to creating a business enabling environment in Campbell River and surrounding area",* further commented Evans.

The Campbell River and District Chamber of Commerce (CRDCC) has determined through business and membership surveys, business advocacy and strategic research and consultation with key stakeholders, a critical need for accurate, current, research-based information at a local level. This information is required to more accurately describe the local human resource needs of employers as reflected in the changing business, economic and demographic shifts in our community and region. It will assist employers with their human resource planning, assist job seekers with their employment, skill development and career decision making, and assist with the retention of existing businesses and industries as well as the attraction of emerging industry sector businesses.

The project will serve to address the imbalance between the skills of the available labour force supply and the demands of existing businesses and emerging industry sectors. *"On behalf of the Chamber Board, we are pleased to further demonstrate our commitment as the 'Voice of Business' to position Campbell River to have the right people with the right skills available at the right time and in the right place, to allow the full potential of Campbell River and the surrounding area's existing and emerging businesses and its residents, to be realized",* stated Andy Leitch, President of CRDCC.

A key ongoing benefit of this project will be the CRDCC's creation and retention in Campbell River the tools and processes for the on-going collection, analysis and distribution of demand-

side labour market information and generating capacity for further local research and implementation.

“The technical aspects of the project are important, inclusive of the tools, database, gap analyses, projections, and research findings but also key, will be the relationship with employers, existing and emerging businesses, industries and other key stakeholders, as a key determinant of measuring success”, states Colleen Evans, Executive Director CRDCC. Colleen further commented, “We will be seeking significantly high levels of business, industry and employer engagement throughout the project process that includes an Employer Survey as a critical primary research tool. In turn, we will endeavor to provide clarity and transparency in what is being presented in the findings and data analysis, its value and benefits from both a supply and demand side and how it can be used to directly inform stakeholders, business planning and HR strategy development”.

The four project objectives are to undertake research within Campbell River and surrounding area to identify:

1. The existing, declining and emerging industries and occupations;
2. The skill development needs of the local labour force relevant to current and future labour market demands;
3. The HR skill development needs of the employer community to ensure the attraction and retention of a qualified workforce;
4. The needed training and skill development supply systems to support employer and employee human resource development.

In addition, the findings from the CRDCC project will be linked to the broader development of a Coordinated Workforce Development Strategy in the community which is being led by North Island Employment. Doug Preston, Executive Director of NIEFS remarked, *“NIEFS is extremely pleased to see this timely pilot project undertaken by the CRDCC”* and elaborated further that *“Over the past three years considerable efforts and progress has been made in Campbell River to coordinate the skill development needs of workers with the human resource needs of our employers”.* A current initiative is the creation of a Community Accord on Work Force Development that will be completed in late fall 2010. *The results of the CRDCC’s research project will be invaluable for supporting the implementation of coordinated approaches to workforce development and creating a more enabling environment for business success.”*

-30-

**For more information, please contact:
Colleen Evans, Executive Director
Campbell River Chamber of Commerce
Ph: 250-287-4513**



Funded in whole or part through the Canada-British Columbia
Labour Market Development Agreement