

PATHWAYS TO YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

A collaborative strategy to support youth in gaining skills, securing employment, and building their futures in our community.

OUR PURPOSE

To develop local strategies that equip youth with sustainable employability skills, support long-term workforce engagement and strengthen pathways that encourage youth to work and stay in our region.

OUR TACTICS

- Implement **continuous feedback** loop with youth and employers.
- Develop **bilateral engagement strategies** that support both youth and employers.
- Expand **employability and job readiness programming**.
- Deliver and enhance the annual **Youth Career Discovery Expo**.
- Administer the **Youth Economic Empowerment Microgrant Program**.
- Strengthen and grow the City of Grande Prairie's **Youth Advisory Council's** youth-led marketing and engagement.
- Strengthen **community awareness** of youth unemployment trends and actionable ways to support **youth workforce success**.

OUR PARTNERS

OUR STRATEGY

I. Align and Integrate Systems

- Break down organizational silos.
- Reduce duplication of services.
- Strengthen coordination across sectors.

II. Strengthen Collective Impact

- Establish shared goals and measurable outcomes.
- Develop a community working group with shared metrics.
- Foster transparency, communication and accountability.

III. Ground Decisions in Data and Lived Experience

- Center youth voice and lived experience.
- Compile actionable regional data.
- Respond to trends in youth employment.

IV. Plan for Sustainable, Long-Term Impact

- Move beyond short-term interventions.
- Support scalable and sustainable solutions.
- Adapt based on feedback and emerging needs.

OUR REFLECTION

- Increased **youth confidence** in employability skills.
- Improved **awareness** of youth employment supports.
- Increased **youth employment and retention rates**.
- Increased **employer participation** in youth hiring initiatives.
- Increased youth reporting **intention to stay and work in the region**.

OUR EVIDENCE

- 76%** of surveyed youth are not currently employed *
- 34%** don't know where to find jobs *
- 55%** report difficulty finding or keeping work *
- 90%** learned about new careers at the Expo *
- 39%** struggle to balance school/work schedules *
- Lack of awareness is the #1 community barrier.** (575 respondents) *

Provincial Labour Context

- Youth population growing at 6.7% annually.
- Youth unemployment highest among those with incomplete high school.
- Alberta youth labour participation rate 64%[^]In 2024, youth made up 15.1 percent of all Albertans aged 15 and over, the fifth greatest proportion among the provinces.[^]
- Youth who had not completed high school faced the highest unemployment rate in 2024 (25.1%), followed by high school graduates (15.6%). Those with some high school education experienced the largest unemployment gap compared to core working-age adults (13.2 percentage points).[^]

*Data taken from the City of Grande Prairie's Youth and Employer Surveys
[^]Data taken from the GoA's 2024 Alberta Labour Force Profiles: Youth

