

PIER NEWS

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PIER Strategic Plan Complete

The Board of Directors has finalized PIER's Strategic Plan. Over the next year, the agency will focus on four goals, with accompanying strategies:

1. Ensure the region has access to a strong labour pool,
2. Expand the regional economy,
3. Communicate with key stakeholders,
4. Ensure that the agency is effective and efficient.

To ensure the region has access to a strong labour pool, PIER will focus on immigration and training related strategies. Providing the services necessary to attract and retain immigrants will continue to be the organization's approach to ensuring continued immigration to the region. PIER holds the contract for the Humboldt Regional Newcomer Centre; one of 11 Newcomer Centres in the province. The Centre assists employers in attracting immigrants with the requisite skill-sets, links employers to needed resources, and provides the support services newcomers need to succeed at work and in their new communities. In addressing labour training strategies, PIER will continue to monitor skill gaps, communicate findings with industry, and support training initiatives.

To expand the regional economy, four strategic areas were identified: providing the region's product and service capacity to potential developers, identifying the supplies required for major projects, identifying infrastructure needs, and working towards additional market affordable housing. A shortage of residential rentals and market affordable housing has and continues to be a key barrier to growth for industry and business.

To communicate with key stakeholders, PIER will initiate regular and targeted contact with regional business, industry, members, partners, MLAs, and government ministries including Enterprise Saskatchewan, and the Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration. Communications will include PIER's mandate, projects and achievements, and will demonstrate the ability of the organization to serve as a tool for economic growth.

The agency will ensure effective operations through a continued commitment to strategic planning and operational efficiency. Annually, PIER will use the results of the strategic planning process to revisit the business plan and associated budget.

PIER... REALIZING ECONOMIC POTENTIAL AND GLOBAL COMPETITION

MANDATE: To assist east central Saskatchewan to increase business and industry competitiveness, realize economic potential and compete globally.

REGION: PIER'S boundaries encompass 22,000 square kilometers, 27 rural municipalities, and over 34,000 residents from Wakaw to Govan, from Prud'homme to Wadena, and communities in between.



ENTERPRISE REGION

PRAIRIE INNOVATION

PROFILE:

Bid Ocean Inc.

Wakaw-based Bid Ocean Inc. is a web-based company expert in the acquisition, processing and distribution of business opportunities (tenders) from government agencies and private organizations. The firm publishes an average of more than 2,500 new business opportunity reports each day, with a contract value of more than \$1.5 trillion US dollars annually. Bid Ocean is the largest publisher of such information in North America, and this is why the firm's customers include Global 50 and Fortune 500 companies.

Bid Ocean uses artificial intelligence software to monitor web sites, task and monitor data entry staff, request data, distribute data to customers and ensure data quality. The firm's unique software was designed by the founder, Tim Loncarich, and was coded using the company's own programmers. "Our software was developed by a small team over several years and has continually evolved. With more than 40,000 man hours of programming so far, the software is very complex, but well integrated," explains Loncarich.

Bid Ocean has a unique approach to employment. The firm looks for employees who are intelligent, ethical, hard-working and want to help make the world a better place. In addition to extensive job training, employees also receive ongoing life skills training. The firm employs staff from within

the region, but has approximately 120 on staff in China, India, the Philippines, Tanzania, Europe and the United States. As the firm's founder explains, "Our goal is to hire the best people we can find and then make them even better using the most advanced techniques available. We employ a psychologist who functions as our Staff Well Being Manager. His job is to help ensure that each person is happy in their personal and work life and are taking steps to evolve as individuals. We also conduct our own consciousness research and work with some of the world's leading researchers. Not everyone

has an interest in their own development, but many do."

Bid Ocean also does research and development in green energy and physics. The firm is currently testing solar and wind panels to determine which ones it will use in converting its own offices to renewable energy. Work is underway on the use of high efficiency electrolysis to produce hydrogen and oxygen from water using less energy than

conventional methods. The firm is also developing a smart bathtub controller that can be set to a desired temperature and will shut off the water once the tub is full. An additional product is under development for colder climates that will utilize cold from outside a building for refrigerators and freezers to reduce energy consumption during winter months.

Corporation With a Conscience

Bid Ocean is an innovative firm demonstrating that a company can exist not just to make a profit but to also empower its customers, employees and make the world a better place. In addition to considerable work in the areas of green energy and physics, the firm demonstrates ethical behaviour in daily operations.

Staff are mentored and coached on satisfaction at work and in their personal lives. The firm uses renewable energy wherever possible. Bid Ocean is also engaged in social development work in Tanzania, Zimbabwe and the Philippines.

GOOD NEWS: Settlement Advisor Hard At Work

PIER's business plan identifies a shortage of skilled labour as a barrier to economic development in the region. Newcomers to the region have, and will continue to help address this shortage. Through a series of contracts with the Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration, PIER is facilitating efforts to help newcomers successfully work and settle in the region.

Recently, PIER secured an extension to a contract with the Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration for a Settlement Advisor. A Settlement Advisor's job is to help newcomers access all the information and services required to work and live in a community. The position involves travel to serve newcomers wherever in the region they settle. A Settlement Advisor also works with businesses that employ newcomers to ensure success on

the job. Chris Kosteroski has been hard at work in the position since July.

Since beginning his employment, Chris has assisted with a number of projects and events, as well as the development of resources available at the Humboldt Regional Newcomer Centre (HRNC). Recent accomplishments include completion of an information package explaining the services available to newcomers.

PIER also holds a contract with the Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration for the Humboldt Regional Newcomer Centre. The

Centre serves as a point of first contact to help newcomers to Humboldt and the region access relevant information, resources and services. Consult www.thehrnc.com to view the Centre's newly updated website.

Assisting Newcomers in East Central Saskatchewan

"Not only does the Humboldt Regional Newcomer Centre provide services at its main office in Humboldt, the HRNC reaches out to all communities within its regions through its Settlement Advisor," says Chris Kosteroski.