

REPORT CARD

Canada West Foundation | 2017

NATURAL RESOURCES

GETTING ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE BUILT

What we said we would do

Based on our prior report *A Matter of Trust: The role of communities in energy decision-making* (in collaboration with the University of Ottawa's Positive Energy group), we committed to making recommendations to help get energy projects (oil, gas, hydro and other renewables) built, with community support. We promised that our recommendations would be heard as part of the National Energy Board Modernization review, among other venues. In that context, we also promised to work on how to balance local interests with the national interest.

What we delivered

- *Up Front: Modernizing the National Energy Board*, Report: Trevor McLeod, 5-Apr-17.
- We did 14 op-eds, 14 speaking engagements, 3 hosted or partnered events and 49 media interviews, on various topics including support for getting pipelines built; support of carbon pricing; critical of the federal government's proposed West Coast tanker ban; as commentary on the proposed changes to the NEB and the environmental assessment process.
- Our various submissions and commentaries on modernization of the NEB addressed the importance of certainty and efficiency in project approvals while ensuring that environmental and other impacts are properly addressed.
- As interprovincial relations became difficult, we stressed the need for the national interest to take precedence.

What it means for Canada's West:

The energy sector is clearly of great importance to the economies of all of the western provinces, albeit in different ways. Getting that energy to markets in cost-effective and environmentally sustainable ways is critical.

IMPROVE INDIGENOUS ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENT IN RESOURCE PROJECTS

What we said we would do

Conduct Phase One of our major multi-year project to explore successful Indigenous economic engagement in resource development, leading to recommendations for industry, Indigenous communities and government. Using deep-dive case studies, including in-depth, broad-based qualitative interviews with employees, community members, leaders, Elders and community businesses distinguishes this work from other research. (This is a major project, conducted over two years with Indigenous research partners and multiple funders.)

Aligning shared economic interests leads to immediate benefits for families and communities – benefits like improved skills, access to capital, employment and entrepreneurial opportunities. *Note that this project, is being done in partnership with our Human Capital Centre, to better understand the opportunities for both resource firms and Indigenous communities to use a competency-based approach to employment and entrepreneurship.*

What we delivered

- We conducted a series of *Hon. James A. Richardson Discovery Roundtables* in 2017 and early 2018, with industry leaders, Chiefs, Elders, and First Nations economic development leadership from Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.
- 5 hosted or partnered events, 4 speaking engagements, 3 media interviews, 1 op-ed.

The report on Phase One of the work will summarize what we learned about the meaning of success and different approaches in different communities, and the factors that contribute to successful partnerships between natural resource firms and Indigenous communities.

What it means for Canada's West

The economic success of our Indigenous communities is long overdue – getting there would represent success for all. This work will help identify the conditions that grow self-sufficiency and economic sustainability, supporting stronger Indigenous communities and full participation of Indigenous individuals and communities in the economy. This will have long-term implications particularly for the growing number of young people who will be entering the workforce over the next years.

It has become clear that successful Indigenous partnerships are also key to getting economically critical energy (and other) infrastructure built. This work aligns with the objectives of resource firms to build the conditions for successful approval of new projects and achieve their goals for ongoing projects.

Still to come

Phase Two will involve deep-dive case studies of up to eight individual communities (two in each western province) to determine the factors that contribute (or not) to the success of partnership(s) with resource development firms. What does a successful partnership mean to all parties? What factors are critical to success? How can successes be built upon, or replicated by others? What are the competencies that contributed to the success of the people engaged in the partnership, and how did they build them?

GETTING ELECTRICITY RIGHT

What we said we would do

The western provinces have different, regional comparative advantages and needs. Building on our project, *Power Up: The hydro option*, we promised to continue our work on electricity, including co-operation across the West on which electricity sources make the most sense for which customers, in which places, for which uses. We also promised to look at how to get that electricity from where it is produced to where it is needed. We promised research and convening work to focus on how greater co-operation and more integrated production and transmission of electricity can benefit each province. A strategic approach to electricity transmission is needed to combine the development of renewables and existing energy sources in the most cost-effective and environmentally sustainable ways.

This work includes an analysis of a potential integrated western electricity system, addressing issues such as the supply and demand challenges of reducing GHG emissions and the differing models of electricity governance. We said that we would ask (and try to answer) questions such as: How to take advantage of new technology? How to help the western provinces meet GHG emission reduction targets? Can the provinces collaborate more effectively? What market and regulatory reforms are needed to drive electricity innovation in western Canada? How to ensure a system-wide perspective? How to ensure cost-effectiveness and predictability for investors and taxpayers?

What we delivered

Although still in early stages, Phase One has included in-depth research including understanding historical attempts to increase grid integration in Canada, interviews with experts and stakeholders in each western province, as well as a roundtable of renewable energy developers (wind) active in Alberta and Saskatchewan. In October, CWF analyst Nick Martin testified to the House of Commons Natural Resources Committee on the value and issues related to strategic electricity interties, which incorporated research on this topic to date. In

March 2018, Nick Martin presented at an invitation-only event at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California on hydroelectricity and co-operation between the United States and Canada on electricity matters, which included a more integrated grid. The topic of inter-provincial electricity co-operation is politically sensitive, therefore CWF has refrained from significant public communications on the issue at this point, pending completion of the research and analysis and publication of our report.

→ 2 op-eds, 3 speaking engagements; 2 hosted events and 2 media interviews.

What it means for Canada's West

We have made significant commitments for GHG emission reductions. The only way we can meet those commitments is with the production or purchase of cleaner options, all of which involve the production of electricity. This cannot happen with the current transmission infrastructure. Also, if done well – in collaboration with the other western provinces, alternative electricity producers and federal government financial support – better transmission options could also lead to more cost-effective energy for western Canadians.

Still to come

Phase Two will involve (a) compiling all of the research, analysis and results of roundtables with various stakeholders and (b) a comprehensive report with recommendations for the West. We anticipate a major policy roadmap outlining concrete steps for evaluating and developing a more integrated western electricity system including: market reforms, government and institutional roles and responsibilities and inter-provincial equity considerations.

GETTING FROM 'NO' TO GO' – REDUCING REGULATORY BARRIERS TO INNOVATION

What we said we would do

There is plenty of innovation happening in western Canada – including in energy, agriculture, mining, forestry, transportation, services and more. The problem is turning those innovations into action. Too often the culprit is regulation – too much, or the wrong kind, or outdated and no longer appropriate. Poor regulation can hinder the adoption of innovative ideas that are needed for economic growth and prosperity, and important environmental improvements. It is critical that we get our regulatory system back to focussing on fundamental principles of protecting health and safety and the environment and encouraging efficient markets, while allowing new ideas to be tried and to take hold. We promised work on how to ensure rapid adoption and implementation of these innovations, specifically in the energy sector, while maintaining protection of human health, safety, security and protection of the environment.

What we delivered

This project was only started in late 2017, but (i) an extensive environmental scan has been conducted to determine existing applicable research and analysis – in Canada as well as other jurisdictions; and (ii) interviews have been conducted with representatives of renewable and non-renewable energy industries, regulators, and governments, to determine overarching challenges and identify specific case studies that would permit a deep-dive investigation, resulting in more concrete recommendations. These efforts have shown that (i) a problem exists with regulation as a barrier primarily to adoption; (ii) different types of innovations face different barriers; and (iii) there is a willingness to seek solutions.

→ 1 speaking engagement and 8 media interviews.

What it means for Canada's West

The energy sector, so important to the West, must be both cost and environmentally competitive. To that end, significant innovations are needed, all along the energy supply and transport chain. Where they are developed, competitiveness requires that they be capable of being implemented as quickly as possible. The whole energy sector, and ultimately the environment as well, will benefit from improved flexibility and adaptability of our regulatory approaches, without sacrificing health, safety and security.

Still to come

As noted, this project is in early stages. We expect to produce 3-4 case studies to demonstrate the issues related to different types of innovation. Our first case study involves a new type of geothermal electricity production using abandoned well pads.

TRADE & INVESTMENT

BUILDING MORE AND BETTER STRATEGIC TRADE INFRASTRUCTURE

What we said we would do

Canada, and especially the West, are fortunate to produce much of what the booming global markets want and need. But we lose out when we don't get our goods to markets quickly or reliably – if at all. Building on our roundtable report *Strategic Trade Infrastructure*, we promised to look for ways to (i) catch up to competitors who are doing better at building crucial trade infrastructure; (ii) bring the private sector and its sophisticated logistics supply and production chain information to help governments get trade infrastructure spending right, and (iii) develop new solutions to improve co-operation on cross-border infrastructure with the U.S

What we delivered

- *Strategic Trade Infrastructure Roundtable Summary*, Report: Naomi Christensen, John Law and Carlo Dade, 16-Feb-17.
- Cited in the *Canada Transportation Act* review.
- Various House of Commons and Senate Committee testimony appearances.
- 4 op-eds; 6 national and U.S. presentations; 6 media stories and interviews.

What it means for Canada's West

Building a national consensus for long-term, strategic solutions to the persistent problems in moving goods through western Canada to our ports and to the U.S. is

vital to our ongoing national economic health. We have demonstrated that practical solutions exist, and industry is willing to come together and work with the public sector to achieve success.

NAFTA – GREATER SUBNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT TO DEFEND NORTH AMERICAN TRADE

What we said we would do

Even before President Trump's "America First" agenda, there was a view that defending trade interests happens between Ottawa and Washington. This past year, more than ever, we needed to stress that trade happens province-to-state, business-to-business, and that's where we needed, and still need, to engage. We promised to focus on specifics of how, where and with whom.

What we delivered

- Our CEO, Martha Hall Findlay, was appointed early in 2017 to Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland's Trade Expert Advisory Council, attending regular in-person meetings and conference calls with the Deputy Minister and Chief NAFTA negotiator to exchange information and recommendations on the NAFTA talks as they have proceeded.
- 7 op-eds, 1 in U.S., 6 speaking engagements, 1 hosted event and 83 media interviews including several in the U.S. and Mexico.
- We strongly supported subnational engagement in the NAFTA discussions and made it the focus of discussions at the U.S. Western Governors' Meeting in Montana.

- In early 2018, we released a guide for small and medium businesses on possible NAFTA scenarios (NAFTA continues; NAFTA dies and the Canada-U.S. Trade Agreement is reinstated; NAFTA dies and we move to WTO tariffs) and how to prepare. The guide was made available to MLAs to help address constituents' questions, through chambers of commerce, trade representatives and other outlets. It has been so well-received that we are doing a similar project on how western Canadian firms can take advantage of the newly signed CPTPP.
- We continued to speak out on trade issues affecting Canada's West and its various economic interests, and to engage with various decision-makers in public office, government, business and other organizations.
- We continued to serve as an expert commentator in provincial and national media on NAFTA and related issues.

What it means for Canada's West

At the government level, western views were inserted into national and North American discussions in Ottawa, Washington, D.C., individual U.S. states and Mexico City. At the same time, the uncertainty surrounding NAFTA was discouraging small and medium enterprises. Ensuring that they are better prepared means greater resiliency for western firms.

RETAINING AND IMPROVING CANADIAN ACCESS TO ASIAN MARKETS

What we said we would do

With the U.S. withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), many in Canada, including senior political and other decision-makers, assumed that the TPP "was dead." Had that been the case, Canada would have lost its best path to catching up with our competitors in Asia and the rapidly expanding Asian markets. We promised to provide recommendations to decision-makers on how to pursue various ways to enhance our trade in Asia.

What we delivered

- *The Art of the Trade Deal: Quantifying the benefits of a TPP without the United States* Report: Carlo Dade and Dan Ciuriak, with Ali Dadkhah and Jingliang Xiao, 13-Jun-17
- *Western Canada's Trade Agenda: TPP11 and beyond* Report: Carlo Dade, 27-Oct-17
- *The Pacific Alliance: Why it's (still) important for western Canada* Report: Naomi Christensen and Carlo Dade, 16-Nov-17.
- 18 op-eds, 7 speaking engagements, 1 hosted event and 45 media interviews in Canada, the U.S. and Asia.
- We were one of the first and most vocal supporters of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, then the TPP11 (without the U.S.), and then as the re-named the CPTPP. Our report, which modelled the impact of the U.S. withdrawal from TPP was requested by virtually all partnership governments (including the U.S.) and has been credited as a critical factor in getting Canada to sign the deal. An example of the importance for the west was highlighted in the *Globe and Mail*, August 4, 2017: "[The TPP can fix Canadian farmers' beef with Japan's tariff.](#)" Surging U.S. beef exports caused Japan to invoke an emergency tariff on frozen beef imports from all countries, including Canada. While Canada and the United States faced a significant 50 per cent charge (hitting more than \$70-million in Canadian exports, including significant lost market share), countries such as Mexico and Australia were subject to drastically lower tariffs because they had trade agreements with Japan. Canada has remained woefully behind these major competitors, with only one trade deal in effect with an Asian economy. Thanks to the CPTPP, restrictions like Japan's tariffs on Canadian beef will no longer be an issue.
- We continued to speak out on the importance of trade with Asia for Canada's West and its various economic interests, and continued to engage with various decision-makers in public office, government, business and other organizations.
- We continued in our role as expert commentator in provincial and national media on the CPTPP, the Pacific Alliance and related issues.

What it means for the West

Our analysis of the quantifiable opportunities in the TPP for Canadian businesses helped push the trade deal over the finish line. The federal government's own economic impact assessment of the CPTPP noted that its "results are consistent with estimates" by Canada West Foundation. The deal will bring hundreds of millions of dollars a year as Canadian exporters take market share from the U.S. in CPTPP markets such as Japan, particularly in the agricultural sector.

Still to come

Guide for western small businesses on how to take advantage of new types of opportunities created by the CPTPP.

ENHANCING CANADA'S AGRI-FOOD PROCESSING AND EXPORT OPPORTUNITIES

What we said we would do

Using a case study approach, we said that we would use the agri-food research we had already been doing to develop recommendations for how to enhance our food processing capabilities, for greater trade within Canada, and to take advantage of growing export markets including in Asia.

What we delivered

- *Sprouted: The plant ingredient opportunity taking root on the Prairies* Report: Carlo Dade, Naomi Christensen and Sarah Pittman, 11-Dec-17, analyzed the value-added plant ingredient opportunity for the West, which already grows many of the crops in demand to be processed.
- 8 op-eds, 4 speaking engagements and 2 media interviews.
- We were one of the most prominent voices on why the Prairie provinces are well-placed to strengthen their economies through the new plant processing sector.

- We helped launch the Plant Protein Alliance of Alberta (Carlo Dade currently sits on the Board).
- We were active participants in supporting the group's application to the federal government for super-cluster designation and funding. (*Within weeks of the Sprouted report's publication, the federal government announced that the protein group was one of the winners in its innovation supercluster initiative – a potentially transformative moment for the Prairie economies.*)
- We participated in a variety of briefings for business, municipal government officials and regional economic development agencies and other business associations in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.
- We continued to speak out on the importance of the protein-related agri-food opportunities and continued to engage with various decision-makers in public office, government, business and other organizations.
- We continued in our role as expert commentator in provincial and national media.

What it means for Canada's West

Understanding the enormous opportunity for the Prairie provinces in plant protein is the first step to realizing the opportunity and assuring that it is not missed and overlooked. As demand for protein, including plant-based protein, skyrockets globally, the Prairie provinces have the kind of opportunity that doesn't come along often. We recommended steps that Ottawa, the provinces and industry can take so the Prairies can co-operate, compete globally, and dominate the non-soy plant ingredient industry.

Still to come

Policy development to solve specific problems and assure that the Prairies can realize the opportunity.

PRACTICAL TOOLS FOR SMES EXPORTING TO KOREA (AND ELSEWHERE)

What we said we would do

Trade agencies were looking for new tools to help small and medium firms export to Asia. We promised to develop and publish innovative, export-focused material on how to effectively export to Korea – materials useful and capable of being adapted for other markets as well.

What we delivered

- Korea Paper No. 01
Trium Environmental Case Study
19-Oct-17
- Korea Paper No. 02
Greenlight Innovation Case Study
19-Oct-17
- 1 speaking engagement.

What it means for the West

New tools for western trade promotion agencies to work with SMEs to realize opportunities in Korea.

SPEAKING TRUTH ON SUPPLY MANAGEMENT AND COSTS TO CANADIAN TRADE

What we said we would do

The cost of supply management in dairy and poultry to the country – especially the rest of Canada's agriculture – is a particularly important issue for the West. Our protection of this small agricultural cartel hurts all consumers with high prices and hurts the majority of Canadian farmers in trade negotiations, particularly western farmers, who want to sell more of their grains, oilseeds, beef and pork to the world. Canadians must ask: What are we giving up, and whose interests are we sacrificing, to preserve our supply management system, and make a small number of millionaire dairy and poultry producers even wealthier?

What we delivered

- *Supply Management: A win-win opportunity for reform* Report: Martha Hall Findlay and Eric Dalke, 5-Jun-17. This report and commentary called for a win-win solution to reform the system and let our producers compete globally. We are one of the sole voices willing to speak out, share facts and find solutions.
- *La gestion de l'offre : Une opportunité de réforme qui ne ferait que des gagnants* Rapport: Martha Hall Findlay avec la collaboration d'Eric Dalke.
- 8 op-eds, 1 speaking engagement and 32 media interviews.
- As our softwood lumber deal with the U.S. came to an end, we asked how we could reconcile pushing for access for our lumber while still insisting on protecting dairy, and why were we thus sacrificing negotiating leverage for lumber.
- We participated in a variety of briefings for business, municipal government officials and regional economic development agencies and other business associations in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.
- We continued to speak out – with various decision-makers in public office, government, business and other organizations – on the importance of moving away from supply management for the sake of both Canadian consumers and because of the detrimental effect it has on our other trade opportunities, disproportionately affecting the West.
- We continued in our role as expert commentator in provincial and national media.

What it means for the West

As Canada participates in trade negotiations to improve access to markets, Canada needs to recognize that this long-standing trade irritant is not necessary for our dairy and poultry sectors to thrive, and that there is a significant price to be paid by other exporting sectors, particularly those in the West.

SOFTWOOD LUMBER

What we said we would do

Although softwood lumber was not part of our committed 2017 workplans, events with the U.S. ensured that it came back as a serious issue, and our expertise on the file was called upon.

What we delivered

- We provided regular commentary on the softwood lumber dispute from an western Canada perspective.
- 4 op-eds, 8 blogs, 30 media interviews.
- We continue to be a go-to source for the media on this file, with multiple print, radio and TV interviews including a radio show in Oregon, and on CBC's national *Power and Politics* – where our Senior Policy Analyst Naomi Christensen was introduced as “one of Canada's foremost experts on softwood lumber.” We are also building relationships with Canadian allies on softwood in the U.S., such as the National Association of Home Builders, a representative of which appeared as a guest on our recent podcast episode on softwood lumber. We also continue to be invited to speak about the ongoing dispute, including a recent keynote presentation by Naomi Christensen to the Western Wood Truss Association of Alberta's annual conference.
- We participated in a variety of briefings for business, municipal government officials and regional economic development agencies and other business associations.
- We continued to speak out on the issue with various decision-makers in public office, government, business and other organizations.

What it means for Canada's West

Keeping this issue on the front-burner in trade policy in both Canada and the U.S. requires vigilance and attention to common interests.

OTHER

Our media reach goes beyond CBC, the Globe and Mail and CTV. We speak extensively on grassroots media such as News Talk 770, Calgary Breakfast TV, BridgeCity News, Western Producer and RealAg radio. First-hand information from a source that knows the locality helps to assure stories get run and our ability to add local context helps deliver a more effective message. We produce for the Lethbridge Herald. Our ability to take international trade down to the grassroots, community level in Alberta, is a unique asset. In addition to raising awareness on the importance of trade we actively build understanding and support for Export Development Canada and the government to undertake the activities for the province to prosper. The same type of advocacy we do in the Edmonton Journal we also do in the Fort Macleod Gazette.

We have used these channels to consistently advocate in print and on the air in support of government trade missions, including in advance of government trips to Asia and to the U.S. We also consistently deliver this message in talks to local chambers and business associations, encouraging them to do more and become more vocal in supporting these activities. Local governments and economic development agencies are increasingly calling on us as one of the few sources outside of government willing not only to take calls from, but also physically go to smaller cities and towns to brief local government officials on international trade issues. Local economic development agencies are increasingly calling us for additional advice and information.

HUMAN CAPITAL

Jobs, workforce development and safety are the primary interest of our Human Capital Centre. At the beginning of 2017 there were 1.32 million people without jobs, yet 400,000 jobs needing people. There was and remains a shortage of people with needed technical skills, even in provinces hit hard by low energy prices. The Human Capital Centre's research is focused on competencies – what people know, do and understand – and on a competency-based approach to building a better workforce. We promised to continue to build on past work including: *Competence is the Best Credential*; *Smarten Up: It's time to build essential skills*; *Building Blocks: Modular credentials for Canada's trades*; and *Know, Do, Understand: Development of competencies in Canada's schoolchildren*.

CREATION OF A PAN-CANADIAN COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

What we said we would do

“Yes, we can.” People develop useful competencies (often quite different from formal credentials), which can be put to good use in various industries and occupations. Too often, neither those people, nor employers with jobs that need filling, recognize those competencies. How do we know the competencies employers are looking for? What are the competencies that people have developed? And how do we match them up? Our work will address the potential of competency-based models of education, training, assessment and certification, and how to build a pan-Canadian competency framework.

What we delivered

- *Matchup: A case for pan-Canadian competency frameworks* Report: Janet Lane and Jeff Griffiths, 27-Feb-17
- 7 op-eds, 7 speaking engagements, 1 hosted event (an Hon. James A. Richardson Discovery Roundtable) and 14 media interviews.
- We have driven the agenda on using a competency approach to match people with jobs and jobs with people. This approach not only reduces the friction as people move between jobs, it also provides the basis by which people can more easily identify the skills and knowledge to transition to new jobs in new sectors.
- Using a competency-based approach to matching people with jobs, we are assisting unemployed and underemployed professionals, laid off in the last downturn in oil prices, to seek new jobs in new and different sectors. Employers in different sectors will be introduced to potential employees with transferable competencies. Individuals will have a new way of articulating what they can actually do for future employers and will look at jobs that go beyond their last job description.

What it means for Canada's West

Workforce disruption is commonplace across the West, and will continue with the adoption of new materials, processes, and technology, as well as the various responses to climate change. Our work is helping to mitigate this disruption.

Still to come

Further work on the development of a pan-Canadian competency framework is being done on a number of fronts. We are assisting in the building of tools that will improve labour market information, reducing the gaps in understanding of the skills and competencies people bring to the workforce, and those that employers are looking for.

GREATER INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT IN RESOURCE PROJECTS

What we said we would do

Note that this project is also described under Natural Resources, as it is being conducted in partnership between the Natural Resources Centre and the Human Capital Centre.

Aligning shared economic interests leads to immediate benefits for families and communities – benefits like improved skills, access to capital, employment and entrepreneurial opportunities. The focus for the Human Capital Centre is to better understand the opportunities for competency-based approaches to employment and entrepreneurship.

What we delivered

- We conducted a series of roundtables in 2017 and early 2018, with industry leaders, Chiefs, Elders, First Nations economic development leadership from Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.
- 5 hosted or partnered events, 4 speaking engagements, 1 op-ed, and 3 media interviews.

The report on Phase One of the work will summarize what we learned about the meaning of success and different approaches in different communities, and the factors that signal successful partnerships between natural resource firms and Indigenous communities.

What it means for Canada's West

The economic success of our Indigenous communities is long overdue – getting there would represent success for all. This work will help identify the conditions that grow self-sufficiency and economic sustainability, supporting stronger Indigenous communities and full participation of Indigenous individuals and communities in the economy. This will have long-term implications particularly for the growing number of young people who will be entering the workforce over the next years.

It has become clear that successful Indigenous partnerships are key to getting economically critical energy (and other) infrastructure built. This work aligns with the objectives of resource firms in building the conditions for successful approval of new projects and achieving their goals for ongoing projects.

Still to come

Phase Two will involve deep-dive case studies of up to eight individual communities (two in each western province) to determine the factors that contribute (or not) to the success of partnership(s) with resource development firms. What does a successful partnership mean to all parties? What factors are critical to success? How can successes be built upon, or replicated by others? What are the competencies that contributed to the success of the people engaged in the partnership, and how did they build them?

WAIWARD STEEL – A SUCCESS STORY OF COMPETENCIES AT WORK

What we said we would do

Despite being recognized for its world-class safety program, and fully “certified” employees, Waiward Steel Inc. experienced four serious safety incidents between 2010 and 2012. The leadership team vowed to make changes. Waiward implemented a competency-based approach to its workforce, and four years later, it had achieved a 900 per cent improvement to its safety record. We promised to use the Waiward case to make

recommendations on competency frameworks and how to implement them, useful to business, governments and unions.

What we delivered

- *Beyond the Rules: Moving Safety from Compliance to Competence* Report: Janet Lane, 9-May-17. This is a study of how Waiward Steel improved its Occupational Health & Safety record by ensuring its workers were competent.
- *The Skill Advantage: The 21st century challenge for Canada's unions* Report: Janet Lane and Jeff Griffiths, 24-May-17, shows how unions can add value to their members and to the employers with which they work, by ensuring their members are competent.

What it means for Canada's West

Among other things, this work has supported development of Alberta's new occupational health and safety legislation coming into force in June, 2018, which includes for the first time a definition of competence, and the requirements that workers be supervised by a supervisor who is competent.

Waiward Steel made its move to a competency-based workforce management system with the full co-operation and support of the Ironworkers Union. Using our report, the Ironworkers International has championed this approach within its own membership across North America, and made the case for all craft unions to do the same. Union members work more safely and productively when they are fully competent for the tasks of their jobs, improving the safety and productivity of the whole economy.

ENGAGING, AND BENEFITTING FROM, SENIORPRENEURSHIP

What we said we would do

There are many Canadian seniors who have significant, diverse, but unused talents and skills – and time to use

them. With today's longer life expectancies, many want to stay active and engaged but are not sure how. Some are worried about outliving their retirement funds, and could earn additional income putting their talents and experience to use. At the same time, young people are starting new businesses more than ever before. Yet many start-ups, although based on great ideas, inventions and innovations, lack business experience, networks and capital to go from idea to commercial activity. Combining the two would be a clear win – win. We set out to find some solutions.

What we delivered

- *Seniorpreneurship: Don't retire – rewire* Report: Colleen Collins, 21-Jun-17, summarizes our findings on ways to bring people over 65 with skills, knowledge and interest together with young entrepreneurs to start businesses that have a greater likelihood of success.
- We engaged with both groups to identify both barriers to, and enablers of, successful partnerships and to identify cases with lessons that could be applied more broadly.
- The report was used to support the extraordinarily successful "Top 7 Over 70" event in Calgary.

What it means for Canada's West

Recognition of the opportunity to build on the strengths of our experienced people through entrepreneurship will encourage individuals and the entrepreneurial ecosystem not to ignore this valuable resource.

INCREASING ECONOMIC PROSPERITY THROUGH ARTS AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES

What we said we would do

Cultural activities are increasingly seen as industries in their own rights. Cities such as Austin, Mexico City and Berlin have recognized the value of their cultural resources and leveraged them to improve liveability for residents, and attract artists, tourism spending and investment. British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec are

leaders in Canada in the cultural industries with funding and industry-friendly provincial policies, especially in film, television, and to a lesser degree music. Cultural industries are notable for their contribution to the wellbeing of individuals and communities. They can also contribute economically, and provide much-needed economic diversification.

We promised to identify policies that could help other provinces and communities build on their cultural strengths – music, theatre, film and television, literature, food, heritage, natural setting and other community resources – to diversify economies and create jobs.

What we delivered

Our project became more narrowed in scope, and specific to Alberta, to investigate opportunities for non-traditional media and cultural business models. We asked questions such as: Can the unique success of CKUA radio in Alberta and TVOntario in Ontario offer lessons for expanding non-traditional media video opportunities into economic contribution?

- We delivered a report (unpublished) to the Government of Alberta, which included data from Statistics Canada released on February 27. We assessed the opportunities in several sectors on the basis of size (measured by jobs), and growth opportunities and impact (measured on a 10-point scale based on our analysis of a variety of sources).
- 3 op-eds.

What it means for Canada's West

Alberta has long recognized the need to diversify its economy. But some efforts have been less than successful – indeed, some have been very costly. Alberta needs options for economic diversification that will really result in net positive return to the province. It is critical to have research and evidence that supports these efforts. We provided independent assessment of the opportunities in the cultural industries for diversification of the Alberta economy.

