



## **Large Business Attraction and Expansion**

Monday, October 30, 2017

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation

4261 Highway 53 South

Eveleth, MN 55734

### **AGENDA**

1. **Introductions and General Discussion**
  - A. Committee Member Updates
  - B. New Business/Additional Agenda Items
  
2. **Review of Regional Labor Study Request for Proposals**
  
3. **Business Retention & Expansion Visits**
  - A. Company Selection for Visits
  - B. Teams
  - C. Scheduling/Process
  
4. **Other Discussion Items**
  
5. **Set Next Meeting**

**Large Business Expansion & Attraction**  
**October 30, 2017**  
**Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation**  
**1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

**In Attendance:** Curt Antilla, Arik Forsman, Doug Learmont, Barb Fivecoate, Scott Sundvall, Shannon Kendall, Joni Dahl, Brian Hanson, Steve Giorgi, Sandy Bryant, Mary Finnegan, Brad Brzezinski and Sara Ferkul

Brian gave a background on the Recharge the Range events. We also had a brief discussion about the groups focus.

We started the meeting with a general discussion with any member updates.

**Skills Assessment**

We discussed the possibility of a Regional Workforce Skills Assessment. APEX has already created a request for proposal. There have been studies that have been completed in the past, however, it has been a while since one was completed. There have been organizations that have showed interest in being a part of the assessment. APEX has already agreed to put \$25,000 in for the assessment. Once the RFP goes out and a company is chosen we will have a final cost and we will work to make up the remaining costs.

We are looking for a company that will also be able to assess the data that is collected and offer long term strategies.

**BR & E Visits**

The group decided to conduct 10 business visits. The companies chosen and the group members that volunteered to make these visits are:

Hibbing Fabricators – Brian Hanson, Scott Sundvall and Brad Brzezinski  
Iracore – Scott Sundvall, Brad Brzezinski and Arik Forsman  
Delta Air Lines – Mary Finnegan and Barb Fivecoate  
Delta Dental – Mary Finnegan and Barb Fivecoate  
DMR/Detroit Diesel – Arik Forsman and Joni Dahl  
MDI – Tamara (APEX), Scott Sundvall and Mary Finnegan  
MN Twist Drill – Steve Giorgi, Brad Brzezinski and Joni Dahl  
NTS (Northern Technical Services) – Barb Fivecoate, Arik Forsman and Steve Giorgi  
Floe International – Curt Antilla and Brad Brzezinski

We will be using the Grow Minnesota template for questions. The group was asked to review the questions and we can adjust depending on the company. Mary would like to add a diversity question to the template. She will be compiling a couple different question options for the questionnaire. The group would also like to add a question about the thoughts of automation.

It was also discussed that the questions should be sent to companies prior to the interview. This will give them the chance to bring the correct people to the table so we can get the best information. It was also mentioned that because we are following the MN Grow template that we should reach out to each chamber when visiting the businesses. Most chambers would like to be a part of the visit.

**Next Meeting:**

December 13, 2017

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation

# Regional Workforce Skills Assessment NE MN & NW WI Request for Proposals (RFP)

## **SECTION I: Introduction**

Low unemployment levels, severe anticipated retirement rates, and aggressive workforce demand have together created momentum in our region of northeast Minnesota and northwest Wisconsin to better understand and continue to close the gaps between available positions and qualified workers.

This large, diverse region includes 10 counties in two states. As such, there are several distinct sub-regions, and many workforce development partners. This assessment will help identify both opportunities and challenges of our regional labor market, aggregating regional data where helpful.

## **SECTION II: Background**

APEX along with our regional economic and workforce development partners (Regional Workforce Study Team or RWST) seek a contractor to frame the advantages, opportunities, and challenges of our regional workforce landscape in terms that private industry, academia, and site selection consultants will find credible. This comprehensive labor study (Project) will be used as an economic development tool to enhance our region's ability to:

1. Attract new and retain existing workforce
2. Attract new and expand existing businesses
3. Attract new investment to the region
4. Support existing career pathways programs and identify new opportunities for more workers to earn family sustaining wages.

To support a collaborative approach in partnership with regional entities, the information produced from this Request for Proposals (RFP) will inform future decisions and processes for policy makers, educators, and industry leaders.

Desirable outcomes to be achieved through the Project include:

- New workforce training opportunities, programs, and approaches are developed
- Information is provided to drive effective public policy decisions
- New industries are identified and pursued
- Regional workforce participation increases
- Regional unemployment rates decrease
- Average regional wages increase
- High School graduation rates increase

## DRAFT 2

To achieve the above items, we are seeking consideration of the following Components:

- A. Workforce Availability & Skillset Analysis
- B. Employer Demand & Needs Analysis
- C. Workforce Strategies

### SECTION III: Scope of Work

Information collected on the workforce and labor market will be limited to the ten county APEX Region of Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and St. Louis Counties of Minnesota and Ashland, Bayfield, and Douglas Counties of Wisconsin.

#### A. Workforce Availability & Skillset Analysis

This Component will focus on evaluating current employee skillsets and demographic data that will help identify future needs and drive effective workforce strategies. The Project will develop a profile of the present and available workforce, taking into account projected changes. An analysis of the current workforce skillsets / capabilities will be essential to determining industry target viability.

1. Analysis of current and future workforce including:
  - a. Overall analysis and profile of the workforce and employment base.
  - b. The skillsets of the people who work in current industries.
  - c. Occupations, wage requirements, education/experience levels of current workforce.
  - d. Participation rates and trends, noting causality for non-participants (i.e. available labor force), including teenagers and retirees.
2. Demographic and geographic location of the labor/workforce
  - a. Demographic characteristics (i.e. age, gender, race).
  - b. Job longevity and job change inducements.
  - c. Travel and commute patterns.
  - d. Characteristics of the labor force, including employment status (i.e. full time, part time, temporary, contract), retirement projections, and turn over.
  - e. Barriers to employment or full employment.
  - f. Access to training other workforce development opportunities.

The consultant will consider opportunities to house individual labor force employment profiles on a live (updateable) platform, such as northforce.org.

#### B. Employer Demand & Needs Analysis

This Component will identify occupational and workforce needs of the existing and future industries. This analysis must identify the competencies that are critical to successful job performance, along with shifts in occupational functions where changes might have a significant impact on the workforce needs in the future. Consultant will work closely with the RWST in suggesting both existing industry growth opportunities and projected regional growth industries for our future.

## DRAFT 2

1. Analysis of the occupational and workforce needs of existing industries:
  - a. Assess existing industry occupational structure, skillset requirements, wage levels and future needs.
  - b. Identify positions where skillsets are not in balance with employer demand / expectations.
  - c. Identify positions where regional wages offered are not in balance with national averages / employee expectations.
2. Analysis of projected regional growth industries for our future:
  - a. Provide a projection of potential new regional industry opportunities, including the skillsets needed, and wages anticipated.
  - b. Inform industry targeting efforts with existing skillset data.
3. Analyze workforce retention / recruitment / attraction efforts and enhance effectiveness to support existing and future industries.

### C. Workforce Strategies

Workforce Strategies will synthesize the learnings from Workforce Availability & Skills and Employer Demand & Needs and formulate solutions to help develop skillsets and encourage a fully engaged regional labor force. The consultant will highlight specific regional workforce issues, and suggest both broad strategies and specific action items to address the issues. Specific areas of interest likely to be addressed include:

1. Barriers to employment or full employment.
2. Skills gap vs. wage gap.
3. Available and underemployed members of the workforce.
4. Current and prospective employee's ability and willingness to change employment or become employed.
5. Specific career pathways in new and existing industries.
6. Opportunities to leverage public, private, and nonprofit resources to implement strategies.
7. Communications strategies to inform individuals, families, educators, guidance and career counselors, and employers.

### SECTION IV: Eligible Respondents

Public, for-profit, and non-profit organizations (Applicants) are invited to submit proposals. All Applicants must demonstrate experience, capacity and commitment to perform the activities required.

### SECTION V: Submission of Proposals

The deadline for submission of proposals is \_\_\_\_\_. Proposals must be submitted electronically to Brian Hanson at [brian@apexgetsbusiness.com](mailto:brian@apexgetsbusiness.com).

## DRAFT 2

### SECTION VI: Submission Requirements

Please submit a Project proposal which includes the following:

- Summary description of your firm
- List of Project staff members including names, titles and qualifications
- List of similar projects previously completed, including references
- Proposed partners or subcontractor organizations including names, titles and qualifications
- Work Plan describing how the requirements listed in the SCOPE OF WORK will be satisfied. The work plan should describe the planned Project schedule and discrete tasks by Component:
  - Activity / Task; Staffing; Deliverables; & Budget breakdown
- Timeline including the following Sessions:
  - Kick-off Session with Regional Workforce Study Team (In-person)
  - Progress Session upon completion of SCOPE OF WORK Components A & B (In-person)
  - Progress Session upon completion of SCOPE OF WORK Component C (Teleconference)
  - Final Report Session and Celebration (In-person)
- Expected payment timing, terms and conditions, directly tied to completion of the Deliverables and Sessions described in the Work Plan and Timeline.

Questions about the proposal or process should be directed in writing to Brian Hanson at [brian@apexgetsbusiness.com](mailto:brian@apexgetsbusiness.com). Frequently asked questions may be grouped and answered electronically, if required.

### SECTION VII: Selection Criteria

All proposals will be evaluated by a group representing the RWST based on experience, qualifications, proposed cost, and timeline. Teaming is permissible, but the contract will be with one Applicant. Upon receipt and review of the proposals, finalists will be selected and interviews may be conducted.

### SECTION VIII: Reserved Rights

The Regional Workforce Study Team reserves the right to perform any or all of the following actions in order to obtain the best possible work product for the good of the APEX region:

- Cancel, modify or terminate this Request for Proposals at any time and for any reason
- Reject any or all proposals or any part or provision thereof
- Waive any informalities or irregularities
- Investigate the qualifications and experience of any Applicant
- Select the proposal deemed to be in the best interest of the Project, regardless of cost
- Make decisions in a manner that is in the best interests of the Regional Workforce Study Team
- Negotiate the details of the completion of the SCOPE OF WORK with the Applicants

This RFP does not commit the Regional Workforce Study Team, or any of its individual members to award a contract or to pay any costs incurred by any Applicant in the preparation of a proposal.

**Recharge The Range – Large Business – Potential List of BRE Visits 2017-18**

Arrowhead Fulfillment	Gemini Sport Marketing
ASV, Inc./Terex	Hibbing Fabricators, Inc.
Blue Cross Blue Shield of MN (Aurora Office)	Iracore Int'l. (f/k/a Industrial Rubber Products)
Blue Cross Blue Shield of MN (Virginia Office)	Lonza, Inc. (fka Larex, Inc.)
Cast Corporation	Minnesota Diversified Ind - Grand Rapids
Conveyer Belt Service, Inc.	Minnesota Diversified Ind - Hibbing
Delta Airlines (f/k/a/Northwest Airlines)	Minnesota Twist Drill
Delta Dental Plan of MN (aka DeCare Dental)	Rapids Hydraulic and Machine, Inc.
DMR Electronics/Detroit Diesel, Inc.	Team Fast, Inc.
Floe International	Techgenics Inc. (dba CrossUSA)
Furin & Shea	Woodline Manufacturing

Do all of these have 25 people?

All still in business?

Are all of these located in the “core” Recharge area? Does that matter?

Who is missing?

Utilities

Mines

Paper



## 1 CONTACT INFORMATION

Date		Interviewers	
Company Name		Contact Name	
Phone #		Title	
Address		Email	
		Chamber Member?	

## 2 COMPANY OVERVIEW

1. What does your company do and how is it changing?
2. **Has ownership/management changed in the last year?**
3. **What is the primary business sector?**
4. Years in business?
5. Company structure?

## 3 INVESTMENTS / FACILITIES / EXPANSION PLANS

1. Did you make any capital investments in the last year? Y/N. Describe?
2. **Do you have any new investment plans for the next year? Describe?**
3. **Is your facility owned or leased?**

4. Do your current facilities meet your needs?
5. What factors would make you consider moving operations to another area? If any, where?
6. What are the biggest threats to a healthy industry sector in our region?

#### 4 PRODUCTS/SERVICES

1. What are your primary products or services? What is special/unique about them?
2. **Has your company created new products or services in the last year? Do you plan to create any in the next year?**
3. Is there new technology that will substantially change your primary product or production?
4. As a percentage of sales, how much does the company spend on R&D?

#### 5 WORKFORCE

1. **What was your total employment in the last year? (FT, PT, & Seasonal)**
2. **Was there a change in the number of jobs in the past year?\* By how many?**
3. **Is the number of jobs expected to change in the next year?**
4. Can you find adequately trained workers?
5. What percent of your workforce lives within 50 miles of your location?
6. Do you use NORTHFORCE as a hiring tool? Are there other places you are looking for workers?

## 6 MARKET INFORMATION - CUSTOMERS

1. **Where is your primary market? Do you export?**
2. Is your target market growing?
3. Are you seeing growth in your company? Are there any barriers for your company to grow and expand in the region?
4. What trends do you see as important for your industry in the next 3-5 years?

## 7 COMPETITOR INFORMATION

1. Who are your competitors?
2. Where are they located and how is this changing?

## 8 SUPPLIERS

1. Tell us about your suppliers and customers.
2. Are any of your inputs (raw materials used in your production process) purchased within 50 miles of your location? Please Describe.
3. Are there any inputs you would like to buy locally but cannot? Please Describe.
4. Do you feel any of your suppliers are positioned now or could be positioned in the future to expand by adding an additional location in this area, therefore, benefitting both your business and theirs?

## 9 PUBLIC POLICY

1. What Local legislation are you tracking?
2. What State legislation are you tracking?
3. What Federal legislation are you tracking?
4. What state or local policies create the largest opportunities or challenges to your business?
5. Are there any specific problems or opportunities that we can help you solve or explore?

## 10 COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES /CHALLENGES

1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of doing business in this community?

## 11 ASSISTANCE

1. Are there any other retention/ issues that we can help you solve or explore?
2. **Does the company require any follow-up?**