



Labour Market Monitor

Halifax



September, 2011

The Labour Market Monitor is a monthly report providing a summary of labour market news events for the Halifax Region.

The Halifax Region includes all of Halifax County.

GENERAL EVENTS

LABOUR MARKET NEWS BY INDUSTRY

Mining and Oil and Gas Extraction

British Columbia mining company Selwyn Resources Ltd (www.selwynresources.com) has completed its acquisition of the **ScoZinc Inc.** mine in Gays River from Acadian Mining Group of Halifax. Selwyn is in the process of arranging debt financing and is waiting for provincial environmental approvals needed to restart the lead and zinc mine which hasn't been operational since 2009. There are 25 workers at the site removing water from the pit and refurbishing the mill, According to Selwyn's CEO, the mine should be operational in April 2012 and will employ about 120 people at that time. (Chronicle-Herald, Sept.1)

Construction

Two major port construction projects are taking place in Halifax. A \$73-million project by **S.E.McNally Construction** at Richmond Terminals involves the building and reinforcing of piers, structures and the addition

of a new road and rail tracks, and will continue until late 2013. A \$35-million expansion of Halterm's south end container terminal by **Dexter Construction Company Ltd.** is scheduled for completion in late 2012. The projects are jointly funded by the federal government and the port authority, and are part of the Gateway initiative announced in 2009. (Chronicle-Herald, Sept. 12)

Multi-residential apartment construction remains strong in the area, while single-housing starts are slow. Before the end of 2011, **WM Apartments** will begin the second of its two apartment buildings in the Mount Royale subdivision. The company has received approval for a residential apartment development at 249 Windmill Road, Dartmouth and wants to transform a strip mall on Young Street, Halifax into an apartment tower complex. **Dexel Developments** is building an apartment building above Pete's Frootique in downtown Halifax. (Chronicle-Herald, Sept. 29)

Westwood Developments Ltd. plans to begin construction in October, 2011 of two commercial buildings on the former Mazda dealership lot on Portland Street in Dartmouth. The project is expected to end in May, 2012. Tenants have not been announced. Also, **Eurofax Properties** has a plan, still in the preliminary stages, to add additional stories to the former Bay building on Chebucto Road in Halifax. (Chronicle-Herald, Sept. 30)

Regional council has approved a \$2.3-million expansion for the **North Preston Community Centre**. RCMP offices, additional activity rooms, and more washrooms will be added. (Chronicle-Herald, Sept. 21)

Regional council has awarded a contract to **Dexter Construction** to complete the transition of the long-track oval from the 2011 Canada Winter Games to a permanent outdoor rink at the Halifax Commons. It is hoped to have the work finished in time for skating at Christmas. (Chronicle-Herald, Sept. 30)

Manufacturing

A number of employers and the Nova Scotia government have contributed cash and equipment to double the number of seats from 20 to 40 for metal fabrication students at the Nova Scotia Community College. The students are split between Dartmouth and Sydney. Large employers in the Halifax area, such as **Cherubini Metal Works and the Irving Shipyard**, are supporters of the decision to train more fabricators, although work force needs are sometimes unpredictable due to contract uncertainty and the number of retirements. (Chronicle-Herald, Sept. 20)

Trade

Steel Subaru is constructing a new central dealership which will jointly house Subaru of Halifax and Steel Subaru of Dartmouth near the Windsor Street interchange at the foot of Kempt Road in Halifax. The new facility will open in January, 2012. There could be some additional hires to the 35 to 40 people expected to work there. (Chronicle-Herald, Sept. 2)

The **Zellers** store in the Colby Village Shopping Centre in Cole Harbour will become a **Walmart** by late 2012. The store is one of three former Zellers operations in Nova Scotia and 39 in Canada purchased by Walmart. (Chronicle-Herald, Sept. 24)

The Downsview Motel in Sackville is being demolished to make room for a new **Lawtons Drugs**. (Chronicle-Herald, Sept. 8)

Transportation and Warehousing

French shipping giant CMA CGM has decided to temporarily suspend direct calls to the **Port of Halifax** (www.portofhalifax.ca), citing market demands as the reason. According to a recent industry analysis by Drewry Shipping Consultants, declining North American container traffic, slowing demand for retail merchandise, and deteriorating freight rates have led to the removal of some shipping services. Halterm's (www.halterm.com) president stated that the loss of the client was unfortunate, but only comprised a very small part of the terminal's business. (Chronicle-Herald, Sept.1)

Canada's third largest scheduled carrier, **Porter Airlines**, (www.flyporter.com) has opened a crew base for pilots and flight attendants in Halifax which will double the number of local employees from 40 to 80. The crew base is the first to be added outside the airline's Toronto headquarters and staffing will involve some transfer of personnel and possible new hiring. Current Halifax employees also include customer service, ground handling and maintenance personnel. (Chronicle-Herald, Sept. 8).

Information and Culture

Moncton-based **PostMan Post-Production Studio** (www.thepostman.tv) will open a new studio in the Freemason's Building in downtown Halifax, following a merger with Dartmouth-based EditFarm. The merged company will use the Postman name, however EditFarm's four employees will be retained at the new 4,000-square-foot studio. According to the company's vice-president, the merger combines EditFarm's creative editors, animators and digital compositors with PostMan's technical expertise. Overall the company will employ six to eight people, but additional staff may be required as projects dictate. (Chronicle-Herald, Sept.1)

SoundSchool! is a new Halifax school which will provide short courses in sound recording geared towards singer-songwriters and home recordists. It will operate out of **SoundMarket Recording Studio** at 6050 Almon Street, Halifax. . (Chronicle-Herald, Sept.29)

Finance and Insurance

Insurance company **Admiral Group** (www.admiralcanada.ca) will move from Bayers Road to a larger space in the West End Mall in Halifax, to allow for continued growth. The company has gone from 21 to 400 local employees since setting up shop here in 2007 and plans on adding more staff as the business grows. Most of the local workers deal over the telephone with clients in the United Kingdom (where the company is based). Starting salaries last year were \$24,000 per year. (Chronicle-Herald, Sept.29)

Professional and Scientific

Projex (www.projex.ca), an engineering company based in Alberta, intends to hire 15 engineers, designers, and technicians to work in its Bayers Road offices in Halifax in the fall of 2011. The workers will support clients in the Alberta oil patch. By the end of 2012, the company expects to have 50 to 200 employees on its Halifax payroll. (Chronicle-Herald, Sept.14)

GoInstant (<http://goinstant.com>), a Halifax developer of shared web browsing technology, will increase its workforce on Barrington Street from seven to 15. The company has benefitted from recent venture capital from Silicon Valley investors as well as from the provincial government support agency Innovacorp. (Chronicle-Herald, Sept.15)

A Quiet Revolution (www.aquietrevolution.com) is a new Halifax technology consulting company which is designed to help businesses capitalize on the world of social media. (Chronicle-Herald, Sept.29)

Atlantis Systems Corp. (www.atlantissi.com), which does simulation and training for the military, is shifting its headquarters from Ontario to the same building in Burnside which houses its subsidiary, **Atlantis Systems Eduplus**. About 10 people will make the move, which includes the accounting and legal operations. The number of workers at Atlantis Systems Eduplus locally has gone from about 30 to 100 in the last 20 months. The company hopes to triple employment to 300 in this province within three years, and also to hopefully have better luck finding government financial support. (Chronicle-Herald, Sept.21)

Education

Employees of the **Nova Scotia Community College** represented by local 267 of the Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union have voted 70 percent in favour of a new, two-year contract. The agreement, running from April 2010 to March 2012, will include one percent wage increases per year, and improvements in shift premiums, professional development, bereavement leave, and severance pay. The 589 employees include those working in various administrative and general support positions. (Halifax Metro, Sept.21)

Arts and Recreation

Palooka's Boxing Club on Gottingen Street in Halifax will close its doors at the end of September, 2011. The club had opened in 2008 to provide free and accessible boxing and martial arts programs for at-risk youth, but the owner said operating the club proved too costly for the number of participants. Eight employees will be affected by the closure. (Chronicle-Herald, Sept.9)

A **GoodLife** (www.goodlifefitness.com) fitness centre has opened at 41 Peakview Way in Bedford. It is the 16th Nova Scotia outlet for GoodLife, which bought 23 fitness clubs in the Atlantic region in 2009. The chain opened a new club at the Penhorn Plaza in Dartmouth earlier this year.(Chronicle-Herald, Sept.23)

Accommodation and Food Services

A **KFC** restaurant on Herring Cove Road in Spryfield has closed after more than 50 years in business.(Chronicle-Herald, Sept.30)

Public Administration

Five non-union, mid-level managers employed by the **Halifax Regional Municipality** were laid off as part of an internal reorganization in September. (Chronicle-Herald, Sept.9)

Snow clearing in some areas of the Halifax Regional Municipality will be outsourced to multiple contractors as part of a two-year trial. According to staff, there will be no municipal layoffs as a result, but some seasonal workers will not be brought back. (Halifax Metro, Sept.28)

Economic Conditions

The minimum wage in Nova Scotia will rise from \$9.65 to \$10 an hour on October 1, 2011. Minimum wage for workers on a three-month probationary period will rise from \$9.15 to \$9.65 an hour. Beginning next year, the minimum wage will be increased annually based on inflation and will also be indexed to the low-income cutoff rate. (Halifax Metro, Sept.27)

***Note:** In preparing this document, the authors have taken care to provide clients with labour market information from reliable sources that is timely and accurate at the time of publication. Since labour market conditions are dynamic, some of the information presented here may have changed since this document was published. Users are encouraged to also refer to other sources for additional information on the local economy and labour market. Information contained in this document does not necessarily reflect official policies of the department.*

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