

Bathurst call centre gets \$1.5M boost

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Employment: Mayor says having business downtown will help revitalize city

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A Bathurst business has received \$1.5 million in government funding to help establish a customer contact centre.

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James Mallory/Northern Light Photo

Economic Development Minister Paul Robichaud announces \$1.5 million in government funding Tuesday to help establish the Aditya Birla Minacs contact centre in Bathurst. Photo: James Mallory/Canadaeast News Service

The provincial government is providing \$1.2 million in payroll rebates to create 200 new positions at Aditya Birla Minacs. The Regional Development Corporation is providing \$300,000 to assist in capital expenditures to establish the centre.

Economic Development Minister Paul Robichaud made the announcement Tuesday at the Aditya Birla Minacs site on King Avenue in Bathurst.

"Fostering strategic employment growth and providing development capital support are action items in our plan for economic development and innovation in northern New Brunswick," Robichaud said.

"New Brunswick has the necessary infrastructure and low business costs to support the growth that the contact centre industry requires. We are also home to a loyal, highly educated and bilingual workforce. All of these factors combined make New Brunswick an attractive location for new and existing businesses."

Aditya Birla Minacs is a business solutions company that partners with global corporations in the manufacturing, retail, telecom, technology, media and entertainment, banking, insurance, health care and public sectors. The company currently has 600 full-time employees at its contact centre in Riverview.

"The people (who) are going to be working for you are not just from Bathurst - they're from all over the region," said Bathurst Mayor Stephen Brunet. "It's businesses like (Aditya Birla Minacs) which are very important. I know this is a very small part of your portfolio and to have you here in Bathurst is a great honour for us."

Mayor Brunet said having a business based in downtown Bathurst will help revitalize this part of the city.

"These people who are working in downtown Bathurst would probably like to live in downtown Bathurst. For me, that's a challenge to provide a good quality of life for the people who work here and that infrastructure we can help put in place with the three levels of government."

The contact centre in Bathurst has been in operation since October. There are currently about 120 employees hired. Gus Gikas, vice-president of operations for Aditya Birla Minacs, said he was impressed that the site was ready for business in less than 45 days.

"To launch a new facility, especially under very aggressive time lines, is no easy feat," he said.

"Many people have had their share in planning and building of this facility. The team that has been on the ground, the folks we have used to come in town to help put this site together have done an impeccable job."

Gikas said his company looks forward to growing its business in Bathurst and becoming a fixture in the city.

"There's a saying that it takes a village to raise a child and the same applies to a growing business. For us, at Minacs, it's always about partnerships - partnerships between ourselves and the community, partnerships between our management team and staff, and partnerships between our company and clients."

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