ALGOMA WORKFORCE INVESTMENT CORPORATION

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND JOB VACANCIES

ALGOMA

FEDERATION OF NORTHERN ONTARIO MUNICIPALITIES

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FEDERATION OF NORTHERN MUNICIPALITIES – WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND JOB VACANCIES | Algoma

PURPOSE OF THE SURVEY

In the spring of 2026, the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM) partnered with the four Northeastern Ontario Workforce Planning Boards on an initiative to better understand the workforce challenges facing municipalities across the region.

The survey was designed to gather practical, on-the-ground information about municipal recruitment and retention, hard-to-fill positions, succession planning, skills shortages, and the broader pressures affecting communities' ability to attract and retain skilled workers. The findings aim to provide a clearer picture of municipal workforce needs and help identify opportunities for collaboration, workforce planning, and targeted supports.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

A total of 61 responses were received from municipalities across Northern Ontario. Across the full survey, there were seven instances in which two individuals responded from the same municipality and one instance in which three individuals responded from the same municipality.

This report focuses on responses from Algoma District, which accounted for 12 responses representing 11 distinct municipalities. All responses were retained in the analysis, as it was not possible to determine which response best represented a municipality when multiple submissions were received.

Ideally, duplicate responses would be removed to avoid giving greater weight to municipalities that submitted more than one response. However, removing duplicate responses would require deciding which submission to retain, and there was no reliable way to determine which response was the most accurate. Each respondent was considered a key informant with relevant knowledge of municipal workforce conditions. Retaining all responses allowed the analysis to incorporate the perspectives provided by each respondent, while recognizing that municipalities with multiple responses may have greater representation in the results.

Where appropriate, the Algoma findings are compared with responses from municipalities across Northern Ontario outside of Algoma to provide a broader regional context.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Municipalities across Algoma District face challenges attracting, recruiting and retaining qualified employees. The Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM) Workforce Development and Job Vacancies survey received 61 responses from across Northeastern Ontario, including 12 responses representing 11 Algoma municipalities.

This report examines the Algoma-specific findings, highlighting recruitment and retention challenges, hard-to-fill positions, skills gaps and competition for workers. The results reflect participating municipalities' experiences and identify opportunities to strengthen municipal workforce capacity across the district.

Key Findings

- **Recruitment and vacancy duration:** Two-thirds (67%) of Algoma respondents reported difficulty attracting qualified candidates, while another 25% experienced difficulty filling certain positions. Among respondents who selected a specific vacancy duration, 57% of Algoma respondents reported vacancies lasting three to six months, compared with 17% elsewhere in Northern Ontario.
- **Hard-to-fill positions and skills gaps:** Finance was the most frequently identified hard-to-fill area, followed by senior management and by-law enforcement. Leadership and management were the leading identified skills gap in Algoma, reported by 36% of respondents, highlighting the importance of leadership development, training and succession planning.
- **Industry competition and compensation:** Mining was the most frequently identified competing industry in Algoma. Among respondents who identified positions affected by salary competition with mining, 58% named public works, roads or grader operators. Although 91% of Algoma respondents reported increasing salaries or adjusting pay scales to remain competitive, municipalities continue to face pressure to balance compensation with budget limitations.
- **Geography and retention:** Respondents identified limited local labour pools, challenges attracting people to northern and rural communities, competitive wages and employee retention as ongoing concerns. Comments also highlighted relocation and housing barriers, the demands placed on small teams and the importance of positive workplace environments.
- **Opportunities for support:** A centralized job-posting platform was the most frequently selected FONOM support option in Algoma, identified by 36% of respondents. Other priorities raised included training and skills development, succession planning, relocation and housing supports, and funding to address workforce challenges.

The findings indicate that Algoma's municipal workforce challenges are interconnected. Limited candidate pools, competition from other industries and geographic barriers can contribute to longer vacancies and added pressure on existing staff. Addressing these challenges will require more than recruitment advertising alone.

Practical opportunities include improving the visibility of municipal career opportunities, sharing recruitment practices, strengthening leadership development and succession planning, and expanding access to relevant training. Exploring approaches to compensation, relocation and housing may also help municipalities attract and retain qualified employees.

Overall, the survey provides a useful snapshot of workforce challenges reported by participating Algoma municipalities. The findings highlight the value of coordinated, practical approaches to recruitment, retention and workforce development to support municipal operations and long-term community capacity.

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Table 1 shows the distribution of survey respondents by size of municipality, both the number and the percentage distribution for each sample (the Rest is the full survey responses minus the Algoma respondents).

Table 1: Survey respondents by municipality population, Algoma and the Rest

	Algoma		Rest	
Municipal population	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
Under 1,000	4	18	33%	37%
1,000-5,000	7	21	58%	43%
5,000-10,000	0	6	0%	12%
10,000-50,000	0	1	0%	2%
50,000 plus	1	3	8%	6%

For both Algoma and the rest of the respondents, small municipalities (under 5,000 population) make up most of the responses, with municipalities with 1,000-5,000 population outnumbering those with under 1,000. In the case of Algoma, there was one respondent with a population of over 50,000 residents.

NUMBER AND TYPE OF EMPLOYEES

Respondents were asked to provide their staffing numbers by different categories of employees. Table 2 provides responses by different sizes of municipalities (only municipality sizes with respondents from Algoma will be compared).

Table 2: Average number of employees by employment type and by size of municipality, Algoma and the Rest

	Full-time	Part-time	Contract	Seasonal
Under 1,000				
Algoma	5	3	1	3
Rest	7	2	1	3
1,000-5,000				
Algoma	13	6	1	6
Rest	20	5	1	4
50,000 plus				
Algoma	753	405	14	140
Rest	931	456	315	135

Not surprisingly, the larger the municipality, the greater the number of employees. Some other patterns are apparent as well:

- Algoma municipalities have slightly fewer full-time employees in each size municipality, and Algoma also has a slightly higher proportion of part-time workers compared to their full-time complement; on the other hand, in their large municipality, Algoma has a far smaller proportion of casual workers as well as a smaller proportion of seasonal workers
- Small municipalities hire a proportionately larger number of seasonal employees compared to their number of full-time employees

PRESENCE OF HR STAFF

Respondents were asked whether they had a designated HR department or a dedicated staff position whose primary focus is HR (hiring, firing and so on). Table 3 presents the results by size of municipality.

Table 3: Presence of HR department or dedicated staff position, Algoma and the Rest

	HR presence		
	Yes	No	Other
Under 1,000			
Algoma	0%	100%	0%
Rest	32%	68%	0%
1,000-5,000			
Algoma	0%	75%	25%
Rest	20%	80%	0%
50,000 plus			
Algoma	100%	0%	0%
Rest	***67%***	***33%***	***0%***

Larger municipalities are much more likely than smaller municipalities to have an HR department or dedicated HR staff position. In the case of Algoma municipalities with populations of 1,000-5,000 residents, the two "Other" responses indicated that the CAO/Clerk carried out this function or that there was an HR committee comprised of the clerk and two council members.

Table 4: Presence of union, Algoma and the Rest

	Union presence	
	Yes	No
Under 1,000		
Algoma	25%	75%
Rest	44%	56%
1,000-5,000		
Algoma	43%	57%
Rest	43%	57%
50,000 plus		
Algoma	100%	0%
Rest	100%	0%

Unions are present among all respondent municipalities with 50,000 or more residents. They are also present in four out of ten smaller municipalities (under 5,000 residents), except for Algoma, where only a quarter (25%) of respondents with under 1,000 residents reported having a union.

JOB VACANCIES AND JOB CANDIDATE RECRUITMENT

Respondents were asked how many municipal staff positions were vacant at the time the survey was being completed, as well as the nature of the position. The average responses are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Average number of job vacancies, by type of position and by size of municipality, Algoma

	Union Positions	Non-Union Positions	Skilled Trades	Permanent	Temporary	Professional
Under 1,000	0.5	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.0
1,000-5,000	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1
50,000 plus	27.0	3.0	5.0	25.0	5.0	21.0

For the small municipalities, where there are fewer staff and fewer vacancies, the randomness of when those vacancies arise is serendipitous. With a very small sample size, these average responses can only tell us about the situation at the moment of when the survey was administered but likely do not give much insight into the pattern of job vacancies over time.

DURATION OF JOB VACANCIES

Respondents were asked how long job vacancies remained unfilled. The responses for all Algoma municipalities and the Rest are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Duration of job postings by size of municipality, Algoma and the Rest

	Algoma	The Rest
Less than 1 month	17%	32%
1-3 months	8%	21%
3-6 months	17%	4%
More than 6 months	0%	6%
More than 1 year	17%	0%
None of the above	17%	23%
Other	25%	13%

There is a difference between the responses from Algoma and the Rest: among Algoma respondents providing a duration estimate, slightly more than half say it is three months or more, while among the Rest, over 80% say it is three months or less. It would appear that job postings stay active longer in Algoma. Under the ”Other” category, respondents are inclined to say that it depends on the position, while a few state that some positions are permanently posted (the example given was lifeguards and temporary front desk clerks).

One can compare those answers that selected a specific time frame to the available data on duration of job vacancies, available through the Job Vacancy and Wage Survey. Table 7 compares the results. The Job Vacancy and Wage Survey data represents the average duration over the last five reported quarters for all Ontario. It is

striking that the values for the entire FONOM (1st column) survey are virtually identical to the Ontario figures (4th column). The percentages in Table 7 are different from the ones in Table 6 because the proportions represent only those that provided a duration figure (that is, does not include "None of the above" or "Other" responses in the calculation).

Table 7: Reported duration of job postings, FONOM survey and Ontario data

	ALL FONOM	ALGOMA FONOM	THE REST FONOM	ONTARIO
Less than 1 month	46%	29%	50%	49%
1-3 months	30%	14%	33%	29%
3-6 months	24%	57%	17%	22%

Ontario data from Statistics Canada, Table 14-10-0443-01

As one can see, the job vacancy durations are much longer in Algoma compared to the other FONOM figures, as well as to the Job Vacancy and Wage Survey results.

HARDEST TO FILL POSITIONS

Respondents were asked which positions were hardest to fill by selecting from a set of occupational categories. Table 8 shows the number of Algoma municipalities which cited each of the following positions that were suggested.

Table 8: Number of Algoma respondents identifying hardest to fill positions

POSITION	NUMBER
Finance	6
Senior Management	5
By-Law Enforcement	4
Public Works	3
Administrative/Clerical	3
Water/Wastewater	1
Fire Services	1
Recreation	1
None of the above	1
Other	4

The "Other" category consisted of: CBO/Building Inspection; Community Emergency Management Coordinator: Clerk/CAO; part time or seasonal; and skilled trades.

By way of comparison, the top five hardest-to-fill occupations for the municipalities outside Algoma were: Senior Management; Public Works; Finance; Administrative/Clerical; Water/Wastewater. Recruiting for By-law Enforcement positions appears to pose a greater challenge in Algoma than elsewhere.

For both Algoma and the Rest, recruiting for positions in fire services and recreation posed a lower level of difficulty.

IDENTIFYING AND ASSESSING RECRUITMENT METHODS

The next two questions asked about recruitment methods, firstly, about which methods were used, then about which worked best.

In asking about recruitment methods, respondents were provided with a list of the typical recruitment activities. The survey was set up in such a way that only one method could be selected. The method with the largest number of responses was "Other," where respondents were allowed to write in their response. In all instances, the answer was either that they used some multiple of these options or that they used the local employment services agency. For this reason, Table 9 illustrating the responses has labelled two "Other" selections: "Multiple/All" and "Local employment agency." The table shows the percentage of respondents which selected each option. The table is ordered from the method with the most responses to the least in Algoma.

Table 9: Recruitment methods by size of municipality, Algoma and the Rest

	Algoma	The Rest
Municipal website	42%	14%
Multiple/All	25%	31%
Other online job boards	17%	18%
Local employment agency	17%	0%
Social Media	0%	22%
Local newspapers	0%	4%
Indeed	0%	4%
Word of mouth/ community networks	0%	4%
Colleges/Universities	0%	0%
LinkedIn	0%	0%

Some respondents did specify which multiple methods they used. Among those which received many mentions were social media, job boards and the municipal website. Methods which were mentioned that were not part of the survey list included professional associations, Municipal World for management positions and local employment services offices.

Respondents were next asked which of these recruitment methods worked best. The survey asked that they write in their response. In some cases, the respondents entered two responses or provided a comment. To reflect all the input, where a response has two entries it was treated as two responses and all the answers were aggregated for all sizes of municipalities. In total, the 12 Algoma respondents provided 21 responses to this question.

Social media received five mentions, and the municipal website received four. One entry indicated that they had the most success through the Internet, which may be a catch-all for social media, on-line job boards, the municipal website, and so on. Two mentioned professional associations where there is need for municipal experience, with one specifically citing the AMCTO job board. Single mentions included: colleges and universities; employment website; Indeed (with the caution that most applications are often irrelevant); local news sites; newsletters; newspaper; on-line job boards; and recruitment agencies.

CHALLENGES RELATING TO JOB RECRUITMENT

With regards to recruitment challenges, respondents were first asked whether they had difficulty attracting qualified candidates. In the close-ended question, respondents were provided with several possible responses to choose from:

- Yes
- Yes, for some positions
- No
- None of the above
- Other (please specify)

Not one respondent chose either "none of the above" or "other," either for Algoma or for the rest of the respondents. Table 10 shows the percentage distribution for remaining responses.

Table 10: Difficulty in attracting qualified job candidates. Algoma and the Rest

	Algoma	The Rest
Yes	67%	47%
Yes, for some positions	25%	47%
No	8%	6%

Very few respondents expressed no difficulty in attracting qualified candidates. Among those that expressed a difficulty, Algoma respondents were more likely to provide an unqualified "Yes" (67%), whereas respondents from outside were equally divided by an unqualified "Yes" (47%) and "Yes, for some positions" (47%). It means that Algoma municipalities experience somewhat greater difficulty in attracting qualified job candidates.

Respondents were next asked the extent to which competition with other industry sectors impacted their ability to recruit job candidates. The answers (measured in percentages) are shown in Table 11.

Table 11: Extent to which competition with other industry sectors impacts ability to recruit, Algoma and the Rest

Algoma	The Rest
55%	54%

The level of difficulty was almost the same between Algoma municipalities and those outside Algoma; slightly over 50% can be interpreted as a moderate degree of competition from other industry sectors when recruiting job candidates.

Respondents were further asked which industries they felt they were competing with for employees. Respondents were required to write in their responses and in several cases offered two or three responses. The 11 Algoma respondents named 15 industries competing for employees. Of these, six cited mining, followed by two each from steel manufacturing, other public sector (either municipalities or another government agencies) or did not know or none. By comparison, the two top industry competitors named by the municipalities outside Algoma were other public sector (mentioned 18 times) and mining (14 mentions).

Respondents were next specifically asked which positions were most affected by salary competition with mining operations. In total, 10 respondents provided an answer (only two, or 17%, felt there was no impact):

- Seven of those ten, or 58%, named public works, roads or grader operators as positions most affected (this compares to 38% among municipalities outside Algoma)
- Two (17%) mentioned mechanics
- One each named CAO/Clerk/Treasurer and finance assistant

QUESTIONS RELATING TO WAGES, PENSION AND BENEFITS AS PART OF THE ATTRACTION PACKAGE

The next set of questions inquired about strategies relating to wages, as well as how pension and benefits may influence recruitment outcomes.

The first question asked whether the municipality had increased salaries or adjusted pay scales to remain competitive. In most cases in Algoma (91% of all respondents), they had increased salaries or adjusted pay scales (Table 12), compared to 71% in the other municipalities.

Table 12: Increasing salaries or adjusting pay scales to remain competitive, Algoma and the Rest

	Algoma	The Rest
Yes	91%	71%
Not possible within budget	0%	14%
No	9%	10%
Considering it	0%	4%

The ten Algoma municipalities that answered yes were further asked to indicate what adjustments were made. Their responses are provided in full below:

- Adjustments to senior management, but hard to adjust Public Works as they are union which trickles down to the other positions
- Alignments were made a few years back to adjust to competitive wages
- An annual increase occurs every year but three years ago there was a significant increase of 40%
- Cost of living increase as a minimum
- Council has been approving a modest increase in the pay band as a whole over the last four years
- Inflationary increases
- Pay increases to attract educated/experienced staff to meet or exceed what our neighbours offer
- Specific positions based on pay equity and market standards
- Updated salary grid considering pay equity in 2022 plus annual COLA increases
- We completed a full salary assessment including pay equity for each position we have and have extended it out nine years to cover inflation

Next, all respondents were asked whether they believed job candidates understood the value of the OMERS or municipal pension plan. The responses for Algoma and the rest are provided in Table 13.

Table 13: Job candidates' understanding of value of municipal pension plan, Algoma and the Rest

	Algoma	The Rest
Yes	27%	35%
No	46%	22%
Not certain	27%	29%
Other	0%	14%

Respondents from Algoma municipalities appear more inclined to think that job candidates do not understand the value of a municipal pension plan, with almost half (46%) holding that view, compared to one fifth (22%) among municipalities outside Algoma.

Further on the topic of pensions as part of the compensation package, respondents were asked what challenges they faced in promoting pension value to younger or mid-career applicants. The answer relied on respondents writing in their reply.

Nine Algoma respondents provided a reply. Two said the question was not applicable to them, and one said that they had no challenges. The remaining six responses are reported below:

- I think some younger individuals don't understand the difference between defined benefit and defined contribution
- They are more interested in cash in hand as compared to pension
- They are not generally interested in additional deductions or paying into a pension plan
- They aren't focused on retirement at this stage in their careers
- They do not stay; they are always looking for more money and the OMERS and benefits aren't the attraction that they used to be

Of those Algoma respondents who provided a comment, a third (33%) can be characterized as "younger workers are more interested in their immediate pay cheque." That view is much more prevalent among municipalities outside Algoma, where half (51%) expressed that opinion.

Respondents were asked how they communicated pension and benefit information to applicants. Table 14 provides the results.

Table 14: How pension and benefit information is provided to applicants, Algoma and the Rest

	Algoma	The Rest
Job posting	46%	33%
Interview stage	18%	27%
Offer letter	0%	14%
Website	0%	2%
None of the above	0%	4%
Other	36%	20%

While the percentage may differ, the ranking of how pension and benefit information is provided is similar between Algoma and the other municipalities. The most common approach is to articulate it in the job posting, followed by explaining it at the interview stage. The "Other" category always was explained as all the options or some mix of most of the options.

Finally, respondents were asked whether tools or benefits from FONOM would help better communicate about these benefits. The responses from Algoma municipalities and the rest were very similar (Table 15). Only one-quarter (27%) said yes, while two-thirds were uncertain. One possible reason for the uncertainty might be that it is unclear what that support from FONOM could look like.

Table 15: Would communication tools from FONOM help? Algoma and the Rest

	Algoma	The Rest
Yes	27%	27%
No	9%	6%
Uncertain	64%	67%

SKILL GAPS AND ADDRESSING WORKFORCE AND RECRUITMENT CHALLENGES

Respondents were asked to identify the most evident skills gap by selecting from a list of options. Table 16 presents the answers. They are listed from highest to lowest percentage response among Algoma responses.

Table 16: Most evident skills gaps, Algoma and the Rest

	Algoma	The Rest
Leadership/management	36%	17%
Skilled trades certifications	9%	17%
Soft skills (communication, reliability)	9%	13%
Heavy equipment operation	9%	11%
Regulatory/technical knowledge	0%	21%
Digital/IT skills	0%	2%
Other	27%	15%
None of the above	9%	4%

For municipalities in Algoma, one skills gap tops the list: leadership/management. For municipalities outside Algoma, three skills gaps share the top spot: regulatory/technical knowledge, leadership/management and skilled trades certifications. In Algoma, the "Other" category represents three respondents who wrote in "all of the above," which was often the case with municipalities outside Algoma as well, either writing in "all of the above" or naming two skills gaps.

Respondents were next asked what specific supports or policy changes would help their municipality address workforce challenges. The question invited respondents to write in their response. Four of the Algoma respondents did not reply to this question. One said, "I don't know." The remaining comments were as follows:

- Funding, promotion of skilled trades
- Having a place for people to stay while they work here
- Provincial policy encouraging migration to the north
- Supports with bringing training to closer locations (e.g. grader operators, winter plowing, fire fighters)
- There is no pool to draw from for those with municipal skills. There isn't a college or university program that teaches municipal policies or practices. We have to take people's skills and train them on our own
- We are a very small community. Tax base is very limited so pay is less than larger surrounding regions
- We offer a very competitive package at this time. Council has been very understanding of the consequences of attrition and the expenses involved with employee turnover

These seven comments speak to three themes: training and skills, relocation and housing, and funding and wages. These three themes are the same themes raised by municipalities outside Algoma.

Respondents were next asked what they saw as the primary barrier to successful recruitment in their municipality. Of the 12 Algoma respondents, two chose not to respond, while one said that they were not having difficulties at the present time. The remaining nine comments were:

- Location, wages, people don't know what we do; political environment and council interference can also be a large factor, especially with strong mayor powers looming
- Competitive salaries
- Isolation, limited opportunities, little to no recreation, shopping, etc. high cost of living, limited access to medical care. i.e. jobs are here, interest in moving north seems to be lacking
- Moving to a small community, competitive salary and work load since staffing is at a minimum
- Our greatest recruitment challenge is geography. As a rural Northern Ontario municipality, we face a limited local labour pool and can encounter difficulties attracting professionals from outside the area, as relocation to a small rural community may not appeal to all candidates
- Rural/Northern location, limited applicant pool, difficulty competing with private sector for positions that require designation (e.g. CPA, CBO)
- The Township faces ongoing recruitment challenges due to a limited pool of qualified local candidates, its remote location, and the difficulty of attracting individuals to relocate to the community for employment opportunities
- The wages, and Council does not understand that we are competing with the entire workforce not just other municipalities
- Wages and qualified candidates

These comments largely centre on three main themes: location and the difficulty of attracting outsiders to the North; inability to offer a wage that is either competitive or would compel a job candidate to apply for the job; and the limited pool of qualified job candidates. These are the same three themes cited by respondents in municipalities outside Algoma.

The next question asked respondents which supports from FONOM would be most helpful when recruiting qualified individuals for municipal positions. The survey offered a set of possible responses, with the results shown in Table 17, in order of the highest to lowest scores among Algoma respondents.

Table 17: Preferred supports from FONOM for recruiting qualified job candidates, Algoma and the Rest

	Algoma	The Rest
Centralized job posting platform	36%	15%
Salary benchmarking data	9%	36%
Shared HR resources	0%	9%
Recruitment best practices guide	0%	6%
Pension/benefits communication toolkit	0%	4%
Template job descriptions	0%	2%
Other	27%	23%
None of the above	27%	4%

The support which was clearly the most preferred among Algoma municipalities was a centralized job posting platform, while among municipalities elsewhere it was salary benchmarking data. After that, no single item attracted much attention, although in the case of "Other" responses, in Algoma it meant "all of the above," as was usually, but not always the case, for municipalities outside Algoma.

FINAL COMMENTS

Finally, respondents were asked if they wished to provide any further comments relating to specific workforce development challenges they are facing. Algoma respondents provided seven comments (almost as many as all the other municipalities outside Algoma), as follows:

- I am very happy to see FONOM taking this on, I am very nervous about what the future holds without some sort of change
- One of the best things our Council did years ago was set up succession planning for upcoming retirements of senior management. This has been one of the most beneficial things we could share/recommend to other municipalities. It cost more upfront but paid off in the long run
- Our biggest challenge is the limited local workforce available to fill positions, coupled with the difficulty of attracting candidates to relocate for township employment opportunities
- Retention is as much of a challenge as recruitment. Often younger people will come for a few years in order to build their resumes. The transient nature of this type of recruitment hinders a township's ability to be progressive as you are constantly changing employees, losing consistency and the ability to implement strategic priorities and long-term plans and goals
- Some councils do not adhere to their roles and are too involved in operations, which is very bad for employees and creates a toxic workplace. It leads to many other issues
- The Fire Fighter training requirement is an enormous hurdle to small towns in the North. There needs to be a rotating trainer going into small towns and providing training outside normal work hours
- We've gone through 3-4 years of recruitment challenges and as a result, we've now got a bad reputation that we will let people go shortly after they are hired. This is mostly due to people applying for jobs they felt they could be qualified for but may not have been fully honest in their skills from the beginning. The positions turn out to be more complicated than they anticipated

As was the case for respondents outside Algoma, the final comments ranged over several topics.

SUMMING UP

This analysis focused on the responses of the Algoma municipalities to the FONOM survey and in many instances, their answers were compared to those of the respondent municipalities outside Algoma. In some respects, the answers are much the same, but in other respects, especially on specific details, the responses are different.

In what ways are Algoma responses the same as other municipalities?

- Similar extent to which competition with other industry sectors impacts their ability to recruit job candidates
- Seem to find the same positions hard to fill (except for by-law enforcement, which appears harder to recruit for in Algoma)
- All areas have been increasing salaries or adjusting pay scales to be competitive when attracting or retaining employees
- Both areas desire the same supports or policy changes to address workforce challenges: training and skills, relocation and housing, and funding and wages
- Both areas see the same issues on barriers to successful recruitment: location and the difficulty of attracting outsiders to the North; inability to offer a wage that is either competitive or would compel a job candidate to apply for a position; and the limited pool of qualified job candidates

The differences between Algoma responses and those from elsewhere:

- Algoma municipalities have slightly fewer full-time employees in each size municipality and slightly higher proportion of part-time workers
- Small municipalities in Algoma are less likely to have a dedicated staff HR function compared to small municipalities elsewhere
- When comparing the smallest municipalities (less than 1,000 residents), the ones in Algoma are less likely to have a unionized workforce
- Job vacancies last longer in Algoma
- When recruiting, Algoma municipalities are more likely to use their municipal website and less likely to use social media
- Algoma municipalities expressed a higher degree of difficulty in attracting qualified job candidates
- The mining industry is named most often as a competitor for recruitment in Algoma; elsewhere, mining is second, after public sector employers
- For municipalities in Algoma, one skills gap tops the list: leadership/management; for municipalities outside Algoma, three skills gaps share the top spot: regulatory/technical knowledge, leadership/management and skilled trades certifications
- In terms of specific support from FONOM for recruiting job candidates, the most preferred option among Algoma municipalities was a centralized job posting platform, while among municipalities elsewhere it was salary benchmarking data