

School trades up in east end

La Cite Collegiale plans to welcome students to new \$18M Orleans campus by fall of 2010

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Economic development in Orleans is getting a kick start with the announcement La Cite Collegiale will build a construction trades facility which is expected to act as an eastern "gateway" into the city.

The college plans to build the \$18-million campus on 21 acres of land, worth \$1 million donated by the city, at the northwest corner of Trim Rd. and Hwy. 174. The new facility and the partnerships it will forge with the trades industry

and research community are being touted as part of continuing good economic news for the east end.

"What we are laying is the foundation for the future," said Orleans Coun. Bob Monette. "Once we build La Cite Collegiale's (campus) we will see economic development come to Orleans and we will see Orleans develop like you have never seen before."

The college is hoping to open the new campus by September 2010. It's seeking \$7 million from the province and \$5 million from the federal government. Another

\$4 million will come through fundraising, with the remainder from the college's capital reserves.

Economic spinoff

Commercial development in the area north of Hwy. 174 has been slow, but the college's proposal is a move in the right direction, said Mayor Larry O'Brien.

"We won't just be growing hay here," he said, gesturing to the empty field behind him. "We are growing part of the economic driver of the eastern part of city."

Peter Stewart, executive

director of the Orleans Chamber of Commerce, said the college is one more piece in the overall economic picture.

He noted that with a new arts centre expected to open in the spring and plans for a hotel in the approval stage at city hall, east-end businesses will begin to see the economic spinoffs from the projects.

The francophone college has been experiencing growing pains as the demand for skilled trades programs and the addition of new programs took their toll on the existing Aviation Pkwy. campus.

College president Andree

Lortie said that in the past five years demand for trades training has doubled.

The donation of the land must still be approved at the Aug. 28 city council meeting, but support was evident from east-end councillors. The city donated land earlier this year worth \$3.2 million to Algonquin College.

Lortie said there is no fear of saturating the market with skilled workers. Studies indicate that by 2015 there will be a need for about 7,000 skilled workers in Eastern Ontario.

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IN DEMAND

■ Some of the oldest baby boomers are already reaching early retirement. By 2015, 48% of the workforce will be in the 45-64 age bracket.

■ In the manufacturing sector, about 400,000 workers will be required in the next 15 years because of retirements.

■ Forty-two percent of young people 13-24 said they would be unlikely to consider a career in the skilled trades, while 26% said they would consider the option.

■ In 2004, manufacturing employed more than 1 million people in Ontario.

Source: Skills Canada
— Ontario