

Building a Stronger North

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September 2013 - Newsletter

Regional procurement database will drive revenue and job creation in northern B.C.

Supply Chain Connector to help more northern B.C. - based businesses land major contracts

Northern Development Initiative Trust, in partnership with communities throughout northern B.C., will launch this fall the Supply Chain Connector — an online procurement database that allows major industry, communities and government to quickly locate northern B.C.-based businesses to help them build major projects.

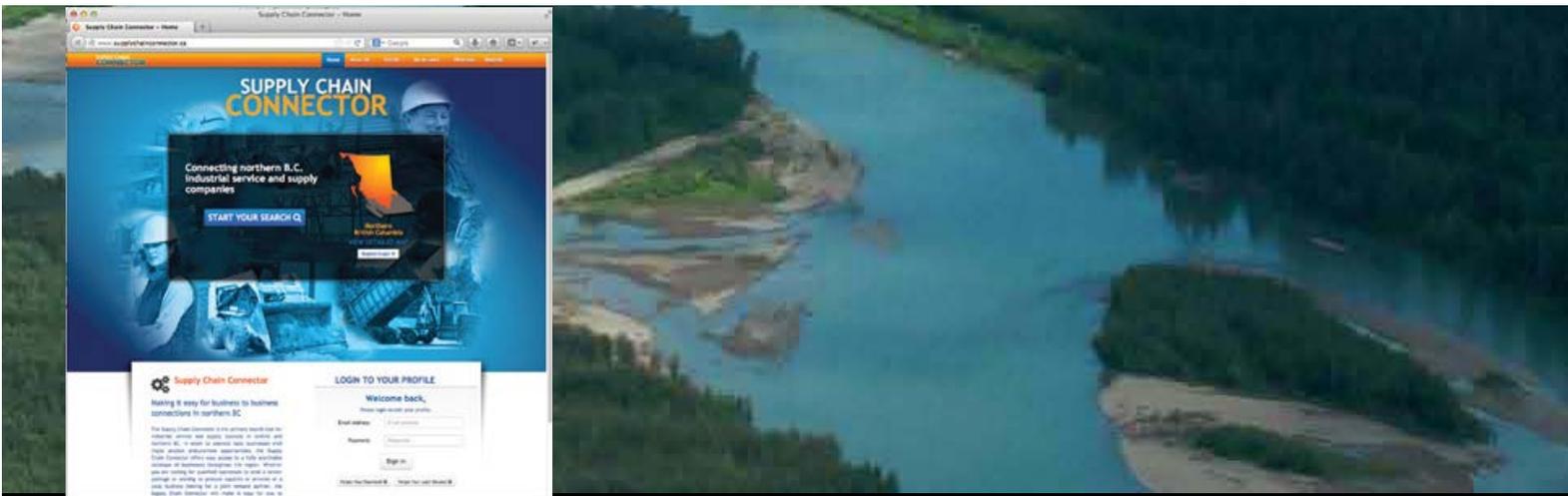
"The Supply Chain Connector will create immense value for businesses across northern B.C., which will help generate new jobs in the region," said Evan Saugstad, Chair, Northern Development Initiative Trust. "It is tools like these that set northern B.C. on the path to success." The connector means that more businesses and communities across the north can reap the benefits of major projects, generating new jobs and income for the region.

The Supply Chain Connector arrives amid a wave of more than \$70 billion in major projects proposed across northern B.C. In the past, major project proponents have awarded contracts to companies based outside of the region because they've struggled to locate northern B.C.-based businesses to carry out the work. The Supply Chain Connector adds capacity to the region to solve that problem, making it quick and easy for project proponents to locate the local expertise they need to build the mines, mills and hospitals of tomorrow, which sets northern B.C. apart from other regions across in B.C.

"Small business is the backbone of our economy, the lifeblood of communities, and the Supply Chain Connector will help small businesses in our region expand and take advantage of major projects."

Lori Ackerman
Mayor,
City of Fort St. John

"The more information that we have out there to help our local contractors, the better off we all are and that means more business for the area," said District of Port Edward Mayor Dave MacDonald. The Supply Chain Connector is a no-cost procurement database that allows industry to find business partners in the north, and those business partners to advertise their expertise at no cost. The Supply Chain Connector will launch with a database of approximately 1,500 businesses across the region that major project proponents can immediately get in touch with.



“The launch of the Supply Chain Connector is a project that all northern B.C. communities will benefit from,” said District of Mackenzie Mayor Stephanie Killam. “With this database major companies that have projects in the region will be able to quickly access contact information for local businesses.

The Supply Chain Connector builds on the previous success of northern B.C.’s regional investment portals (Invest Northwest BC, Invest North Central BC, Invest Northeast BC, Invest Cariboo-Chilcotin Coast BC), which have helped investors connect directly with communities about major investment opportunities throughout the region. “Northern Development Initiative Trust’s new Supply Chain Connector database is an exciting development for small business and industry within our region and northern B.C.,” said Cariboo Regional District Chair Al Richmond. “The Cariboo Regional District supports this initiative and I am hopeful the site will also provide awareness about the developing markets and expertise within our region. This is what building communities together truly means.” The Supply Chain Connector will be updated annually to ensure business information in the database stays current.

Businesses are also encouraged to add and update their information to the database on an ongoing basis.

[Learn More](#)

Northern Development approves \$250,000 for Haida Gwaii Higher Education Society expansion project

Program expansion will mean more hands-on community immersion experiences for university students studying resource use and management

Northern Development Initiative Trust’s board of directors have approved a \$250,000 grant to support an expansion of the Haida Gwaii Higher Education Society’s (HGHS) programs.

HGHS is an Enterprising Non-profit organization committed to delivering community-based natural resources programs to university students. Its goal is to provide world-class university-level educational opportunities inspired by the people, communities and environments of Haida Gwaii.

“The existing Haida Gwaii Higher Education Society semesters program is a key economic driver for the Village of Queen Charlotte and Haida Gwaii.”

Carol Kulesha
Mayor,
Village of Queen Charlotte

“The Haida Gwaii Higher Education Society has created world-class programming and learning opportunities for university students, which has also diversified the local economy on Haida Gwaii and supported businesses,” said Evan Saugstad, Chair, Northern Development Initiative Trust. “We are proud to support an expansion project for this unique and valuable organization.”

The funding was approved under the Trust’s Economic Diversification Infrastructure program, which provides funding to municipalities, regional districts, First Nations and non-profit organizations in Northern Development’s service area for projects that significantly strengthen the local economy via a major capital investment. This capital investment will be used to fund two new revenue-generating programs, expansion of staff capacity, professional development and the development of a pilot summer semester to be launched in 2015.

“This funding allows this worthwhile program expand its courses and the program’s economic reach to produce increased value for our region.” HGHS’ ‘Haida Gwaii Semesters’ are intensive field study resource management

programs designed for undergraduate students.

The program immerses students in the day-to-day life, culture and issues that affect Haida Gwaii and its people.

HGHES estimates that it currently injects up to \$400,000 annually into Haida Gwaii communities, a figure that they expect will increase to between \$800,000 and \$1 million in the next five years. Much of this revenue flows directly back into local businesses, organizations and community members. HGHES programs receive tremendous support, guidance and participation from the Haida people by utilizing the forests and resources to provide a holistic approach to resource use and management education.

The society aims to be at the cutting-edge of education and a leader in experiential education. In 2012, HGHES received \$4,285 through Northern Development's Marketing Initiatives Program for the Haida Gwaii Semester marketing campaign. "We are extremely grateful to Northern Development for supporting an expansion of our program offerings and capacity," said Laurel Currie, Executive Director, Haida Gwaii Higher Education Society. "We have already created a name for ourselves offering cutting-edge experiential learning programs that foster a greater understanding of responsible resource management, and this funding will help us take our programs to the next level."

Northern Development partners with six communities on "Small Town Love" buy-local program

A pilot-program has been launched to celebrate home-grown businesses to help local economies thrive

Six communities throughout central and northern British Columbia have partnered with Northern Development Initiative Trust to deliver buy-local campaigns to strengthen local businesses, local competitiveness and keep more dollars in the local economy.

"There is solid evidence that successful buy-local campaigns in smaller communities help the economy thrive," said Evan Saugstad, Chair, Northern Development Initiative Trust. "The Trust exists to serve communities throughout central and northern B.C., and we believe this pilot program celebrates and supports the growth of fantastic home-grown businesses throughout the region."

The six communities included in the pilot program are the District of Logan Lake, the District of Fort St. James, the District of 100 Mile House, the District of Vanderhoof, the Village of Valemount and the Village of Burns Lake.

Each of the six communities has a population of less than 5,000 residents.

"The Small Town Love project is a great opportunity for local businesses in Fort St. James to collaborate and promote what products and services are locally available to the community," said District of Fort St. James Mayor Rob MacDougall. "We're very excited as this helps us to build a critical awareness for community members, business and industry to highlight the benefits of shopping locally, in turn helping to strengthen the resilience of our local economy."

The pilot program is a partnership between Northern Development and entrepreneur Amy Quarry, who created and launched the original "Small Town Love" buy-local initiative in the City of Quesnel. With more than 50 local Quesnel-based businesses working collaboratively under the "Small Town Love" marketing brand, Quarry's original program was extremely well received and highly successful (one-in-five Quesnel residents now own a copy of the first "Small Town Love" guide, which sold out in less than four months).



The program is anchored by a strongly branded website with the highest quality photography, which features many independently owned local businesses.

"We are so excited to be partnering with Northern Development to bring the vision of Small Town Love to more towns in northern B.C.," said Amy Quarry, founder, Small Town Love. "Our hope is that Small Town Love can serve as a powerful reminder that B.C.'s small towns are worth visiting, living in — and investing in. Supporting local independent businesses means putting your money where your heart is."

Northern Development approves \$250,000 for Smithers New Arena

Trust board of directors backs major recreation project two decades in the making



Northern Development Initiative Trust's board of directors in July approved a \$250,000 grant to support the development of a new arena in the Town of Smithers.

The recreation facility, which has been in planning stages for two decades, will cost approximately \$4.7 million to build.

"An arena is more than just a sheet of ice. An arena is a place where people come together, an asset that builds a stronger north, and a legacy that makes Smithers a more desirable and enjoyable place to live," said Evan Saugstad, Chair, Northern Development Initiative Trust. "Northern Development is proud to partner with the great people of Smithers to support this important project — and we can't wait to see the building when it's complete."

The funding was approved under the Trust's Economic Diversification Infrastructure program, which provides funding to municipalities, regional districts, First Nations and nonprofit organizations in Northern Development's service area for projects that significantly strengthen the local economy via a major capital investment.

Past Economic Diversification Infrastructure funding projects have included a fuel station for Barkerville and Wells, the Terrace Sportsplex and Conference Facility and the Prince George Airport's runway expansion.

"The Town of Smithers is truly grateful for Northern Development's funding commitment," said Town of Smithers Mayor Taylor Bachrach. "The new arena is a big project for Smithers and this additional funding means we're one step closer to seeing this important project become a reality."

The Town of Smithers has contracted Nanaimobased C&M Developments to design and build the new arena, which will be located adjacent to the town's current area.

C&M's team of northwest B.C. contractors includes TimberPeak Construction, architect Dan Condon, Bulkley Valley Engineering Services and several other local contractors.

The existing 52-year-old Smithers arena is beyond capacity, limiting access for area residents who want to skate or play hockey. Over the past 10 years, 100% of ice time has been utilized and 95% of total ice time is during the prime-operating season. A new arena will provide much-needed additional ice capacity for all ice users. It is anticipated that, by doubling the available ice time, many existing ice users will expand their operations and new ice user groups may be formed once the new arena is built. The new arena is estimated to be complete by the end of September 2014. It will feature an NHL-sized ice surface and a first-phase seating capacity of at least 350.

Additional funding secured to date totals \$4,063,786, including \$2.35 million in provincial grants; \$650,000 in Town of Smithers borrowing; \$400,000 in Town of Smithers Land Sales Reserves, \$250,000 committed from the Aquilini Investment Group and Canucks Sport and Entertainment; \$100,000 from Pacific Inland Resources; \$50,000 from Minor Hockey and additional funds from other sources including local donations.

Message from the Chair and CEO



Evan Saugstad
Chair
Northern Development
Initiative Trust



Janine North
Chief Executive Officer
Northern Development
Initiative Trust

2 013 is shaping up to be another exciting year for communities throughout northern British Columbia, supported with help from Northern Development Initiative Trust.

Last year, the Trust surpassed a major milestone of 1,000 cumulative project approvals since the organization's creation in 2005.

As of August, 2013, Northern Development's board has approved more than \$115 million in funding to 1,239 projects such inception.

More than \$5.5 million in funding had been approved in the first seven months of 2013 across the Trust's four regional development areas:

- Northwest Region: \$1,568,646 in funding approvals for 56 projects with a combined project value of \$10,077,182;
- Cariboo-Chilcotin/Lillooet Region: \$1,026,630 in funding approvals for 45 projects with a combined project value of \$2,831,933;
- Northeast Region: \$1,142,317 in funding approvals for 29 projects with a combined project value of \$5,443,115; and
- Prince George Region: \$1,445,971 in funding approvals for 53 projects with a combined project value of \$8,678,835

In addition to ongoing grant writing and economic development capacity building support, the Trust has partnered on a number of exciting community projects throughout the region this year, including:

An ice rink chiller modernization project in Prince Rupert, a marketing strategy for Smithers Regional Airport, the restoration of a community curling facility in Forest Grove, marketing support for Clinton's 150th and 50th anniversary celebrations, renovations at the Big Bam Ski Hill in Fort St. John, mountain bike trail development at Pidherny in Prince George and the restoration of an outdoor rink for Nak'azdli Band Council in the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako.

In this edition of *Building a Stronger North*, you'll also read about some of the many exciting new programs and projects that we have lent support to, including the Supply Chain Connector database, Small Town Love and the Haida Gwaii Higher Education Society.

Northern Development also launched the Business Façade Improvement program this year, which provides \$20,000 to each municipality and regional district to enhance economic development by encouraging private sector investment in businesses façade improvements. In July, our board of directors approved funding under this program for a dozen communities across the region — you can read more about it in this newsletter.

The first half of 2013 also marked the launch of the Trust's Local Government Management Internship program. Building on the success of the Economic Development Internship program, the Local Government program created six year-long positions in communities throughout the region for recent University of Northern British Columbia graduates.

In May, the interns spent a month at Northern Development's offices focusing on economic development skill building, before heading off to 11 months of local government work in Burns Lake, Fort St. James, Vanderhoof, Mackenzie, Valemount, McBride and Prince George.

Although the first eight months of 2013 have been very exciting and rewarding, the remainder of the year promises many more funding approvals as Northern Development partners with communities to build a stronger north for us all.

Burns Lake - stunning natural vistas at the heart of

the Lakes District

Located in the heart of the Lakes District, the Village of Burns Lake has many kilometres of beautiful shoreline to explore and enjoy.



With hundreds of kilometres of gorgeous shoreline within minutes of town, the Village of Burns Lake is a long-standing community at the heart of unmatched beauty. Located approximately two hours west of Prince George along Highway 16, Burns Lake is home to some 2,000 residents who enjoy the town's many amenities and four-season recreational opportunities.

Although Burns Lake has historic ties to the forestry sector, the town is quickly becoming a destination for mountain biking enthusiasts across North America — notably for the town's annual Big Pig Festival.

Mountain biking, fishing, canoeing and hiking are popular summertime activities in the community, while snowmobiling, snowshoeing and crosscountry skiing round out the winter.

The economy in Burns Lake is also thriving these days amid a major hospital project, highway improvements and the Babine sawmill rebuild.

[Learn More](#)

Explore hundred of projects...

and connect with the people who are building their communities and a stronger regional economy in central and northern BC.

Share Your Story...

Do you have an update or personal story about a project undertaken in central and northern BC that has made a positive difference for you, your family, or organization?