



Working with communities, First Nations, local government and businesses to build a stronger North by investing in economic development in central and northern British Columbia, Canada

August 2015 - Newsletter

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Dunster shares its memories



The Dunster CN Station was built a century ago to serve the residents of the tiny community - and now houses their memories

Hundreds of people gathered in Dunster August 1 to celebrate the town's centennial and the grand opening of the Dunster CN Station museum. The museum is housed in one of Canada's last remaining CN train stations from the early 20th Century, and once served as the only access route to the community before the highway was built. A century later, people of all ages from across the region gathered to reminisce about their Dunster memories – and make a few new ones. Northern Development provided a \$30,000 grant to help make the museum a reality – and we were on hand to record the action August 1.

“Without Northern Development this station would probably still be a shell,” said Marion Cousineau, president, Dunster Community Association.

The museum now serves as a gathering place for the community, and also a new tourist attraction for visitors to the Robson Valley. Northern Development's grant was approved under the Trust's Community Halls and Recreation Facilities program, which provides municipalities, regional districts, First Nations bands and registered non-profit organizations with up to 70% of a project's budget to a maximum of \$30,000 in funding to improve, expand, or develop facilities in order to increase the number of events held annually in the community, contributing to service sector revenues in the local economy.

Watch the video here:

Trust funding boosts Dawson Creek's ability to host tournaments, events



Dawson Creek has been approved for \$250,000 in grant funding to upgrade the ice plants at its Memorial and Kin arenas

Dawson Creek is readying itself to reap the benefits of tournament and event hosting for years to come thanks in part to help from Northern

Development. The Trust's board of directors recently approved a \$250,000 grant to support the replacement of ice plants at Dawson Creek's Memorial and Kin arenas, which will support the city's efforts to host more events, including hockey tournaments, curling bonspiels, figure skating competitions, among others. The city's Memorial and Kin arenas were closed last year due to ammonia contamination in the ice plants, hampering Dawson Creek's ability to host events that generate economic dividends for local hotels, restaurants and other businesses.



The upgrades mean the city will be in a better position to attract and host major events and tournaments

The upgrades to the Memorial and Kin arenas mean both facilities will re-open this fall. The Trust's funding will be paired with \$2.1 million from the City of Dawson Creek to replace the two ice plants with Freon

systems. Upgrades at both arenas could generate as much as \$765,000 in increased revenue for the city over the next five years, mostly from ice rentals, floor rentals and various municipal programs. The \$250,000 grant from the Trust was approved through its Economic Diversification Infrastructure program, which has previously been used to support a variety of major projects throughout the region including airports, arenas, sports complexes, pools and visitor centres. Please visit our Economic Diversification Infrastructure program page for more information.

Quotes:

“Northern Development is proud to support upgrades to Dawson Creek’s Memorial and Kin arenas. This grant not only ensures the residents of Dawson Creek can continue to enjoy their local facilities, but also it will help the city host future events that generate economic dividends for the community,” said Evan Saugstad, Chair, Northern Development.

“This is another great example of the City of Dawson Creek working in collaboration with our partners (NDIT) to access funding to enhance and further the investment in our infrastructure, moreover, it further creates long term opportunities of our sports and recreation facilities in Dawson Creek for all citizens,” said Dale Bumstead, Mayor, City of Dawson Creek.

“The Northern Development Initiative Trust was created by our government more than 10 years ago with the belief that economic development decisions for the North should be made in the North. This funding is a great example of that philosophy, and ensures these popular facilities will help strengthen the Dawson Creek economy for many years to come,” said Mike Bernier, MLA for Peace River South.

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Runway resurfacing in Williams Lake boosts safety, supports economy



Williams Lake Airport has been approved for \$250,000 in funding to support runway resurfacing

Passengers through the Cariboo's busiest airport will soon enjoy a smoother runway thanks in part to help from Northern Development. The Trust's board of directors has approved a \$250,000 grant to resurface the runway at Williams Lake airport. Last year, the airport recorded 34,000 passengers through its doors, equating to approximately 11,000 landings.

In addition to regularly scheduled flights with Central Mountain Air and Pacific Coastal Airlines, the airport services two charter flights daily for nearby mines and also serves as a forest fire tanker base and supports Canadian Military, medevac, charter and helicopter traffic. Northern Development's grant funding comes in addition to a \$3.89 million Government of Canada grant to support runway improvements at the airport. In addition to improving safety at the airport, the runway improvements could also generate \$100,000 in additional revenue for the airport in the next five years through reduced operational costs, fees, parking, leases and fuel sales. The Trust's \$250,000 grant was approved through the Economic Diversification Infrastructure program. Since 2005, Northern Development has provided more than \$4 million in grants to support airport improvements projects throughout the region.

Quotes:

"Airports are crucial to the economy in Northern B.C., and these improvements to the Williams Lake Regional Airport will continue to ensure residents, employees and visitors can travel safely to and from our region," said Evan Saugstad, Chair, Northern Development Initiative Trust.

"The City of Williams Lake is pleased to receive funding from Northern Development Initiative Trust for this important upgrade. The resurfacing of the runway will ensure safety not only for scheduled flights, but for our Ministry of Forests Air Tanker Base, medevac, military, and the many private flights that use the Williams Lake airport," said City of Williams Lake Mayor Walt Cobb.

"Aviation and tourism is critical to our economy, supporting jobs, enabling investment and facilitating travel," said Cariboo North MLA Coralee Oakes. "This funding will support not only runway improvements at the Williams Lake Airport but will help provide a more reliable and accessible transportation link to the rest of the province, and a

foundation for ongoing safety enhancements.”

“For many residents in the Cariboo region, commuting is a large part of our everyday lives,” said Cariboo-Chilcotin MLA Donna Barnett. “The resurfacing of the runway at Williams Lake Airport will make a positive impact by helping move goods and people more efficiently and enhancing public safety.”

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Hometown highlights: community buildings get upgraded

We're celebrating the regions community buildings this month!

Revitalization is underway in four rural areas this summer as Northern Development provides support to upgrade community buildings across the region. The Trust's regional advisors recently supported \$101,476 in grants that will upgrade community buildings in Burns Lake, Francois Lake, Fort St. John, Dunster and Valemount. The upgrades include:

- \$30,000 for the Wistaria Community Hall in Burns Lake (pictured: top row, second and third photos)
- \$30,000 for the Valemount Lions Club community hall upgrade (pictured: bottom row left)
- \$28,018 for clubhouse improvements at Lakepoint Golf and Country Club in Fort St. John

- \$13,458 for upgrades to St. Luke's on the Lake hall in Francois Lake (pictured: top row, left)

Each of the grants was approved under the Trust's Community Halls and Recreation Facilities program, which provides municipalities, regional districts, First Nations bands and registered non-profit organizations with up to 70% of a project's budget to a maximum of \$30,000 in funding to improve, expand, or develop facilities in order to increase the number of events held annually in the community, contributing to service sector revenues in the local economy.



Moving up north: Trust intern Will George reports on his first three months working for the region



© Heather Pratt-Johnson

Northern Development intern Will George (right) recently visited LoveDawsonCreek.com business Vintage & Restoration Love. Josee Kownatka (centre) of Vintage & Restoration Love. Austin Weaver (left), City of Dawson Creek tourism.

8:30AM Tuesday, August 11: I just got into the office and wanted to send off a quick note letting you know what's been going on since this year's internships started. It's been a busy but rewarding first two months. Here's the news:

Originally from the Lower Mainland, my career path so far has been a steady migration north. Now, after graduating from Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, I have positioned myself for a career in economic development.

Our cohort of interns this year includes seven local government interns (now out in their respective communities), and four economic development interns here in Prince George. The communities where the

local government interns have been posted include: Vanderhoof, Wells, Quesnel, Prince Rupert, Granisle, Bella Coola, Valemount and Fort St. James. As for me, Prince George is home for the next few months as I experience life as an economic development intern.

Almost every day a new project lands on our desks. So far some of the projects we have worked on include reviewing grant applications, developing new programs and creating databases to better understand what organizations and communities are in need of assistance now and in the future.

My favorite project so far has been creating a list of every non-profit organization in Northern B.C. The list is important because it means the Trust will be able to reach out to these organizations and ensure each non-profit knows they may be able to access funding and assistance from Northern Development. So far as we know this list has never been developed before (If you know of one, please tell me). The task has been substantially less daunting thanks to assistance we've received from the team of local government interns who have provided us with a list of the active non-profit organizations in their communities.

Moving to a new city and continuing down my career path is exciting. There are many places to see here in Northern B.C., and the potential we have to help build a stronger north and stronger British Columbia is something I am looking forward to. And, as a bonus, past and present Northern Development interns are spread throughout the province so if we need assistance on projects, they are only a phone call away.

Better get back to work though – we have a 'to-do' list the size of Mr. PG.

'till next time,

- Will George

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?