

### Tumbler Ridge Sustainability Plan: Strategies for Resilience

The Community Development Institute (CDI) has been working in partnership with the District of Tumbler Ridge over the past 22 months to develop a sustainability plan. The plan sets goals and defines strategies to diversify and strengthen the community and the economy.

“Our work on the sustainability plan was most timely,” said Mayor Darwin Wren. Last fall, Tumbler Ridge was anticipating significant growth, the result of renewed investment in the coal mines in the region. By early 2014, a dramatic change was underway and coal prices started dropping. And by the fall of this year, 900 direct mining jobs had been lost. The impact on the community of 2,700 residents was significant. “Working with the CDI on this plan has put us ahead of the curve in terms of our ability to respond to the pressures we are facing,” said Mayor Wren.

Since the last downturn, more than a decade ago, Tumbler Ridge has evolved from a single resource-based economy to an increasingly adaptive and diverse community. The sustainability plan builds on these efforts and identifies new opportunities for expanding the economy and building community capacity and resilience. “This process has highlighted the community’s resolve to ensure that Tumbler Ridge is strong, stable, and self-reliant,” said Councillor Mike Caisley, who served as Council Liaison for the project. “I have every confidence that, working together, we will make this happen.”

“The recent experience in Tumbler Ridge highlights the need for communities to focus on strengthening and building on their assets to create a diverse economy, and to be ready to anticipate and adapt to change,” said Marleen Morris, Co-Director of the CDI.

To develop the plan, the CDI conducted 89 interviews, held eight workshops with the community, and convened six sessions with District Council. As a final step, the draft strategies and tactics were presented at an Open House for review and comment by the entire community.

### 2014 Fall Speaker Series Announced: Keeping the BC Interior Forest Industry Strong

The CDI is proud to announce the **Fall 2014 Community Speaker Series** will feature **James Gorman, President and CEO of the Council of Forest Industries**.

Mr. Gorman will present two free public lectures on the state of the BC forest industry, with particular focus on the Interior. He will examine the relevance of the industry to British Columbia's economy, and discuss some of the important changes being experienced in the industry today. Mr. Gorman’s talk will address work being done to overcome timber supply challenges, industry actions to grow new markets for BC’s forest products, new technologies being developed, challenges faced, and what can be done to improve the competitiveness of the industry. Finally, Mr. Gorman will touch on what forest dependent communities should expect in the coming years.

The free Speaker Series events, which are open to the public, will be held in two locations:

- **November 12, 2014: Cariboo Recreation Complex, Williams Lake, 7-8.30pm**
- **November 13, 2014: Prince George Public Library (Bob Harkins Branch), Prince George, 7-8.30pm**

*Mr. Gorman is the President and CEO of the Council of Forest Industries, which works in support of the BC Interior forest industry. The organization liaises with governments, communities, organizations and individuals to promote policy, trade, and development of the forestry sector in BC. He has held this role since September of 2013. Mr. Gorman is also the President of the BC Lumber Trade Council, which represents the interests of the BC forest industry in negotiating the Softwood Lumber Agreement with the United States. Prior to joining the forest industry, he worked for the provincial government, most recently as Deputy Minister for Advanced Education. Mr. Gorman holds an MA from McGill University.*

**For more information, please contact the CDI:**  
[jennifer.hall@unbc.ca](mailto:jennifer.hall@unbc.ca)

## Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation Conference a Huge Success!

The Community Development Institute at UNBC hosted the [Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation's \(CRRF\)](#) annual conference from September 25-27, 2014 in Prince George. The conference theme, *New Realities, New Relationships*, explored the changing relationships across industry, local and senior levels of government, and community organizations, as new development opportunities and challenges emerge.

More than 170 rural and industry leaders, community and economic development practitioners, government policy-makers, researchers, and students gathered to discuss issues at the heart of rural and resource sector development in BC and Canada.

The conference included two days of plenary sessions and workshops featuring national experts in rural and resource sector development, along with local and regional presenters. Conference participants had the opportunity to embark on local and regional tours exploring the innovative ways that rural BC is adapting to a changing reality.

Special guest speakers included Prince George-Mackenzie MLA, Mike Morris, and Dr. Ranjana Bird, VP Research, UNBC, who provided welcoming remarks on behalf of the provincial government and the university respectively. Ken Shields, Chairman, President, and CEO of Conifex Timber, and Jason Fisher, Vice President of Dunkley Lumber, both provided an industry perspective in their keynote addresses. Keith Storey from Memorial University spoke about fly in/ fly out workers and the impact of mobile workforces, while Bill Reimer from Concordia University presented on facilitating collaboration in the face of new rural realities. Greg Halseth, Co-Director of the CDI, provided a compelling summary and analysis to wrap up the conference.

The CDI wishes to express sincere thanks to all of the speakers, participants and volunteers who made the conference such a success. Special thanks to our sponsors who generously supported the event: [Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation](#), [Community Futures British Columbia](#), [Golder Associates](#), [Conifex](#), [BC Housing](#), [University of Northern British Columbia](#), [Grizzco Camp Services](#), [Columbia Basin Trust](#), [Planning Institute of British Columbia](#), [16/97 Economic Alliance](#), and [Winton Homes and Cottages](#).

**Presentations from the conference are now posted [online](http://www.crrf.ca/?page_id=3966) ([www.crrf.ca/?page\\_id=3966](http://www.crrf.ca/?page_id=3966)).**

## Upcoming Events, News and Information

**Don't miss the BC Non-Profit Housing Association Conference: Richmond, BC, November 16-19, 2014** [www.bcnpha.ca/events/conference](http://www.bcnpha.ca/events/conference). Marleen Morris, Co-Director of the CDI, will be speaking on a panel entitled "Boom and Burst: Housing in Resource Communities."

### **New Building Canada Fund - Small Communities Fund Accepting Applications**

Canada and British Columbia have launched the New Building Canada Fund – Small Communities Fund (NBCF-SCF) Program.

Under the NBCF-SCF program, the provincial and federal governments will each allocate approximately \$109 million to support infrastructure projects in communities with a population of less than 100,000 people. This 10-year funding program runs from 2014 to 2024.

NBCF-SCF funding provides communities with support in addressing their infrastructure needs and will operate concurrently with Gas Tax Funding.

***Applications for the first intake will be accepted from October 22, 2014 to February 18, 2015.***

**For more information, consult the website: [Small Communities Fund](#)**

### **The Community Development Institute at UNBC**

The Community Development Institute at UNBC is dedicated to understanding and realizing the potential of BC's non-metropolitan communities in a changing global economy, preparing students and practitioners for leadership roles in economic and community development, and creating a body of knowledge, information, and research that enhances our understanding and our ability to deal with the impacts of ongoing transformation.

In keeping with the vision of the University of Northern British Columbia, the Community Development Institute is committed to working with all communities – Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal – to help them further their community and regional development aspirations.

#### **For more information contact:**

Marleen Morris, Co-Director by phone at 250 960-9806 or email at [marleen.morris@unbc.ca](mailto:marleen.morris@unbc.ca), or visit our website at [www.unbc.ca/community-development-institute](http://www.unbc.ca/community-development-institute)