



Community Contacts Newsletter

University of Northern British Columbia

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*"Northern
Strength
to
Northern
Strength."*

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Welcome

Welcome to the inaugural newsletter of the Community Development Institute (CDI) at UNBC. We hope that this newsletter will help to keep you informed about developments at the CDI. Our plan is to send these e-newsletters out to our community contacts quarterly. If you have any comments on how we can improve the newsletter, or if you have news that you would like us to include in our next edition, feel free to contact us at manson@unbc.ca

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The CDI at UNBC

The Community Development Institute at UNBC is interested in two fundamental issues for communities in northern BC: community capacity and community development. By undertaking research, sharing information, and supporting education outreach, the Institute is becoming a vital partner to communities interesting in making informed decisions about their own futures.

The Institute emphasizes the importance of capacity-building, collaboration, learning, and complementarity between UNBC research centres. Research that is undertaken balances academic credibility with practical relevance. Beyond research, the Institute is involved in outreach activities and serves as a conduit to expand local educational opportunities related to community development.

For more information please visit:
<http://www.unbc.ca/cdi/>

Projects

Mackenzie Seniors Study Completed

Since the 1980s, Canada's population has been aging. In small towns, the provision of adequate and appropriate housing, services, and facilities will have an influence upon the decisions of individuals when choosing to retire in a community. In Mackenzie, there were about 50 people over the age of 65 in 1991, but by 2001 there were approximately 140 people over age 65 (Census, 2001). The increase in the number of older residents, and the increase in the number of residents who wish to remain in Mackenzie when they retire, have raised the level of interest in how the community, local services, and available housing options will meet the needs of a growing seniors' population. As a result, UNBC and the District of Mackenzie are

working together to assess the housing and service needs for older residents.

The purpose of the Mackenzie and Area Seniors Needs Project is to examine housing and support service needs for older residents in the District of Mackenzie and surrounding area. The work was carried out by a research team from UNBC with the goal to provide decision-makers and community groups in Mackenzie and area with information relevant to decision-making over community planning and infrastructure investments. The project was carried out over the Summer of 2004 and the results were shared back with the community during the Fall of 2004.

For further information on this study please visit:

http://web.unbc.ca/geography/faculty/greg/print_research.shtml#SeniorsNeeds

Northern BC Vision and Strategy Project

Since time immemorial, quality of life for the people and communities of northern BC has been intimately linked to its natural resource base. In the transformation from a resource development strength into a diversified economic strength built upon the solid foundations of our natural resources and amenities, communities and businesses told us how crucial it is that plans be made in the North, by those who live in the North, so as to create a future for the North. This report presents the responses from across northern BC to the question:

If people in northern BC were going to devise a vision and plan for economic renewal, and a structure to manage that renewal, how would they do it?

There was very strong interest in this exercise by the people and groups we spoke with despite a great deal of scepticism about economic planning processes often imposed from outside the region. Current economic challenges have also created an impatience to get on with the task. Through this Project, people across the region spoke of a willingness to 'roll up their sleeves' and get on with the job of creating a made in the north approach.

For further information please Visit:

<http://web.unbc.ca/geography/faculty/greg/research/edvs/projectReports.html>

Institute News

Speaker's Series

The Community Development Institute, in partnership with communities and funding agencies, will sponsor two Community Speakers a year. One in the fall term and one in the winter term. Experts will be invited to speak on important and relevant topics. The Speakers series will consist of three lectures. A classroom based lecture at UNBC, a public lecture at the Prince George campus and one lecture in a community in our service area. The CDI will publish these speeches via its publications series. The first Speakers series will take place in the spring of 2005.

From all of us at the CDI and Rural and Small Town Studies

Have a Happy and Safe Holiday Season

We look forward to continuing to work with you in 2005.