



Community Contacts Newsletter

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*"Northern
Strength
to
Northern
Strength."*

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Welcome

We are pleased to present the September 2006 newsletter of the Community Development Institute (CDI) at UNBC. The newsletter is coming out a little early due to some important notices and the fact that the CDI team will be on the road through much of September. 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 our coordinator 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 an important partner to communities interested in making informed decisions about their own futures.

The Institute emphasizes the importance of capacity-building, collaboration, learning, and complementarity. 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/>

Population Aging

Since the 1980s, Canada's population has been aging. In small towns, the provision of housing, services, and facilities influences the decisions of individuals when choosing to retire in a community. For northern BC's resource industry towns, the huge in-migration of young workers and their families through the 1960s and 1970s means that a large share of local workforces are now nearing retirement. In towns designed and built for young families, this creates a challenge – will there be enough support services, housing, and health care appropriate for these older residents. As we all know, the provision of any services in our smaller places has been a struggle and now we face some growing demands.

The CDI has been working with a number of local partners over the past two years to examine senior's issues. Research projects have been completed in the Mackenzie and Terrace areas, current projects are underway in the Fort St. John and Peace River Regional District areas, and this fall, additional work will be underway in the McBride area.

Some of the general findings and implications include:

- Most older workers wish to retire locally
 - They will have a strong network of family and friends
 - The growth of the local seniors population will be quite dramatic over the next decade
 - Most existing services (health care, recreation and leisure, retail,

transportation, etc) will need adjustment to serve an older population

- When they retire, most will be relatively healthy and want to contribute to their community
 - There is time to plan for additional services and facilities if we start to work on it now
 - These seniors will become basic sector economic contributors and may be able to help build some of the retirement economy that has driven growth in many other places
- People wish to remain in their homes for as long as possible
 - Immediate attention needs to go to expanding home care and home support services
 - Attention must also go to services like house cleaning, yard/house maintenance, snow shoveling, grocery delivery, etc
 - Attention will soon need to be directed at renovating the housing stock to assist people as their mobility decreases
- When people do need seniors' housing, they want to move into graduated care complexes that start with Independent Living units, move through Semi-independent Living units, and also have continuing care Dependent Living units
 - This has implications for the type and location (people want these near shopping and recreation) of new facilities
 - Five key housing issues are affordability, safety and security, suitability, in-home supportive assistance, and easy access to social, health, and recreational services

For additional information on completed research projects examining senior's housing and support services issues, please see the "Terrace and Area Senior's Needs Assessment" and "Mackenzie and Area Seniors' Needs Overview" sections at:

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

Notices

2006 Northern Economic Development Forum

Building upon last year's success, the 2006 Northern Economic Development Forum is set for September 13-15 in Prince George's Civic Centre. This year's theme is "Capitalizing on Opportunities" and will investigate the changing economy in the north and profile four areas of major development. The Forum focuses on creating synergies and commitments to work cooperatively to develop an implementation strategy for the North. For additional information, please contact Roger Leclerc at (250) 635-5449 or Don Zurowski at (250) 562-9622. Early Registration is \$150.00 per delegate by August 18.

Change Brings Opportunity Conference

By the fall of 2007, Prince Rupert will be home to a new container port facility. This conference brings together speakers from across North America to talk on the latest port developments and identify opportunities for employment, entrepreneurship, and exports. The conference is November 8 & 9, 2006, in Prince Rupert, BC. For more information and to register at the \$125 early bird rate, visit the conference web site: <http://www.cfdc-pnw.com/>

The following item was circulated by Brandon Hughes through the Rural Team BC e-mail list but it speaks to a topic in which many are interested:

Community Information Database - The Community Information Database was developed collaboratively by the Rural Secretariat (Canadian Rural Partnership), provinces, territories, other federal departments, and community groups. It is a free on-line web-based resource intended to help users quickly capture demographic/socio-economic data for specific or multiple geographic regions from an interactive map. Please visit the site at <http://www.cid-bdc.ca/homepage.htm>

Institute News

Speaker's Series

The CDI is pleased to announce that Manley McLachlan will join us for the Fall 2006 Speaker's Series event. Manley McLachlan is the President and CEO of the BC Construction Association (BCCA), the largest construction organization in the province. Mr. McLachlan's talk will focus on the identification of international, national, and provincial trends that are impacting the construction industry in BC. He will identify 5 cross cutting drivers that impact every facet of the business, and will describe both the impacts of those drivers as well as steps that have been undertaken to mitigate their impact.

These public talks will be held in Prince George on Wednesday October 11, 2006 and in Fort St. John on Thursday October 12, 2006. For further information, please contact: Don Manson at manson@unbc.ca or phone (250) 960-5018