

Community Connections

The UNBC Community Development Institute Newsletter

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Dialogues on Readiness: Preparing for industrial development in northern BC communities

Communities in northern BC are preparing for more than \$70 billion in anticipated resource sector investment. If they are ready, this investment could deliver lasting benefit through transformative economic and community development.

To help communities understand their own state of readiness, the CDI has designed and delivered the **Dialogues on Readiness** project. Some of the focus issues included housing, labour market, education, social services, economic development, public safety, environment, and transportation. To date **Dialogues on Readiness** has been conducted in four communities. Conversations have focused on the oil and gas sector and will continue throughout the upcoming months.

“At this time, it is crucial for communities to understand their ability to address the opportunities, pressures, and impacts that may result from the proposed oil and gas projects,” said Marleen Morris, Co-Director of the CDI. Terrace Mayor Dave Pernarowski added, “Communities in northwest BC must act now to be ready in the event that these investments do go through, and one way to do this is through regional collaboration.”

Through this project, the CDI seeks to facilitate communication and collaboration between all sectors in order to maximize the benefit from these proposed projects and build long-term sustainability into these communities. Communities must be ready, whether projects proceed or are cancelled. The **Dialogues on Readiness** will help strengthen the communities’ ability to plan for and adapt to either outcome.

CDI Fall Speakers Series

Communities and industry across the north are being challenged to adapt and innovate to respond to change. Some of the changes are driven by transformation and demand in the global economy. Others are driven by changes within our own communities, such as an aging population. How can communities adapt and transform so that they are more resilient and have more sustainable economies?

The Fall Speakers Series will explore the process of transformation. In a talk called, **Re-imagining Your Community**, Greg Halseth and Marleen Morris, Co-Directors of the Community Development Institute will draw upon examples from BC, Scandinavia, and the United Kingdom to provide inspiration and a framework for moving forward.

The CDI's Community Speakers Series sponsors talks on topics that are important and relevant for northern BC. The goal is to share information and encourage dialogue within and among communities. Talks are held in the Spring and Fall.

This year's Speakers Series will take place:

- November 13 in Valemount at the Community Hall
- November 14 in McBride at the Robson Valley Community Centre

Talks are held from 7:00-8:30 p.m.

The Fall Speakers Series talks are open to everyone and are free of charge.

Partnering for Change: Understanding the Process of Primary Health Care Transformation

CIHR Operating Grant, 2011-2015

This research will look at the ability of collaborating to transform primary health care (PHC) at community and regional levels. In northern BC communities, partnerships are emerging between local primary care providers, community leaders, community-based services, and the regional health authority to improve the health and health care experiences of residents. Case studies of PHC transformation initiatives will be conducted in seven of these communities to learn how relationship building can bring about system change, and to identify the facilitators and barriers of networking.

Investigators: Dr. Martha MacLeod (Nominated Lead, UNBC), Dr. Margo Greenwood (UNBC), Dr. Neil Hanlon (UNBC), Dr. Suzanne Johnston (Northern Health), and Cathy Ulrich (Northern Health)

CRRF Conference – Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation

The Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF) is an organization that brings together government, researchers, and industry to discuss rural economies in Canada. Their focus is to ensure that the interests of rural communities are well represented, and to lessen the gap between rural and urban residents.

The CDI will host the 2014 CRRF conference in Prince George next fall. Watch for updates at crrf.ca and unbc.ca/cdi.

Free Webinars

BC Affordable Market Housing Pilot Webinar Series

The Housing Policy Branch is hosting two webinars: “Where do Housing Costs Come From? A Developer’s Inside Peek” (November 28), and “Secondary Suites: What Works and What Doesn’t?” (January 30). Register at <http://www.ruralbc.gov.bc.ca/webinars/index.html>

Citizen Webinar Series ‘A Drop in the Bucket: Storytelling for Health and Place in the North’

BC Healthy Communities, Northern Health, and provincial and national leaders will discuss the importance of civic involvement as a determinant of community health. This webinar takes place on January 30th at 1:30 p.m. Register at bchealthycommunities.ca

Presentations

Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) 2013, Vancouver

This year, Greg Halseth presented *Traditions and Transitions: Steps small places must take* to BC municipalities, MLAs, and ministers. He spoke on the pressures rural and small towns face to stay competitive in global resource extraction markets, as well as the need to diversify northern BC economies to ensure resilience and a high quality of life.

BC Health Officers’ Council, Fort St. John

BC Health Officers dedicated their 2013 meeting to exploring the social impacts of resource sector economic cycles on small communities. Marleen Morris provided an overview of these impacts.

Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation Conference, Thunder Bay

Laura Ryser discussed the next rural economies and how to prepare for increasingly mobile workforce. This talk explored the impact of “fly-in fly-out” workers on both host and home communities, as well as workers’ families.

BC Energy Conference 2013, Fort St. John

Greg Halseth presented “Camps in British Columbia”, which discussed the benefits and drawbacks of “fly-in fly-out” long-distance labour commuting versus building industry towns where workers reside full-time.

2013 Columbia Basin Trust Symposium, Creston

Marleen Morris spoke to leaders in the Columbia Basin about the value of regional collaboration and how these relationships can be established.

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.

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