

An Inventory of Community and Economic Development Strategies and Plans across the Peace River and Northern Rockies

Prepared for:



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Availability

Copies of this project report have been provided to the KTIDS Northwest. Copies of the report have also been deposited in the Kitimat Public Library and the Terrace Public Library. They may also be accessed through the UNBC Community Development Institute's website at: www.unbc.ca/cdi/research.html.

Project Reports

- Lessons from Economic Upswings: A Case Study of the Peace River Region
- Lessons from Economic Upswings: Summary Theme Tables
- A Historical Guide of Recent Events across the Peace River Regional District: 2000-2012
- An Inventory of Community and Economic Development Strategies and Plans across the Peace River and Northern Rockies

Contact Information

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An Inventory of Community and Economic Development Strategies and Plans across the Peace River and Northern Rockies

Introduction

When industrial investments come to small communities, the impacts can be significant and transformative. These impacts occur in all sectors – social, community, service, economic, and governance. Communities across the Peace River and the Northern Rockies regions have considerable experience with large coal, oil and gas, and forest industrial projects. The Community Development Institute has been working to collate lessons and experiences from these areas so as to inform effective responses to the opportunities and pressures of large industrial projects across northern BC.

The project work was carried out by a research team from UNBC in the spring of 2012 with the goal to provide local leaders with information relevant to decision-making over community planning and infrastructure investments. This report includes an inventory of community and economic development strategies and plans across the Peace River and Northern Rockies. We hope that it can be a useful starting point for collating lessons and understanding issues from the recent past.

An Inventory of Community and Economic Development Strategies and Plans across the Peace River and Northern Rockies

Culture

Commonwealth Historic Resource Management Ltd. 2007. *A Heritage Strategy for the City of Dawson Creek*. Vancouver: Commonwealth Historic Resource Management Ltd.

This heritage strategy examines the benefits of community heritage, provides an inventory and description of heritage organizations and facilities in the Dawson Creek area, examines heritage sites in other northern BC communities, and provides proposed heritage strategies and implementation plans for Dawson Creek.

Economic Development

Commonwealth Historic Resource Management Ltd. and AMS Planning & Research Inc. 2008. *Market and Financial Feasibility Study for the Old Post Office Dawson Creek, BC*. Vancouver: Commonwealth Historic Resource Management Ltd.

This document assesses the market and financial feasibility to re-use and transform the old post office building into a new community cultural centre.

Community Futures Peace Liard. 2010. *District of Hudson's Hope Economic Development Strategic Plan 2010*. Dawson Creek, BC.

This strategy includes a community profile and an inventory of infrastructure and services in Hudson's Hope, as well as a discussion of the opportunities in various industrial sectors. It then outlines a list of recommended community development priorities by participating groups, as well as a discussion of the economic development strategy goals and housing issues that need to be addressed in the community.

Energy Services BC. n.d. *Business Development Initiative: Executive Summary*.

This document outlines key initiatives being planned to increase business opportunities for the service sector within industry. It includes a list of contacts for the Business Development Initiative.

Energy Services BC. 2009. *Business Development Initiative: Presentation*.

This presentation includes information about Energy Services BC, as well as information about the Business Development Initiative and associated activities and partners.

Institute of Chartered Accountants of BC. 2010. *BC Check-Up: Live, Work, Invest in BC. Northeast Development Region*. Vancouver: Institute of Chartered Accountants of BC.

This document tracks the employment statistics, unemployment rates, business and investment activities, bankruptcies, education statistics, and use of social safety net programs for the region.

Northern Rockies Regional Economic Authority. 2007. *A Concept for Economic Prosperity Cooperation and Collaboration under a New Northern Rockies Regional Economic Authority*. Fort Nelson: Northern Rockies Regional Economic Authority.

Topics addressed in this document include the need for more effective local government collaboration, the need for more collaboration with First Nations, barriers inhibiting regional economic development, and the initiative to establish a regional economic authority.

Northern Rockies Regional Municipality. 2011. *The Business Case: For Establishing a Partnership for Investing in the Continued Development of the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality as the Key Service Centre for the Development of the Horn River, Cordova, and Liard Shale Gas Basins*. Submitted to the Province of BC. Fort Nelson: Northern Rockies Regional Municipality.

This document includes a description of projections associated with the shale gas sector in the region, as well as a discussion of the impacts that this development has on transportation, industrial, commercial, and other physical infrastructure. It also looks at the changing demand and need for more coordination and partnerships to address housing and community service needs. Property tax mechanisms and provincial policy tools are also discussed.

Urban Futures. 2011. *Spatial Export Analysis: Assessing the Contribution of the Northeast and Peace River Regions to British Columbia's Exports*. Prepared for the North Peace Economic Development Commission. Vancouver: Urban Futures.

This report provides a profile of both the Peace River and Northeast regions of BC, as well as an assessment of these regions' changing contributions to BC's exports.

Urban Systems. 2002. *Fort St. John and Area Comprehensive Development Plan: Economic Growth Impact Study*. Draft Final Report. Fort St. John: Urban Systems.

This plan covers a description of the current supply and constraints on land and buildings, as well as demand projections for labour, housing, and various industries.

Environment

Justice Institute of BC. 2009. *Peace River Regional District Oil Spill Panel Discussion: After Action Report*. Vancouver: Emergency Management Division, Justice Institute of BC.

This report documents concerns about oil spills, as well as details concerning responses and recovery operations. It includes identifying who the key industry and government contacts would be under such circumstances, as well as how efforts would be coordinated.

Forestry

Park, R. 2008. *Fort Nelson Forestry Roundtable Brief*. Fort Nelson: Town of Fort Nelson and the Northern Rockies Regional District.

The report outlines a series of policy changes that need to be addressed to resituate the forest industry in the Fort Nelson region. This report also advocates for the retention and improvement of the CN Rail extension.

Peace Country Consulting Ltd. 2010. *Fort Nelson Demonstration Forest: Five Year Plan – Maintenance and Improvement Opportunity Projects*. Peace River, AB: Peace Country Consulting Ltd.

This five year plan identifies opportunities to expand public educational opportunities, as well as to maintain and develop recreational and physical infrastructure (i.e. trails, demonstration forest, drainage, bike trails, amphitheatre, etc.).

Health

Bush, K. n.d. *Population Health and Oil and Gas Activities: A Preliminary Assessment of the Situation in North Eastern BC*. Prince George: Northern Health Authority.

This report was produced for the Northern Health Authority to identify potential health impacts from the oil and gas industry (including social issues), as well as to identify the capacity and gaps that may exist to respond to industry emergencies. In addition to policy recommendations, information and communication needs are also identified.

Fraser Basin Council. 2012. *Identifying Health Concerns Relating to Oil and Gas Development in Northeastern BC: Human Health Risk Assessment Phase I Compendium of Submissions*. Prepared for the BC Ministry of Health. Vancouver: Fraser Basin Council.

This document includes letters that were submitted to the Fraser Basin Council from industry and local government partners that identify health concerns associated with the oil and gas industry.

Fraser Basin Council. 2012. *Identifying Health Concerns Relating to Oil and Gas Development in Northeastern BC: Human Health Risk Assessment Phase I Report*. Prepared for the BC Ministry of Health. Vancouver: Fraser Basin Council.

This report discusses health concerns associated with the oil and gas industry, including air quality, water quality, safety issues, access to community services and infrastructure, and operational issues with the oil and gas industry (i.e. safety inspectors, monitoring, and compliance). It also highlighted a number of issues that needed to be addressed in order to improve communication and emergency response planning.

Housing

Eberle Planning and Research. 2009. *Dawson Creek Housing Strategy: Affordability, Diversity and Sustainability*. Prepared for the City of Dawson Creek. Vancouver: Eberle Planning and Research.

Key issues raised in this strategy include vacancy rates, rental rates, limited housing for special needs and older residents, an aging housing stock, and rising transportation and heating costs. To address these issues, the strategy discusses the need for better communication and coordination, the need to support non-market rental housing, the need to rehabilitate / renovate the aging housing infrastructure, the need to address homelessness, and the need to address seniors' housing needs.

Northern Rockies Engineering Inc. 2010. *Residential Housing Strategy*. Prepared for the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality and Town of Fort Nelson. Fort Nelson: Northern Rockies Engineering Inc.

This housing strategy examines growth projections, housing needs, and land use supply opportunities and constraints.

Hydro

City of Fort St. John. n.d. *Let's Talk Site C: Taking a Proactive Approach to Protecting and Promoting the Best Interests of our Community*. Fort St. John: City of Fort St. John.

This document outlines opportunities to maximize the benefits associated with Site C dam construction, such as local hiring, purchasing local goods and services, establishing a trust, training and research, adopt a 'workers living locally' strategy, build one camp but not two, and include all staging areas and camp facilities within the municipal boundaries.

Labour

BC Chamber of Commerce. n.d. *A Strategy for Resolving BC's Skills Shortages*. Community Futures Peace Liard.

This document discusses sector vacancies, impacts on businesses, the need for on-the-job training, the lack of skilled trades workers, the lack of communication, the need to improve human resource management capacity, and the need for succession planning. These were the issues that led to the formation of the Regional Skills Advisory Councils and associated priorities.

Northeast Regional Workforce Table. 2012. *Northeast Regional Workforce Table Open House Forum: Summary Report*. Victoria, BC: Ministry of Jobs, Tourism, and Innovation; Ministry of Advanced Education.

This report highlights economic development issues and skills needs in the Northeast region of BC. This includes attention to the capacity of the Aboriginal workforce. Key themes identified in the report include: learning from existing initiatives, enhancing communication and collaboration, building upon the capacity of the existing labour pool, and strengthening links between education and industry stakeholders.

Mining

British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines. 2012. *British Columbia's Mineral Exploration and Mining Strategy: Seizing Global Demand*. Victoria: BC Ministry of Energy and Mines.

This provincial strategy covers topics such as streamlining regulatory processes, addressing the health and safety of workers, addressing environmental issues, partnerships with First Nations, and developing a skilled workforce.

Mining Association of BC. 2011. *Economic Impact Analysis*. PwC Network.

This report provides an economic impact analysis of the mining sector, including an overview of mining activities around the province, industry commodity trends and export values, human resource development issues, a summary of the overall economic impact of the BC mining industry, a summary of the economic impacts of the mining industry on operating and capital expenditures of various levels of government, as well as the economic impacts on transportation sectors, exploration and development activity, and environmental monitoring. It also compares the regional economic impacts with the Nechako and Northeast regions grouped together.

Oil and Gas

Molinski, D. 2007. *Recent Oil and Gas Trends and Future Development in the Fort Nelson Region of British Columbia*. Victoria: OnPoint Consulting Inc.

The documents reports trends in the oil and gas industry with a particular focus on the shale gas sector. Other topics covered include BC's energy policy, royalty rates, infrastructure challenges, technology challenges, and economic barriers that may impact industry activities.

Physical Infrastructure

City of Dawson Creek. 2001. *Water Quality Assurance Plan*. Dawson Creek: City of Dawson Creek.

This water quality assurance plan covers topics such as source water, intake facilities, transmission infrastructure, treatment facilities, capital costs, and recommendations.

Dobson Engineering Ltd. 2007. *Kiskatinaw River Watershed Source Protection Plan*. Kelowna: Dobson Engineering Ltd.

This document examines hazards to water sources and quality, as well as a description / discussion of water supply infrastructure. Recommendations to improve drinking water source protection and sustainability are included.

HB Lanarc Consultants. 2009. *City of Dawson Creek Water Strategy*. Vancouver: HB Lanarc Consultants.

This water strategy previews current regulations and policies before addressing measures and tools for water conservation in the Dawson Creek area. It includes an analysis of water use by sector (i.e. industry, commercial, residential).

Peace River Regional District. 2012. *North Peace Fringe Area Heavy Industrial Lands Study*. Dawson Creek: Peace River Regional District.

This document examines the supply and constraint issues for heavy industrial lands within the jurisdictions of the Peace River Regional District, Fort St. John, and Taylor.

Planning

Holmes, D. 2003. *City of Dawson Creek Visioning Process: Final Report*. Toronto: ICA Associates Inc.

Topics addressed in this visioning exercise include community engagement, alternative financing, tourism, business expansion, youth, environment, arts and culture, and recreation.

Stevenson, J. 2010. *Evaluation of “Home Occupations” / “Home Industries” Regulations in the Town of Fort Nelson Northern Rockies Regional District. Zoning Bylaw No. 729, 2008.* Fort Nelson: Northern Rockies Regional Municipality.

This document discusses issues and concerns with home-based businesses, and proposes a range of regulations to address home-based businesses.

Urban Systems. 2011. *City of Fort St. John Boundary Extension Review.* Fort St. John: Urban Systems.

This report explores provincial policy and processes for municipal boundary changes, other options for the provision of city services in rural areas, and projected impacts on property taxes.

Protection Services

D.W. McMullen & Associates Ltd. 2008. *Safer City Project for Dawson Creek, BC: Report and Recommendations.* Kamloops: D.W. McMullen & Associates.

This report discusses residents’ perception of safety in public areas, as well as the topics of pedestrian and road safety, public transportation, phone booths, protection services, and bylaw enforcement.

Roy, T. 2008. *Fort Nelson Detachment Annual Performance Plan.* Fort Nelson: Fort Nelson Detachment of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

This plan documents the supports that are available at the detachment, as well as the protection and community services that are available around the community. Initiatives to improve cooperation with First Nations communities in the area are also outlined.

The Drug Free Dawson Creek Committee. 2007. *Dawson Creek Community Drug Survey: Facts and Opinions 2007.* Prepared for the City of Dawson Creek. Dawson Creek: The Drug Free Dawson Creek Committee.

This report covers topics such as personal experience with drug use and abuse, access to services and programs to address addiction issues, and legal / policy responses.

Recreation and Tourism

AldrichPears Associates. 2005. *Communications Plan: Alaska Highway Corridor Thematic Strategy, Dawson Creek Interpretive Strategy, Dawson Creek Downtown Revitalization, and Alaska Highway House Concept Plan*. Vancouver: AldrichPears Associates.

This document includes the Alaska Highway Corridor Thematic Strategy; the Dawson Creek Thematic Strategy; a Dawson Creek Downtown Revitalization plan; and an Alaska Highway House Concept Plan.

AldrichPears Associates, Bufo Incorporated, Economic Planning Group, Commonwealth Historic Resource Management Ltd., and Hotson Bakker Boniface Haden Architects. 2007. *Dawson Creek Attractions Master Plan*. Vancouver: AldrichPears Associates.

This document includes a financial analysis and description of the challenges to maintaining and developing cultural, heritage, and recreational infrastructure in Dawson Creek.

Economic Planning Group. 2010. *South Peace Community Multiplex Economic Impact Analysis: Final Report*. Prepared for Tourism Dawson Creek.

This report documents the economic impact of the South Peace Community Multiplex by examining usage statistics and spending at the facility, as well as the effects the centre has had on nearby businesses.

Intrinsic Tourism Solutions. 2009. *North Peace Region Value of Tourism Study*. Fort St. John, BC: Funded by North Peace Economic Development Commission. Supporting Partners: Tourism British Columbia; Northern British Columbia Tourism Association; Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association.

This report examined the value of the region's commercial accommodation sector. Visitor expenditures and characteristics of accommodation properties are tracked (i.e. rooms available, rooms occupied, rates, length of stays, etc.).

Intrinsic Tourism Solutions. 2009. *South Peace Region Value of Tourism Study*. Project Partners: South Peace Economic Development Commission; Tourism British Columbia; Northern British Columbia Tourism Association; Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association.

This report detailed the volume of visitors and direct expenditures associated with the tourism sector in Dawson Creek and the South Peace.

Meadfield Consulting Inc., Economic Growth Solutions Inc., and Bold Point Centre. 2007. *Northern Rockies / Fort Nelson Tourism Strategic Plan: Final Report*. Prepared for the Northern Rockies Regional District and Town of Fort Nelson. West Vancouver: Economic Growth Solutions Inc.

This report contains information about the Northern Rockies Destination Marketing Program, as well as strategies to enhance and develop tourism infrastructure. Other issues that are discussed include tourism industry cooperation and training.

Moi, A., Papadakos, C., and Carlyle-Smith, S. 2009. *Tourism Plan: Dawson Creek and Pouce Coupe, BC*. Vancouver: Tourism British Columbia.

This report explores the challenges and opportunities for tourism in the Dawson Creek and Pouce Coupe region. Key topics that are discussed include tourism partnerships, infrastructure, information management and research, marketing and branding, community engagement, and business development.

Northern Rockies Regional District, Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association, Tourism Dawson Creek, Tourism Research Innovation Project, Northern BC Tourism Association, and BC Parks. 2007. *Northern Rockies District Value of Tourism Research Project*. Fort St. John: Northern Rockies Alaska Highway Tourism Association.

This report contains information about the number of visitors to the area, visitor expenditures, and recommendations to improve tourism infrastructure, partnerships, promotion, and workforce training.

Urban Systems. 2004. *Parks and Recreation / Leisure Services Master Plan Facilitation: Needs Assessment Report*. Fort St. John: Urban Systems.

This needs assessment includes information about socio-demographic trends in the community, as well as issues raised by youth, service clubs, sports teams, and seniors. Key recommendations included developing a sports council, completing a master plan, developing a comprehensive communications strategy, and expanding outdoor recreational infrastructure.

Social Development

Edwards, F. and Schuetz, S. 2010. *North Peace Economic and Cultural Impact and Gap Analysis Study*. Commissioned by North Peace Economic Development Commission, the City of Fort St. John, and the Northern Lights College. Canmore, AB: CSE Group.

This report examines gaps and opportunities with labour, energy services procurement, education, First Nations partnerships, water management, information management, and regional collaboration.

Learning Initiatives for Rural and Northern BC. 2009. *Traction for Social Action: Towards a Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles for the Community Social Planning Council*. Prepared for the Fort Nelson Community Literacy Society, the Fort Nelson First Nation, the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality, Success by Six, and SPARC BC.

The purpose of this strategy was to identify common ground that would support collaboration across a range of stakeholders. Key topics that were explored include health and well-being, culture and recreation, social infrastructure, education, safety, and housing. Recommendations focused on developing a governance structure, coordinating a network, developing innovative strategies to address seniors' housing needs, and ways to address youth and young adult activity needs.

School District #81. 2011. *District Literacy Plan*. Fort Nelson: School District #81.

This literacy strategy focuses upon the needs for young children, school aged children, adults, and Aboriginal residents. A variety of venues, both conventional and unconventional, to promote literacy are explored.

Social Planning and Research Council of BC and Nick Istvanffy. 2008. *Dawson Creek Social Plan: Final Report*. Prepared for the City of Dawson Creek. Vancouver: Social Planning and Research Council of BC.

This social plan includes priorities, gaps, and actions for child and youth issues, community development, safety, education and training, food security, housing and homelessness, and health.

Sustainability

Conestoga-Rovers & Associates. 2010. *Northern Rockies Regional Municipality Greenhouse Gas Emissions Action Plan*. Richmond: Conestoga-Rovers & Associates.

This report highlights key steps that need to be taken to reduce GHG emissions including the need to identify a champion, expanding awareness about environmental issues and environmental programs, partnering with other municipalities, and completing a community energy management plan.

Holland Barrs Planning Group. 2007. *Sustainability Baseline Assessment for the City of Dawson Creek*. Vancouver: Holland Barrs Planning Group.

Key issues raised in this report include density approaches, transportation, green building practices to reduce energy consumption and costs, the development of multi-task spaces, the development of integrated green infrastructure, etc.

Horne, M. 2008. *Dawson Creek's Climate Action Plan: First Steps Towards Deep Reductions in Global Warming Pollution*. Drayton Valley, AB: The Pembina Institute.

This report identifies the potential for solar energy in commercial buildings, bio-energy, and wind energy. The use, and examples, of bylaws for supporting energy efficiency and reducing GHG emissions are considered. Other topics explored include program needs, training auditors, coordinating equipment purchases, and developing a comprehensive communications strategy.

Horne, M. and Cobb, P. 2005. *City of Dawson Creek Community Energy Planning: Municipal Operations Energy Baseline Report*. Drayton Valley, AB: The Pembina Institute.

This document discusses current and future energy consumption patterns and costs for municipal buildings and operations (i.e. airports, cultural centres, recreational centres, public works, etc.).

Paradine, M. 2011. *Climate Action Revenue Incentive Public Report for YEAR*. Fort St. John: City and Fort St. John and the Peace River Regional District.

Topics covered in this document include transportation, neighbourhood planning, green building policies, adapting a solar ready community policy, heat mapping, waste management, rebate programs for businesses, energy efficient buildings, etc.

Simard, B. 2011. *Climate Action Revenue Incentive (CARIP) Public Report for 2011*. Dawson Creek: Peace River Regional District.

Topics covered in this report include retrofit programs, waste management, transportation, 'solar ready' regulations, etc.

Sustainable Dawson Creek. 2009. *On the Path to Carbon Neutral: Dawson Creek's Strategy*. Dawson Creek: Sustainable Dawson Creek.

This document explores some of the challenges to pursuing a carbon neutral strategy in Dawson Creek. It also highlights some successful conservation and energy efficiency policies and initiatives.

The Sheltair Group (now Stantec). 2010. *City of Fort St. John Community Energy & Emissions Plan*. Prepared for the City of Fort St. John. Vancouver: The Sheltair Group.

Topics addressed in this document include land use density, transportation, resident behaviours, energy efficiency of buildings, and partnerships.

Timmenga and Associates. 2010. *Feasibility Study of a Biomass Burner Fired with Fescue Straw for the Multiplex Facility in Dawson Creek*. Prepared on behalf of the City of Dawson Creek. Vancouver: Timmenga and Associates.

This report examines the feasibility and effects of a proposed biomass burner at the Multiplex Facility in Dawson Creek. The key issue was to explore opportunities to reduce operating costs, while having a facility that could link with other initiatives in education and industry.

Timmenga and Associates and Zbeetnoff Agro-Environmental Consulting. 2008. *Potential for Bio-Energy in the Dawson Creek Area: Draft Final Report – Inventory & Analysis*. Submitted to the City of Dawson Creek. Vancouver: Timmenga and Associates.

This report documents fibre sources from the South Peace region that could be used for bio-fuel in municipal facilities in Dawson Creek. Economic opportunities associated with power generation and wood pellet manufacturing are also discussed.

Transportation

InterVISTAS Consulting Inc. 2011. *The Northern Rockies Regional Airport Business Plan*. Prepared for the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality. Vancouver: InterVISTAS Consulting Inc.

This business plan examines the location constraints, infrastructure, and activity forecasts; as well as governance issues, human resource needs, operations and expenses, revenues, and capital requirements.

InterVISTAS Consulting Inc. 2010. *Long-Term Strategic Plan for the Northern Rockies Regional Airport*. Prepared for the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality. Vancouver: InterVISTAS Consulting Inc.

This strategy highlights estimated trends and forecasts, as well as land and infrastructure needs (i.e. ground access and parking, terminal needs, airport operations and support, safety management systems, commercial development, etc.).

McElhanney & Patricia Maloney & Associates. 2011. *Dawson Creek Airport Sustainability Report*. Prepared for the City of Dawson Creek.

The focus of this report was to develop recommendations to enhance the use of the airport as a community resource and economic tool for community development. Topics that were addressed include financial support, use of airport, airport services, governance, and population / economic forecasts.