

April 16, 2009

Chair Karen Goodings  
and Board Members  
Regional District of Peace River  
Box 810  
Dawson Creek, BC V1G 4H8

Dear Chair Goodings and Board Members,

The United Way of Northern British Columbia and the Community Development Institute at UNBC are partnering in a joint initiative to collect socio-demographic information about your community and regional district within an overall northern BC regional scoping exercise.

We believe that the *Northern Scoping Exercise* is an important initiative for northern communities. The deliverables will assist communities and regional districts to better understand the social challenges and pressures faced by their communities and work within local partnerships to address those issues. Addressing social issues will have a direct impact on the economic stability, quality of life, and sustainability of northern communities. We wanted to make you aware of this project and ask you to play a role in it.

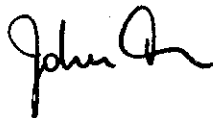
The research done through this *Northern Scoping Exercise* will provide a consistent and comparable body of information collected via a repeatable and rigorous methodology. The work will be carried out by the Community Development Institute at UNBC in consultation with senior staff of the United Way of Northern British Columbia. The area of coverage will include the full service area of the United Way of Northern British Columbia (Quesnel north to the Yukon border, and west to east from the Queen Charlotte Islands to the Alberta Border).

We ask that you review the attached summary and consider your potential involvement in the project by one or both of the following ways:

1. Participating with the researchers in information gathering
2. Making a financial contribution of \$2,000 towards the research

We will be in touch with you in the next two weeks to answer any questions you may have about this project and to discuss your interest and ability in being involved and supporting the project. In the meantime, you can direct questions or feedback to Jocelyn Snih or Greg Halseth. Their contact information is listed at the end of the attached summary.

Yours sincerely,



John Turner  
Board Chair

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## United Way of Northern British Columbia – Community Development Institute at UNBC Northern Scoping Exercise

### An Important Partnership

The Northern Scoping Exercise is an important partnership for northern communities. The deliverables will assist communities and regional districts to better understand the social challenges and pressures faced by their communities and work within local partnerships to address those issues. Addressing social issues will have a direct impact on the economic stability, quality of life, and sustainability of northern communities. We wanted to make you aware of this project and ask you to play a role in it.

As communities work to diversify their economies, they need sufficient capacity to support new developments. Such capacity can help communities capitalize on opportunities. Social services help communities to cope with economic restructuring and transition. Without local social service providers, residents would have to cope with the additional burden of having to leave their home to access assistance. The relationships, partnerships and trust created through this process can lead to innovative ways for delivering services where they might otherwise not exist.

### Your Role

We hope that you and your colleagues would consider participating in the project in one or both of the following ways:

1. Participating with the researchers in information gathering  
We value your potential input and feedback throughout the process and we hope that you would encourage others in your community and area to participate in some way as well.
2. Making a financial contribution of \$2,000 towards the research  
Because of the benefits to communities and regional districts, and the northern BC region overall, we hope that each municipality and regional district would be willing to contribute \$2,000 towards the \$60,000 cost. UNBC is the lead partner to date, with an in-kind contribution of the senior researcher's time and expenses.

This is proposed as a collective project, so we hope the cost can be shared by you and other partners throughout the region whose communities will benefit significantly and on a long-term basis. Once priority issues are identified and a base-line is established through the Northern Scoping Exercise, this information can be used to leverage funding and support through various partnerships to ensure your community and regional district are able to build and rely on a solid social services structure as you emerge through transition and growth.

### Information Collection

Information collected through the Northern Scoping Exercise will be garnered through Statistics Canada census information, with supplementary trend and forecast information from BC Stats. Building on that general census data, emerging issues and needs will be identified within clusters of communities across the service area. The focus will be on strategic topics aligned with the five pillars of the United Way of Northern British Columbia's Action Plan (successful kids, empowered families, involved seniors, healthy citizens, and supportive communities).

As a component of our expanding role in servicing the northern BC region, and in line with United Way's evolution towards an issues-based community impact organization, this project will be critical in present and future strategic planning, fundraising campaigns and community development investments in your area.

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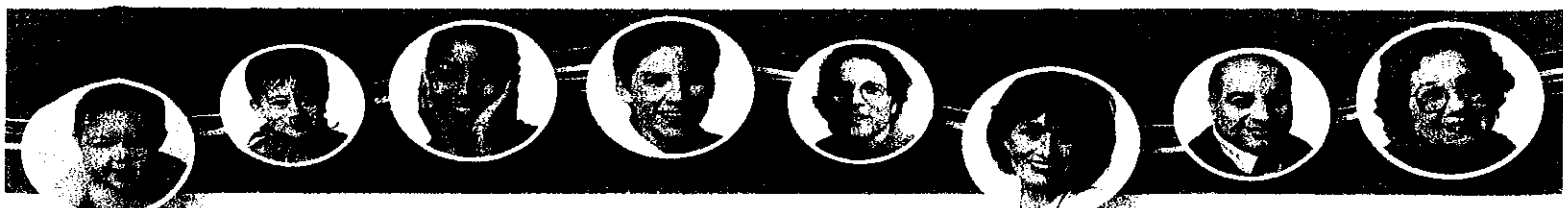
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The United Way's planned approach is a constant cycle of effort to ensure critical needs are identified, cooperative strategies are developed, and donations are invested in a way to have the greatest impact on the community.

To support our campaign in your workplace please call Prince George (250) 561-1040 • Fort St. John (250) 263-9266 www.pguw.bc.ca





**Emerging Issues and Outcomes**

The emerging issues and needs will be identified through a series of local interviews and reviewed in focus group meetings with the United Way's regional advisory committees. Our intent is not to duplicate any other studies that have been conducted in this area, but rather to compliment and build on the information gathered, as well as develop and implement collaborative strategies with our community partners to address the issues. The Northern Scoping Exercise will pull all relevant information together into one comprehensive resource.

The outcomes of the research include socio-demographic data summaries for each municipality and regional district, and an issues/needs report for each of the identified clusters of communities within the United Way's service area. We hope to begin the project in the next few weeks, with final results provided in the spring of 2010.

**United Way of Northern British Columbia**

We relayed to you earlier this year that we had begun the process of changing our name from the Prince George United Way to the United Way of Northern British Columbia. We are delighted to let you know that the process is now complete and our next step will be to announce the name change to the public through various avenues in early May. United Way will continue to conduct the same caring, responsive, accountable work in your community. We look forward to working more rigorously with you and other community leaders, volunteers, and regional and local agency partners, and to providing increasing measurable impact on issues of priority in your community and region. The Northern Scoping Exercise will help move all of us collectively towards this enhanced impact.

**Community Development Institute 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 interested 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 and enhance local educational opportunities related to community development.

**Contact Information**

You are welcome to direct questions or feedback to:

Jocelyn Snih  
Director, Resource Development  
United Way of Northern British Columbia  
250-561-1040 or [jocelyns@pguw.bc.ca](mailto:jocelyns@pguw.bc.ca)

Greg Halseth  
Director  
Community Development Institute  
at UNBC  
250-960-5826 or [halseth@unbc.ca](mailto:halseth@unbc.ca)

MAY 14 2009

make a big impact.

IDENTIFYING THE NEEDS

BRINGING COMMUNITY PARTNERS TOGETHER

RAISING MONEY

INVESTING RESOURCES

MONITORING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROGRAMS

United Way's planned approach is a constant cycle of effort to ensure critical needs are identified, cooperative strategies are developed, and donations are invested in a way to have the greatest impact on the community.

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United Way