Dialogues on Readiness
Preparing for Industrial Development in Northern BC Communities: Prince George

Prepared by the Community Development Institute
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Marleen Morris and Greg Halseth
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Availability

Copies of this project report may be accessed through the UNBC Community Development Institute's website at:
http://unbc.ca/community-development-institute/research-projects

Project Reports
1. **Dialogues on Readiness:** Executive Summary
2. **Dialogues on Readiness:** Kitimat
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1.   Dialogues on Readiness

Preparing for Industrial Development in Northern BC Communities

Northern BC is in a period of growth not seen since the 1950s-1970s era of province building. Communities and regions are experiencing transformational change as the industrial, manufacturing, and natural resource sectors – including oil and gas, mining, forestry, and energy – expand and renew.

Over the past several months, a broad consensus and common interest has emerged among government, community, business, and industry for a better understanding of the opportunities, pressure points, and processes associated with the development of large industrial projects. People have expressed the need for all parties to better understand each other's roles, processes, and pressure points throughout the project lifecycle, including proposal development, review, construction, and operation.

The **Dialogues on Readiness** project was designed to develop a better understanding of these issues. The project explored the following themes:
- The level of understanding of the process and timing associated with the development of large projects in the community.
  - Information about the phasing and staging of large industrial projects.
- Community factors that need to be considered in order to be prepared and ready for large industrial projects.
  - Capacity in areas including local workforce, housing, education, health, community services, community amenities, the voluntary sector, transportation networks, and local economic and business development.
- Community processes and mechanisms for enhancing readiness, building community capacity, and engaging government, industry, business, and the community.

The research in this phase of the **Dialogues on Readiness** project conducted in Kitimat, Prince George, Prince Rupert and Terrace during the summer of 2013 and focused on the oil and gas sector.

2.   Methodology

2.1 Research Ethics

The University of Northern British Columbia Research Ethics Board must review all research conducted by the Community Development Institute. The Board reviewed the interview questions in the spring of 2013 and permission to perform the study was granted. Upon agreeing to take part in the project, each participant signed a consent form (see Appendix A), which outlined the purpose of the study and stated that their participation was voluntary and that their contributions would remain anonymous and confidential.

2.2 Key Informant Interviews

Participants from four Northern BC communities (Prince George, Kitimat, Prince Rupert, and Terrace) agreed to take part in this study. Participants included individuals from a range of sectors: local government, education, industry, not-for-profit organizations, health care, economic development, cultural organizations, emergency services, social services, and the local business community.

Each participant was invited to participate via email. Their contact information was obtained through public records, referrals from other interested community members, or through the local advisory committee member that assisted the Community Development Institute in this project. For Prince George, 15 interviews were completed.

2.3 Interview Questions

The interview questions (see Appendix B) were sent out in advance to give participants time to reflect on the topics and focus on a few areas of particular relevance to them. The interview included five major sections.

Part 1: Participants were asked about their previous experience with the oil and gas industry, including information about roles and lessons learned.
Part 2: Participants were asked how informed they felt about the oil and gas projects proposed for Northern BC, as well as the source and quality of the information they received.
Part 3: Part 3 focused on questions about community readiness for major oil and gas industrial projects; participants were asked to identify present and future pressures and opportunities facing their communities.

Part 4: Community preparation was the focus of Part 4. This section explored a number of subtopics, including housing, labour force, skilled trades, post-secondary education and training, Kindergarten to Grade 12 education, health care, community and social services, economic development services, public safety, recreation and sports facilities and programs, cultural facilities and programs, transportation, business, and the environment. For each of these topics, participants were asked what the community has done to get ready, what needs to be done and by who, and what happens if nothing is done. Due to the breadth of this portion of the interview, participants were asked only to comment on those areas that they felt were particularly relevant to their knowledge, expertise, or personal interest.

Part 5: Participants commented on community vision and coordination, in order to determine whether organizations are taking steps to identify community needs and opportunities, whether they are creating a plan for how the community can align itself to get ready for potential oil and gas projects, and whether they are working to establish collaboration between the many key individuals and organizations in the communities, including industry and government.

2.4 Analysis

All interviews were digitally recorded. Notes were made from the recording of each interview to identify the main points and themes. These notes were sent back to each participant for review to ensure that their views were accurately reflected. Responses to the interview questions were then sorted by topic and compiled into a main summary. From this, common themes were identified through a qualitative content analysis. In addition, a number of unique observations and innovative suggestions were identified. The report follows the same pattern as the interview questionnaire.

3.   Prince George: A Brief Profile

Prince George is located in north central British Columbia, with a population of approximately 72,000 people (Statistics Canada, 2011), making it the largest municipality in Northern BC. Prince George sits at the confluence of the Fraser and Nechako rivers and the junction of the Cariboo and Yellowhead highways, which run north to south and east to west, respectively. This positions Prince George as a hub city for the rest of Northern BC.

Prince George, formerly Fort George, was established in the early 1800s as a fur trading post for the Hudson's Bay Company within the Lheidli T'enneh traditional territory. The city remained small compared to those in the surrounding area (e.g., Quesnel and Barkerville) until 1915 when the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway (now CN Rail) station was constructed, connecting Prince George to Prince Rupert and the Pacific Ocean in the west, and the rest of Canada in the east. The downtown core was created around the rail station, as this was expected to be the main focus of the town. Gradually, the City incorporated increasing amounts of the surrounding lands, which resulted in a number of suburbs separated from a now quieter downtown core.

In the early 1950s, forestry, particularly lumber, became the primary industry in Prince George. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the industry expanded and diversified with the construction of three pulp mills. This was followed by a significant population increase which was accompanied by a housing construction boom. In 1976, an oil refinery was built to supply Bunker C crude oil for the pulp mill boilers.

Over the last decade, a Mountain Pine Beetle infestation has decimated the pine stands in central and southern BC. This had the short-term impact of increasing the annual allowable cut in heavily impacted areas as part of a provincial strategy to realize the value from these affected stands. Depending upon location, this increased cut will soon result in a significantly decreased cut allowance. Fortunately, economic diversification has allowed Prince George to weather the ups and downs of the forest industry more successfully than other communities in the region.

Prince George hosts several regional government offices, major retail stores, the University of Northern British Columbia and the Northern Medical Program, the University Hospital of Northern British Columbia, the northern branch of the BC Cancer Agency, and the College of New Caledonia. All of these amenities draw people from surrounding communities, which is the reason Prince George calls itself 'the Northern Capital of BC'.

4. Dialogues on Readiness Interview Results

For the City of Prince George, the **Dialogues on Readiness** project conducted 15 interviews; 13 in person, and two by telephone. This is an analysis of the information that the interviewees provided in response to questions about community readiness for possible large-scale industrial projects, particularly in the oil and gas sector.

4.1 Part 1: Previous Experience and Lessons from Large-Scale Industrial Projects

4.1.1 Have you had previous experience in dealing with large-scale industrial projects?

Many of the interviewees in Prince George have had experience with industrial projects, including mining, oil and gas, hydroelectric, and forestry projects. Many interviewees mentioned having experience with various phases of these projects, including planning, construction, and operation. Most experiences were in Canada, but some were international.

What was your role(s) dealing with large-scale industrial projects?

Interviewees' involvement with projects was generally related to professional roles including: reviewing projects as an elected official; facilitating the flow of business and project information; economic development; community planning; worker training; and direct employment with project proponents.

What key lessons have you gained from previous experiences with large-scale industrial projects?

A question about key lessons from previous experiences was asked because these are often valuable in informing approaches to current projects.

It was noted that proponents of these projects often do not understand or adequately consider Aboriginal communities' needs and values, including their connection to the land. The importance of taking the time required to build relationships and develop an understanding of these communities was highlighted.

Community residents generally prioritize safety, both for people and the environment. Residents also want to be involved and consulted about projects, and to know how their community will benefit. Based on past experiences, the environmental practices and impacts of oil and gas projects are of concern. Resource companies are perceived by some to have a poor international reputation for human rights, social practices, and accountability, which raises concerns about how projects will be conducted at home.

Interviewees were also concerned about the impact these projects would have on people who do not have the education or employment skills to take advantage of the job opportunities these projects create. These people are impacted by the increased cost of living that accompanies these projects, particularly increased housing and food costs during the construction phase of the project.

4.2 Part 2: Awareness and Information

4.2.1 How informed are you about proposed oil and gas projects in this area, what are your sources of information, and what kinds of information are you getting?

How informed do you feel?

Interviewees who work with organizations that are directly involved with proponents, for example local government and economic development agencies, indicated that they feel well informed. Organizations not directly involved with proponents feel that there is a lack of information about both the construction and operational phases of these projects. These organizations often include social service, public service, and business organizations. Interviewees noted that people in Prince George and the surrounding area have very little experience with the oil and gas industry, and therefore do not have a context for this information.

What are your sources of Information?

Interviewees gather information from a variety of sources including media and social media, prospectuses and investment houses, economic development officers, direct relationships with industry representatives, business organizations, project open houses and community meetings, and peer-reviewed research. Most people said that they seek out multiple sources of information and perspectives in order to get to a balanced understanding. Preferred and trusted sources of information differ among people. Some prefer to attend open houses and meetings hosted by the proponent and/or government. Others rely more on environmental organizations, particularly for information on environmental impact. Many look for sources that are independent and neutral; however, interviewees indicated that such sources are not always readily available.

What kinds of information are you looking for?

The information that interviewees seek varies widely and may be influenced by professional and personal interests and values. There was a sense that, while industrial projects would not be located in Prince George, the proposed industrial investment will transform Northern BC. The impact of this transformation will be felt in the city and is, therefore, of interest to the city.

4.2.2 Are there gaps in the information you are getting?

Participants stated that a community discussion that includes multiple perspectives is lacking in Prince George. Articles and reports that explore intertwined social, environmental, cultural, and economic considerations are needed. The current situation is that media often covers just one issue and presents a single perspective. Comments were made about the need for community discussions to understand the social, economic, and environmental factors associated with oil and gas development. Much of the current discussion is about short-term impacts, but communities

need to know more about long-term impacts that relate to the lifespan of the oil and gas resource (50 or more years).

Interviewees mentioned that reliable information should be made more available. For example, proponents' project information should be deposited for public review at libraries. It was also suggested that technical research and studies about project impacts could be made more accessible to a general audience by including summaries that use plain language.

Interviewees felt that there is a lack of knowledge about the regulatory framework and the project review and approval process for proposed oil and gas projects. Public education that includes information about how people can engage in the consultation process would be of benefit. It was observed that public concern about natural gas projects is lower than for the Enbridge Northern Gateway Project.

4.3 Part 3: Community Readiness

4.3.1 What are some of the key pressures the community faces as it prepares for potential oil and gas industrial projects?

The purpose of asking interviewees to name key pressures was to gauge which issues – both concerns and opportunities – come to mind.

It is recognized that there is an opportunity to position Prince George to realize economic benefits from proposed oil and gas projects, and that there is a need to begin planning to be prepared to take advantage of these. These benefits include increasing the tax base, growing and diversifying the economy, and increasing the population. It was observed that current planning and action is focused on short-term pressures, and that there is insufficient consideration of longer term opportunities. For example, the current focus has been on short-term construction jobs associated with oil, gas, and other major projects, rather than on long-term employment that will be created during the operations phase.

People expressed frustration with the fact that so little of the revenue and benefits from the extraction of natural resources in Northern BC remain in the region. As a result, Northern BC is extremely vulnerable to the economic boom and busts cycles that are the result of swings in global demand for resources. Many want to see a larger share of the revenue from oil and gas operations remain in the north. In addition, they would like to see the north have more of a voice in provincial policy development on issues that impact the region.

Interviewees identified workforce issues as a key pressure. People need to be ready with the skills required for the jobs that will be created. Given that it is felt that there is not enough skilled labour in the north to fill all of the construction phase jobs that will be created, Prince George and other communities must be prepared to welcome new workers and their families into the community. There was concern that with this growth, the city will experience an increase in social issues such as family violence and drug and alcohol abuse. There was also concern about an increase in organized crime activities.

4.4 Part 4: Community Preparation

Interviewees were invited to describe pressures associated with potential oil and gas projects, what is being done to get ready to address them, what needs to be done to get ready, and what will happen if the pressures are not addressed. Interviewees provided information based on their professional role and knowledge, and some also offered insight based on general knowledge they bring as residents.

4.4.1 Housing

Housing: Pressures

Interviewees felt that the expectation of most people in the community is that construction employees will reside in work camps outside of the community; only a small proportion will live in Prince George. Permanent housing will, however, be required for employees working in the operations phase of projects, along with their families. Permanent housing will also be required for new residents who arrive as a result of the increased job and economic opportunities in Prince George.

New housing in the city has implications not only for the municipal tax base but also for the social infrastructure, including schools, hospitals, and social support services. To avoid over-supplying the housing market and manage shorter-term housing demand, it was suggested by interviewees that industry sequence, rather than overlap, project construction timelines. This, they felt, would stagger peak construction phase housing needs. It was noted that mid- to high-range rental accommodation that is often desired by professionals is already in short supply, and the demand would be exacerbated during project construction.

Interviewees were concerned that as housing costs rise, the lack of affordable housing will become a safety and health concern. For people with low income, the quality of housing and living conditions will suffer as these families and individuals are forced into smaller, unsuitable units. There are some concerns about resistance to integrating affordable housing into neighbourhoods, or discrimination in the housing market against some Aboriginal people and other population groups.

Housing: What is already happening to get ready

The City of Prince George is addressing housing needs through their planning strategies, which include infill housing in residential areas, downtown area planning, and homelessness initiatives. Many housing issues require partnership with, and funding from, senior levels of government.

Housing: What needs to be done to get ready

Interviewees felt that industry and the City share responsibility to accurately forecast the required housing supply associated with the projects. A couple of interviewees cautioned that housing supply must not be planned according to old paradigms and assumptions, for example, employees working in Prince George will not necessarily be accompanied by their families, which affects their housing choices.

It was suggested that there would be opportunities to develop innovative social housing through re-use of buildings. There are examples in other communities of housing that was built for construction workers being converted to seniors housing after the project construction phase was complete.

4.4.2 Labour Force

Labour Force: Pressures

It was noted by participants that communities can support a strong local labour force in different ways. Social supports should be provided to help people deal with the ups and downs in labour demand. Participants felt that programs that focus on youth and children are required to ensure that the next generation of workers is prepared with the education and skills for the jobs and careers that will exist in the future.

Some felt that Prince George is likely to require substantial in-migration to meet labour needs, particularly if a number of the proposed industrial projects proceed at the same time. One of the keys to attracting and retaining a skilled labour force is to create attractive and livable communities. Interviewees said that Prince George must offer high-quality health, education, recreational, cultural, and social amenities and services if it wants to attract new residents.

It was noted that communities that retain people help industry by reducing employee turnover, thus avoiding the costs associated with recruitment and training**.**

Labour Force: What is already happening to get ready

Some interviewees mentioned that labour studies have been completed and lay out a clear path forward. Others, however, are not aware of these studies. It was learned through the interviews that there are initiatives underway to attract new immigrants living in other parts of Canada to Prince George, and to help the community and employers welcome and embrace different cultures. Participants also mentioned that both the College of New Caledonia (CNC) and University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) are attracting international students and students from other parts of BC to the region, and there is a possibility that these students will remain in the region after graduation.

Labour Force: What needs to be done to get ready

Interviewees felt that industry needs to identify the skills required, the number of positions that will be available, and the timeframes for deployment, so that local training organizations and individuals can prepare for these opportunities. The roles of universities, colleges, and industry need to be clarified in a coordinated labour strategy. The strategy must include training for trades, public service, social services, and the professions. Many of the interviewees spoke about the need to focus on training and building capacity among the Aboriginal community. Barriers to local labour force participation also need to be removed, for example childcare and transportation challenges that are particularly experienced by women. Proposed oil and gas projects may bring opportunities for women to take up non-traditional roles, such as truck driving.

4.4.3 Post-Secondary Education and Skilled Trades Training

Post-Secondary Education and Skilled Trades Training: Pressures

Broader thinking about training and education needs was encouraged by interviewees. Skills training for oil and gas construction projects is needed, but the scope of training and education also needs to include support services and professional roles that result in long-term jobs. Interviewees were concerned that educational programs and degrees without immediate vocational or technical applications are being dismissed.

Programs are being funded in skilled trades training to respond to current labour shortages. Interviewees say that this funding, however, does not cover operations or support costs. CNC and other colleges are challenged to respond to calls for new programs, only to find that the budget allocation is tight, particularly for programs that have high costs for instructors, equipment, and facilities. For many programs, colleges are finding it difficult to retain and attract instructors because many candidates could earn a higher wage by practicing their trade in an industry job.

It was learned through the interviews that colleges are particularly focused on recruiting Aboriginal youth, and it was noted that they are the fastest growing demographic group in Canada. It was also noted that many Aboriginal students may need upgrading and prerequisites before they can enroll in some programs. This requires a longer commitment from the student, more support from the college, and more funding for the college to enable it to offer the prerequisite courses.

Post-Secondary Education and Skilled Trades Training: What is already happening to get ready

Interviewees stated that post-secondary institutions are taking advantage of training opportunities and private sector investment to build new partnerships. Trades education programs have employer advisory groups to provide information about the labour requirements. Interviewees commented that colleges and industry need to be in close contact about training programs so that course content and equipment remains current.

Post-Secondary Education and Skilled Trades Training: What needs to be done to get ready

Participants spoke to the need for a renewed commitment by employers to apprenticeships and clinical placements. They noted that both students and employers benefit from these placements and spoke to the need for a stronger commitment from large industry. Currently, many of the participants are smaller employers, who, after training these students, generally lose them to higher-paying industry jobs. It was also suggested that the Industry Training Authority (ITA) should partner with colleges to find solutions for co-op placements.

It was suggested that alumni of post-secondary institutions in Northern BC should be encouraged to stay in Northern BC. One idea proposed was to award exit scholarships, which students could use to return to a Northern BC college for more training.

4.4.4 Education – Kindergarten to Grade 12

Education: Kindergarten to Grade 12: Pressures

Participants emphasized the importance of the K-12 school system in laying the foundation for life-long learning and education. It was felt that schools must continue to provide traditional courses, but also needed to add courses such as leadership and communications training.

Education: Kindergarten to Grade 12: What is already happening to get ready

Interviewees identified the Accelerated Credit Enrolment in Industry Training (ACE IT) program, which allows high school students to enter a trade program while completing their high school diploma, as an example of a program that is helping students prepare for job opportunities. ACE IT involves the Career Technical Centre (CTC) at the College of New Caledonia and the Secondary School Apprenticeship Program. These programs include sessions with parents to inform them about the program and the potential of trades jobs.

Education: Kindergarten to Grade 12: What needs to be done to get ready

The forestry industry is already involved in the ACE IT program as a donor, and the oil and gas industry could also become involved. Interviewees noted that, while the program cannot solve the skilled labour shortage, it does help the community by enhancing long-term labour development. Participants also highlighted the need to focus on helping students, especially Aboriginal students, succeed and achieve high school graduation.

4.4.5 Health Care

Health Care: Pressures

Interviewees highlighted that Prince George is the trauma centre for Northern BC. It serves a large geographic region and will need to be prepared for an increased volume of cases, particularly during the construction phase of the oil and gas and other resource sector projects. In addition, health care services will be challenged to serve a larger population in Prince George and the surrounding region. It is anticipated that the number of cases will increase across the health system.

It was noted that by interviewees that the experience in other resource communities suggests that the health system also needs to be prepared for an increase in the conditions associated with community and personal change, including substance abuse, addictions, violence, and domestic violence.

Health Care: What is already happening to get ready

Through the interviews, it was learned that Northern Health is working on a primary health care strategy that directs more attention to ensuring that clients/patients have access to a health care team where they live, as well as a telehealth strategy. It was noted that recruitment and retention are concerns across all health professions. Both UNBC and CNC offer programs that train health professionals, for example: the Northern Medical Program, Medical Lab Technician, and Medial Radiography Technician programs.

Health Care: What needs to be done to get ready

Participants stated that the health system in Prince George must be prepared to serve the local, regional, and northern population in a timely fashion. Interviewees recognized that the availability and quality of health services are key elements of a resident attraction strategy, and this should influence decisions to allocate additional capacity to local and regional health services in Prince George.

4.4.6 Community and Social Services

Community and Social Services: Pressures

Interview participants commented that the experience with oil and gas projects in other communities suggests that community and social services in Prince George will be under pressure. They noted that social and community services in other oil and gas communities report having to deal with the social consequences of increased gang activity, drug trafficking, domestic violence, and racism. They observed that the agencies that provide social and community services in Prince George do not have the information or capacity to forecast the demand for their services. These agencies indicated that they would like to work closely with local government, economic

development agencies, the health authority, and the education sector to develop strategies to address increased demand.

Community and Social Services: What is already happening to get ready

Prince George has a Poverty Reduction Pilot Program that links social services to business. Companies are recognizing that they are putting pressure on social infrastructure, and are providing some assistance, such as equipment donations.

Community and Social Services: What needs to be done to get ready

Interviewees suggested that the development of a social strategy that anticipates need and demand across the whole system, rather than continuing to plan for each service in isolation, would be the preferred place to start. Learning from the social service sector in communities that have experienced rapid growth as a result of oil and gas investment would be beneficial. Some of these communities could provide insight into 'social costs' that could have been averted with early and preventive action. Including industry in addressing the social impact of their agenda is important. Local government, economic development agencies, and the education sector should also be included.

A discussion about social issues needs to engage the voices that tend to be at the fringes of many community dialogues, including Aboriginal people, people with low incomes, and recent immigrants. A system or pathway to speed up the process of becoming familiar with social services availability and roles would be useful.

4.4.7 Economic Development

Economic Development: Pressures

Interviewees noted that Prince George is home to a large number of regional businesses, including a number of professional and technical service and supply companies. These companies are finding it difficult to recruit and it has been suggested that there should be more emphasis on educating the required work force in the north, at UNBC and CNC. For example, there is a shortage of engineers and technologists in Prince George, and interviewees expressed concern that this gap will not be easily filled because of limited post-secondary opportunities in engineering and high school preparatory courses in the north.

Economic Development: What is already happening to get ready

Interviewees highlighted the work of Initiatives Prince George, stating that it plays a key role in promoting the community and attracting economic investment and labour. It was noted that economic development organizations in Prince George are using consistent messaging in attraction strategies.

It was learned through the interviews that economic development organizations are engaging industry in conversations to encourage policies and operations that promote local partnerships. These partnerships can have a significant impact on community well-being. For example, First Nations are encouraging industry to work with them on a capacity development model, which generally involves the establishment of Aboriginal and joint venture companies to capture specifically designated business contracts.

Economic Development: What needs to be done to get ready

It is recognized that Prince George and smaller communities need to work together and support one another to take advantage of emerging economic opportunities related to industrial projects in the oil and gas sector. The Province needs to play a supportive role, to help communities with economic development, recognizing the value they contribute to the provincial economy. The focus of all economic development should be on long-term viability and sustainability, growing local businesses, and diversifying the economic base.

Participants felt that there is an opportunity to create and strengthen economic development partnerships and develop joint ventures with First Nations. This will require learning to build respectful relationships and understanding more about one another's objectives.

4.4.8 Business Development

Business Development: Pressures

Participants noted that local businesses are experiencing challenges in hiring skilled labour. In some cases, their employees have been lured away by oil and gas companies located in Prince George and in Alberta. The most commonly advertised jobs in Prince George are in engineering and technology, skilled trades, heavy equipment operation, health care, and business services. Interview participants noted that most businesses in Prince George are already busy, and may not be concerned about, or interested in, pursuing new oil and gas opportunities.

Business Development: What is already happening to get ready

The BC Chamber of Commerce has passed a resolution stating that business resiliency in communities should be a key outcome to emerge from major industry projects. Oil and gas companies are already communicating with the business sector in communities across Northern BC about procurement, contract, and employment opportunities.

Interviewees observed that many businesses in Prince George do not have experience with large scale projects or the oil and gas industry. Northern Development Initiative Trust is offering 'boot camps' to provide skills and strategies to help businesses be more successful. Businesses are also receiving assistance to attract and retain workers, and are being supported to welcome new immigrants in the workplace.

Business Development: What needs to be done to get ready

Interviewees felt that Prince George needs to continually reinforce its role as Northern BC's economic hub for industrial and resource projects. Many contractors and suppliers in Prince George are accustomed to dealing with forestry companies. These businesses need to better understand the oil and gas sector, and learn how to communicate with industry, if they want to take advantage of business opportunities. Businesses also need to take seriously good customer service practices, attractive storefronts, and performance quality.

4.4.9 Public Safety

Public Safety: Pressures

Interviewees noted that capacity was the most serious pressure facing public safety organizations. These organizations are not able to increase their staffing based on potential projects; they must wait until the projects are approved and underway before staffing is increased.

Public Safety: What is already happening to get ready

In Prince George, interviewees reported good lines of communication and relationships with the social service and community organizations. These help both the public safety and social service organizations deal more effectively with social issues and safety implications that emerge. Ongoing economic development initiatives to create more business activity downtown and make the area more economically viable, vibrant, and safe are positive developments. Public safety organizations are participating on the Mayor's Task Force on Safety.

Public Safety: What needs to be done to get ready

Through the interviews it was learned that public safety organizations will work directly with industry on protocol agreements for service and assistance. Public safety messages that reiterate that Prince George is a safe place to live will continue to strengthen worker attraction initiatives.

4.4.10 Recreation, Sports Facilities and Programs

Recreation, Sports Facilities and Programs: Pressures

Interviewees noted that industry often builds recreation and sport facilities in the camps. This reduces the impact on community facilities. Industry partners usually anticipate being called on to support the community's recreation infrastructure needs. Many corporations will provide funding for recreation facilities.

Recreation, Sports Facilities and Programs: What is already happening to get ready

It was learned through the interviews that, once camps are in place, industry surveys camp residents to learn about leisure and recreation preferences. Facilities and programs are developed

based on the results of the survey. Camps will offer a wide range of facilities and programs, including learning opportunities (e.g. library, Skype tutorials), social recreation, and fitness (e.g. workout equipment). It was noted that, in many cases, industry will donate the equipment to the community after the project is complete.

Recreation, Sports Facilities and Programs: What needs to be done to get ready

Interviewees noted that past history in other communities would suggest that many companies are willing to make a capital investment in a community legacy, and recreation facilities are often raised as an idea. Estimates and funding strategies for maintenance are recommended, since industry contributions usually do not cover operating expenses.

4.4.11 Cultural Facilities and Programs

Cultural Facilities and Programs: Pressures

Cultural facilities interpret and tell the stories of the community. With this mandate, interviewees felt that it would be possible to highlight the historical, present, and future roles of various industries. With industry funding, there would be excellent opportunities for cultural facilities to provide this information. The concern for cultural facilities is that funding from industry would come with an expectation that only the positive aspects of the story would be told.

It was also noted that cultural facilities can also help industry better understand the history and culture of a community. The stories can help provide insight into the community's values and image of itself.

Participants stated that despite the potential of these roles, cultural facilities are very rarely involved in discussions with industry about opportunities for partnership. They rarely realize lasting benefit from industrial investment in a community.

Cultural Facilities and Programs: What is already happening to get ready

It was noted by interviewees that cultural organizations are not typically involved in specific plans related to industry projects, and that this was a gap that should be addressed.

Cultural Facilities and Programs: What needs to be done to get ready

Interviewees pointed out that industry and cultural organizations tend to have philanthropic relations with one another, but there is also potential for deeper partnerships. For example, businesses are being challenged to provide opportunities for staff to develop creativity and teamwork. Cultural facilities can offer programs that provide these opportunities.
Leveraging cultural facilities' role as conveners in the community, industry could explore opportunities to tell their story through a community and cultural lens. Participants said that there are opportunities for cultural facilities to use children's programs as an avenue to encourage young

people to explore and learn about different industries and career opportunities. Cultural facilities may be able to host discussions about industry-related topics; they provide an accessible and trustworthy place for people to seek information, learn, ask questions, and participate in the process.

4.4.12 Transportation and Infrastructure

Transportation and Infrastructure: Pressures

Interviewees commented that Northern BC communities are raising awareness about their significant contributions to provincial revenues, and advocating that they should realize greater benefit in terms of infrastructure investment, including roads, water, and sewer systems. For many communities, hard infrastructure is in critical need of repair and upgrading. It was noted that transportation and mobility are key attractants for the community, and delays from increased traffic and slow-moving vehicles associated with industry projects need to be addressed.

Transportation and Infrastructure: What is already happening to get ready

Specific measures were not discussed during the interviews.

Transportation and Infrastructure: What needs to be done to get ready

Interviewees felt that, as the economic hub in Northern BC, Prince George's transportation infrastructure - air, road, and rail - is critical. They highlighted the need to ensure that this infrastructure keeps pace with the demands. Links between the city and the surrounding communities were seen by interviewees as important to the communities, as well as to industrial project efficiency and safety. It was recognized by those participating in the interviews that significant funding will be required for infrastructure investment.

4.4.13 Environment

Environment: Pressures

A number of interviewees stated that there is concern that the long-term environmental implications of proposed oil and gas projects have not been studied. It was felt that the environmental assessment process is generally not well understood, and that most people have a limited understanding of the process involved in planning oil and gas projects.

Environment: What is already happening to get ready

The environmental review process for some of the proposed projects is already underway.

Environment: What needs to be done to get ready

Interviewees reported that the community wants more information about how a proposed project's environmental risks would be monitored and assessed. It was noted that continued engagement is needed to build and maintain trust. Project review processes could be improved by overtly respecting minority voices and different worldviews, such as those held by First Nations. Interviewees suggested that understanding cumulative and interconnected effects and taking into account factors such as social values should become part of the way that industry thinks about and evaluates its proposals.

4.5 Part 5: Vision and Coordination

4.5.1 Identifying Community Needs, Opportunities, and Challenges and Bringing Groups Together to Plan

Current Initiatives

A single collaborative table in Prince George was not identified, but many initiatives were described:

- Oil and gas companies are establishing community offices to create a corporate presence and to better understand the community. Outreach initiatives include sponsoring community open houses, participating in business organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, and creating specialized teams to build relationships with Aboriginal communities.
- Economic development agencies such as Northern Development Initiative Trust, Omenica Beetle Action Coalition, Initiatives Prince George, and Community Futures bring northern communities together to create a common voice to lobby the provincial government for policies and programs that will benefit the region. They also sponsor forums on topics of interest. These forums are effective venues for networking and information exchange. Oil and gas companies are participating.
- The City of Prince George has established a number of committees to deal with specific issues. These include, for example, the Mayor's Task Force on Community Safety, the Housing Strategy Steering Committee, and the Winter Games Committee. The City and key organizations are also coordinating communications and messaging to build Prince George's identity.

Interviewees commented that there are many community and neighbourhood groups working on various projects, but there is very little coordination among them.

Who is involved, leading, engaged, or missing?

It was noted that, while economic development organizations are getting ready for oil and gas sector investments, social development organizations have not been as involved in the dialogues or planning, despite recognition that oil and gas projects will create social issues in the community. Social and community service organizations need to know more about industry's plans so that they can prepare for the impact. They also need to be supported to come together with other social service and community organizations and with economic development organizations, to create an integrated community-wide plan for social and economic development. Interviewees suggested that industry needs to partner with, and support the work of, these organizations.

How could it be more effective?

Building community and organizational capacity to work with industry is important since industry reportedly gravitates to, and works with, those who have the strongest leadership and skills. It can be difficult to know which groups might be missing from the dialogue.

Where is the funding coming from?

Some interviewees felt that government should be responsible for funding coordination and collaboration work, and that industry should contribute through donations and sponsorships. Others said that the cost of collaboration should be shared because the benefit is also shared. It was pointed out that it would be wise to first figure out where the funding will come from, in order to bring legitimacy and commitment to the process.

4.5.2 What is being done to develop a community vision, and what needs to be done?

Current Initiatives

The City of Prince George's vision is articulated in the Official Community Plan, *myPG Community Sustainability Plan*, and the current Council Plan and Priorities. Interviewees noted, however, that this is not a complete and comprehensive community vision and plan; it is the vision and plan for local government only. An economic development vision is also in place. This vision is to see Prince George positioned as the economic hub of Northern BC.

Who is involved, leading, engaged, or missing?

Interviewees indicated that a broad range of community groups were involved in the development of the Official Community Plan, but there is no such project bringing the community together at this time. It was noted that any group engaged in visioning and planning should be encouraged to seek the advice of Aboriginal Elders, as they can bring a long-term perspective to the process. Representatives from oil and gas and other industrial companies also need to be involved in the community visioning process.

How could it be more effective?

It was suggested that Prince George should develop a social development vision and plan that integrates with the economic development vision and plan. Prince George needs to invest in creative and innovative 'social thinking'.

Some of the interviewees mentioned that many good ideas have already been created through visioning and planning. Before creating new work, there should be a mechanism to review the validity of past work. People who have taken time to participate in the processes should be asked to contribute to the review. Creating a long-term view is essential. Unfortunately, the three-year local government election cycle hampers the development of a consistent long-term vision.

Where is the funding coming from?

The interview participants did not discuss funding for this process.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of the *Dialogues on Readiness* project was to better understand the opportunities, pressure points, and processes associated with the development of large industrial projects. Specifically, the project explored:

- The level of understanding of the process and timing associated with the development of large industrial projects.
- Community factors that need to be considered in order to be prepared and ready for large industrial projects.
- Mechanisms for readiness, community capacity, and the ongoing involvement by government, industry, and communities.
- This phase of the project was conducted in Kitimat, Prince George, Prince Rupert and Terrace, and focused on the oil and gas sector.

Through interviews with a broad cross-section of residents whose work or volunteer activities related to community readiness, it was found that a number of positive things are happening in Prince George:

- The City of Prince George has completed an Official Community Plan and is currently working on a housing need and demand study and housing strategy framework.
- Oil and gas project proponents are opening offices in Prince George and are building relationships in the community.
- Post-secondary institutions are working with industry, First Nations, economic and business development agencies, and the K-12 school system to develop programs that will prepare people for the jobs that will be available in the region.
- As the northern tertiary health care centre, Prince George has benefited from a significant investment in health facilities over the past five years, including additions to the hospital and the construction of the BC Cancer Agency Centre for the North.

The interviews also identified a number of areas where participants felt that action was required in order to be prepared for large industrial projects in the oil and gas sector:

- There needs to be better communication, coordination, and collaboration between Prince George and communities and First Nations in the surrounding region in order to take full advantage of the economic development opportunities associated with the proposed oil and gas projects.
- Social and community service agencies need to be supported with increased capacity and better information about the impact of the proposed oil and gas sector investment so that they can anticipate and plan for increased service levels.
- Similar to the economic and business development organizations, social and community service agencies need to be supported to come together to develop a strategy for meeting service needs.

- There is an opportunity for better coordination and communication between the groups, committees, and task forces that are working on community and economic development issues in Prince George. This will help to ensure that plans are integrated and comprehensive.
- As communities, industry, and businesses in the north grow and diversify, there will be job opportunities in all sectors; including industry, business, service, supply, public, and community sectors. A strategy for educating and retaining young people in the north to fill these positions should be developed. The development of this strategy should engage the northern post-secondary institutions, representatives from each employment sector, and community representatives.
- As the regional service centre for Northern BC, Prince George should champion the development of a strategy for transportation infrastructure that allows people and goods to travel efficiently to communities across the north. This strategy would most likely focus on the development of small airports.
- Given that the oil and gas industry is new to the area, there is a need for public education that builds awareness of the regulations, approval processes, timelines, and monitoring and reporting requirements for these projects.

Enhancing community readiness will better position the community and region to realize long-term benefit from the anticipated activity and investments by the oil and gas sector. Working together, the community and industry can realize the mutual benefit that comes from having a qualified workforce, an attractive community that can attract and retain workers, a strong and diversified business sector, and a robust community and social services sector. Building a resilient community with a sustainable economy will ensure that Prince George remains vibrant and viable well into the future.

Appendix A: Dialogues on Readiness Consent Form

Dialogues on Readiness: Preparing for Industrial Development in Northern BC

Purpose – A common interest has emerged among communities, regions, and industry for a better understanding of the opportunities, pressure points, and processes associated with the development of large industrial projects. The objective of the project is to further dialogue and understanding about this development, including mechanisms for readiness, community capacity, and the ongoing involvement by government, industry, and communities. This phase of the project will focus on developments in the oil and gas sector.

How Respondents Were Chosen – Interview participants were identified from publicly available lists as well as from local suggestions of people who have the potential to provide information on community readiness for industrial development.

Anonymity and Confidentiality – The names of participants will not be used in any reporting, nor will any information which may be used to identify an individual be used within the project reporting. All information shared in the interviews will be held in strict confidence by the researchers. All records will be kept in a locked research room at UNBC and will be accessible only to the research team. The information will be kept until the final project report is complete, after which time, shredding and file erasure will destroy all information related to the interview.

Potential Risks and Benefits - This project has been assessed by the UNBC Research Ethics Board. The project team does not consider there to be any risks to participation. It is hoped that by participating, people will be able to help prepare the community for large industrial investment.

Voluntary Participation - The interview will be audio recorded and a summary of key themes will be created. A key thematic summary of the interview will be sent to each interviewee, and they will have one week to provide any edits or corrections back to the research team. Participation in the interview is entirely voluntary and, as such, people may choose not to participate. Interviewees may choose not to answer any questions that make them uncomfortable, and they have the right to end their participation in the interview at any time and have all the information they provided withdrawn from the study and destroyed. The interview is expected to last 45 minutes.

Research Results - In case of any questions that may arise from this research, please feel free to contact Dr. Greg Halseth (250-960-5826; halseth@unbc.ca) or Marleen Morris (250-960-9806; mmorris@unbc.ca) of the Community Development Institute at UNBC.

Complaints - Any complaints about this project should be directed to the Office of Research, UNBC (250) 960-6735, or e-mail reb@unbc.ca.

I have read the above description of the study and I understand the conditions of my participation. My signature indicates that I agree to participate in this study.

_____
(Name -please print)   (Signature)   (Date)

Appendix B: Dialogues on Readiness Interview Questions

Part 1: Opening Questions
1. Have you had experience in dealing with large scale industrial projects?
    a. If so, where and when?
    b. Was it during the planning phase, construction phase, or the operating phase of the project?
        i. Prompt: Were these multi-year projects? Were there multiple projects involved?
2. What was your role?
3. What were the key lessons from your experience?

Part 2: Awareness and Information
1. How informed do you feel about the oil and gas projects that are being proposed for this area?
        i. Prompt: Differentiate for the different projects: Pipelines, LNG plants, refineries.
        ii. Prompt: Balanced, comprehensive, up-to-date, understandable.
2. Where do you get your information?
        i. Prompt: Media, social media, websites, organizations, other people (word of mouth).
        ii. Prompt: Which sources are best? Why?
3. What kind of information are you getting? Why is it relevant to you?
4. Are there gaps in the information you are getting? Why would this information be relevant to you?

Part 3: Community Readiness
1. What are some of the key pressures the community is facing as it prepares for potential industrial development?
        i. Prompt: labour force / availability of labour, transient people / workers, public safety, crime, housing, community services, environmental impact, noise, traffic.

Part 4: Community Preparation
I would now like to ask, probe a little deeper, into some specific areas related to community pressures and community readiness.

Housing
1. What are the pressures around housing?
        i. Prompt: suitability of current housing stock, type and tenure of housing, cost, overcrowdedness, camps.
2. What is being done to get ready?
3. What needs to be done to get ready? By whom?
4. What happens if this is not addressed?

Labour Force
1. What are the pressures around the labour force?
    - i. Prompt: shortage of workers, shortage of specific skills, cost of labour, retention / length of stay, local / non-local hiring, long distance labour commuting, Aboriginal hiring.
2. What is being done to get ready?
    - i. Prompt: recruitment / retention programs, marketing campaigns, industry/government/education collaboration.
    - ii. Prompt: Who are the opportunities focused on? Who should they be focused on?
3. What needs to be done to get ready? By whom?
4. What happens if this is not addressed?

Skilled Trades
6. What are the pressures around skilled trades training?
    - i. Prompt: local opportunities, right offerings available, timing (when courses are offered), Aboriginal focus, focus on long-term / chronically unemployed.
7. What is being done to get ready?
    - i. Prompt: recruitment / retention programs, marketing campaigns, industry/government/education collaboration.
    - ii. Prompt: Who are the opportunities focused on? Who should they be focused on?
8. What needs to be done to get ready? By whom?
9. What happens if this is not addressed?

Education and Training (Post-secondary)
1. What are the pressures around post-secondary education and training?
    - i. Prompt: local opportunities, right offerings available, timing (when courses are offered), Aboriginal focus, focus on long-term / chronically unemployed, student funding issues.
2. What is being done to get ready?
    - i. Prompt: recruitment / retention programs, marketing campaigns, industry/government/education collaboration.
    - ii. Prompt: Who are the opportunities focused on? Who should they be focused on?
3. What needs to be done to get ready? By whom?
4. What happens if this is not addressed?

Education (K-12)
1. What are the pressures around K-12 education?
    - i. Prompt: existing / anticipated school capacity, age, availability of higher level high school courses.
2. What is being done to get ready?
3. What needs to be done to get ready? By whom?
4. What happens if this is not addressed?

Health Care
1. What are the pressures around health care?
   i. Prompt: number of physicians, ER, other health professionals (physiotherapy, occupational therapists).
2. What is being done to get ready?
3. What needs to be done to get ready? By whom?
4. What happens if this is not addressed?

Community and social services
1. What are the pressures around community and social services?
   i. Prompt: availability of services to deal with / welcome the influx of new residents, anticipated social and crime issues, immigrant settlement.
2. What is being done to get ready?
3. What needs to be done to get ready? By whom?
4. What happens if this is not addressed?

Economic development services
1. What are the pressures around economic development services?
   i. Prompt: availability of services to develop or manage a community economic development plan, local business development, local business succession planning, business and industry attraction and retention, availability of market trend data for local business.
2. What is being done to get ready?
3. What needs to be done to get ready? By whom?
4. What happens if this is not addressed?

Public safety
1. What are the pressures around public safety services?
   i. Prompt: police, fire, ambulance, justice
2. What is being done to get ready?
3. What needs to be done to get ready? By whom?
4. What happens if this is not addressed?

Recreation and sports facilities and programs
1. What are the pressures around recreation and sports facilities and programs?
   i. Prompt: recreation facilities and programs, outdoor recreation, environment.
2. What is being done to get ready?
3. What needs to be done to get ready? By whom?
4. Who should fund this?
5. What happens if this is not addressed?

Cultural facilities and programs
1. What are the pressures around cultural facilities and programs?
   i. Prompt: cultural facilities and programs, groups and organizations.
2. What is being done to get ready?
3. What needs to be done to get ready? By whom?

4. Who should fund this?
5. What happens if this is not addressed?

Transportation
1. What are the pressures around transportation?
      i. Prompt: local / regional roads, industrial traffic, air line connections, rail connections.
2. What is being done to get ready?
3. What needs to be done to get ready? By whom?
4. What happens if this is not addressed?

Business
1. What are the pressures around business and the retail / service sector?
      i. Prompt: knowledge of procurement and contract opportunities, ability to recruit, skills, wage differentials with major employers, employee retention, cost, local cost of living, availability of business services (accounting, IT, marketing).
2. What is being done to get ready?
3. What needs to be done to get ready? By whom?
4. What happens if this is not addressed?

Environment
1. What are the pressures around the environment?
      i. Prompt: increased population, increased traffic, water supply and treatment, risk of accidents, greenhouse gas emissions.
2. What is being done to get ready?
3. What needs to be done to get ready? By whom?
4. What happens if this is not addressed?

Part 5: Community Vision and Coordination

1. What is being done to identify the community needs, opportunities, and challenges that will emerge as a result of the industrial investment?
      i. Prompt: building community capacity, diversifying local economy.
   a. Who is involved?
   b. Are outside agencies and organizations engaged in the process?
      ii. Prompt: provincial ministries / agencies, regional bodies.
   c. Is there anyone missing from these dialogues?
   d. Who is taking the lead?
   e. What could be done to make this work more effective?
   f. Who is currently funding this work?

2. What is being done to develop a vision for the community?
      i. Prompt: for now, for the future? Is discussion based on community assets and aspirations?
   a. Who is involved?

b. Are outside agencies and organizations engaged in the process?
    ii. Prompt: provincial ministries / agencies, regional bodies.
c. Is there anyone missing from these dialogues?
d. Who is taking the lead?
e. What could be done to make this work more effective?
f. Who is currently funding this work?

3. What is being done to bring groups in the community together to understand and plan for the needs, opportunities, and challenges that will emerge as a result of the industrial investment?
    a. Who is involved?
    b. Are outside agencies and organizations engaged in the process?
        i. Prompt: provincial ministries / agencies, regional bodies.
    c. Is there anyone missing from these dialogues?
    d. Who is taking the lead?
    e. What could be done to make this work more effective?
    f. Who is currently funding this work?