



# CARIBOO • STRONG

news release

March 8, 2017

17-05

For Immediate Release

## New economic development project launches in the Cariboo

*Cariboo-Chilcotin* – Elected officials from the Cariboo region met last month as part of the official launch of Cariboo Strong, a new program to capitalize on economic opportunities in the region. With a goal of *growing a strong region through strong communities*, the program will support the region’s communities towards economic diversification, transformation and growth.

Leading to its official launch, Cariboo Strong has slowly been building momentum throughout 2016 and into 2017. Initial meetings and conversations have begun in all three Cariboo sub-regions with local community members, businesses, industry, municipalities and First Nations regarding the economic opportunities present in the Cariboo. To date, Cariboo Strong has met with about 100 individuals and organizations. Key themes discussed have centred on housing, Aboriginal tourism, recreation trail development, age-friendly opportunities, agriculture and forestry innovation.

The program is grounded in the three Cariboo sub-regions – South Cariboo, Central Cariboo & Chilcotin, and North Cariboo. In each sub-region, the work begins with one-to-one conversations and small group meetings to discuss the economic opportunities and challenges in the area. Through these conversations, Cariboo Strong identifies opportunities and forms action groups with community members to take action on those opportunities. Structured around specific themes such as Housing or Tourism, each action group finds opportunities for collaboration and identifies actions for the short, medium and long term. The region’s elected officials and three sub-regional economic advisory tables provide support to the action groups.

As Cariboo Strong progresses, the program will include community-to-community collaboration and action where there is common ground and the potential for mutual benefit. The program will also work at the regional level to develop strategies to take advantage of the opportunities created by shifts in the global economy.

.../More

*growing a strong region through strong communities*



Throughout 2017, Cariboo Strong will continue meeting in all three sub-regions to discuss opportunities for economic diversification and community capacity, form action groups and facilitate on-the-ground action.

Cariboo Strong is a partnership between the Cariboo Regional District, the District of 100 Mile House, the City of Williams Lake, the City of Quesnel, the District of Wells, the Village of Clinton, the Thompson-Nicola Regional District and the Community Development Institute at the University of Northern British Columbia. The program has been made possible with support and funding from the Cariboo Chilcotin Beetle Action Coalition, Northern Development Initiative Trust, West Fraser and the Province of B.C.'s Rural Dividend Fund.

## QUOTES

### **Al Richmond, Chair of the Cariboo Regional District:**

“This program is important for the Cariboo as our economy and communities face significant economic challenges. The Cariboo region needs to develop and implement short- and long-term transition plans that focus on economic diversity, growth, job creation and attracting new investors to the region. Through Cariboo Strong, we are taking a locally-built approach that builds on collective knowledge, supports the values of the broader community and encourages local participation and ownership.”

### **Marleen Morris, Co-Director of the Community Development Institute at the University of Northern British Columbia:**

“The CDI is bringing our research expertise and skills to the communities, helping them identify viable options for economic diversification. Our experience with community development will support all partners coming together to make decisions and plans. The CDI will be there throughout the process to assist individual and collective community efforts in identifying and implementing actions. We’re proud to be a founding partner in Cariboo Strong.”

### **Jim Rivett, Mayor of the Village of Clinton:**

“Cariboo Strong brings the five municipalities in the Cariboo, the TNRD, First Nations and the CRD closer together to tackle the significant issue of diversifying the economy of the region. Bringing in CDI to help us through this project will keep us focused and promote action-oriented results. I believe it takes this type of partnership to accomplish the goal of building a stronger diverse economy and creating jobs in the region.”

### **Mitch Campsall, Mayor of the District of 100 Mile House:**

“It’s refreshing to see community leaders from across the region working towards a common goal. Collectively, we have a responsibility to recognize our challenges as a region and, with an open mind, entertain opportunities that will encourage long-term sustainability. This initiative facilitated by UNBC and the CDI will definitely make us stronger as a region.”

.../More



news release

**Bob Simpson, Mayor of the City of Quesnel:**

“Quesnel is pleased to partner with our neighbouring Cariboo communities on this sub-regional initiative. Our communities are facing challenges and Cariboo Strong will support us in thriving through this transition. We will work together to identify projects to support business growth, attract and retain residents, create investment opportunities and strengthen our economy.”

**Robin Sharpe, Mayor of the District of Wells:**

“The District of Wells fully supports the Cariboo Strong Project. In this time of economic uncertainty for our region it is important that all communities work together to ensure the economic well-being of our residents. By working together, we can attract far more resources to the area than we could as individual communities. We are pleased to work alongside the larger municipalities realizing that, if they are doing well, there will be many economic benefits for us as well.”

**Walt Cobb, Mayor of the City of Williams Lake:**

“The economic challenges faced by our Cariboo communities emphasize the need to diversify our economy and strengthen our communities. There is strength in collaboration, and the City of Williams Lake supports Cariboo Strong’s local approach to addressing these challenges.”

**John Ranta, Chair of the Thompson-Nicola Regional District:**

“The Thompson-Nicola Regional District is committed to providing a healthy and sustainable community for our residents, both economically and socially. It is vital that we continue to seek out opportunities to grow in order to enhance the well-being of our community as a whole. We look forward to working with the Cariboo Regional District and our Cariboo Strong partners to help diversify our economy and create jobs.”

*Learn more about the project by visiting the CRD’s website at [cariboord.ca](http://cariboord.ca) under Community Economic Development or following us on Facebook at [facebook.com/caribooregion](https://facebook.com/caribooregion). If you would like to become involved in Cariboo Strong, please email the project facilitator, Krystin St. Jean, at [Krystin.StJean@unbc.ca](mailto:Krystin.StJean@unbc.ca).*

**Media Contact:**

Emily Epp, Manager of Communications  
Cariboo Regional District  
250-392-3351 or 1-800-665-1636  
[eepp@cariboord.ca](mailto:eepp@cariboord.ca)



news release

