



Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako
SUPPLEMENTARY - Committee of the Whole
February 11, 2016

To: Chair Miller and the Board of Directors
 From: Corrine Swenson, Manager of Regional Economic Development
 Date: February 3, 2016
 Regarding: Invest North West Investment Attraction Portal

In March of 2012, Northern Development Initiative Trust requested the RDBN partner with other municipalities and regional districts to participate in two investment attraction websites:

- North West Portal (Includes: Smithers, Telkwa, Granisle, Houston, Burns Lake Electoral Areas A, B, E and G)
- North Central Portal (Includes: Fraser Lake, Vanderhoof, Fort St James, Electoral Areas C, D and F)

The cost at that time to the RDBN was \$2,500 for the North West and \$5,000 for the North Central websites. As the municipalities were already contributing funding for these portals, the RDBN funding was allocated from the Rural Government Budget.

The North West website was the first of five portals launched by Northern Development in 2012. The goal was collaboration and providing an investment attraction tool for northern BC. Northern Development has been supporting the websites both financially and through staff capacity. They no longer have staff capacity to support ongoing maintenance and updates to the website. A consortium of municipal economic developers are taking on the website through a collaboration. They are requesting the RDBN contribute \$2,000 for the 2016 Invest North west project.

The information below was included in the request to participate.

INWBC is a web portal designed to inform investors and the public of major projects taking place in our region. It attracts thousands of visitors each month who look at not only the projects, but the investment ready community profiles of each participating community. Communities large and small are able to make themselves more widely known to investors who may not have known about each community in the region.

- *18 communities and regional districts in the northwest make up the INWBC group stretching from Haida Gwaii to Burns Lake*
- *INWBC is the biggest regional investment portal in western Canada*
- *The federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Development point to it as an example of how this should be done on a regional level.*
- *Fees go towards marketing the site and driving traffic to it.*

- *Site is also marketed globally by BC's Trade and Investment Reps who are stationed around the world.*
- *Fees are determined by population size. Large communities pay \$3000, medium pay \$2000, small pay \$1000. This has been lowered from previous years by \$500 respectively.*

Attached is the work plan that was supplied with the request.

At this time a meeting for the Invest North Central website has not taken place so Staff is uncertain as to the future plans for the continuation of the website and if a funding request may come forward.

The RDBN has expanded the mining website to be an opportunities website which includes the Bulkley Nechako Directory, job board, sector and project information, as well as regional information. Regional Economic Development Staff are updating content and promoting the website as part of their work plan. The Invest North West website is being updated in 2016 by a contractor but there is the expectation that the RDBN will provide social media updates and new project updates as they are available.

The Invest North West website is a useful tool and sees 2,200-5,500 visitors per month. Most visitors are from Vancouver and Calgary. Since 2012 there has been a 30% drop in page views and there is a higher percentage of domestic users over foreign users. The group intends to revitalize the website by updating and providing additional content, promoting the website through various media, and creating a schedule for economic developers to be responsible for the twitter account to ensure engagement.

Does the Board want to support this partnership opportunity by providing \$2,000 and if so please identify where the funds will be allocated from. Two options include:

- Rural Government – Special Projects (\$3,000 available)
- Regional Economic Development – Marketing Initiatives (\$3,500 available)

If you wish to view the website, please visit investnorthwestbc.ca.

<p>Recommendation: Direction.</p>	<p>(All/Directors/Majority)</p>
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Invest NW Workplan

Administration and Site Updates

2015 Goal	2015 Achievement	2016 Goal	Notes
Collect community fees	Had budget left over from previous year's surplus that has been used up. No fees collected. Kitimat managed sites updated, Bulkley Valley managed pages updated. Minimal accomplished due to high EDO turnover, capacity of communities in region	Collect community fees	Have started collecting fees for 2016. Have collected \$10000 for the project so far.
Updates of pages as managed by EDOs		All community, project, and sector pages updated by contractor	Hired Jane Stevenson to refresh current content. Jane to review ALL pages on site and update content via public sites. (est cost: \$3000)
New pages added ad hoc by existing EDOs	2 pages added by existing EDOs	Add FN pages to site. Add new projects that meet threshold for site	Community pages will only be added if FN choose to buy in to site. (est cost: \$1000 per page added)
Site Technical Support	Sticky Wicket Designs is on retainer for bug fixes and other needs	Site design refresh	Contract company to redesign logo, add new pictures, update look. (est cost: \$5000)
Marketing and Promotion		Site Technical Support	Continue to use Sticky Wicket Design for tech support (est cost: \$3000)

Marketing and Promotion

2015 Goal	2015 Achievement	2016 Goal	Notes
Advertising campaign via publications	2 ad placements in publications	Ad buys in N2K Magazine Ad buys in Northern Routes Magazine	industrial magazine that covers entire NW BC (est cost: \$5796) Hawkair in flight magazine (est cost: \$2520)
Social Media	Twitter used sparingly	Determine value of social media on site and how best to use it. How to gain influencers to increase reach of our audience. Google Adwords campaign	Assign EDO's a month in which they are to manage the Twitter account. Encourage conversations and links to communities rather than retweeting project updates. Keyword placement results in highly targeted ads (est cost: \$2000)
		TIR information package Minerals North Sponsorship	Market site to Trade and Investment Reps employed by the Province around the world. Keeping them informed will help them market our projects to the world. Market via email, social media. Send placards to each international office (est cost: \$100) Sponsor Minerals North 2016 in Smithers/Telkwa (est cost: \$2500)

New Communities and Projects

2015 Goal	2015 Achievement	2016 Goal	Notes
Attempt to add FN aspect to site	1 added (Nass Region)	Add 3 more to site as paying partners Add new projects to INWBC	Pitch idea to FN in the region as a piece of their economic development plan. Danielle Myles of Terrace has created a document to follow. New pages will cost no more than the amount collected from the new community (est cost: \$1000 per project) Add new projects that meet the requirements to be on the site. Project must be \$50M in value (with exceptions on a case by case basis), no residential projects. Less than 5 projects were added last year. (est cost: EDO time)

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To: Chair Miller and the Board of Directors
 From: Corrine Swenson, Manager of Regional Economic Development
 Date: February 3, 2016
 Regarding: 2016 Marketing Initiatives

At the January 14 Committee of the Whole meeting the following resolution was made:

"That the Committee of the Whole recommend that the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Board of Directors direct staff to analyze the Regional Economic Development Budget and determine if funds can be targeted for a recruitment and marketing strategy."

Staff have analyzed the Regional Economic Development Budget and identified funds in the Investment Readiness Action Plan project for the identification of target market(s) for the region. Once the target market(s) have been identified, a targeted marketing campaign can be included in the 2017 Regional Economic Development work plan at the RDBN Board of Directors discretion.

For the Boards information, Staff have included a description of the Investment Readiness Action Plan, current and planned marketing initiatives of the RDBN and the SWOT.

Activities in the Investment Readiness Action Plan include:

- Identification of target market(s) for the region
- Repackaging existing Industrial Land Use Inventories to use as a marketing tool to potential investors
- Create infographics to provide statistical information about the region
- Expand the business section of the RDBN Opportunities website
- Provide stories to media regarding economic development in the region
- Update and expand Regional/Community/Sector Profiles
- Create and implement a Social Media Plan

Other marketing initiatives include:

- Advertisement and editorial in Invest in BC magazine
- Opportunities.rdbn.bc.ca website
- Image Bank
- Tourism advertisements: Milepost, PG Visitors Guide, Northern BC Tourism Guide
- Local "Find Adventure in your own Backyard" marketing initiative
- Visitbulkleynechako.ca website
- Connecting Consumers and Producers Project

Current Marketing materials include:

- Community/Sector/Regional Profiles
- Pop-up Banners
- Invest in RDBN promo card
- Find Adventure in your own Backyard postcard
- Tourism Brochure
- Hiking & Winter Activity Brochure
- Connecting Consumers & Producers Agriculture Brochure
- Regional Skills Gap Analysis promotion - Bridging the Regional Skills Gap – Implementation of Strategic Goals
- SWOT promo card

Marketing initiatives to be completed by the SWOT, 2016-2017 include:

- Document and promote community and regional assets to increase awareness of lifestyle benefits and quality of life attributes.
- Initiate a social media strategy that profiles local employment opportunities and showcases business success stories.
- Assemble and publish relevant cost of living information.
- Promote longer-term career planning through development of a business case targeting those that did not complete high school
- Collaborate in designing and delivering a 'get to know your region program' for fly-in/fly-out workers.
- Support ongoing initiatives to inform small business on succession planning strategies and practices, providing tools and resources to facilitate linkages between seller and purchaser.

Recommendation:
Receive.

(All/Directors/Majority)