

**STUART-NECHAKO REGIONAL HOSPITAL DISTRICT**

**AGENDA**

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2015**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA**

Receive

**PAGE NO.** **AGENDA** – December 10, 2015

Approve

**MINUTES**

**ACTION**

**2-4** **Stuart-Nechako Regional Hospital District Meeting Minutes – November 19, 2015**

Adopt

**REPORTS**

**5-11** **Hans Berndorff, Treasurer – Draft 2016 Provisional Budget**

Recommendation (Page 8)

**12-13** **Hans Berndorff, Treasurer – Impact of Endako Mine Closure**

Receive

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**14-15** **Northern Health Medical Bulletin – ‘Connecting’ Health Care Services Through Innovative Access: Northern Health Connections!**

Receive

**16-17** **Northern Health News Release – Full Lakes District Hospital and Health Centre Project Complete**

Receive

**VERBAL REPORTS**

**RECEIPT OF VERBAL REPORTS**

**SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**STUART-NECHAKO REGIONAL HOSPITAL DISTRICT****MEETING MINUTES****THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2015**

PRESENT: Chairperson Jerry Petersen

Directors Eileen Benedict  
Tom Greenaway  
Dwayne Lindstrom  
Rob MacDougall  
Bill Miller  
Mark Parker  
Luke Strimbold  
Gerry Thiessen

Director Absent Thomas Liversidge, Village of Granisle

Staff Gail Chapman, Chief Administrative Officer  
Cheryl Anderson, Manager of Administrative Services  
Hans Berndorff, Treasurer  
Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant

Others Rob Newell, Electoral Area "G" (Houston Rural) – left at 10:15 a.m.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Petersen called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

**AGENDA &  
SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA**Moved by Director Miller  
Seconded by Director Greenaway**SNRHD-2015-10-1**

"That the Stuart-Nechako Regional Hospital District Agenda of November 19, 2015 be approved; and further that the Supplementary Agenda be received."

(All/Directors/Majority)

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY****MINUTES****Stuart-Nechako Regional  
Hospital District Meeting  
Minutes – October 22, 2015**Moved by Director MacDougall  
Seconded by Director Greenaway**SNRHD-2015-10-2**

"That the minutes of the Stuart-Nechako Regional Hospital District meeting of October 22, 2015 be adopted."

(All/Directors/Majority)

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY****REPORTS****Meeting with Northern Health  
-October 19, 2015**Moved by Director Miller  
Seconded by Director Benedict**SNRHD-2015-10-3**

"That the Stuart-Nechako Regional Hospital District Board of Directors receive the Treasurer's November 10, 2015 memo titled "Meeting with Northern Health – October 19, 2015."

(All/Directors/Majority)

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**REPORTS (CONT'D)**

Northern Health Capital  
Spending Reports  
-September 30, 2015

Moved by Director Parker  
Seconded by Director Greenaway

SNRHD-2015-10-4

"That the Stuart-Nechako Regional Hospital District Board of Directors receive the Treasurer's November 10, 2015 memo titled "Northern Health Capital Spending Reports, September 30, 2015."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Financial Statements  
-September 30, 2015

Moved by Director MacDougall  
Seconded by Director Miller

SNRHD-2015-10-5

"That the Stuart-Nechako Regional Hospital District Board of Directors receive the Treasurer's November 10, 2015 memo titled "Financial Statements – September 30, 2015."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Correspondence

Moved by Director Lindstrom  
Seconded by Director Strimbold

SNRHD-2015-10-6

"That the Stuart-Nechako Regional Hospital District Board of Directors receive the following correspondence:

- Email from Hans Berndorff, Treasurer, SNRHD to Michael Hofer, Northern Health RE: Pines Generator;
- Northern Health News Release – New Seniors' Health Action Plan to Guide Northern Health or Next Five Years."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**VERBAL REPORTS**

Dr. Anthon Meyer, Fort St.  
James

Director MacDougall mentioned that Dr. Anthon Meyer received an award as B.C.'s family doctor of the year by the College of Family Physicians of Canada and was honoured with a luncheon hosted by the District of Fort St. James. Director MacDougall noted that Dr. Meyer has revolutionized primary care in the community of Fort St. James.

Receipt of Verbal  
Reports

Moved by Director Strimbold  
Seconded by Director Miller

SNRHD.2015-10-7

"That the verbal reports of the various Stuart-Nechako Regional Hospital District Board of Directors be received."

(All/Directors/Majority) CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA**

**Pines Generator Funding Request**

Moved by Director Benedict  
Seconded by Director Greenaway

**SNRHD.2015-10-8**

"That the Stuart-Nechako Regional Hospital District Board of Directors receive the Treasurer's November 18, 2015 memo titled "Pines Generator Funding Request."

(All/Directors/Majority)

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Discussion took place regarding the Regional Hospital District's support of the Pines generator project and the Pines but concerns were brought forward regarding the process in which the request for funds was made.

Comments were made regarding the closure of Endako Mine and consideration needs to be given to the impacts to the region and its tax payers.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Director MacDougall  
Seconded by Director Strimbold

**SNRHD-2015-10-9**

"That the meeting be adjourned at 10:28 a.m."

(All/Directors/Majority)

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

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Jerry Petersen, Chairperson

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Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant

# Stuart-Nechako

## Regional Hospital District

# Memo

December 1, 2015

### Board Agenda – December 10, 2015

**To:** Chair Petersen and the Board of Directors  
**From:** Hans Berndorff, Treasurer  
**Regarding:** Draft 2016 Provisional Budget

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The *Hospital District Act* requires a Regional Hospital District Board to pass a provisional budget for the year no later than December 31<sup>st</sup> of the preceding year. Attached is a draft provisional budget for 2016 along with a copy of Northern Health's preliminary proposed capital expenditures and budget funding request for the SNRHD. Northern Health may request changes as it completes its budget process in the coming months. The following are the highlights of the draft provisional budget.

#### **Building Integrity Expenditures**

Northern Health is requesting that the budget for building integrity expenditures be kept the same as last year at \$24,000. This is 40% of the total projected 2016 expenditures.

#### **Minor Equipment**

For 2015, Northern Health has requested a budget of \$172,920, a small reduction from last year's budget of \$180,000. This is approximately 40% of the \$432,799 minor equipment expenditures planned for 2016. This is less than prior recent years because a large portion of the equipment in the Burns Lake Hospital was replaced when the new hospital was built.

#### **Burns Lake Hospital Replacement**

The SNRHD funded 100% of the planning costs of \$2,413,187, enabling this portion of the project to proceed without having to wait for formal funding approval by the Province. Construction commenced in 2013 and is now complete, except for some landscaping that will be complete in spring, 2016. To date, in addition to the planning costs, the SNRHD has funded \$7,553,421 of construction costs with another claim of \$854,370 expected in 2016. This will bring the total paid by the SNRHD up to \$10,820,978 out of total commitment of \$11,010,000 (20% of the total \$55,050,000 budgeted cost). With the project coming in under budget, Northern Health does not expect the remaining \$189,022 to be needed, so it is being budgeted as a contribution to the capital reserve in 2016.

#### **Fraser Lake D&T Centre Heating System**

This project was budgeted for \$128,000 (40% of the total) in 2014. It has now been completed for an SNRHD 40% contribution of \$67,560. The surplus of \$60,440 is being budgeted as a contribution to the capital reserve in 2016.

#### **Fort St. James Sprinkler System**

This project was budgeted in 2015 for \$400,000 (40% of the projected total cost of \$1 million). Since then, Northern Health has revised the estimate to \$340,000 (40% of \$850,000)

**SNRHD**

2016 Provisional Budget  
December 1, 2015

**Major Equipment**

- Vanderhoof & Fort St. James Telephone Systems Upgrades – This is a carryforward from the 2015 budget. It was originally budgeted in 2015 at \$90,000 (40% of \$225,000). Northern Health now expects the cost to come in at \$91,440 (40% of 228,600).
- Vanderhoof C-Arm – Northern Health is requesting \$50,040 (40% of \$125,100) for a C-Arm Operating Room live X-Ray system.

**Clinical Information Systems**

Northern Health is requesting RHD funding for several clinical information technology projects to provide more efficient and more informed health services.

- The integrated Community Clinical Information System will enable a single record for each patient to support the traditionally separate records of Public Health, Home and Community Care, Mental Health and Addictions and others. This is a multi-year project costing \$5.8 million. Northern Health is requesting the SNRHD to contribute \$272,022 (4.8%) over three years. The SNRHD contributed \$123,468 in 2015. Northern Health is requesting contributions of \$71,224 in 2016 and \$77,330 in 2017. This is 40% of the total cost, prorated by population.
- The Emergency Department Information System will enable a single record per patient and a workflow tool to support efficient and effective care in emergency departments across the North. This system is in place in Prince George and Fort St. John but requires extensive development and further deployment across the region. This is a multi-year \$2.2 million project and the SNRHD is requested to contribute \$106,690 (4.8%) over two years starting in 2018. The SNRHD had originally budgeted to start contributing in 2015, but the project has been deferred due to limited provincial funding.
- Health Link North is an integrated system that enables a single clinical record for acute care patients throughout Northern Health. The SNRHD has previously contributed to the development of this system. It now needs a software upgrade. This is a multi-year project costing \$3.7 million. Northern Health is requesting the SNRHD to contribute \$176,736 (4.8%) over two years starting in 2017.

**Pines Cafeteria Expansion**

Although not requiring taxation in 2016, Northern Health has included a request for funding an expansion of the Pines cafeteria in 2017 at a cost of \$520,000 (40% of \$1.3 million).

**Temporary Borrowing**

The 2015 budget included temporary borrowing of \$373,590 to help pay for the Burns Lake Hospital Replacement. Now that this project is under budget and with the deferral of some other capital projects until 2016, temporary borrowing is no longer necessary.

**SNRHD**

2016 Provisional Budget  
December 1, 2015

**Withdrawal from Special Capital Reserve**

A special reserve was established for the Burns Lake Hospital Healing Garden with funds raised from local donations. With interest, the balance in the reserve is \$63,300. The Healing Garden is projected to be complete in 2016 for a cost of \$62,000. The small remaining balance is budgeted to be contributed back to the capital reserve.

**Contribution to Capital Reserve**

Now that the Burns Lake Hospital Replacement will be completed in 2016, the SNRHD can again start contributing to the capital reserve. The projected 2016 contribution to the capital reserve is \$716,495. This, when added to the current reserve balance of \$775,919, would result in a balance of \$1,492,414 plus interest in the capital reserve at the end of 2016.

**Long Term Capital Projects**

Northern Health's projections include several projects in the "outer years".

- Fort St. James Hospital Replacement – Preliminary projection of \$30 million (40% of \$75 million) with a preliminary target date starting in 2019 and completed in 2021;
- Fraser Lake Health Centre Upgrades – Preliminary projection of \$1,656,000 (40% of \$4,140,000) with a preliminary target start date in 2024 with completion in 2025;
- Vanderhoof Hospital Post-Anaesthetic Recovery Patient Monitoring system – Projected cost of \$130,000 (40% of \$325,000) in 2019;
- Fraser Lake Health Centre Carestream Quantum X-Ray machine – Projected cost of \$200,000 (40% of \$500,000) in 2019.

Long term financial projections will be presented to the Board prior to consideration of the final 2016 budget.

**Taxation**

Taxation is currently projected to remain the same as 2015 at \$1,790,000, with the projected tax rate of \$0.57 per \$1,000, based on 2015 assessments adjusted for the Endako Mine closure. This is \$0.03 per \$1,000 higher than last year, due to the Endako closure.

Last year, 2015 taxation was increased by \$47,386 to keep the tax rate the same as 2014 at \$0.54 per \$1,000, as property assessments had increased. This year, with property assessments decreasing due to the Endako Mine closure, the board may wish to consider keeping the tax rate the same as last year. This would mean reducing taxation by \$108,000 to \$1,682,000 and contributing \$108,000 less to the capital reserve. This could be reconsidered in January, as the 2016 completed tax roll becomes available.

At this time, the Board is requested to consider approving the attached 2016 Provisional Budget, including any amendments that it deems appropriate.

**SNRHD**

2016 Provisional Budget  
December 1, 2015

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I would be pleased to answer any questions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. T. Jones'.

Recommendation:

(all/weighted/majority)

That the Board of Directors receive the Treasurer's December 1, 2015 memo titled "Draft 2016 Provisional Budget" and approve the attached 2016 Provisional Budget.

**Stuart-Nechako R.H.D.**  
**2016 Provisional Budget**

	2014 Actual	2015 Final Budget	Oct 2015 YTD Actual	2015 Projected	2016 Provisional Budget
<b>REVENUE:</b>					
Surplus from prior year	1,338,768	44,245	44,245	44,245	541,992
Interest Income	11,511	6,500	11,684	12,500	5,000
Grants in lieu of taxes	9,680	10,000	4,253	8,000	8,000
Withdrawal from Capital Reserve	2,529,241	1,555,728	794,544	794,544	
Withdrawal from Special Capital Reserve		63,000			63,500
Temporary Borrowing		373,590			
<b>TAXATION:</b>	1,742,614	1,790,000	1,790,000	1,790,000	1,790,000
Conv. Hosp. Assmts. (2015 Estimated Roll) \$ 311,499,235					
2016 Estimated Tax Rate 57 Cents per \$1,000					
Conv. Hosp. Assmts. (2015 Revised Roll) \$ 330,748,303					
2015 Estimated Tax Rate 54 Cents per \$1,000					
Conv. Hosp. Assmts. (2014 Revised Roll) \$ 321,634,494					
2014 Estimated Tax Rate 54 Cents per \$1,000					
Conv. Hosp. Assmts. (2013 Revised Roll) \$ 313,082,572					
2013 Estimated Tax Rate 56 Cents per \$1,000					
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>5,631,814</b>	<b>3,843,063</b>	<b>2,644,726</b>	<b>2,649,289</b>	<b>2,408,492</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES:</b>					
<b>Annual Grants</b>					
Building Integrity < \$100,000	24,000	24,000	24,000	24,000	24,000
Global Equipment Grant for Minor Capital <\$100,000	179,169	180,000	180,000	180,000	172,920
	203,169	204,000	204,000	204,000	196,920
<b>Major Capital Projects</b>					
Vanderhoof Outpatient Renovations - CFWD from 2008		794,545	794,544	794,544	
Major Project - Burns Lake Hospital Replacement Planning					
Major Project - Burns Lake Hospital Construction	5,076,850	1,941,585		898,193	854,370
Major Project - Fraser Lake D&T Heating system (40%)		128,000		67,560	
	5,076,850	2,864,130	794,544	1,760,297	854,370
<b>Building Integrity &gt; \$100,000</b>					
Fort St. James Electrical Upgrades - CFWD from 2011	110,738				
Fort St. James Aire Handling Unit - CFWD from 2011	87,805				
Fort St. James - Sprinkler System (40%)		400,000			340,000
	198,543	400,000	0	0	340,000
<b>Major Equipment &gt; \$100,000</b>					
Vanderhoof Hospital Chemistry Analyzer - CFWD from 2013	42,755				
Vanderhoof Anaesthetic Machine	47,545				
Vanderhoof & Fort St. James Telephone System Upgrades		90,000			91,440
Vanderhoof C-Arm O/R X-Ray					50,040
	90,300	90,000	0	0	141,480
<b>Information Technology Projects</b>					
Integrated Community Clinical Information System		131,413	123,468	123,468	71,224
Emergency Department Information system		65,020			0
Health Link North - Cerner Upgrade					0
	0	196,433	123,468	123,468	71,224
<b>Administration &amp; Other:</b>					
Directors' Remuneration & Travel	4,934	10,000	3,360	4,032	10,000
Administration (staff time, audit & other)	13,973	15,500	12,524	15,500	16,000
	18,907	25,500	15,884	19,532	26,000
<b>Burns Lake Hospital Healing Garden (100% funded from donations)</b>		63,000			62,000
<b>Contribution to Capital Reserve</b>					716,498
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>5,587,569</b>	<b>3,843,063</b>	<b>1,137,896</b>	<b>2,107,297</b>	<b>2,408,492</b>

**NORTHERN HEALTH AUTHORITY CAPITAL PLAN  
STUART-NECHAKO REGIONAL HOSPITAL DISTRICT FUNDING REQUEST**

RHD Budget Year - -		APPROVED 2015/16 2015	2016/17 2016	PLANNING 2017/18 2017	2018/19 2018	Outer Years	Comments
<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>							
<b>Major Projects</b>							
<b>Approved Projects:</b>							
BLH Lakes District Hospital Replacement	Burns Lake	2,938,776	3,533,000	0	0	0	
BLH Landscaping	Burns Lake	176,861	0	0	0	0	
PIN Electrical Upgrade & Generator Relocation	Burns Lake	620,000	0	0	0	0	
STH Sprinkler System	Fort St. James	850,000	0	0	0	0	
<b>Proposed Projects (&lt;\$5,000,000):</b>							
PIN Cafeteria Expansion	Burns Lake	0	0	1,300,000	0	0	
FLC Health Centre Upgrade	Fraser Lake	0	0	0	0	4,140,000	
<b>Proposed Major Projects (&gt;\$5,000,000):</b>							
STH Stuart Lake Hospital Replacement	Fort St. James	0	0	0	0	75,000,000	
<b>Building Integrity &lt;\$100,000</b>							
		60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000		
<b>Equipment &amp; Projects &lt;\$100,000</b>							
		447,990	388,000	370,000	370,000		
<b>Equipment &amp; Projects &lt;\$100,000 - notional increase</b>							
		0	44,795	51,116	59,071		<i>to be discussed</i>
<b>Information Technology:</b>							
Information Technology - Northern Integrated Community System	Regional	2,626,753	1,515,677	1,645,165	0	0	<i>project name changed</i>
Information Technology - EDIS	Regional	0	0	0	1,245,402	977,311	
Information Technology - HLN: Cerner Upgrade	Regional	0	0	700,000	2,982,000	0	
<b>Major Equipment &gt;\$100,000</b>							
STH/SJH Phone Systems	Vanderhoof/FSJ	228,600	0	0	0	0	
SJH C-Arm replacement	Vanderhoof	0	125,100	0	0	0	
SJH Post-Anaesthetic Recovery Patient Monitoring	Vanderhoof	0	0	0	0	325,000	
FLC Carestream Quantum	Fraser Lake	0	0	0	0	500,000	
Northern Health Medical Imaging Strategy	Various	0	0	0	0	0	<i>Fundraising Campaign*</i>
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>		<b>\$7,948,980</b>	<b>\$5,666,166</b>	<b>\$4,127,101</b>	<b>\$4,716,473</b>		

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**NORTHERN HEALTH AUTHORITY CAPITAL PLAN  
STUART-NECHAKO REGIONAL HOSPITAL DISTRICT FUNDING REQUEST**

RHD Budget Year - -		APPROVED 2015/16 2015	2016/17 2016	PLANNING 2017/18 2017	2018/19 2018	Outer Years	Comments
<b>RHD FUNDING REQUESTED:</b>							
<b>Major Projects</b>							
<b>Approved Projects:</b>							
BLH Lakes District Hospital Replacement	Burns Lake	1,526,631	705,000	0	0	0	
BLH Landscaping	Burns Lake	62,000	0	0	0	0	
PIN Electrical Upgrade & Generator Relocation	Burns Lake	0	0	0	0	0	
STH Sprinkler System	Fort St. James	340,000	0	0	0	0	
<b>Proposed Projects (&lt;\$5,000,000):</b>							
PIN Cafeteria Expansion	Burns Lake	0	0	520,000	0	0	33% 66%
FLC Health Centre Upgrade	Fraser Lake	0	0	0	0	1,856,000	2024 2025
<b>Proposed Major Projects (&gt;\$5,000,000):</b>							
STH Stuart Lake Hospital Replacement	Fort St. James	0	0	0	0	30,000,000	25% 50% 25% 2019 2020 2021
Building Integrity <\$100,000		24,000	24,000	24,000	24,000	0	
Equipment & Projects <\$100,000		180,000	155,000	150,000	150,000	0	
Equipment & Projects <\$100,000 - notional increase		0	17,920	20,774	23,628	0	to be discussed
<b>Information Technology:</b>							
Information Technology - Northern Integrated Community System	Regional	123,468	71,224	77,330	0	0	
Information Technology - EDIS	Regional	0	0	0	59,779	46,911	
Information Technology - HLN: Cerner Upgrade	Regional	0	0	33,600	143,136	0	
<b>Major Equipment &gt;\$100,000</b>							
STH/SJH Phone Systems	Vanderhoof/FSJ	91,440	0	0	0	0	
SJH C-Arm replacement <i>O/R X-RAY</i>	Vanderhoof	0	50,040	0	0	0	
SJH Post-Anaesthetic Recovery Patient Monitoring	Vanderhoof	0	0	0	0	130,000	2019
FLC Carestream Quantum <i>X-RAY</i>	Fraser Lake	0	0	0	0	200,000	2019
Northern Health Medical Imaging Strategy	Various	0	0	0	0	0	Fundraising Campaign*
<b>TOTAL RHD FUNDING REQUESTED</b>		<b>\$2,347,539</b>	<b>\$1,023,184</b>	<b>\$825,704</b>	<b>\$400,544</b>		

# Stuart-Nechako

## Regional Hospital District

# Memo

November 26, 2015

### Board Agenda – December 10, 2015

**To:** Chairman Petersen and the Board of Directors  
**From:** Hans Berndorff, Treasurer  
**Regarding:** Impact of Endako Mine Closure

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With the closing of the Endako Mine, it filed an application with BC Assessment for a reduction in the taxable assessed amount, which has been granted by BC Assessment.

Attached is an analysis that shows that this will result in a 5.8% reduction in the SNRHD tax base and a 3.4% reduction in the RDBN tax base. The net result is an increase in the SNRHD residential tax rate from \$0.54 per \$1,000 to \$0.57 per \$1,000, all other things being equal. This represents an increase of \$3 from \$54 to \$57 for a \$100,000 property.

Note that there is also a \$3 increase in RDBN residential taxes for region-wide services, from \$93 for a \$100,000 property to \$96.

I would be pleased to answer any questions.



Recommendation:

(all/directors/majority)

That the memorandum from the Treasurer, dated November 26, 2015 regarding the impact of the Endako Mine closure on the SNRHD residential tax rate be received.

**Endako Mine Closure**  
**Impact on Tax Base**

<b>Effect of Assessments</b>				
		2015 Net	2016 Net	
		Taxable Value	Taxable Value	Difference
Folio 705000	Fraser Lake	11,517,000	7,110,942	-4,406,058
Folio 707002	Fraser Lake	52,344,000	7,814,421	-44,529,579
Folio 1694315	Area "D"	12,542,000	4,862,730	-7,679,270
		<u>76,403,000</u>	<u>19,788,093</u>	<u>-56,614,907</u>
Class Multiplier				3.4
Impact on Converted Assessments				<u>-19,249,068</u>

<b>Effect of Residential Tax Rate</b>		
	<u>RDBN</u>	<u>SNRHD</u>
Total Converted Assessments	558,114,610	331,723,544
Reduction Due To Endako Closure	<u>-19,249,068</u>	<u>-19,249,068</u>
	<u>538,865,542</u>	<u>312,474,476</u>
Percentage Reduction	<u>-3.4%</u>	<u>-5.8%</u>
2015 Region-wide Residential Tax Rate per \$1,000	0.90	0.54
Tax Rate Reflecting Endako Closure	0.93	0.57
Increase in Residential Tax Rate	<u>0.03</u>	<u>0.03</u>

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## MEDIA BULLETIN

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For immediate release  
Nov. 30, 2015

### **'Connecting' health care services through innovative access: Northern Health Connections!**

Ensuring that people who live in rural and remote communities in northern B.C. can access the services they need to maintain their health is very important to Northern Health. It is not always possible to provide every specialty and diagnostic service in each small community, so when we can't bring the services to small communities through initiatives like mobile diagnostic solutions and Telehealth, we help bring the patients to the health care services.

We recognize that people sometimes have to travel to larger centres such as Terrace, Fort St. John, Prince George and even Vancouver to receive some specialty or diagnostic services necessary to address certain health care concerns. This might also include optometry and dentistry services as well. We also know that even with improved Telehealth technology, enhancing and offering outreach services, and through mobile diagnostic services, we still can't meet all of the local health care needs of people who live in smaller communities. Knowing that, and by listening to our communities, we introduced the Northern Health Connections health care travel service in partnership with Diversified Transportation in 2006. This service helps to provide people with some peace-of-mind that they'll be able to get to their appointment on time without the associated stress and financial burden of travelling via other means.

The Northern Health Connections fleet consists of five coaches and six mini-coaches, but is not your typical set of buses. These buses have been specially designed to meet the health care needs of people who use them; they include movable chairs to ensure wheelchair accessibility, wheelchair accessible washrooms and Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) to restore normal heart rhythm if a person on board goes into sudden cardiac arrest. The drivers are trained to use the AEDs, as well as to assist and support the passengers who utilize this health care service. As an added touch, satellite radio, DVD players, blankets and pillows are available, and the buses have been customized from a regular 55 seat coach to 44 to allow for additional leg room and wheelchair seating. This does affect the number of usable seats, but thanks to prescheduled bookings we can make any necessary accommodations prior to the trip to ensure the comfort and special needs of the passengers can be met.

The Connections service offers both long-haul (travel over six hours) and short-haul travel routes (travel under six hours). These routes include scheduled stops at Northern Health facilities in northern B.C. communities. Travel on the Connections service is appointment-

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## MEDIA BULLETIN

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based in order to give people certainty that they can get to their health care appointment on time, and companions are allowed and encouraged to ensure patients have the support they need.

This system is a health care service that is specifically designed to alleviate pressure on our facilities in northern B.C. by ensuring that people can access the care they need to maintain their health. More than that, this service allows people to access health care they may not otherwise be able to reach, which keeps people healthier in their communities longer and prevents them from ending up in emergency rooms and hospital beds. It is a service that we continually look to improve; we adjust routes and schedules as our community-based services change in communities and as changes occur in patient referral patterns. Northern Health appreciates Diversified's collaboration in building a flexible system that can meet patients' needs across the north.

Ridership on the Connections service has increased steadily since it was introduced, demonstrating its value to northern B.C. residents. Nearly 14,000 patients and their companions use this service annually, and we hope to increase health care ridership and use of this service through collaboration with communities and the First Nations Health Authority in the future. We have experienced success with the Connections health care travel service, but as with any service there is always room for innovation.

For further information on the Northern Health Connections travel service, including schedules and rates, please visit <https://nhconnections.ca/>. This website also contains information about travel alternatives for northern B.C. residents who are unable to access the Connections health care travel service.

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## NEWS RELEASE

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November 20, 2015

### Full Lakes District Hospital and Health Centre project complete

With the completion of the parking lot, the Lakes District Hospital and Health Centre replacement project is officially complete, approximately six months ahead of schedule.

Minor landscaping details will be attended to in the spring, and will be marked by a community celebration. The facility opened to the public in February 2015.

“The new Lakes District Hospital and Health Centre has created a more modern environment with many features to meet the health care needs of families in Burns Lake and the surrounding area,” said Health Minister Terry Lake. “Together with our partners, Northern Health and PCL Constructors Westcoast Inc., we were able to create a fantastic new building well ahead of schedule and under budget.”

The new hospital has 16 beds and provides acute care and emergency services, diagnostic imaging, lab services and pharmacy. A medical clinic offers primary, outpatient and acute care, along with the delivery of mental health and addictions and public health, as well as home- and community-care services,

“This project has meant a lot to people in this community and together we have celebrated every milestone,” said John Rustad, MLA for Nechako Lakes. “Patients who have been through the doors of the new hospital have had access to care in an up-to-date and welcoming space and it is exciting to mark the official completion of the project.”

The facility is a two-storey building totalling approximately 6,100 square metres (65,000 square feet). The hospital is a green and energy-efficient facility designed to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Gold certification.

“The design-build partner PCL Westcoast Constructors Inc. completing the project ahead of schedule and under-budget shows a strong commitment to the people of Burns Lake and the surrounding area,” said Jerry Peterson, Chair of the Stuart Nechako Regional Hospital District. “The patient rooms include remarkable views of Burns Lake and are larger to allow for more comfort when family and friends visit. It is a wonderful new addition to the community of Burns Lake.”

The project was officially announced in April 2012, and the first big milestone was the move of the old nurses’ residence in December 2012. The groundbreaking ceremony for the project



was held on April 12, 2013, with excavation of the site. Construction began in January 2014 with substantial completion of the hospital in December 2014.

“Our staff are proud to work in the new, modernized space that helps them deliver high quality care,” said Michael McMillan, Northern Health Chief Operating Officer for the Northern Interior. “These projects take years of planning and preparation before construction officially starts, and it is fantastic to see the finished product and results of all the hard work.”

PCL Constructors Westcoast Inc. built the new Lakes District Hospital and Health Centre. The total project cost of \$55 million was shared between the Government of British Columbia and Stuart Nechako Regional Hospital District.

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