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Ministry of Community Services  
Western Economic Diversification Canada  
Ministry of Economic Development

## **NORTHWEST BENEFITS FROM NEW INFRASTRUCTURE FUND**

SMITHERS – British Columbia’s northwest residents will benefit from more than \$5.6 million in combined federal and provincial funding to extend the runway at the Smithers Regional Airport, improve drinking water quality in the Terrace area and increase energy efficiency in Houston’s arena and pool.

Cariboo-Prince George Member of Parliament Dick Harris, on behalf of the Honourable Rona Ambrose, President of the Queen’s Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, and Dennis MacKAY, MLA for Bulkley Valley-Stikine, on behalf of Community Services Minister Ida Chong, announced the funding, through the Canada-B.C. Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (CBCMRIF), today.

“Through collaboration and partnership, our government is helping to build healthy, clean and prosperous communities in the Town of Smithers, the District of Houston, and the Terrace region,” said Harris. “Today’s joint investment of more than \$5.6 million will benefit British Columbians by providing clean drinking water, developing an alternative energy source to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and extending a runway to bring new economic opportunities to the region.”

In Smithers, \$2 million will go toward extending the runway to 7,500 feet; the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine is receiving more than \$2 million to install more than eight km of drinking water pipe and fire hydrants, to help an area where the groundwater has been threatened by events such as the recent flooding. In Houston, more than \$1.5 million will help create a district GeoExchange heating and cooling system at the District’s leisure facility.

“I have been working with the mayors of Smithers and Houston for the last couple of years to help move these projects forward,” said MacKAY. “I am also pleased to see that the Kitimat-Stikine Regional District is also receiving funding to extend Terrace’s water system. These are all important local projects and are an example of how, by working together, all three levels of government can improve local infrastructure and quality of life.”

Under the initial Canada-B.C. Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund Agreement signed in June 2006, the federal and provincial governments each committed \$51 million to the fund, with participating local governments expected to match this amount. This year, Canada’s New Government and the Province of B.C. have each provided an additional \$23.5 million to the CBCMRIF as part of their commitment to help smaller communities meet their pressing infrastructure needs. This additional funding brings the total federal and provincial investment and matching local government contribution in CBCMRIF projects to over \$220 million.

The majority of the CBCMRIF funding is targeted towards communities of fewer than 250,000 people and at least 60 per cent of the funding will assist with “green projects” such as drinking water

supply, treatment and distribution needs as well as wastewater and energy efficiency projects. The remaining funds will be dedicated to other projects like tourism, recreation and other infrastructure.

More details on the program are available through the Canada-British Columbia Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund website, at [www.canadabcmrif.ca](http://www.canadabcmrif.ca).

This news release is available online at  
1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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