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Ministry of Community Services

\$2M FOR NEW ENERGY INTERPRETIVE CENTRE IN THE NORTHWEST

FORT ST. JOHN – The community of Fort St. John will have a new energy interpretive centre thanks to a joint investment of \$2 million from the federal and provincial governments. The funding will be provided through the Canada-B.C. Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (CBCMRIF), which supports the continued growth of B.C. communities as greener, healthier and more sustainable places to live.

The announcement was made today by the Honourable Jay Hill, Secretary of State, Chief Government Whip and Member of Parliament for Prince George-Peace River, and Richard Neufeld, MLA for Peace River North and Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources.

The three-storey centre will offer an interpretive learning experience about the energy industry to approximately 60,000 residents and visitors yearly. The building itself will meet silver LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards, with a green building design that includes solar power and a wind generator.

“The energy industry is a vital component of British Columbia’s history as well as its future, and our story should be showcased in a way that is accessible to the public,” said Hill, 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. “This project will create a significant tourism attraction in Fort St. John that will strengthen the economy and benefit local residents as well as entrepreneurs.”

“This energy interpretive centre is great for this community, region and province,” said Neufeld. “This project will highlight northeastern B.C. and B.C.’s connection to the energy industry, while incorporating green efficiencies into the building design and construction.”

The majority of the program funding from the CBCMRIF, which was launched in June 2006, supports communities of fewer than 250,000 people in minimizing the costs to taxpayers of local infrastructure upgrades or new construction projects.

At least 60 per cent of the funding will assist with “green projects” that are geared towards enhancing environmental sustainability, such as water and waste-water systems, public transit and environmental energy improvements. Other infrastructure projects will support local roads, cultural and recreational facilities, infrastructure to support tourism and broadband connectivity. The funding for this project is conditionally approved pending the successful completion of an environmental assessment.

The total amount available through the CBCMRIF, with federal and provincial investments and matching local government contribution, is over \$220 million. More details on the program are available online at www.canadabcmrif.ca.

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