

# Small Talk Forum



## Village of Harrison Hot Springs

# From Dysfunction to Collaboration:

Harrison Hot Springs  
Council

Councillor Michie Vidal  
Tyson Koch, CAO



# Governance Challenges in Harrison Hot Springs

A story of dysfunction, recovery, and collaboration in a small community.



# Initial Dysfunction

## Divided Council

Shortly after the General Election in 2022, the Village of Harrison Hot Springs became a deeply divided Council.

## Dysfunction & Conflict

There was dramatic dysfunction and continuous conflict that impacted public distrust, Council, staff, and most importantly, the community.

## Fractured Relationships

This spawned from strong differing personalities, philosophies, and priorities that led to tense, hostile meetings and fractured relationships.



# Impact on Council and Staff



Four of five vital senior staff members resigned.



Council's ability to govern was compromised.



Public confidence was eroded as the conflict continued to play out publicly.

# Rebuilding Village Staff



Following the governance crisis, the Village of Harrison Hot Springs faced significant staff turnover.



Many senior staff members resigned due to the hostile environment and fractured relationships.



New staff showed resilience by continuing essential operations despite the stressful environment and added workload created by the dysfunction.



This revealed areas where improvements were needed and opportunities where policies and procedures could be strengthened.

# Ministry Intervention

Council requested help from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs.

Ron Poole was appointed to guide Council and staff through the challenges.

A lack of full participation from all members of Council increased discord.

A Councillor resigned early in the term, triggering a costly by-election.

# Turning Point

The Mayor's resignation in June of 2024 triggered another by-election.



A Councillor resigned to run for Mayor.



The former Mayor ran for the vacant Council seat.



**Despite uncertainty, it provided a small window of opportunity for Council, staff, and the community to reset.**



# New Leadership Approach



The 2024 by-election added a new Mayor and Councillor to Council



The new Mayor emphasized respectful debate, achieved collaboration, and regained trust.



The tone of Council meetings immediately began to change.

# Lessons in Moving Forward

## Respect over Discord

Council adopted a respectful tone in public meetings.

## Defined Roles

Reviewed governance boundaries and adopted a revised code of conduct.

## Professional Development

Workshops helped identify common goals and repair relationships.

## Public Communication

Increased transparency and engagement rebuilt trust.

## Shared Vision

- Council's Strategic Priorities started to be achieved.
- Focusing on infrastructure, grants, and community events.



# Tips for Dealing with Conflict

## **Strong Code of Conduct**

Ensuring that you have a strong Code of Conduct with a clear process for dealing with complaints and breaches in place

## **Strong Council Procedure Bylaw**

To prevent the abuse of meeting procedure and agendas

## **Council-CAO Covenant**

A Council-CAO covenant or document outlining the one-employee model

# Conclusion

**Harrison Hot Springs Council's experience shows that dysfunction doesn't have to define a legacy.**

With leadership change, staff and community support, and a commitment to collaboration, progress is possible.

*A good news story for other communities facing similar challenges.*



An aerial photograph of a coastal town, likely Victoria, British Columbia, featuring a large harbor, a golf course, and a marina. The town is nestled between two large, forested mountains. The entire image is covered with a semi-transparent teal filter. The word "Questions?" is written in a large, white, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

**Questions?**





# CHARTING UBCM 2025 THE COURSE







*STEWART, BC*

**AMBULANCE CRISIS IN RURAL BC**



The B.C. government has added three different staffing models, moving away from the on-call model.

The three models are called alpha, mix shift and kilo.

The model used in Stewart is the kilo model, which will have a full-time unit chief and staff on call.

“This is a fundamental change in how we provide paramedic services in these communities”.

~PRESS RELEASE~

B.C. adds hundreds of new paramedics to rural and remote communities



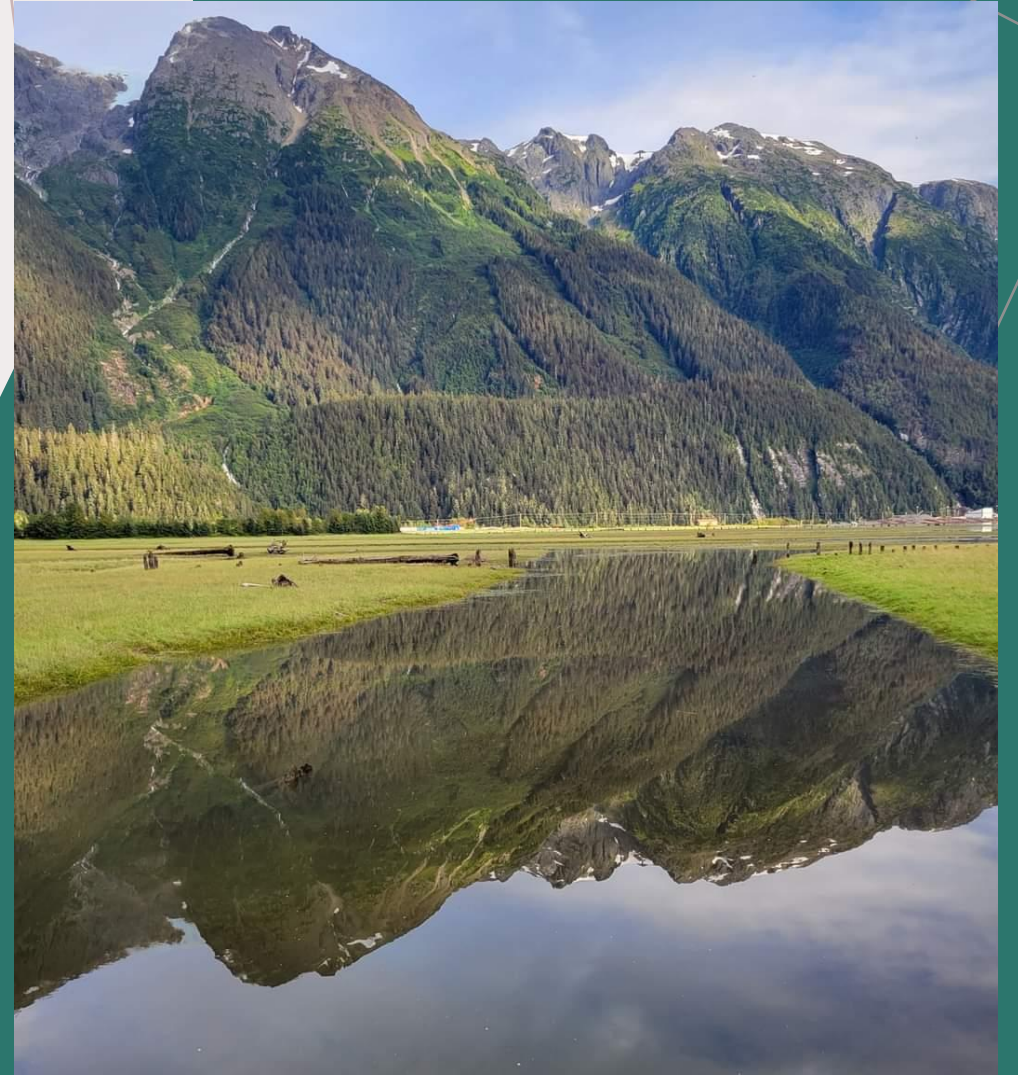
# *A BEAUTIFUL PLACE TO CALL HOME*

SURROUNDED BY PRISTINE NATURE

A FOUR-SEASON PLAYGROUND OF  
OUTDOOR RECREATION

CLOSE KNIT COMMUNITY

SMALL COMMUNITY WITH MODERN  
AMENITIES,



# STEWART DEMOGRAPHICS

There is an increasing influx of young families mixed with an aging population of long- term residents that are attempting to age in place.

The largest demographic is age 45 years to 65+ at a combined 57.3% of the population.

AGE	NUMBER	% OF POPULATION
0-15	70	13.6%
15-24	45	8.7%
25-34	45	8.7%
35-44	60	11.6%
45-54	90	17.5%
55-64	96	18.4%
65+	111	21.4%

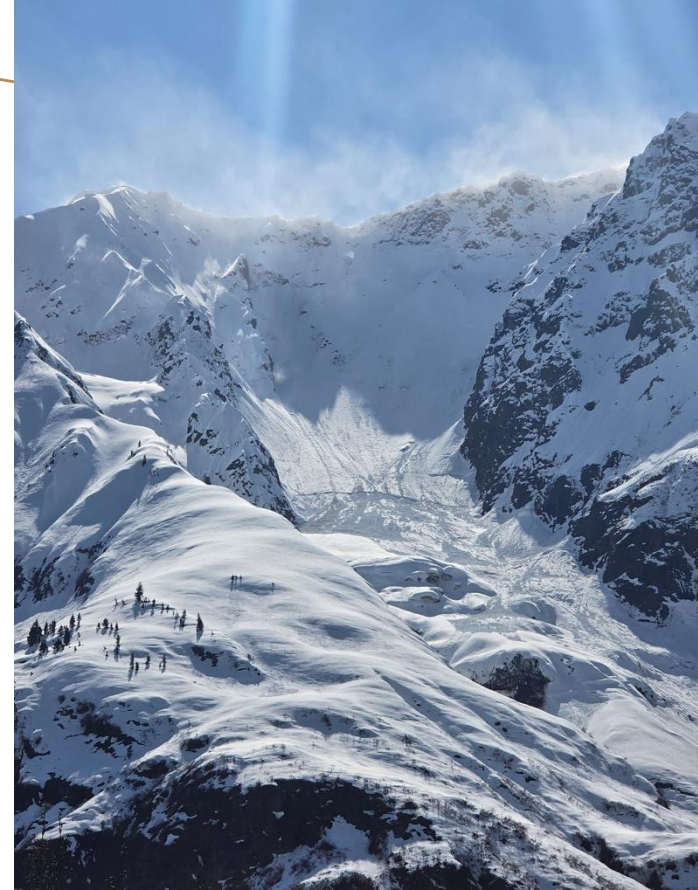
Stewart is home to **517** residents, based on Statistics Canada's 2024 population estimate.  
Demographics based on Statistics Canada's 2024 population estimate.





It is 266 Kilometres from Stewart to the nearest ambulance station.

That is a 3-hour+ drive, in good conditions.



# *WHAT HAS BEEN HAPPENING...*

- **WAIT TIMES**

Recently, a patient in Stewart had to wait over 27 hours for transport to another facility.

- **LACK OF COMMUNICATION**

Local hospitals, health centres, other first responders and municipal governments often aren't even told when there's no ambulance coverage.

911 doesn't inform callers of how far away the ambulance is or how long it might take.

Our health staff can't plan, and our residents are left entirely in the dark.





# Ambulance Paramedics News Release



The province no longer allows paramedics to pre-schedule overtime coverage weeks or months in advance to fill in for co-workers who are sick or go on holidays.

Not allowing any lead time in scheduling is an unnecessary disruption for paramedics already dealing with high call volumes and the burnout that comes with their job as front-line first responders.



“Fixing staffing fixes a lot of those things because a lot of the burnout comes from overwork and not having breaks and not having down time. When you’re short-staffed you can’t ever get those breaks.”

# *MOVING FORWARD*

- **Fix the staffing model.** Bring back mixed shift and pager models that attract paramedics to remote postings.
- **Expand the travelling paramedic program province-wide, just like the travelling nurse program** that's working well in many small communities.
- **Offer incentives** for urban paramedics to rotate into rural areas. Many would benefit from the experience and the opportunity to work in a quieter setting.
- **Improve communication.** Make it mandatory to notify local health centres, other first responders, 911 callers, and municipal leaders when there is no ambulance coverage.
- **Increase recruitment marketing.** Stewart and other small communities are attractive places to live. Increase the efforts to attract qualified professionals to rural and remote areas.
- **And finally, include us at the table.** No more decisions about rural healthcare made without rural voices.





# BC EMERGENCY HEALTH SERVICES

## *VISION, PURPOSE, VALUES -REALITY*

- VISION

*"Employees at BCEHS ... feel supported to provide the highest quality, evidence informed emergency care, interfacility transfers, and community services to all patients".*

- REALITY:

Patients face dangerously long wait times for emergency services and interfacility transfers, without receiving relevant information of where help is coming from and when it will arrive.

- PURPOSE

*"BCEHS brings compassionate, equitable, and professional emergency care, interfacility transfers, and community healthcare services to people in communities across British Columbia".*

- REALITY:

Rural communities do not have equitable care or an equal voice in the system that is supposed to serve them.

- VALUES

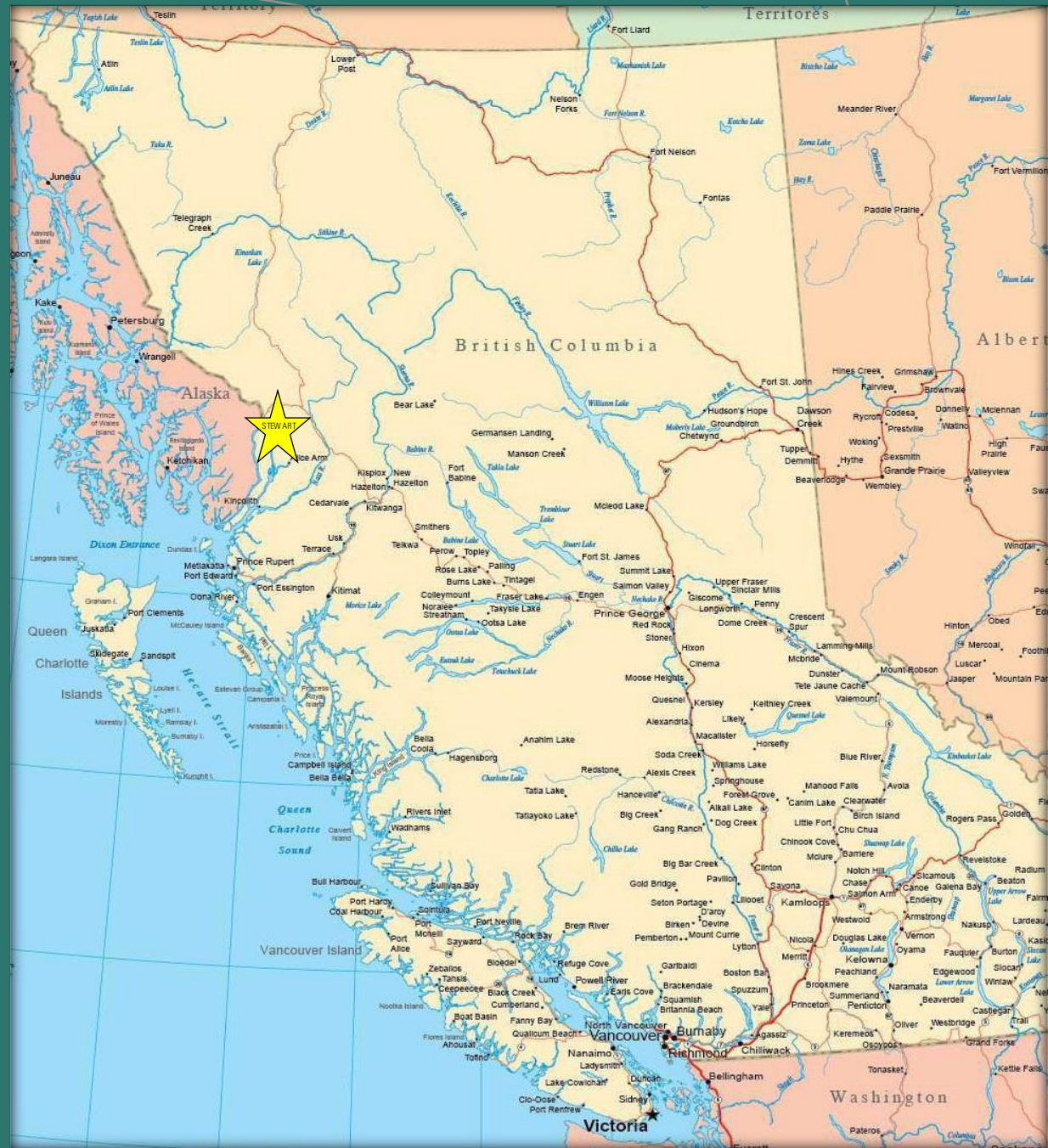
*"We strive to create just, equitable health systems and structures, that continuously provide fair outcomes. We strive for province-wide solutions by embracing partnerships and teamwork. We listen, share knowledge and welcome opportunities to learn and grow".*

- REALITY:

Residents, officials, and health partners in remote and rural communities receive inadequate communication regarding vital information during coverage disruptions.



# AMBULANCE CRISIS IN RURAL BC







# CHARTING UBCM 2025 THE COURSE





# UBCM 2025 Small Talk Forum

September 23, 2025



**BCEHS** | BC Emergency  
Health Services

# Largest Provider of EMS Services in Canada

## Who We Are:

Provincial provider of 911 emergency medical care and inter-facility patient transport.

- 800,000 911 calls/year
- 75,000 Interfacility Transports (IFT)/year

## Our Teams:

5,000 Paramedics, Dispatchers & Call Takers

- 87% staff fill rate overall

182 Ambulance Stations & 3 Dispatch Centres

660 Ambulances, 300 single response vehicles, 29 low acuity response vehicles

9 Fixed Wing & 6 Helicopters (35+ contracted aircraft)

3 Marine Ambulances (12+ contracted watercraft)



# Current State

The provincial system is experiencing similar challenges to Stewart:

- Increasing patient acuity & aging population
- Record call volume
- Sustained toxic drug crisis
- Growing need to support primary health care
- Offload delays from Emergency Departments
- Recruitment challenges



# BC Small Communities and Regional Districts

## We understand the stakes.

Let's build a resilient and responsive emergency medical system that meets your unique needs, together.

## Work has already begun:

- Expanding full-time positions
- Piloting new deployment models
- Strengthening community engagement
- Investing in recruitment improvements





# Adapting Staffing for Enhanced Service

In 2024:

- 22 stations converted to the **Alpha** staffing model (full-time 24/7).
  - Including: Bella Coola, Bowen Island, Madeira Park, Boston Bar
  - Total of 144 Alpha stations in the province
- 80% of all ambulance stations in BC are now Alpha stations





# Adapting Staffing for Enhanced Service

## Cont'd:

- 25 stations converted to the **Mix Shift** model (permanent positions: mix of in-station and on-call).
  - Bella Bella
  - Texada Island
- 13 stations moved to on-call **Kilo** staffing with a full-time unit chief.
  - Stewart
  - Field

Result = Almost 500 new positions province-wide.



# Creative Solutions

## Travelling Paramedic Program

- Rotational paramedic coverage from urban to rural/remote areas

## Community Support

- **Granisle:** Offering accommodations for incoming travelling paramedics – supporting the Travelling Paramedic program in their community.
- **Northern Rockies:** Offering recruitment initiatives and perks for paramedics willing to come & work in Fort Nelson.



# Concrete Outcomes

- **New Full-Time Positions**
  - Another 210 paramedic positions added across the Northwest, Northeast, Northern Interior and the Thompson Cariboo regions, among others.
  - **ED Closures Support**– collaborative plan with MoH and Regional Health Authorities to mitigate hospital closures & diversions.
  - First ever Advanced Care Paramedic ambulance in the Northeast.
- High School EMR Program
- BCEHS Job Fairs
- Paid Training Programs

**BCEHS** | BC Emergency  
Health Services  
Provincial Health Services Authority



**BCEHS  
OPEN  
HOUSE  
& BBQ**

📅 Wednesday, Sept. 24, 2025  
🕒 12:30 – 4:30 p.m.  
📍 Ambulance Station 309, 6637 Marten Road,  
Anahim Lake, BC

## **BCEHS HIRING EVENT**

**WorkBC Career and Job Fair**

📅 April 15, 2025  
🕒 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.  
📍 4936 Barriere Town Rd, Barriere, B.C.

Learn more at [bcehs.ca/careers/what-we-offer/hiring-events](https://bcehs.ca/careers/what-we-offer/hiring-events)



# Change is Happening

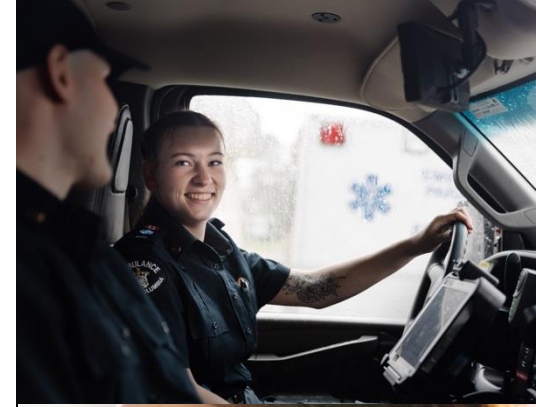
- Increased Access to Air Resources
  - Additional air assets in the North and South Island
  - Additional Critical Care night shift (provincial)
  - New training and new roles for paramedics to support air-based patient transfers.



# In Conclusion

- We are...
  - Investing in recruitment
  - Expanding full-time positions
  - Exploring new deployment models
  - Strengthening partnerships at the local level
  - Improving emergency medical coverage

Improvement and change take time.  
Help us shape a more resilient, responsive system.





# Questions





# CHARTING UBCM 2025 THE COURSE





An aerial photograph of the City of Grand Forks, British Columbia, showing a wide river flowing through the town. The river is brown and turbulent, indicating high water levels. A large concrete bridge spans the river in the foreground. On the right side of the river, there is a large area of construction or flood mitigation work, with heavy machinery and materials visible. The town is built on a valley floor, with houses and commercial buildings scattered throughout. In the background, there are steep, rocky mountains with some forested areas. The sky is overcast with grey clouds.

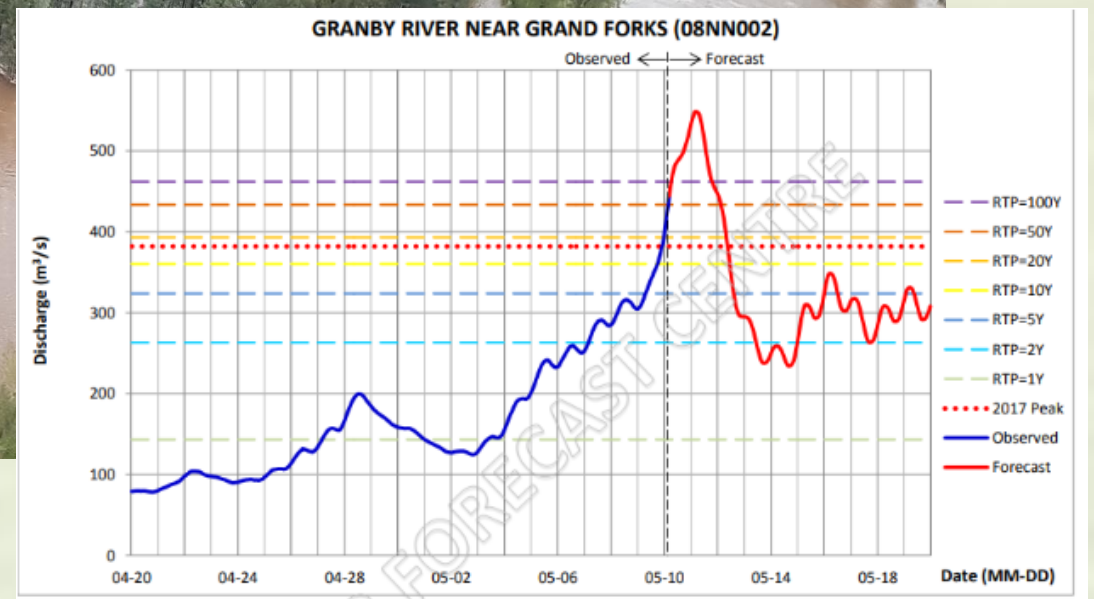
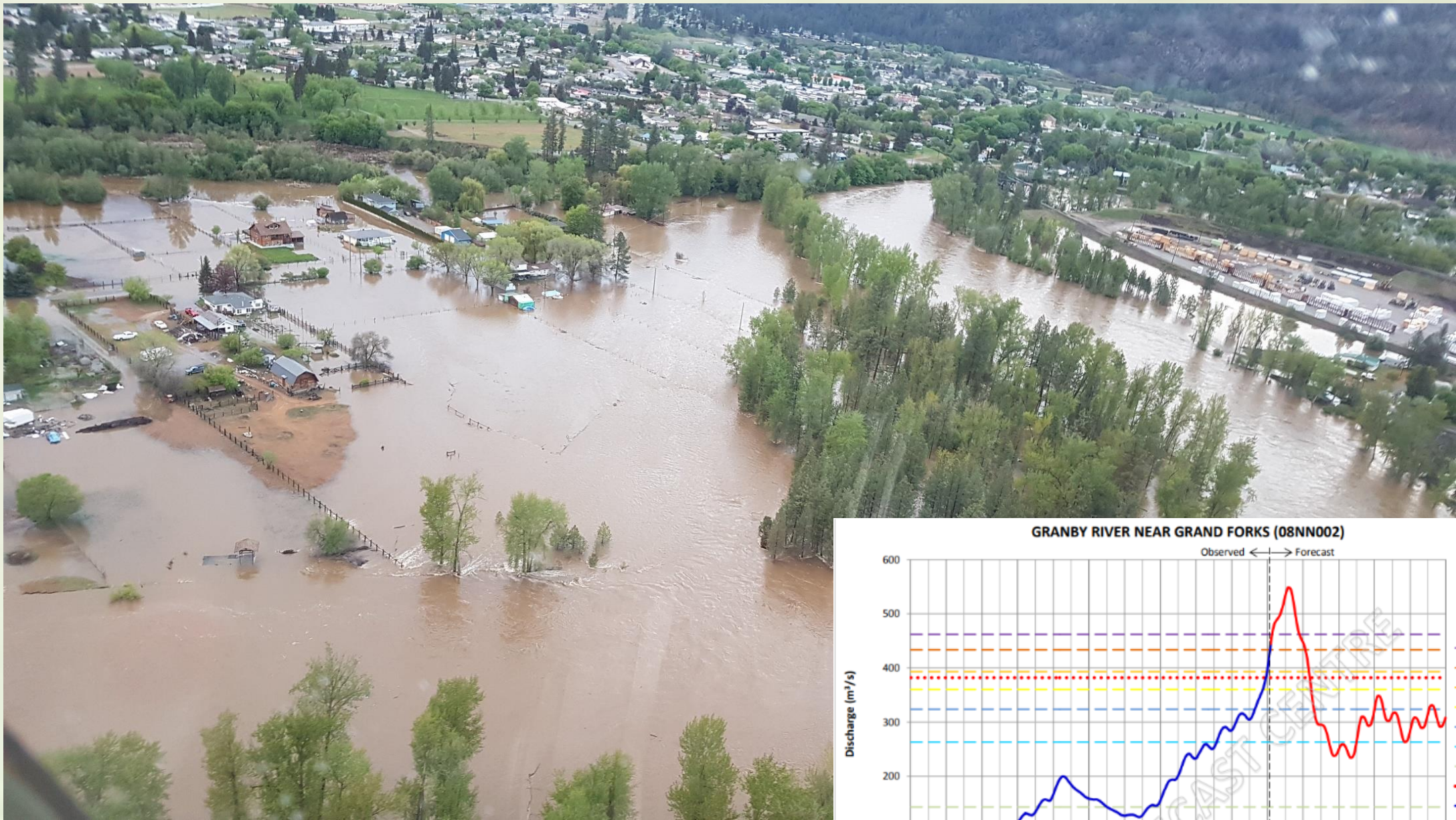
# City of Grand Forks Flood Mitigation Program September 2025



# Regional District of KOOTENAY BOUNDARY















Award (DMAF ~\$20M, BC \$31M, + additional grants)



Prepare the grant



Decision



Feedback



Analysis

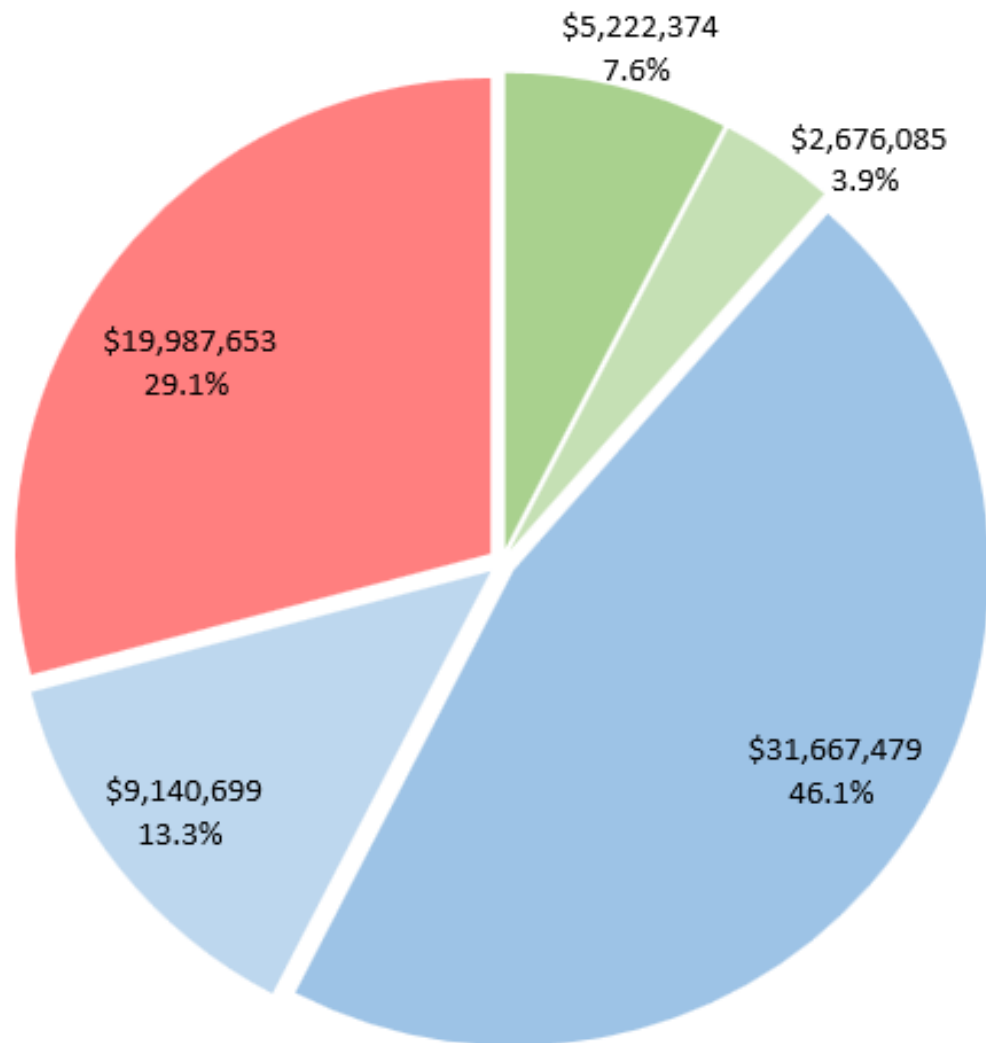


Risk Assessment



## Updated Total Committed Funding By Source

Total = \$68,694,290



Original, City of Grand Forks

Additional, City of Grand Forks

Original, Province of BC

Additional, Province of BC

Original, Infrastructure Canada



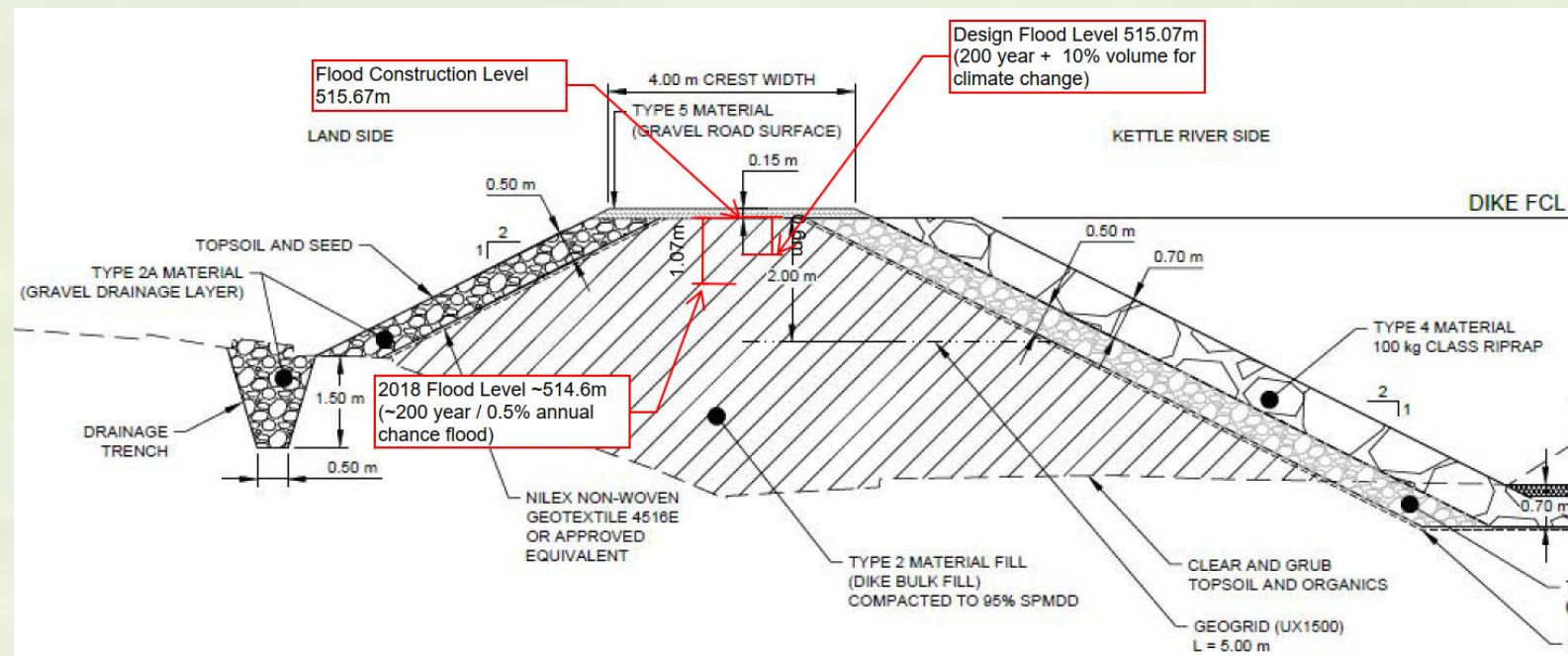


Grand Forks BC flood May 7 2023



Purchase of Property





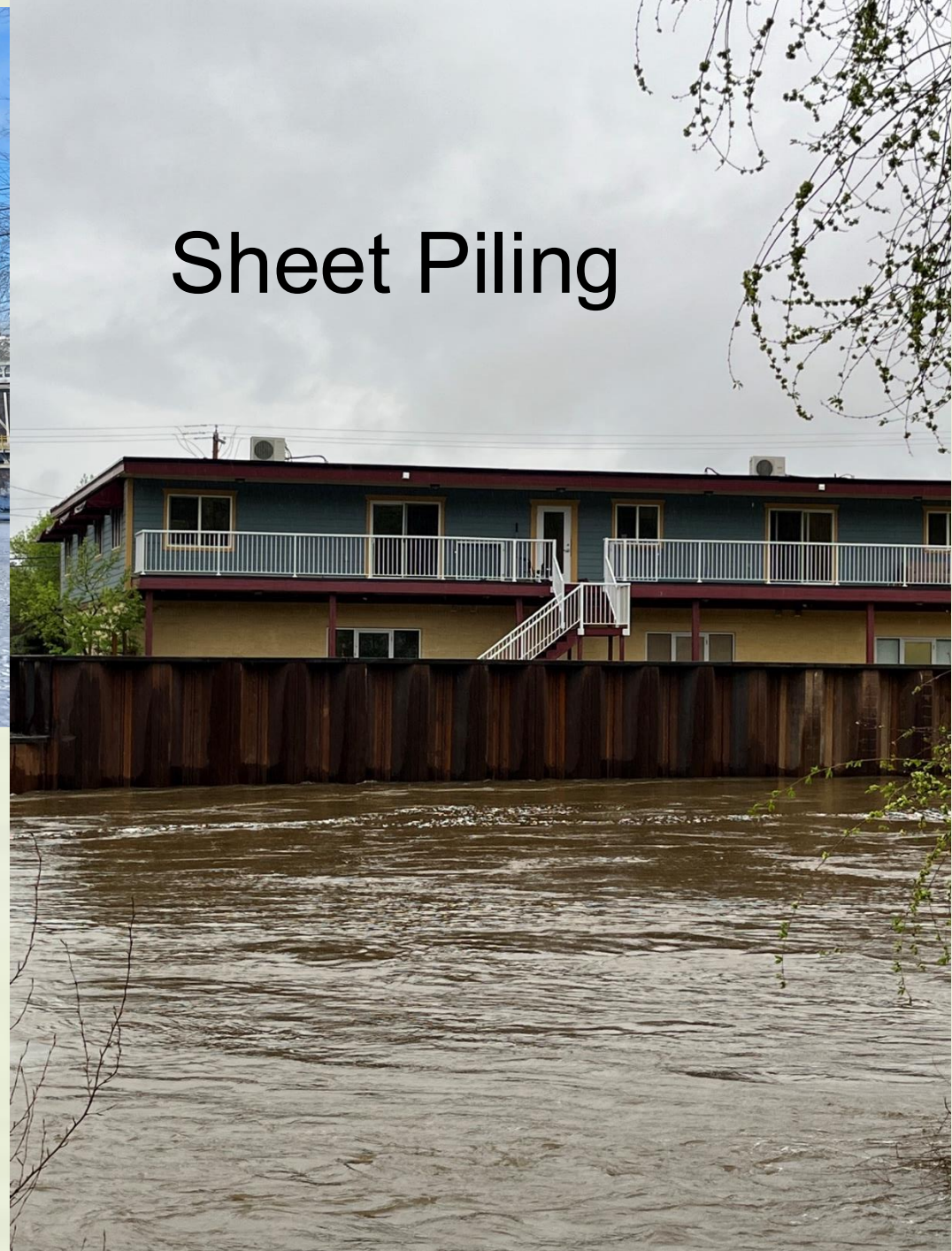
**C** TYPICAL SECTION  
STA 0+165 TO STA 0+180

# Earth Berm





# Sheet Piling







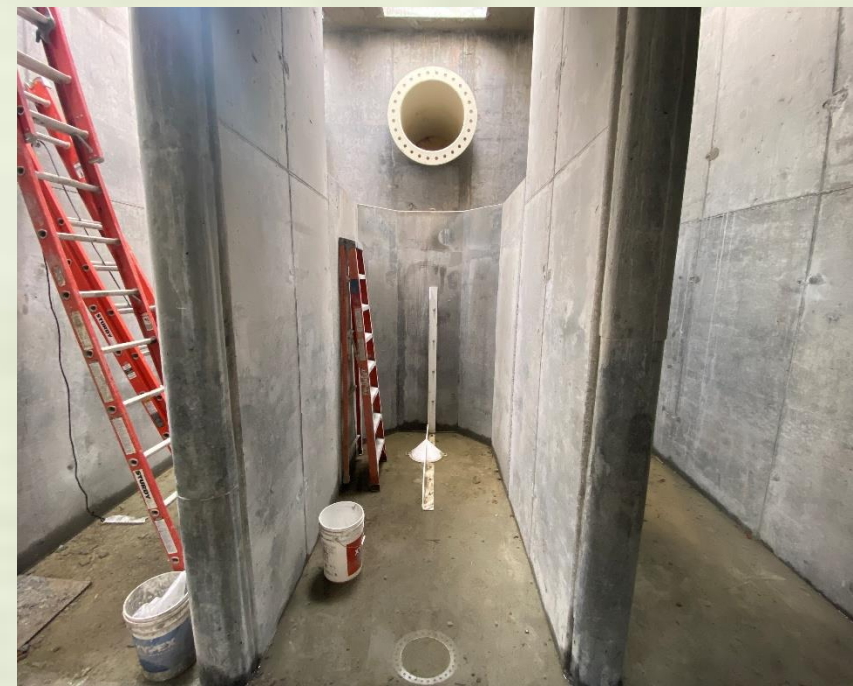
Demountable Wall







# Pump Stations







# Riparian Offsetting







Downtown May 2018





Downtown May 2023





North Ruckle 2018





North Ruckle 2024





# A Good News Story







# CHARTING UBCM 2025 THE COURSE





Presentation to UBCM  
September 2025

HFN Group of Businesses

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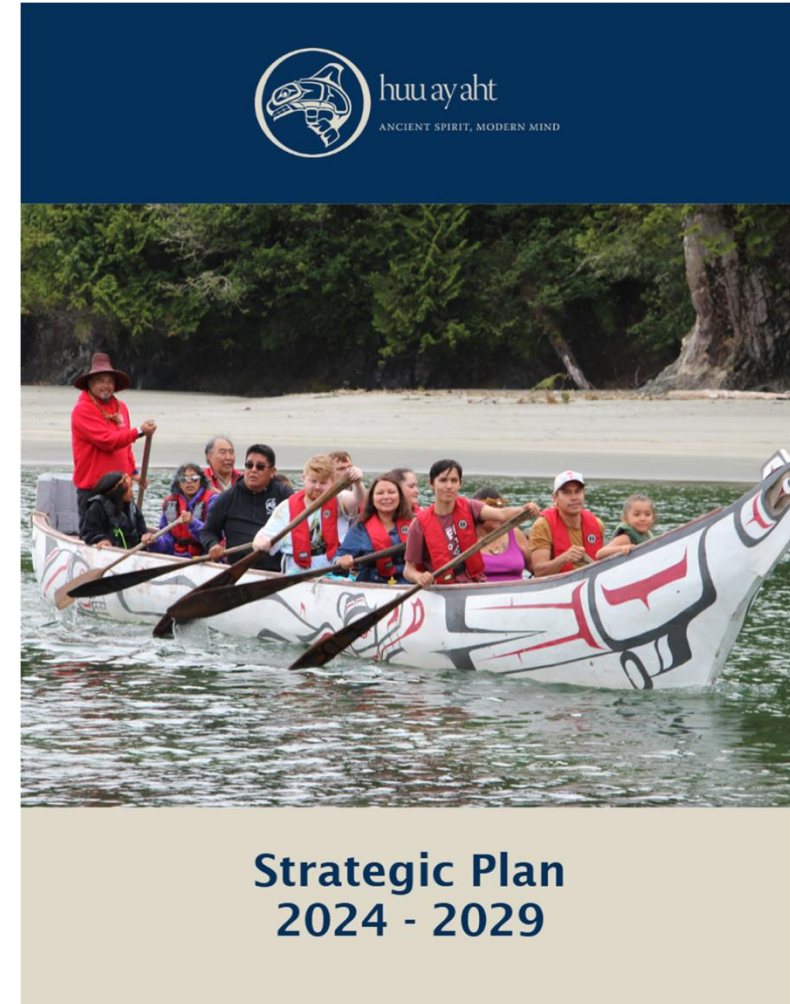


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# HUU-AY-AHT FIRST NATION

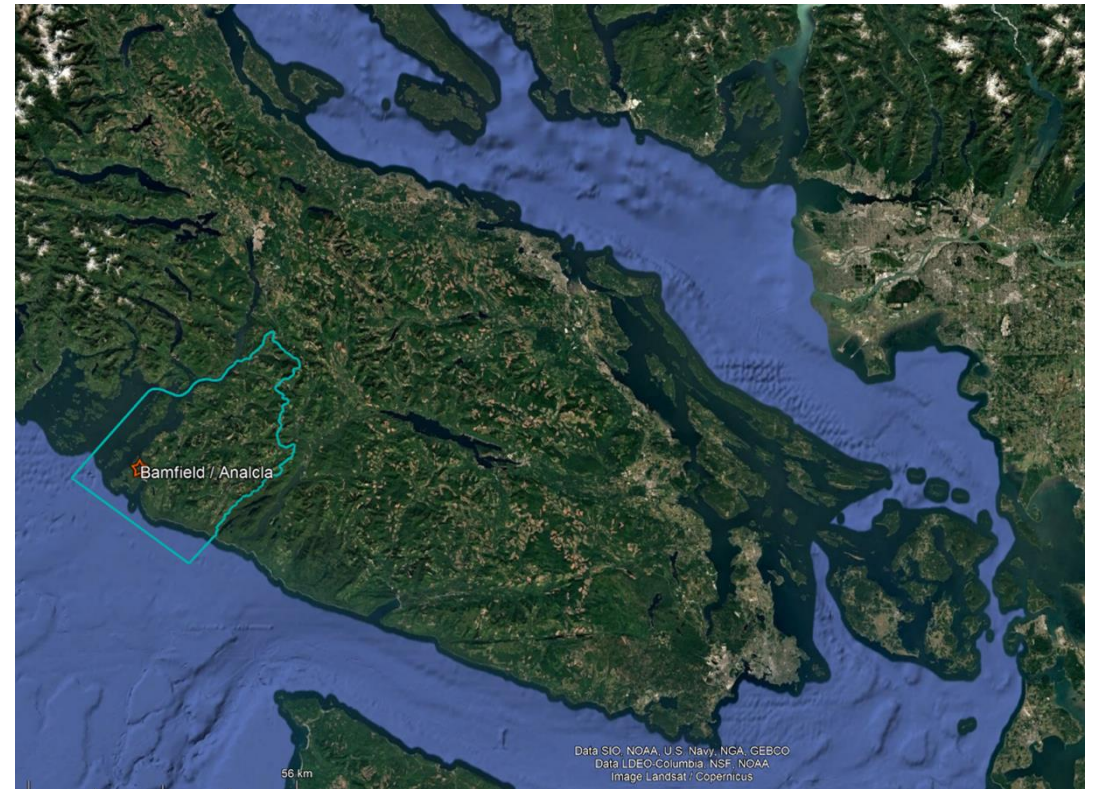
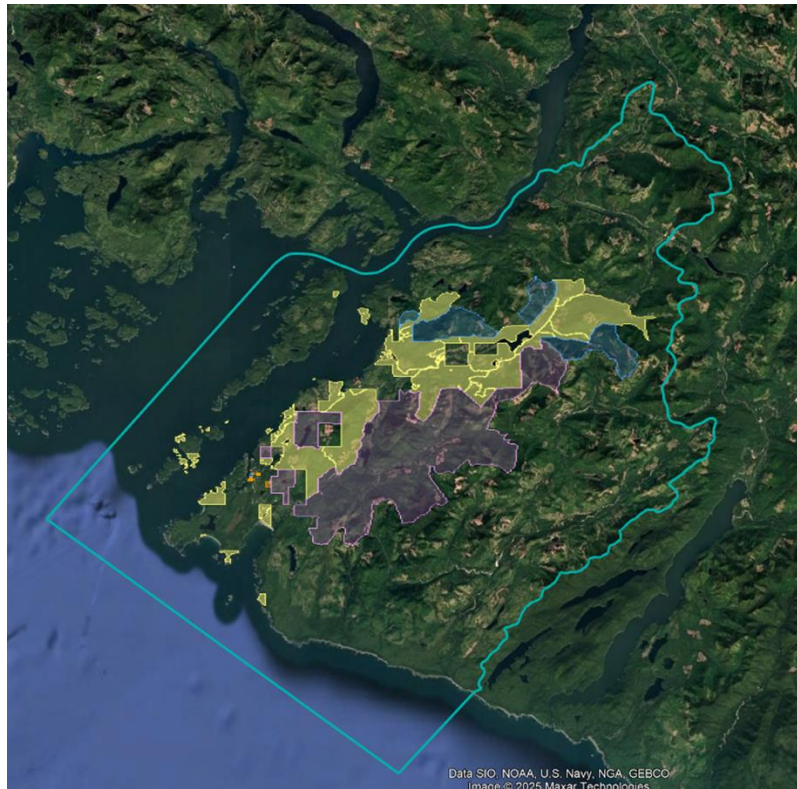
Goal:

A strong and sustainable economy that unlocks the wealth of the HUU-ay-aht Hahuuḷi, attracts visitors, provides diverse employment opportunities, **and generates revenues to reinvest in the ḥahuuḷi and muschuum**



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# HUU-AY-AHT HOME TERRITORY (Ḥahuuṭi)





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# HFN GROUP OF BUSINESSES

## - BUILDING DIVERSITY FOR WEALTH GENERATION



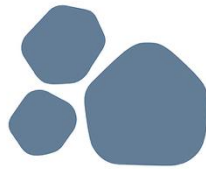
MANAGEMENT LP



FORESTRY LP



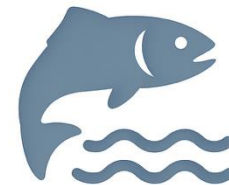
HOSPITALITY LP



GRAVEL LP



LANDS LP



FISHERIES LP



MARKET LP



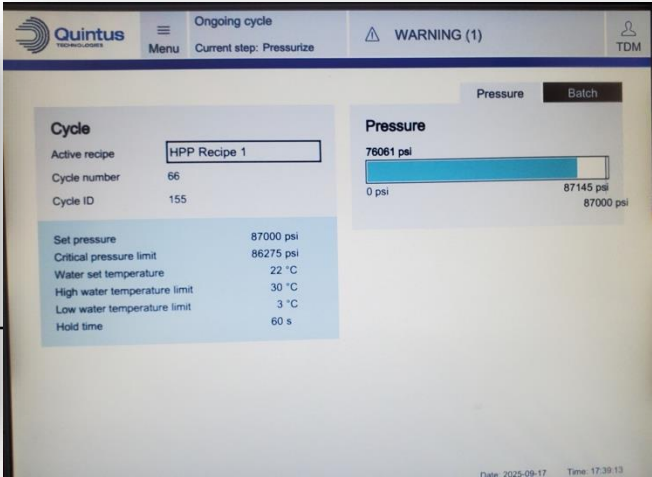
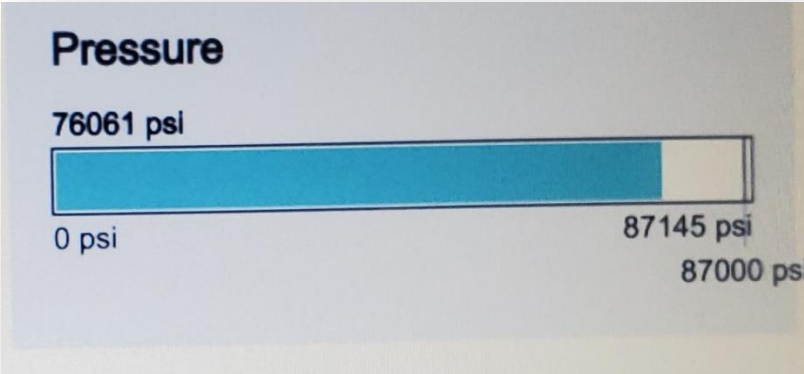
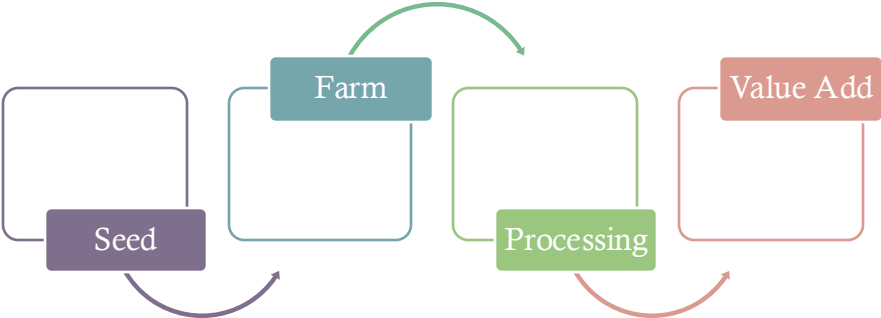
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# FISHERIES





# OYSTER VALUE ADDED PROGRAM





# LANDS







# HOSPITALITY

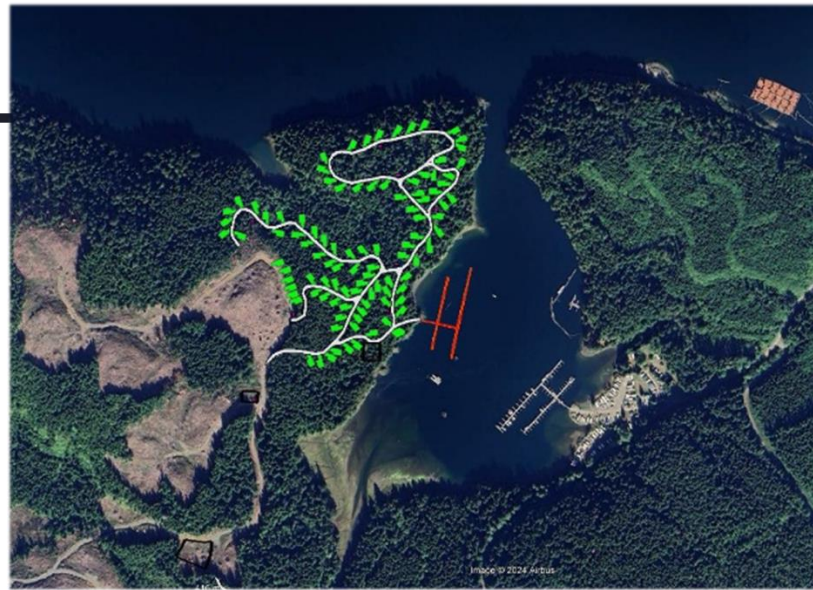




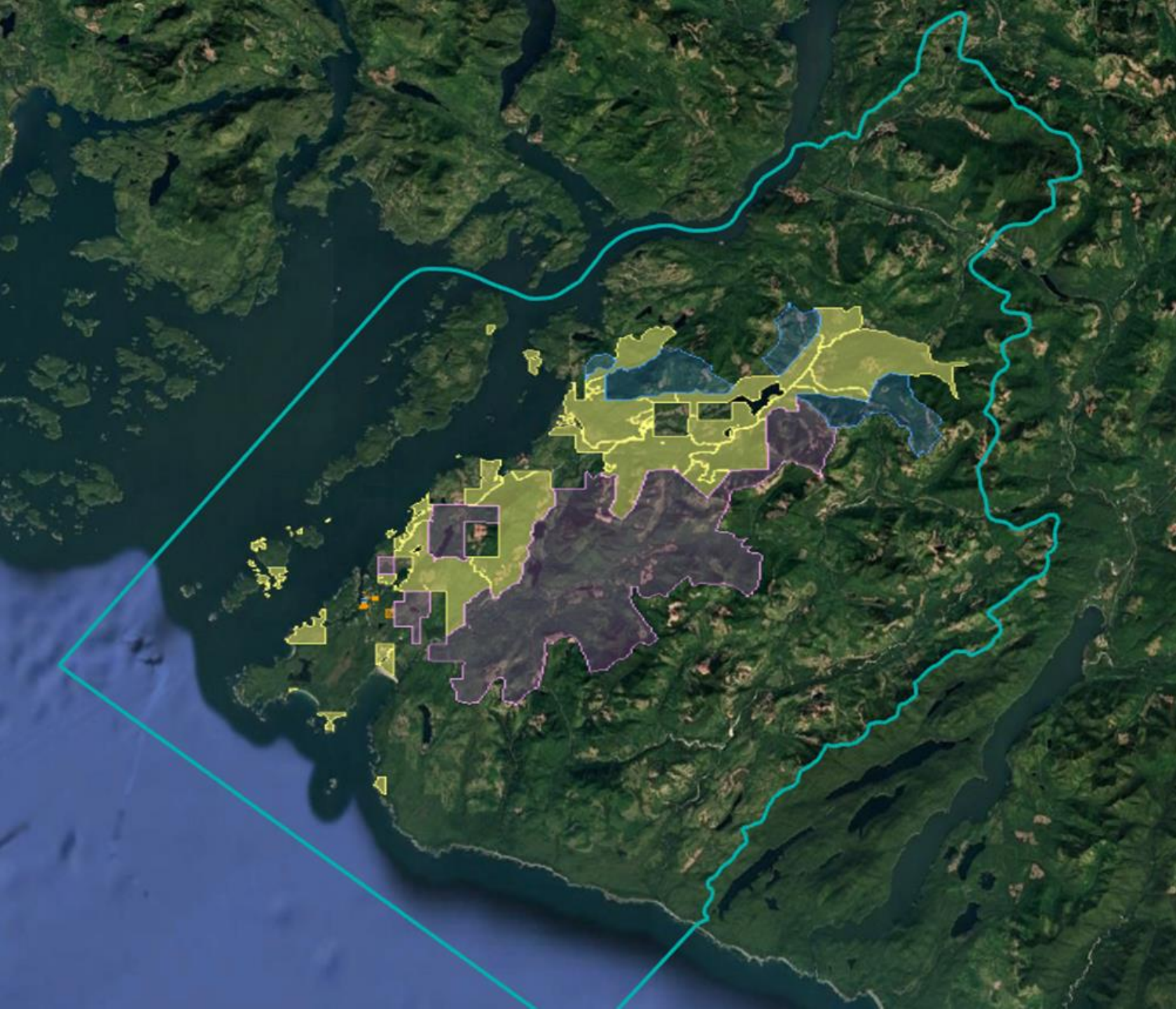
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# HOSPITALITY GROWTH

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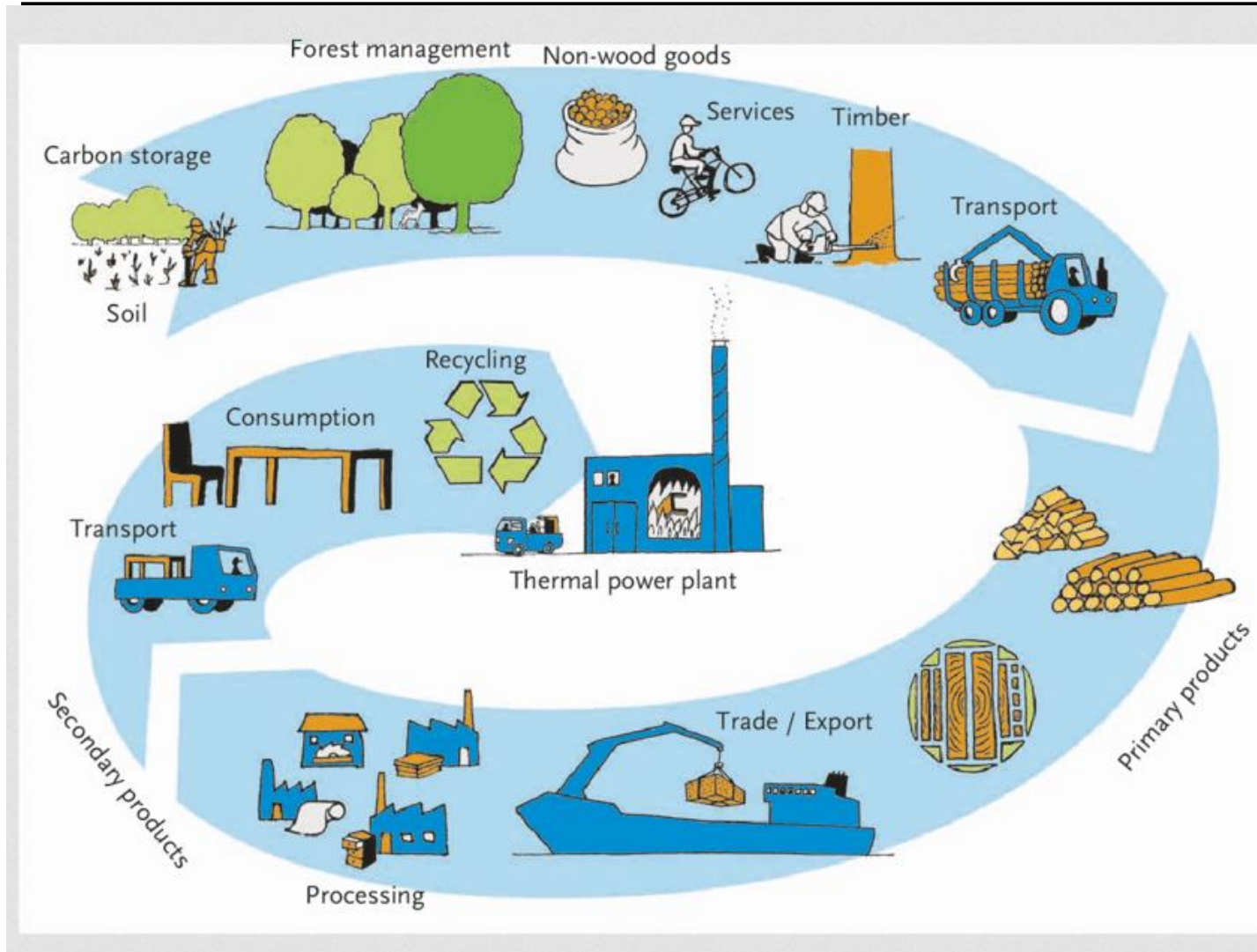




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# FORESTRY

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# ADVANCING THE VALUE CHAIN





TIMBERTILES



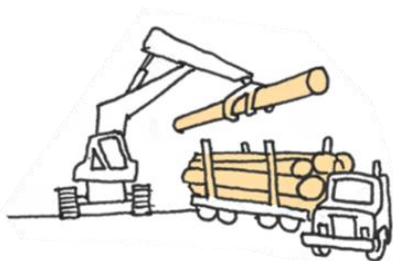
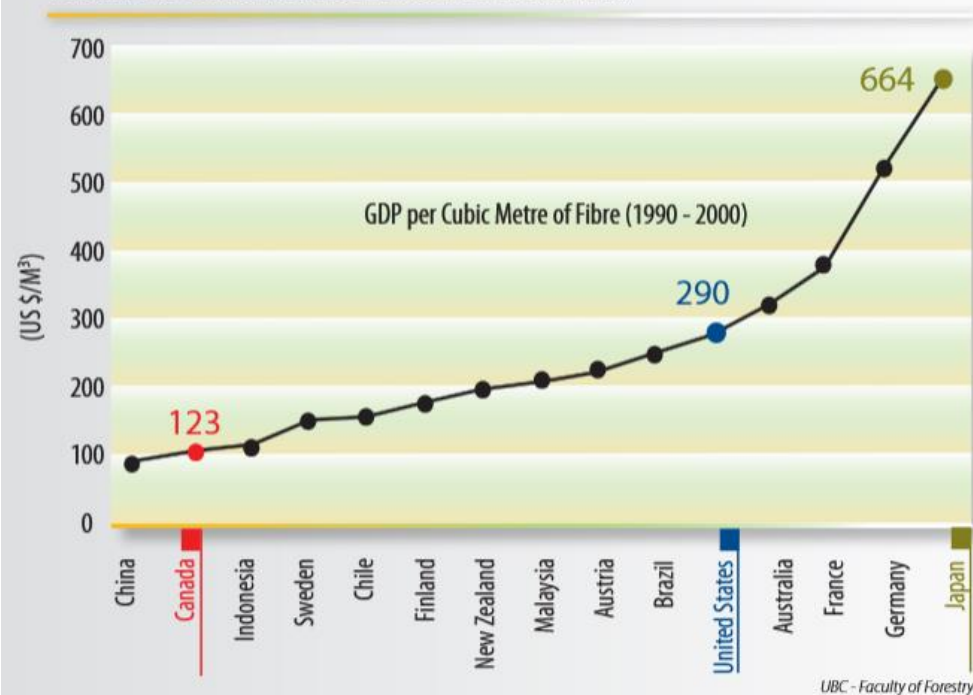


# FORESTRY DIVERSIFICATION

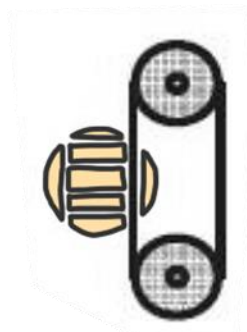




# Potential to Create More Economic Value from Wood

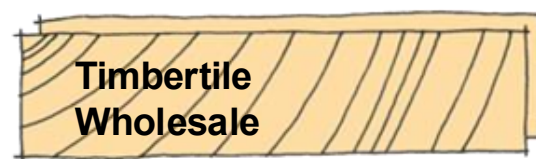


Hemlock Log - Canada

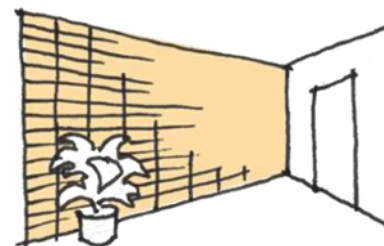


Hemlock Squares

3.2X



Timbertile Wholesale



Japan Wholesale

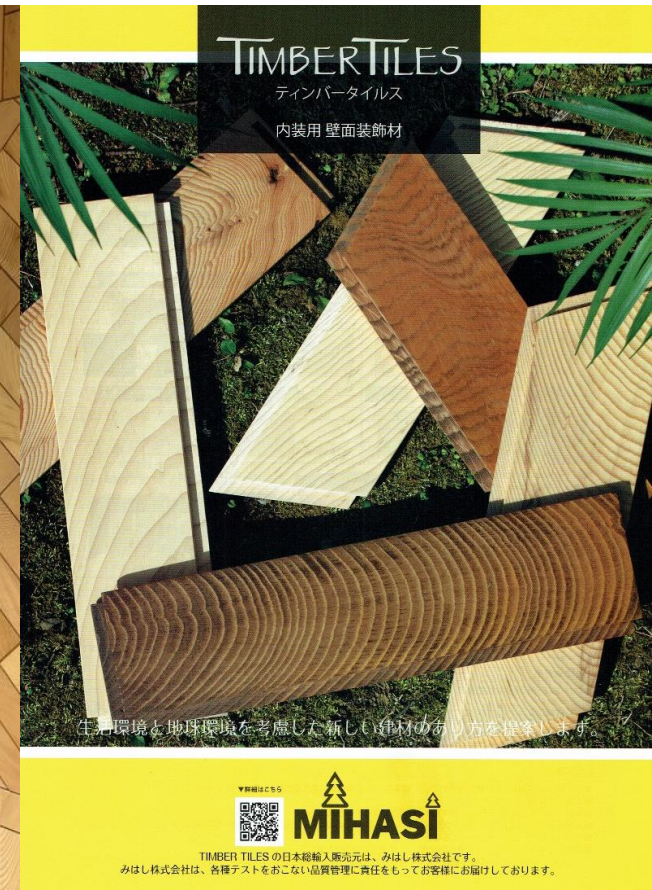
Japan Retail

マウンテンクーガー (Mountain Cougar)  
品番: TLSR4MC  
販売価格: 132,000円 (税抜: 120,000円)  
平米単価: 60,000円

134X  
67X

21.2X

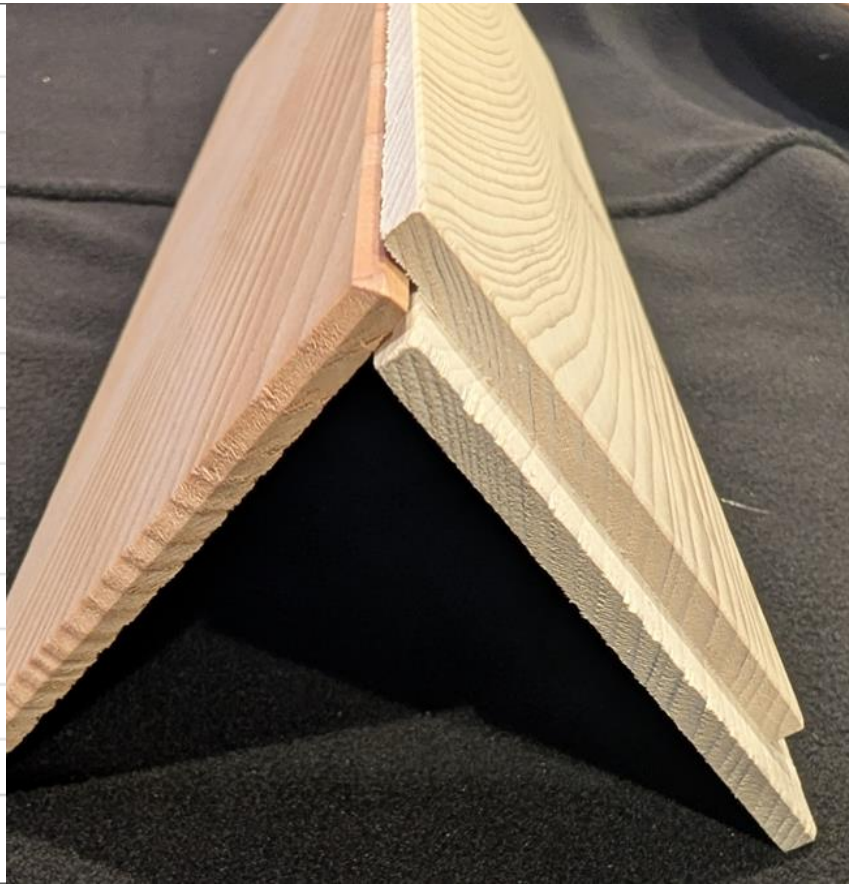
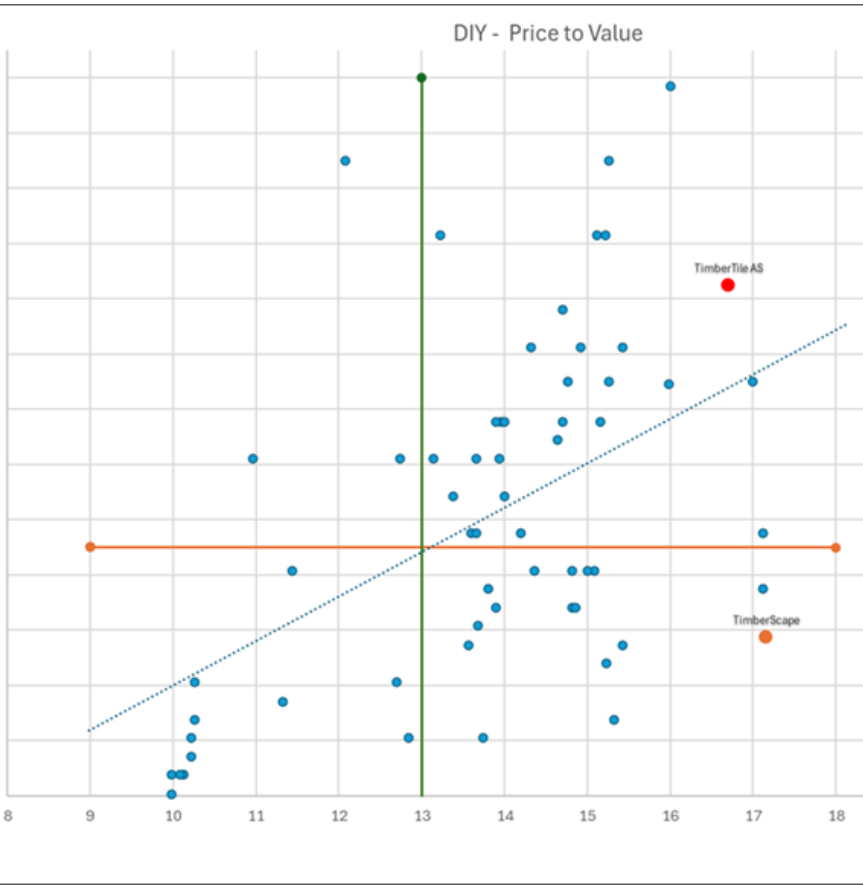
# INITIAL TARGETS – ARCHITECTURAL MARKET/EXPORT





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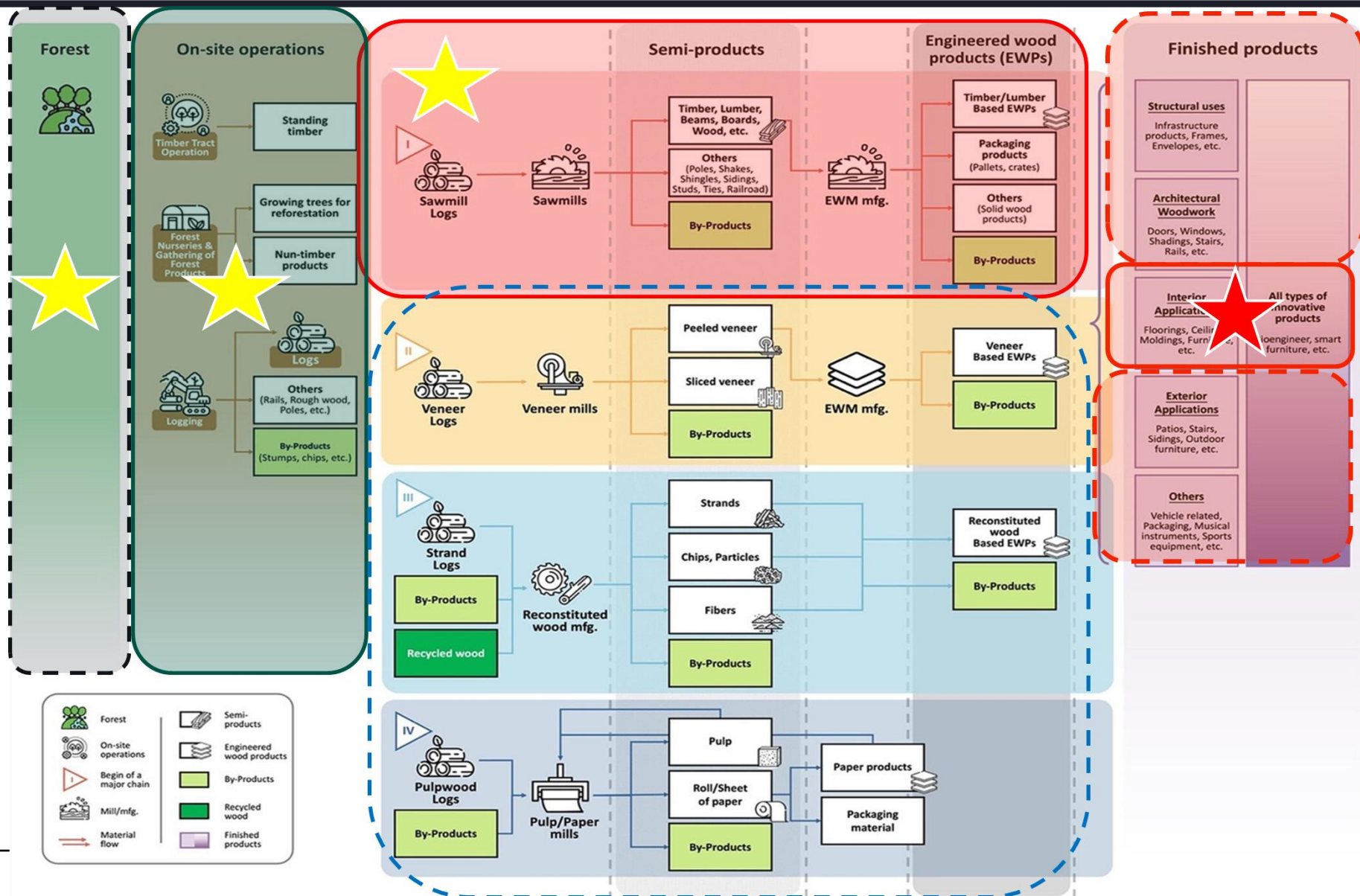
# NEED TO ADAPT TO MARKETS





**DEVELOPING  
PRODUCT  
OPTIONS**





(a)

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HFN

GROUP OF BUSINESSES

For more information contact:

778-421-2663

[info@hfngroup.ca](mailto:info@hfngroup.ca)

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# CHARTING UBCM 2025 THE COURSE



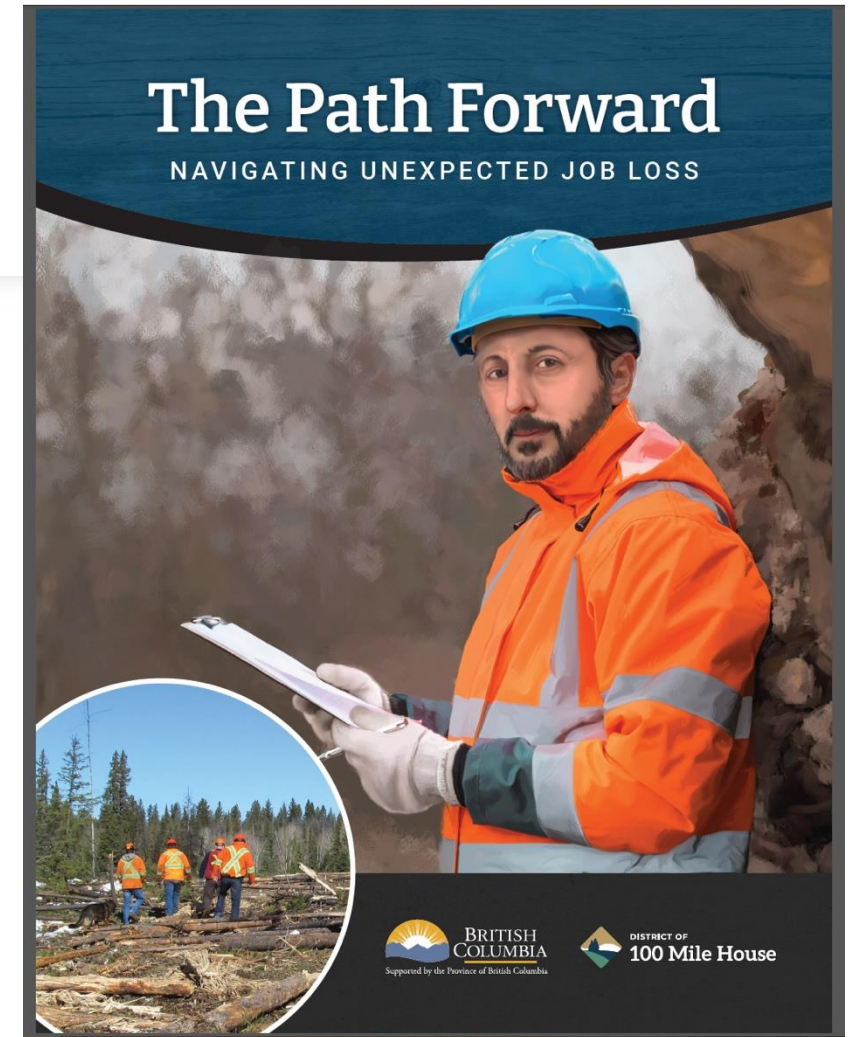
# The Path Forward: Navigating Unexpected Job Loss

2025 UBCM Convention  
Small Talk Forum  
Sept. 23, 2025



## The Path Forward: Navigating Unexpected Job Loss

- Service centre for the South Cariboo
- Forestry dependent
- 2019 - 2 full mill closures & 1 curtailment = 600 direct jobs
- Displaced forestry workers
- How to support workers & families to stay in home community
- Shelf-ready resource guide



## Research

- Fly in – Fly out communities
- Community Development Institute - UNBC
- Hired a skilled researcher
- Confidential interviews with impacted workers & families
- Document common challenges
- Confirm what we were hearing

## When a tree falls: Finding the Path Forward

### Community Support Grant Program

Prepared for District of 100 Mile House

March 2022

By Barbara Perrey, M.S.W.



*"We were on a pretty good path in life until the mill closed. It was like this giant tree crashed down right in front of us and everything stopped. It took us almost the last two years to crawl through that debris and to find a way to get back on track."*

*We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia*



**NOT FOR PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION**



## Evolution of the Resource Guide

Themes	Be informed Be prepared Be proactive
Sections	How are we going to pay the bills? What am I going to do about a job? I didn't expect to retire so soon. I'm worried about my kids. Looking after myself
Features	Checklists Workbook features Resources Action scenarios

## How to use this book

By nature, humans are hardwired to resist change (unless we know for sure it will be beneficial, like a lottery win). When change happens to us, especially when we're taken by surprise, most of us resist and react first, and problem-solve later. Keep this information handy for a time when you are ready to read it. That may be before a job loss, soon after, or many months down the road.

By taking time to become:

- ➔ Informed (What do I need to know?),
- ➔ Prepared (What can I do now?), and
- ➔ Proactive (How can I regain some control of my future?)

...it will be easier to find and take the right path forward.

The local and provincial resources shared throughout this guide were selected as "first points of contact" for people experiencing unexpected job loss. There are many more services that could be of great help to people in this situation. It is anticipated that the services included a) will be operating with the same contact information in the foreseeable future and b) are informed and able to direct people in crisis to any service needed throughout the community and province.

### This guide is organized by sections:

Each section addresses a different issue that a person might face when dealing with job loss. The sections are colour-coded and labelled on the outside of each page.

- **SECTION 1**  
How are we going to pay the bills?
- **SECTION 2**  
What am I going to do about a job?
- **SECTION 3**  
I didn't expect to retire so soon.
- **SECTION 4**  
I'm worried about my kids.
- **SECTION 5**  
Looking after myself

### The sections also contain the following:

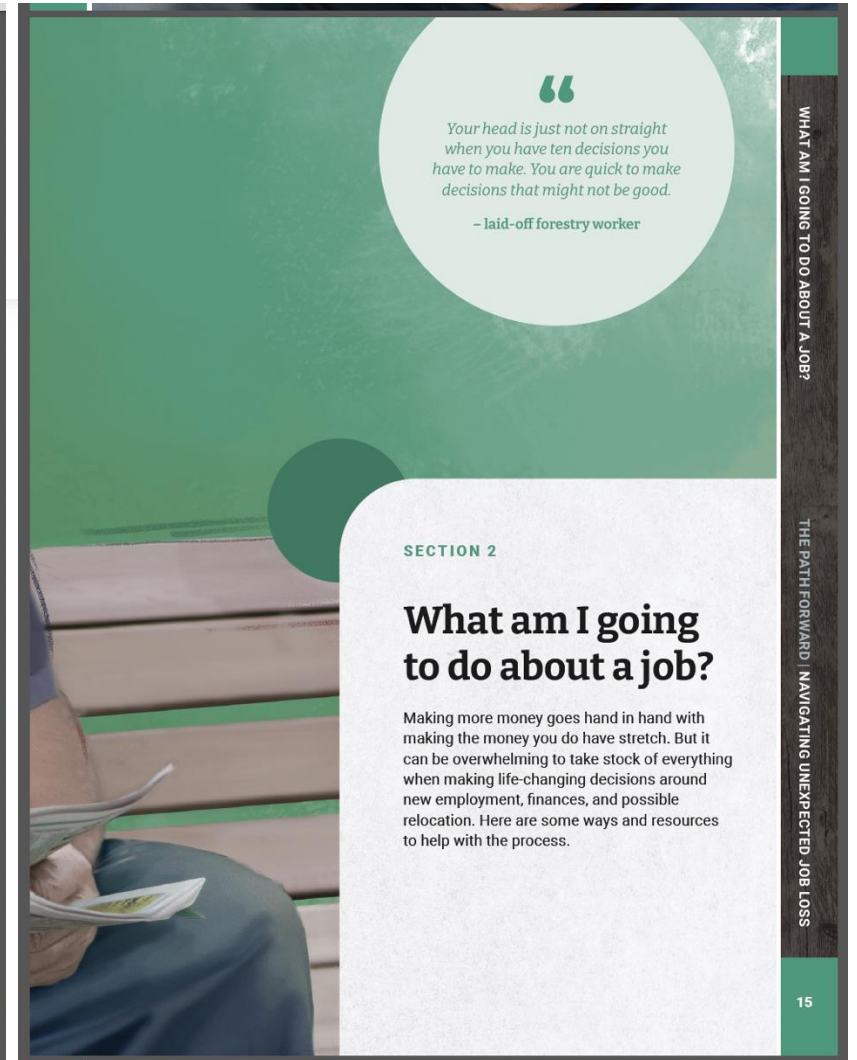
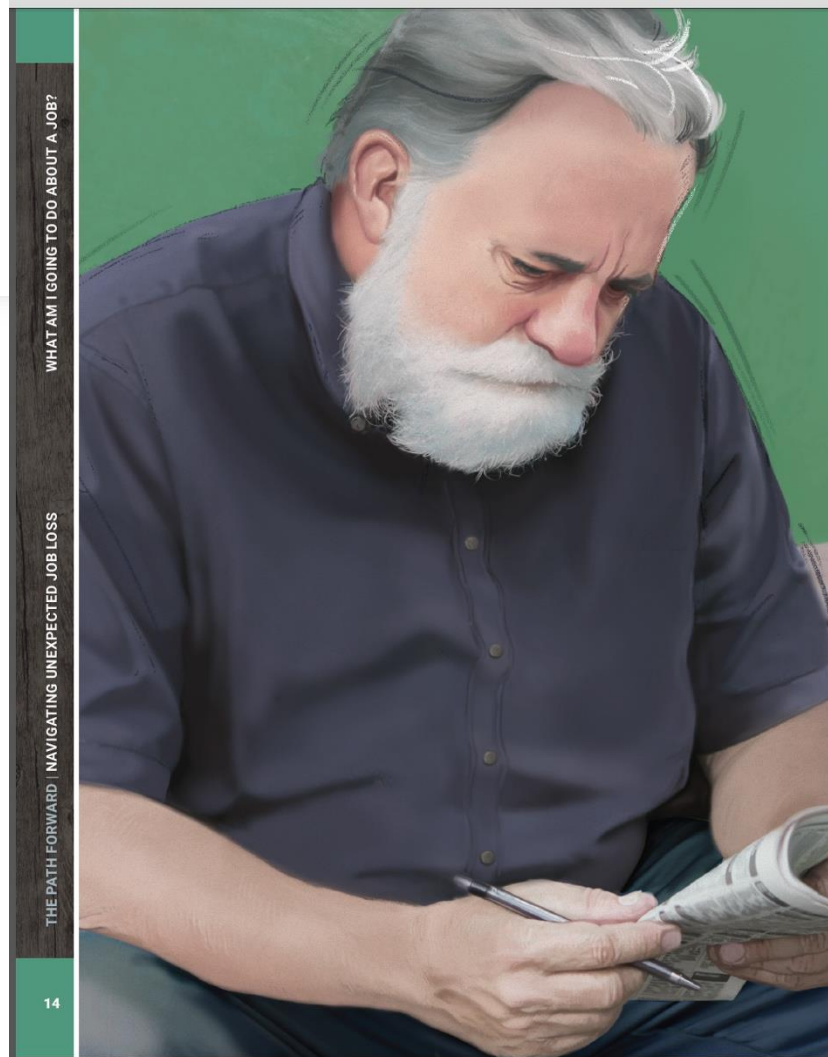
- ☑ **Checklists:** These lists identify steps to take and different people to talk to.
- 📝 **Workbook features:** These are areas you can use to write down your thoughts, useful information, and other things that you may do to help as you plan for your future.
- ⚙️ **Resources:** Within the sections, for quick reference, useful resources are contained in coloured boxes.
- ▶️ **Action scenarios:** These are descriptions of what to do in specific situations, such as calling a resource provider. They include examples of what to say.



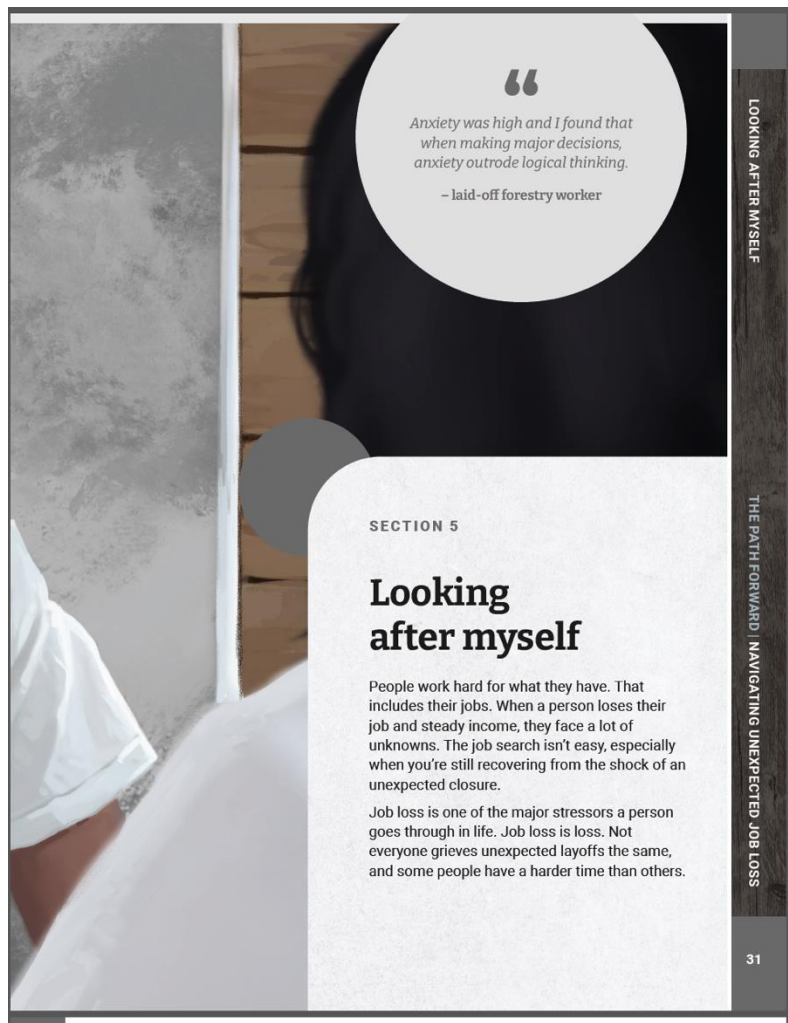


## Intentional Design

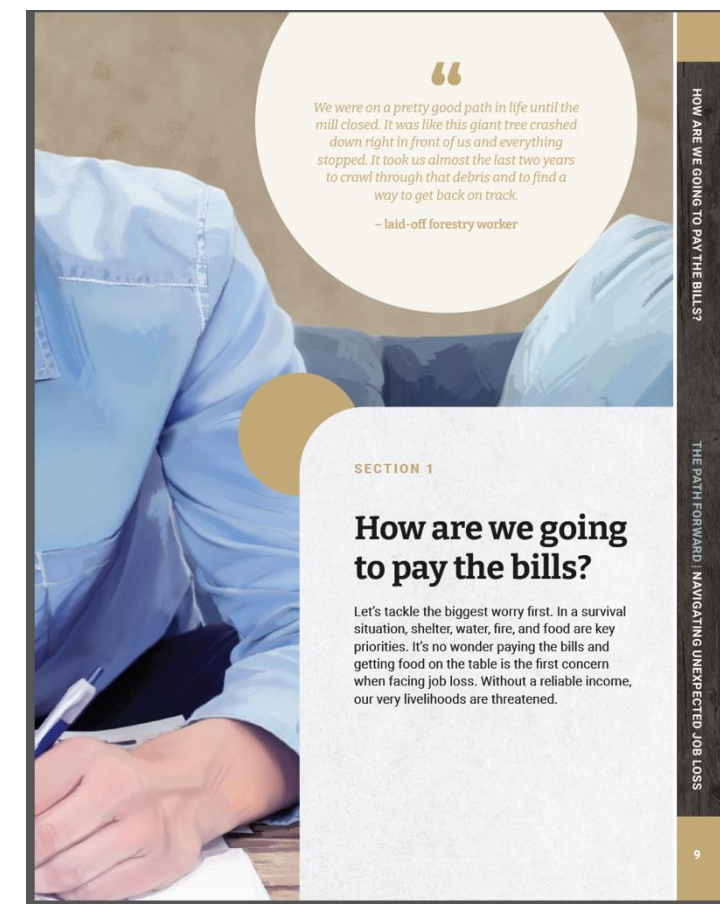
- Design
- Content
- Language & voice
- Printing
- Illustrations



DISTRICT OF  
**100 Mile House**



## Intentional Design Elements



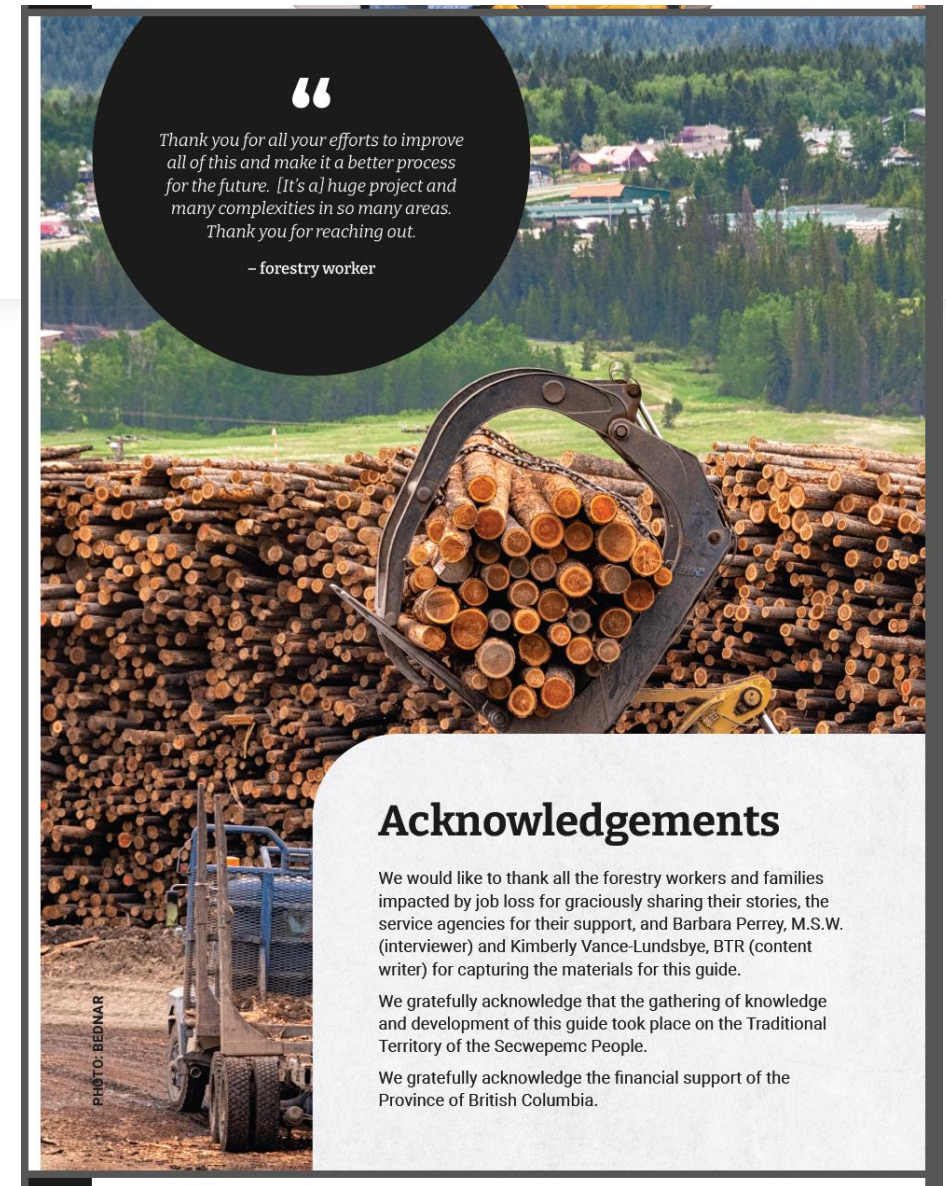


## Community Resiliency

- Funding
- Adaptability
- Sharing our experience
- Real voices
- Lived experiences
- Editable & shared with
  - Province
  - Communities with forestry mill closures
  - Communities with mine closures



DISTRICT OF  
**100 Mile House**



## Closing Comments

“

*This is a good, supportive and generous community. During events like the wildfires and mill closures, people stepped up in so many ways.*

– service provider



DISTRICT OF  
**100 Mile House**

## The path forward

When times are toughest, putting one foot in front of the other is sometimes all a person can do. Moving forward is just that; one step at a time. Finding the path itself isn't always easy, and moving forward takes courage, tenacity, and some blind faith that better times are on the horizon.

### Job loss is not the end of the road. Even retirement is a new beginning.

To find your path forward, stay:

- ➔ **Informed:** Find out what is happening and how it will impact your life.
- ➔ **Prepared:** Take stock of what you can get done now to make life easier later.
- ➔ **Proactive:** Stay behind the driver's wheel of your life. Make things happen.

Life doesn't unfold in a straight line. When setbacks happen, reorient and keep on moving along the path forward.

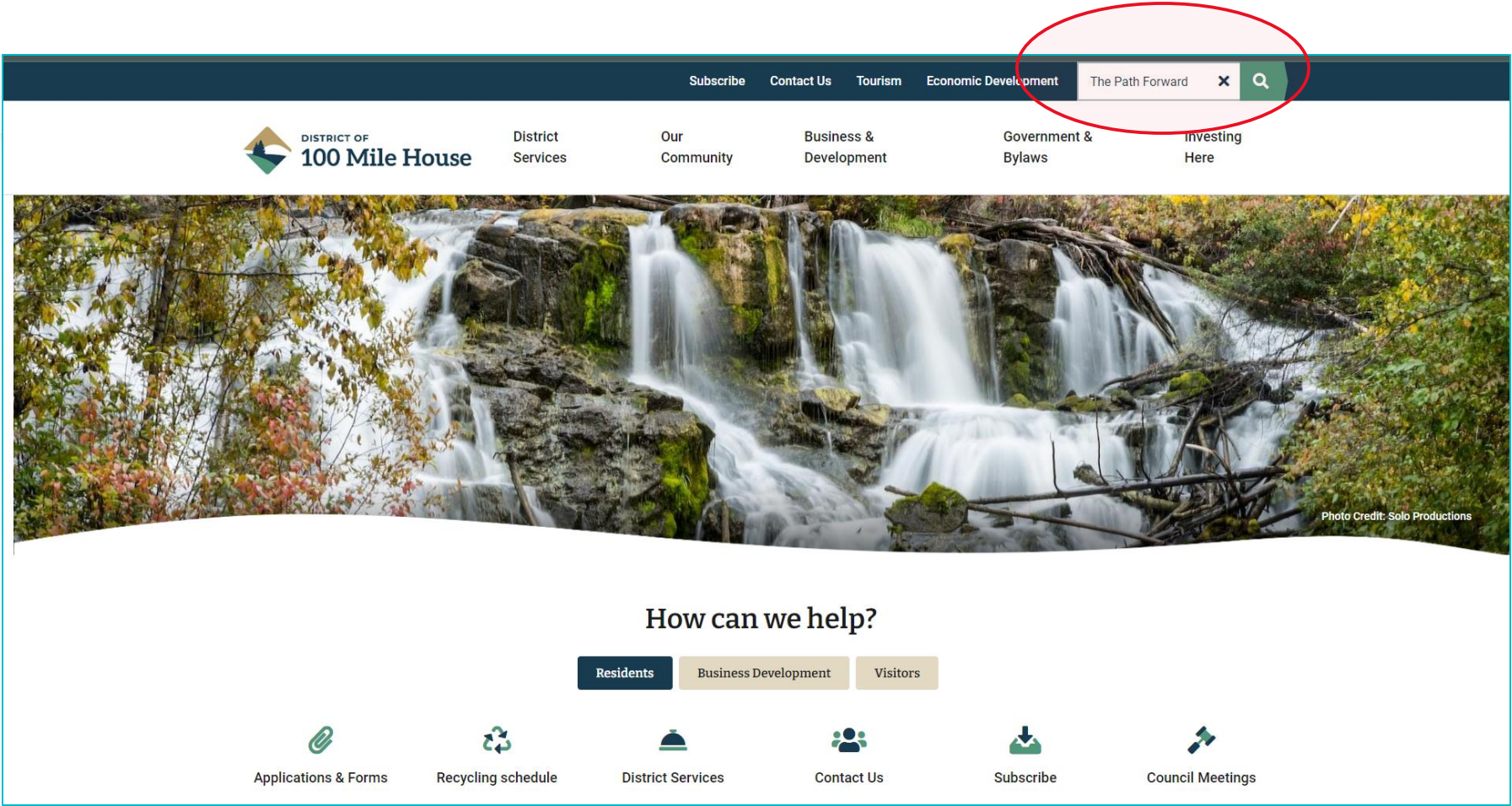
Major industry changes are a community crisis. All along the path are neighbours, friends, and coworkers. Some chip in and clear the way of obstacles where they can. Others offer shortcuts or supplies to make the journey easier. If we do what we can and take what we need, everyone will make their way through to the other side.





# The Path Forward: Navigating Unexpected Job Loss

www.100milehouse.com







# CHARTING UBCM 2025 THE COURSE





# Local Government Program Services

# Provincial Funding Administered by UBCM

Local Government Program Services (LGPS) provides administration for Provincially-funded grant programs. Since 1999, LGPS has provided funding to local governments, First Nations and other eligible applicants through a diverse range of funding programs and services.





# LGPS: Current Programs

- 2026 FireSmart Community Funding and Supports: Open intake from Oct. 1, 2025 to Sept. 30, 2026
- 2026 Next Generation 911. Opens Oct. 1, 2025. Deadline: Feb. 13, 2026
- 2024/25 Active Transportation Planning: Open intake closes Sept. 30, 2025

# LGPS: Current Programs

- 2025/26 Community Emergency Preparedness Fund
  - 2025 Volunteer and Composite Fire Departments Equipment and Training. Deadline: Oct. 31, 2025
  - 2025 Emergency Support Services Equipment and Training. Deadline: Nov. 14, 2025
  - 2026 Indigenous Cultural Safety and Cultural Humility Training. Deadline: Jan. 30, 2026
  - 2026 Emergency Operations Centres Equipment and Training. Deadline: Feb. 27, 2026
  - 2026 Public Notification and Evacuation Route Planning. Deadline: April 24, 2026



# LGPS: Looking Ahead

- 2027/28 Community Emergency Preparedness Fund. Intakes confirmed.
- 2026/27 Community Emergency Preparedness Fund. Intakes confirmed.
- 2026/27 Community to Community Forum program. Pending confirmation of funding.
- 2026 Asset Management program. Pending confirmation of funding.

# Tips & Tricks!

Join a UBCM webinar

Focus on Table 1 in each guide

Extensions to application deadlines are usually available

Excel templates are available for budgets and financial summaries

Project amendments can be considered

Progress payments are usually available

Extensions to final report deadlines are available

Program officers are always available to answer questions

Contact: [lgps@ubcm.ca](mailto:lgps@ubcm.ca)





# CHARTING UBCM 2025 THE COURSE



# Threshold Housing Society

In appreciation of our speakers today and with thanks for your contribution, UBCM has made a donation in your honour to the Threshold Housing Society. They are passionate about serving youth at risk, offering a nurturing and safe environment to support the varying needs of the youth, and offer them a safe place to call home.