



# District of 100 Mile House

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The District of 100 Mile House is pleased to share our Municipal Log Home Façade Project with all municipalities in the province. This project demonstrates excellence in incorporating the principles of sustainable development by contributing to the economic, social and environmental sustainability of 100 Mile House and area. The District took the lead in creating a vision for the community and its business core and set the standards for a rehabilitation project. The municipality successfully demonstrated that a potentially under-valued resource, beetle-killed Lodgepole Pine, can be used innovatively to showcase the skills in the community that support the municipality's reputation as the *Handcrafted Log Home Capital of North America*, contribute to the mitigation of the mountain pine beetle in the short-term and well into the future, and provide practical opportunities for economic sustainability and growth.



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## **PROJECT SUMMARY REPORT**

The District of 100 Mile House is pleased to submit the following Project Summary Report which it believes meets the Community Excellence Award criteria to profile excellence in Local Government in the category of Leadership and Innovation.

The project chosen is one that has created incentives for others to follow and contributes to the economic, social and environmental sustainability of 100 Mile House and surrounding area.

### *Background*

100 Mile House with a population of approximately 2,000 is located in the South Cariboo in the Central Interior Region of British Columbia on Highway 97, BC's main arterial north/south route. It lies approximately 441 km northeast of Vancouver and approximately 326 km south of Prince George. Highway 24 to the east connects to the Okanagan and north to Jasper. 100 Mile House is surrounded by hundreds of lakes of various sizes and wetlands, natural resources, agricultural land and a spread-out rural population. It is the main service trading area in the South Cariboo with a population of 26,000 who come into 100 Mile on a daily basis for schooling, business, goods and services. These numbers swell during the summer months when tourists take advantage of many recreational opportunities that appeal to a wide audience of all ages.

The South Cariboo economic base includes forestry, ranching, tourism and value added, with forestry as the most dominant of the local economy. The District continuously seeks out avenues to provide the community opportunities to build the capacity needed to nurture, enhance and utilize the skills of people and organizations to progress towards sustainable development.

### *Project Motivator*

It is widely recognized that the mountain pine beetle epidemic in British Columbia is an unprecedented threat to forest based communities in the Interior of BC that will have community and environmental impacts for several decades in the future.

100 Mile House is an active member of the Cariboo-Chilcotin Beetle Action Coalition and follows the Provincial Government's Sustainable Resource Management Plan which prioritizes high risk beetle areas. Pine beetle infestations have been recorded in the 100 Mile House area since 1974, with the largest recorded outbreaks from 1980 – 1985 and again in 1995. 100 Mile House was included in the Emergency Bark Beetle Management Area in March 2004 for aggressive prevention and suppression action.

The mountain pine beetle is the catalyst that spearheaded this project. The District is committed to contribute to the mitigation of the problem both in the short-term and well into the future. It seeks results based solutions to provide an economic catalyst that will contribute to community stability and growth. The Municipal Façade Project met the criteria for economic generation in the community by utilizing salvage wood harvesting of beetle killed Lodgepole Pine.

Interest was sparked from the very beginning as the spectacular transformation of outdated drab old buildings into an integrated, beautiful log home structure with a natural wood and rock trimming effect took place. The District is enthused with the results, not only those that showcase the skilled craftsmanship of our log home builders, and supports the municipality's very recent adoption of the Official Mark, *Handcrafted Log Home Capital of North America*, but also the growing participation of the business community in integrating the theme into their structures.

### *Need For Project*

It had been recognized for quite some time that the allocation of space and the structural state of the District municipal offices located at 385 South Birch Avenue were inadequate to meet the needs of Council and Staff. Previous attempts to partner with other organizations to develop a building complex on other municipal lands were unsuccessful. Such a development could have provided much needed services and training needs for 100 Mile House and area residents, as well as made available to the community and private sector the opportunity for economic development initiatives.

Much discussion was held by the District regarding how to allocate scarce resources to meet its own physical administrative spatial needs in a fiscally responsible way while at the same time contributing to the economic growth of the community.

### *Project Description*

An architectural site inspection and feasibility study of the District Municipal Office, actually comprised of two buildings, was undertaken in January 2004. The principle building is a single storey concrete block structure dated 1971, and the second an older timber frame structure with vinyl siding, both buildings with flat roofs. It was determined that the state of repair of both buildings had substantially deteriorated, the internal air quality was extremely poor, the heating was operating unsatisfactorily and showed signs of obsolescence, and the general interior was comprised of narrow circulation

aisles, ad hoc storage and furniture placement and doubling up of space allocation. The options for improvement ranged from Option #1, short-term improvements within the existing buildings without any major code upgrades, to Option #4, the planning and construction of a brand new municipal building.

On February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2004 Council directed that Option #1 be proceeded with, and that a concept plan for improvements to the outside of the building be sought. The upgrading work that ensued in the inside resulted in the relocation of Council Chambers from the north side of the principal building to the south side of the adjoining building, the addition of four offices into the previously occupied Chambers site, and circulation revisions.

In June 2004 Municipal Façade Tender T04-62 was developed and closed July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2004. The project was awarded to a local log home builder for a total project cost of \$60,838.06. Works were commenced Easter Weekend of March 2005 and completed a month later. The work included the removal and disposal of the current entry header framing and siding on the wood framed portion of the existing municipal office building as well as the furnishing of all labour, materials and equipment necessary for the installation of a front façade using beetle killed Lodgepole Pine.

### *Contribution to Economic Growth*

How did the District of 100 Mile House, through this project, contribute to the economic growth of the community? As stated earlier, much interest was generated throughout the construction phase of the project. The Contractor's work was well-received, resulting in increased business for his company and interest expressed from neighbouring businesses to consider joining in the log home theme. The mini business strip on the opposite side of Birch Avenue has now commissioned log wrapping work on its outside support poles, with work to commence in the very near future.

### *Qualitative Benefits*

This project contributes many benefits to the community. The intangible benefits are many and difficult to quantify at this time.

- The District took the lead in creating a vision for the community and its business core. It demonstrated an innovative use and possibility for wood affected by beetle kill, as well set the standards for a rehabilitation project.
- The District placed an economic value on beetle-killed wood, contributed to the economic recovery of potentially unrecoverable losses, and showcased the end product as a stunning example of an under-valued resource.

- The Municipal Façade project met the District's corporate strategy to contribute to the mitigation of the mountain pine beetle disaster both in the short and long-term by providing a results based solution to encourage economic activity and sustainability.
- The District entered into a relationship with a local log home builder and showcased the skills in the community that has earned 100 Mile House the reputation as the *Handcrafted Log Home Capital of North America*. 100 Mile House and area is home to some 13 active log home businesses who export their products world wide.

### Summary

There are costs to the community when nothing is done to invigorate it, when opportunities are not taken, and when creative and innovative ideas are avoided.

100 Mile House has had its years of boom and bust, and is currently experiencing being on an even keel. This small rural community faces many economic challenges, similar to other small communities in the province. Most daunting for us is our small revenue base which is required to meet the service needs of an expanding community outside our borders.

The financial resources are scarce, but not the desire and will to build community capacity in all areas that contribute to growth and sustainability.

It is hoped that this is only the very beginning of the transformation of the community, a transformation of the physical structures as well as a transformation of the economy from static growth to vibrant sustainability.

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