

## Local Partnership to Undertake 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual “Business Walks”



*April 5, 2019 - For Immediate Release*

**April 5, 2019** – The District of 100 Mile House, Community Futures Cariboo-Chilcotin, South Cariboo Chamber of Commerce and the Provincial Ministry of Forests Lands, Natural Resource Operations, and Rural Development are teaming up to conduct a survey blitz of local businesses on Wednesday, May 1 as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Business Walks gets underway.

The brief survey, which will be delivered by local volunteers, will be used to inform business retention, expansion, and attraction programs to strengthen the local business sector. Information collected will be held confidentially; however, a response team will be enacted to help follow-up on specific needs that businesses identify during the “Business Walks” event and a public report summarizing the findings will be issued. An estimated 240 businesses will be interviewed during this ‘volunteer blitz’.

Volunteers for the Business Walks event include elected officials and economic development staff from the District of 100 Mile House, as well as South Cariboo Chamber of Commerce staff and board members. Other organizations partnering in the event include the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations, and Rural Development, Community Futures Cariboo-Chilcotin, the Cariboo Regional District, the South Cariboo Visitor Centre, Canlan Ice Sports, and CIBC (100 Mile House Branch). All these organizations play a role in providing services to small and medium sized private enterprises and have a potential role to fill in responding to needs articulated from the Business Walks event.

Business Walks is a program popular in the Province of British Columbia, whereby economic development practitioners survey local businesses to learn about their needs. This event being held in 100 Mile House is anticipated to generate energy, excitement, and increased engagement between the community and the business owners operating in the municipality. The intention is that, the program will continue to gain momentum and success in the community, helping to connect business owners to existing programs structured to meet their needs, and help to inform potential new programs and policies.

By taking the pulse of the local business community through Business Walks, the District can identify common successes and obstacles faced by local businesses which will help inform resources and services needed to support and stimulate economic activity in the District, says Mayor Mitch Campsall.

The business surveys will take place in the downtown and industrial areas between 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. on May 1. Businesses that are not visited are encouraged to contact the Municipal Office or Chamber of Commerce to request a follow-up survey which will be conducted after May 1.

Business Walks is not a membership drive or a sales call. It is a program designed to establish a connection and identify actions, where appropriate, to assist business to stay in the community and grow. This program complements activities already taking place in the municipality, including the Business

Façade Incentive Program, the Business Supply Chain Connector, and the Love 100 Mile House buy local program. Those interested in learning more about these programs can contact Joanne Doddridge at the District of 100 Mile House 250-395-2434.

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