



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 20, 2008**

**March 20 Board Meeting Highlights**

**Board Approves 2008 Budget; Regional District Partners with Initiatives Prince George; Regional District Participates in Trade Mission to China;**

The Regional District of Fraser – Fort George Board of Directors approved the 2008 Operating Budget and Five Year Financial Plan at their meeting on March 20, 2008. Operating expenditures for the Regional District in 2008 will total \$23.9 million, of which \$14.2 million will be funded through property taxation. This represents a slight increase over the 2007 budget, which came in at \$22.9 million, of which \$13.6 million came from property taxation.

The 2008 budget reflects the Board's on-going commitment to deliver relevant services in locations where they are needed. Funding for four new services, the Buckhorn, Bendixon, and West Lake Sewer Services and Electoral Area Administration Service, is included in the budget, together with financial support for the Regional Cultural Plan implementation.

The tax requisition level in the budget reflects increased support for several Fire/Rescue Protection Services, the 9-1-1 Emergency Response Service, the Prince George and District Library Service, Electoral Area Community Grants and the Robson Valley Recreation Centre. Significant 2008 budgeted expenditures provided by the Regional District include Solid Waste Management (\$6.3 million), 9-1-1 Emergency Response Services (\$3.1 million), Protective Services (\$3.5 million), and Recreation Services (\$2.5 million).

-----  
**Regional District Partners with Initiatives Prince George**

The Regional District agreed to enter into a one year partnership agreement with Initiatives Prince George (IPG), the economic development agency for Prince George. The Board has agreed to partner with IPG and invest in their new strategic plan. The plan has a new focus to move away from non-core activities and center efforts on capitalizing on new logistics and manufacturing opportunities presenting themselves with the airport expansion and Prince Rupert port operation.

The one year partnership is valued at \$62,620 and will contain some clear deliverables in making an investment in the economic activities that will have broad benefits to our region as a whole.

-----  
**Regional District Participated in Trade Mission to China**

The Regional District is among many northern BC organizations who are participating in the Prince George and Northern Corridor of BC Trade Mission to Beijing, China.

The trade mission is being organized by Initiatives Prince George and is designed to create an opportunity for local leaders to foster business relationships with Chinese peers and promote investment and commerce activities in our region. This mission will allow the unique opportunity for participants to see first hand the opportunities available to our region that will aid in understanding and evaluating the Regional District's future role in economic development. Information sharing and opportunities exist in areas like Culture, Relations with First Nations, Eco-Tourism, and industrial land development

The Board agreed to send Chairman Art Kaehn and Chief Administrative Officer Jim Martin on the trade mission, with a budget of \$10,000.

For further information, please contact  
Reneé McCloskey  
Manager of External Relations  
Regional District of Fraser Fort George  
(250)960-4453