



CITY OF QUESNEL NEWS RELEASE

City of Quesnel wins BC Economic Development Award

**For Immediate Release
June 22, 2016**

Quesnel, B.C. – The City of Quesnel was honoured with the Community Project Award (Population <20,000) at the British Columbia Economic Development Association Awards Banquet this month for the Healthcare Recruitment Red Carpet Welcome Program.

The award recognizes a community or regional partnership that works together in on-going economic development work and activities. Judging Criteria includes: the extent of the economic impact on its community; achievement of its stated objective with measurable results; development of strong relationships with relevant players and widespread support in the community; innovation, originality and cost effectiveness; and relevance and transferability of elements to other communities.

“This is an example of Quesnel taking the lead on a common problem facing communities across the Province,” says Mayor Bob Simpson. “By proactively working together, we kept Quesnel out of a crisis situation and moved us into a position where we act as a model for others to look to.”

This program has been a true community project, involving Quesnel Mayor and Council, Cariboo Regional District Directors, the existing medical community, Northern Health, private business such as Regency Chrysler, and Susan Paulsen, contracted as the City of Quesnel’s Healthcare Recruitment Coordinator.

The Healthcare Recruitment Coordinator connects with new potential physicians prior to their arrival for a visit in Quesnel, plans a community tour that matches their interests, arranges for a personalized welcome package to greet them at the airport, and then continues to connect with them to answer community questions afterward. Once they have committed to Quesnel, she works with them to find appropriate housing in our limited rental market, picks them up at the airport on their arrival, and helps them to settle in the community. This may mean connecting them with others with shared interests, arranging a meeting with the French Immersion principal, helping their spouse find employment, or even lending her own children’s toys while the family waits for their belongings to arrive. Susan works with Northern Health to arrange a welcome dinner, inviting current physicians and their spouses to engage in networking and socialization. Regency Chrysler has loaned vehicles to locums, multiple homeowners have been flexible with short term leases, and others have given their time to help welcome new doctors to our community.

Over the past year, the recruitment team has placed five new doctors in the community, and nine more are scheduled to arrive before the end of the year. This program may be used as a model by other communities, noting that the key to success has been working together as a community, and personalizing the attention given to each potential physician. The program has been made possible by funding from the Cariboo Chilcotin Hospital Regional District.

Editor's Note: This release is available online at www.quesnel.ca

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