



# **SUMMARY**

REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS

**TERRACE**

FEBRUARY 24, 2004

**PREMIER'S TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL**

This document is a summary only of presentations made during the regional consultations in Terrace on February 24, 2004 and written submissions provided to the Premier's Technology Council. Every effort has been made to consider all input presented and be as accurate as possible. However, errors or omissions may have occurred. Please notify the PTC of any significant inaccuracies at

[Premiers.TechnologyCouncil@gems8.gov.bc.ca](mailto:Premiers.TechnologyCouncil@gems8.gov.bc.ca).

## TERRACE CONSULTATIONS

Date : Tuesday, February 24, 2004  
 Time : 09:00-16:30  
 Location : Best Western Terrace Inn  
 4553 Greig Avenue, Terrace

In attendance:  
 - Jim Mutter, PTC President  
 - Dr. Don Rix, PTC Council Member  
 - Len Juteau, PTC - Director of Operations  
 - Derrick Chee, PTC - Analyst

### AGENDA

Time	Organization	Name	Page
09:00-09:30	National Research Council	Betty Barton	1
09:30-10:00	Community Futures Development Corporation of the Pacific Northwest	Les Deacon-Rogers	1
10:00-10:30	North Coast Distance Education School	Warren Wilson	2
10:30-11:00	City Tel	Don Holkestad Greg Nancekivell	2
11:00-12:00	Northwest Community College	Stephanie Forsyth Beth Davies Diane Ready Todd Taylor Terrie McAloney	3
14:30-16:30			
	Gitksan Government Commission	Jamie Sterritt	3
	Nisga'a House of Learning	Deanna Nyce	4
	Nisga'a Lisims Government	Gary Patsey	4
	McNab Morri's Kitimat Valley Industrial Education	Nancy McNab	5
	Telegraph Trail Internet Society (written submission)	Dan Pakula	5
	School District #87 (Stikine) (written submission)	Warren Cocking Inder Mehat	6
	Observers:		
	Raven i.designs and training	Sasa Loggin	
	TELUS	Kevin White	
	Gingolx Media Centre	Mike Scott	

This page has been left blank intentionally

**NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL (NRC)**

**Betty Barton**

- Attempting to create a local science and technology council:
  - 10 member regional board formed with the first meeting set for March 15.
  - Local council will be running on its own until news of funding comes through. Proposal for funding sent to provincial government; awaiting response. Funding will support a part-time resource for the Northwest Science and Technology Council
- Currently has 10 NRC projects on the go
  - People have time to put into action ideas with economy being as depressed as it is; however, there is a lack of funding. Transportation is also an issue for cost-effective delivery to distant markets. Improved CN rail lines and a container port in Prince Rupert would help.
- Provincial Funding and Incentives
  - More angel funding is needed
  - Travel support for people from North to gain access to the Vancouver network would be helpful

**Message to the PTC:**

- *Funding and incentives* to invest is needed in North including angel funding
- Support creation of a regional science and technology council in the region
- Transportation improvements are needed – rail and container port

**COMMUNITY FUTURES DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST**

**Les Deacon Rogers, John Webb sitting in**

Project coordinator for RAIN (Resources, Access, Information Network) project which covers 9 communities of Kincolith, Metlakatla, Port Simpson, Prince Rupert, Dodge Cove, Port Edward, Oona River, Hartley Bay, Kitkatla.

- Funding for 3 year project from the Communities Learning Network (CLN)
  - Focusing on computer resources, internet access and training for young and old
  - Project depends on donated equipment and time
- All communities have 56K dialup (sometimes over long distance) with only Prince Rupert having high speed
- Submitted BRAND (Broadband for Rural and Northern Development) proposal to cover 7 communities, but matching funding is difficult to access to make the project materialize
- Availability of technology and nodes is not sufficient without training and support for its usage and the opportunities available through it. Bringing in support and technicians from outside is costly
- Wireless distribution can extend node access to 80 households
  - Private enterprise is not going to provide a system or access
  - A distribution system supported by the provincial government can be attained a marginal additional cost. Cost for a community of 600 people is estimated to be \$10K
- In terms of business opportunities, culture and arts products are marketable as well, especially to and for non-Native communities
- \$10-20 local user fee for access to node would be the affordable and desired rate
- John Webb, Government Digital Divide Group
  - Delivering nodes is current drive

- Proposal regarding distribution is under consideration to access funding from this fiscal year
  - send experts into community to train community and open network connections - develop community champions

**Message to the PTC:**

- There is a need for broadband capability for health services and economic opportunities and provincial funding is needed to achieve it.

**NORTH COAST DISTANCE EDUCATION SCHOOL (NCDE)  
Warren Wilson**

- North Coast Distance Education School has 1700 students, 900 adults working on completing their high school education. It supports 100 home school students from K-12
- Wants to leverage correspondence system and offer online courses
- NCDE belongs to the BC distance education consortium
  - Offer courses on Cisco, CCNA (Cisco Certified Network Associate)
  - Opportunity to offer courses in communities to support broadband distribution
- Involved in Rural Research Site (involves Nisga'a, Prince Rupert and Terrace) through the Ministry of Education
- Getting access to bandwidth: there are so many players in the game and there is a need to coordinate and get the content distributed. Need for better communication in the communities and cooperation in dealing with government as a coordinated body
- BC Ed Online
  - Competitive situation created where school districts from outside are offering incentives (e.g. \$1k to attract students)
  - Growth of and access to learning objects repository is inhibited by competitive situation that has been created
  - Fear that larger school districts will steal students
  - Applaud funding following students
    - However, no funding is held back to roll out a system standard or strategy

**Message to the PTC:**

- Provincial government needs to fund a central system (BC Ed Online) to create an e-learning strategy, standards and repository. Such a system will reduce "poaching".

**CITYTEL  
Don Holkestad, Greg Nancekivell**

- 2nd largest incumbent local exchange carrier in BC, created in 1910
- 75% of traffic is file sharing, uncapped bandwidth; less than half of capacity is used during peak time
- Provide broadband in Prince Rupert and are mandated by the city to support business development
  - Costly to deliver broadband into smaller surrounding communities
  - There are challenges in working with major carrier – high charges for cable to outlying communities and lengthy service outages

**Message to the PTC:**

- Broadband is needed throughout the local area
- Competition is needed to bring down rates and improve service

**NORTHWEST COMMUNITY COLLEGE (NWCC)**

**Stephanie Forsyth, Todd Taylor, Beth Davies, Terrie Mcaloney**

- 1600 FTEs in Terrace, Prince Rupert and Smithers campuses
- Region the size of France but is not well connected
- 7 First Nations (FN) communities within the region
- Have embraced e-learning and support BCcampus and its model. Tremendous potential for e-learning, especially in First Nations communities where learning within community can be accommodated and controlled
- Need for reliable broadband to support e-learning and research
- Government policy: Funding distribution based on FTEs does not recognize local support provided
  - Possible solution is factoring both delivering and home institution providing support into the model
  - Large up front costs to developing curricula
  - Local learning center for distance student support is needed
    - Blended learning, which has been proven more effective, is more difficult to deliver in rural-based and smaller institutions
- Northwest region has worst education levels in the province
  - Importance of learning communities is acute as is strong government support
- Highest First Nations participation and graduation rate of any college. Funding model should reflect that First Nations FTE costs are higher; institutions should be funded as such.
- Institutional capacity of small institutions to deliver e-learning must be supported such as funds for professional development, integration, etc.

**Message to the PTC:**

- Broadband is needed throughout the region
- Funding formula based on FTE system is an issue:
  - It does not recognize the local support provided when students take distance education courses, but use the resources of NWCC
  - FN FTE costs are higher than non FN

**GITKSAN GOVERNMENT COMMISSION**

**Jamie Sterrit**

**First Mile Community Solution**

- 5 FN member communities – Kispiox, Glen Vowell, Gitanmaax, Kitwanga, Gitanyow
- Membership: +2000 on reserve and +3000 off-reserve, plus 3 other communities (+1600)
- 200 First Nation communities that do not fit into the PTC's definition. Communities usually lie outside POP (Point of Presence) distribution area
- Gitksan Network
  - Working on caching and bandwidth optimization components on their network
  - Installing a wired and wireless network by partnering with Bell West, Cisco, HP & Ai
  - Piloting the connection of 2 First Nations and 2 Non-FN communities

- Becoming its own ISP (Internet Service Provider) by developing a low total cost of ownership network that is remotely managed

**Message to the PTC:**

- PTC must expand its definition of communities
- Broadband is needed in all FN communities
- Suggest investment in first mile solutions

**NISGA'A HOUSE OF LEARNING**

**Deanna Nyce**

- Nisga'a Learning Centre
  - Offer post-secondary courses and is responsible for all research in the community as mandated in the treaty
  - Have a full BA (Bachelor of Arts) offering
- High turnover of health professionals
  - Language and cultural divide between providers and patients
- Working with First Voices organization to lend expertise on Nisga'a language
- Nisga'a culture, language and computer science are the most subscribed to courses of WWN (Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a - Nisga'a House of Wisdom)
  - wishes to pilot the training of technicians that would stay in the community and offer their services
- Direction of education?
  - Has relationship with other universities and supports transfer credits
  - Agreements with UNBC, NWCC, Royal Roads University
  - Want to make culture courses available to a wider market
  - In 9 years of delivery 5 students are now completing their master's degrees
- Gained international students without advertising
- Tied into medical school expansion, which will help support health delivery services in the future

**Message to the PTC:**

- There is a shortage of community-based technicians for IT system support

**NISGA'A LISIMS GOVERNMENT**

**Gary Patsey**

- Treaty nation, tri-parteid
- Project: June 2002 data communications plan
  - Communications infrastructure owned and controlled by Nisga'a nation with five aims:
    - Connectivity to 4 communities
    - Connection to Terrace financed by its users
    - Ability to reach to other suppliers
    - Access from the household
    - Bring cell phone services to Nass valley
  - DS3 (Digital Signal) Target, scalable WAN (Wide Area Network) financed by Nisga'a and partnerships. Three phase project:
    - Fiber connecting major centers and facilities (ongoing – completion expected end of March)



- Linking 4 communities together (fiber links from Telus in exchange for building link to Rosswood)
- Wider connection to other Nisga'a people living throughout the region
- Employment
  - 4 market surveyors; favourable response to Nisga'a ISP
  - 2 technicians, expanded to 5 that can lash fiber, trained locally
  - Request from community for additional technical support
- Applications:
  - Offer Nisga'a government broadcast (N-PAC)
  - Nisga'a government kiosks (various applications)
  - Centralizing accounting operations
  - E-learning and telehealth are emerging applications
- Rationale for fiber project was to have control of its own facilities and leverage opportunities inherent in operating equipment, applications, etc.

**Message to the PTC:**

- Need technical support based in the communities

**MCNAB MORRI'S KITIMAT VALLEY INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION**  
**Nancy McNab**

- Education company and education broker serving industry and First Nations
- Training through internet for the last 9 years. One of the highest success rates at the provincial level
- Also operate Kitimat Valley Institute for Industrial Education
- Private institute co-ordinated with post-secondary institutions (Simon Fraser University, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology) and industry partners (Alcan, Methanex)
- Have had technical issues and pedagogy issues in distance education
  - Need for resource to support students locally, augmenting the instructor teaching from a distance
  - High success rate comes from mentoring and local support provided to students

**Message to the PTC:**

- Resources are needed for local student support including mentoring

**TELEGRAPH TRAIL INTERNET SOCIETY**  
**Dan Pakula (written submission)**

- Non-profit society with aim of providing high-speed internet access to Telegraph Creek
- Operating a network with PLnet (Provincial Learning Network) that was constructed in March 1998 with help of CAP (Community Access program) grant
- Access to Government network backbone is key to helping non-profits get broadband to the community
- Support expansion of PLnet bandwidth to Northwest. Benefits to health, education, economic and social applications
- Rural populations realize proportionally greater benefits from broadband access

- Suggests non-profit internet societies as template for delivering broadband to rural and remote communities
- Reiterates the content of last submission during the PTC's previous regional consultation: focus on the last mile component of the digital divide is needed
- Their society has shown that the non-profit delivery model is viable

**Message to the PTC:**

- Broadband is needed in the region
- Government should use internet societies as part of the solution for providing service to remote communities

**SCHOOL DISTRICT #87 (STIKINE)**

**Warren Cocking, Inder Mehat**

- A district of 2,223 people. Approx. 54.4% are Aboriginal (1996 Census).
- Projected enrolment for K-12 in 2003 is 304 students, 400 by the year 2010. The Aboriginal student population is 64.6%.
- Characteristics of the district: a proportionately large First Nations population, geographic isolation, a medium to high unemployment rate, a transient population and a high turnover of staff and administration at the school level.
- In a remote region such as School District 87, it is not feasible for schools to offer the variety of courses that are available in urban schools. For this reason, some secondary students take correspondence school courses through the Northern B.C. Distance Education School in Fort St. John. Other students live at great distances from their community school and cannot attend due to geographic factors.
- School District 87 envisions e-learning as a means of linking students in each of the three schools having a secondary school component (Dease Lake, Telegraph Creek, and Atlin). Technology education courses and secondary science courses such as Physics and Chemistry 11 and 12 will be taught using the technology.
- Some benefits of e-learning for the Stikine include:
  1. More efficient utilization of District teaching staff, in particular capitalizing on teacher strengths.
  2. Greater integration of correspondence and satellite students into the classroom.
  3. Reduction of time and associated costs of travel within the District.  
Due to the extreme distances between schools and the time required for travel, the related costs can be reduced if teachers can meet for professional development at their schools. Trustee and Administrative meetings can also be streamlined with this technology.
  4. Increased collaboration with other school districts and organizations.  
School District 87, with implementation of e-learning technology, will be able to collaborate more effectively with other school districts having the same or similar technology in terms of sharing teaching resources. An example would be the ability for students to access Spanish instruction from the Burnaby School District.

In summary, School District 87 stands to benefit greatly from the implementation of e-learning technology both in terms of efficiency and cost savings. The restrictions imposed by distance, size,

and finances can be overcome to provide the students of the Stikine with the innovative technology that will afford them the same or similar advantages as their southern counterparts.

**Message to the PTC:**

Broadband connectivity is needed to deliver education programs in rural and remote areas of BC, such as Stikine.

**GENERAL DISCUSSION**

Gary Patsey, Nisga'a Lisims Government:

- Encourage Premier to put technology on the table for treaty negotiations
  - First Nations are often remote and support and infrastructure are needed
  - Partnership with Telus was key for Nisga'a Lisims government, as well as splicers and fiber technicians in their community
    - Fiber has bigger impact than the paved roads

Mike Scott, Gingolx Media Centre:

- Web business has had trouble uploading their products on existing infrastructure
- Better access will allow for improved business offering and responsiveness