

**Tracking the Social and Economic Transformation Process in  
Kitimat, BC: Methodology Report**

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**Community Development Institute  
University of Northern British Columbia**

**January 2013**

**Table of Contents**

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Page Number

## Acknowledgements

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In the winter and fall of 2012, our research team visited Kitimat to conduct interviews to explore and track the social and economic changes being experienced in Kitimat. This is part of an ongoing project and our visits will continue over the coming years. We wish to thank all of the residents, community groups, business members, service providers, industry leaders, policy makers, and municipal staff who took the time to help out and to answer our many questions.

Special thanks to our local partners and organizations who provided advice and input for this work including staff at the District of Kitimat, the Kitimat Chamber of Commerce, and the Child Development Centre. In particular, we would like to thank Margaret Warcup, Gwen Sewell, Trish Parson, and Martin Gould for all of their advice and for collecting and providing us with additional information.

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Funding for this project was provided by the Canada Research Chair in Rural and Small Town Studies.

Laura Ryser and Greg Halseth  
Prince George  
January 2013

## **Availability**

Copies of this report have been provided to the Kitimat Public Library, the District of Kitimat, the Kitimat Chamber of Commerce, and the Child Development Centre. Copies of the report have also been provided to all participants. Reports have also been posted on the UNBC Community Development Institute's website: <http://www.unbc.ca/community-development-institute/research-projects>.

## **Project Reports**

- Methodology Report
- A Review of Socio-Economic Characteristics in Kitimat
- Tracking the Social and Economic Transformation Process in Kitimat: Interim Summary Report
- An Inventory of Community and Economic Development Strategies and Plans

## **Contact Information**

For further information about this topic and the project, feel free to contact Greg Halseth, Director of UNBC's Community Development Institute.

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# Tracking the Social and Economic Transformation Process in Kitimat, BC: Methodology Report

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## 1.0 Project Description

When major industrial investments come to small communities, the local social impacts can be significant and transformative. The town of Kitimat has been an industrial centre in northwestern British Columbia since the early 1950s. The town is now experiencing a large number of industrial construction projects that will change and renew the local economy. These construction projects will also impact and change the community. This research involves a long-term tracking study of the economic and social transformation processes now getting underway in Kitimat, BC.

The research will involve two aspects. The first is the tracking of available and emerging data on industrial projects, temporarily on

categories do not always 'add up'. Furthermore, Statistics Canada will not provide some types of data for very small populations in order to protect the identity of residents.

***Selecting Interview Participants***

## *Interview Questions*

The purpose of this project was to explore and track the social and economic changes in Kitimat. The reports associated with this project assemble a summary of key issues as identified from our interviews. A detailed description of questions asked in each section of the interview guides is provided in the appendices (Appendix A for the winter of 2012; Appendix B for the fall of 2012). In general, participants were asked questions in the following areas:

- background questions,
- benefits and concerns associated with large scale industry and economic development projects,
- local responses to pressures and opportunities that emerged,
- the structure and capacity of local groups,

## **Appendix A: Interview Materials for Winter 2012**

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1. Consent form
2. Interview guide

## **Tracking the Social and Economic Transformation Process in Kitimat, BC**

### **Interview Consent Form for Local Leaders and Service Groups**

**Purpose** – This project is being conducted by the Community Development Institute at UNBC. The purpose of this project is to examine the impacts of major industrial and economic projects in Kitimat, BC. It will examine the benefits, challenges, and tensions created across various facets of the community. It will also explore how the characteristics of place, such as community capacity, relationships, infrastructure, and institutions, shape the experiences with, and responses to, new development.

**How Respondents Were Chosen** – Interviews are being conducted with local leaders, economic and industry representatives, community groups, service providers, and residents who have an interest in, and can provide insights into, the impacts of major economic projects in Kitimat. All of these names come from publically available community listings. Interviewees were selected for their potential to provide information that can help to better understand community preparedness, as well as the impacts of major developments on workers, their families, and the community. The interview should take about 30-45 minutes to complete. This is the first interview in a process that will be repeated annually for the next 5 years.

**Anonymity And Confidentiality** - The names of participants will not be used in any reporting, nor will any information which may be used to identify individuals. All information shared in this interview will

**TRACKING THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION PROCESS IN KITIMAT  
INTERVIEW GUIDE**

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Interviewee Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Connection/Role in the Community: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview Time: Start \_\_\_\_\_ Finish \_\_\_\_\_

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**Comments on Interview:**

**Opening Questions**

What is your name and how long have you lived in Kitimat?

Can you briefly describe the role(s) that you play in the community?

**Background Questions**

I would like to talk about the period prior to the 2008 global economic downturn. How would you characterize Kitimat's:

*Prompts:*

Economic structure

Local government

Employment opportunities

Opportunities for women

Opportunities for youth

Recreation and civic programs

Infrastructure (roads, pool, etc.)

Community / voluntary groups

Social Services

Retail services

How have these characteristics changed since the 2008 global economic downturn?

*Prompts:*

Economic structure  
Local government  
Employment opportunities  
Opportunities for women  
Opportunities for youth  
Recreation and civic programs  
Infrastructure (roads, pool, etc.)  
Community / voluntary groups  
Social Services  
Retail services

### **Benefits**

Thinking back, what do you think have been some of the benefits or positive impacts of previous industrial or large-scale economic development projects in the community?

*Prompts: For ...*

Workers  
Families  
Community groups  
Local businesses  
Local government

### **Concerns**

Thinking back, what do you think have been some of the concerns or negative issues created by previous industrial or large-scale economic development projects in the community?

*Prompts: For ...*

Workers  
Families  
Community groups  
Local businesses  
Local government

### **Services**

Prior to 2008, do you think local services were successful in meeting the needs of residents so they could pursue opportunities created through those industrial or large-scale economic development projects?

*Prompts: For ...*

Workers  
Families  
Community groups  
Local businesses

Thinking back, what additional services or supports, if any, do you think were needed to address local needs?

## **Community Economic Development**

In terms of community economic development, what do you think are some of the key opportunities for your community?

In terms of community economic development, what do you think are some of the key challenges for your community?

How would you characterize the level of cooperation among local community and economic development groups?

How would you characterize community efforts to encourage or attract more entrepreneurs or businesses?

## **Quality of Life**

Prior to the 2008 global economic downturn, how do you think industrial / economic development projects impacted local quality of life?

*Prompts:*

Voluntary organizations

Recreation or social groups / programs

Infrastructure

Family

## **Concluding Question**

From the experiences you have had in the community, do you have anything else that has not been touched on here that you would like to comment on?

## **Appendix B: Interview Materials for Fall 2012**

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1. Consent form
2. Interview guide

## **Tracking the Social and Economic Transformation Process in Kitimat, BC**

### **Interview Consent Form for Local Leaders and Service Groups**

**Purpose** – This project is being conducted by the Community Development Institute at UNBC (Greg Halseth and Laura Ryser). The purpose of this project is to examine the impacts of major industrial and economic projects in Kitimat, BC. It will examine the benefits, challenges, and tensions created across various facets of the community. It will also explore how the characteristics of place, such as community capacity, relationships, infrastructure, and institutions, shape the experiences with, and responses to, new development.

**How Respondents Were Chosen** – Interviews are being conducted with local leaders, economic and industry representatives, community groups, service providers, and residents who have an interest in, and can provide insights into, the impacts of major economic projects in Kitimat. All of these names come from publically available community listings. Interviewees were selected for their potential to provide information that can help to better understand community preparedness, as well as the impacts of major developments on workers, their families, and the community. The interview

**TRACKING THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION PROCESS IN KITIMAT  
INTERVIEW GUIDE**

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Interviewee Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Connection/Role in the Community: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview Time: Start \_\_\_\_\_ Finish \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewed in round one.

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**Comments on Interview:**

**Section A: Background Questions**

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A1. How have the following characteristics changed in Kitimat over the past six months?

*Prompts:*

- Economic structure
- Local government
- Employment opportunities
- Opportunities for women
- Opportunities for youth
- Recreation and civic programs
- Infrastructure (roads, pool, etc.)
- Community / voluntary groups
- Social Services
- Retail services

A2. What do you think have been some of the benefits or positive impacts of industrial or large-scale economic development projects in the community over the past six months?

*Prompts: For ...*

- Workers
- Families
- Community groups
- Local businesses
- Local government

A3. What do you think have been some of the concerns or negative issues created by industrial or large-



## Section D: Partnerships

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D1. Does your organization have any partnerships with volunteer groups, businesses, institutions, government **inside** of the community?

Yes (please go to question D3)

No (please go to question D2)

D2. If no, what have been some of the key challenges / barriers to forming **local** partnerships?

*Prompt:* not needed, lack of staff, limited availability, lack of interest, personal conflicts, lack of resources, lack of meeting space

D3. If yes, have there been any changes with your **local** partnerships over the past six months? If yes, please explain.

D4. Please list all the partnerships your group has with groups <b>inside</b> the community	D5. How would you rate the effectiveness of these partnerships with groups <b>inside</b> of the community?
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Very Effective	Effective	Neutral	Not Effective	Very Not Effective
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D7. What made the **local** partnerships function effectively or not effectively?

*Prompt:*

routine meetings,  
equal sharing of responsibilities,  
common interests / goals,  
complementary expertise,  
access to a broader range of resources,  
timely completion of tasks,  
governance structure formalized,  
clear responsibilities

D8. Have any **local** partnerships been terminated / added over the last six months? If yes, can you describe the circumstances that influenced this decision?

D9. Does your organization have any partnerships with volunteer groups, businesses, institutions, government **outside** of the community?

Yes (if yes, please go to question D11)

No (if no, please go to question D10)

D10. If no, what have been some of the key challenges / barriers to forming partnerships with groups **outside** of the community? Prompt: not needed, lack of staff, limited availability, lack of interest, personal conflicts, lack of resources, lack of meeting space

D11. If yes, have there been any changes with your partnerships **outside** of the community over the past six months? If yes, please explain.

D12. Please list all the partnerships your group has with groups **outside** of the community

D14. What were the key benefits / outcomes of partnerships with groups **outside** of the community?

*Prompt:*

change in products / services / events / activities,  
sharing of resources,  
sharing of information / expertise,  
transfer of skills,  
technical support,  
change in administration / organizational structure,  
change in regulations,  
new operational protocols,  
more funding,  
more community support,  
expanded operations,  
expanded networks

D15. What made partnerships with groups **outside** of the community function effectively or not effectively?

*Prompt:*

routine meetings,  
equal sharing of responsibilities,  
common interests / goals,  
complementary expertise,  
access to a broader range of resources,  
timely completion of tasks,  
governance structure formalized,  
clear responsibilities

D16. Have any partnerships with groups **outside** of the community been terminated / added over the last six months? If yes, can you describe the circumstances that influenced this decision?

### **Concluding Question**

From the experiences you have had in the community, do you have anything else that has not been touched on here that you would like to comment on?