

Workcamps: Context for Community Development Issues

Greg Halseth
University of Northern British Columbia
Community Development Institute

Fort St. John
October 10/13



Outline

- Background
- Issues
- Workcamps:
 - Issues of General Interest
 - Differences in Worker Accommodation
 - Phases
 - Getting Ready
- Discussion



Background

Background I

- Always been labour mobility
- Increasingly mobile/global capital
- Is labour “catching up”?

Background II

- Resource development and mobile workers
 - “Rushes”
 - Boomtowns
 - Instant towns
 - Fly-in, fly-out (FIFO), long distance labour commuting (LDLC)
- Historical trade off between new towns and LDLC
 - Remoteness
 - Length of production run
 - LDLC cheaper in short run, costly over long-term
- Shift cycle norms were different for new towns and LDLC

Background III

- Questions of scale:
 - Geographical
 - Regional
 - National
 - International
 - Temporal
 - Daily
 - Weekly
 - “Long shifts”
 - Monthly
 - Seasonal
 - Longer

Background IV

- Contemporary tradeoffs between new towns and LDLC
 - LDLC costs are decreasing
 - More sophisticated/comfortable camps
 - New town costs increasing dramatically
 - New environmental standards
 - Land claims issues
 - Access routes
- Transition in work expectations
 - ‘Golden handcuffs’ of salary replaced by quality of life desires for whole family & multiple employment opportunities

Background V

- LDLC dominates new developments
- Hybrid models:
 - Fort McMurray (town; with significant worker mobility)

Issues

- Workers
- Home Communities
- Host Communities

Worker Issues

- Benefits
 - Financial
 - Skills, Training
 - Networks
 - Experiences from other sectors
 - Access to a wider range of services/amenities
- Concerns
 - Financial
 - Safety
 - Mental health, fatigue, isolation
 - Household impacts

Host Communities

- Increased service demands
- Not “counted” in fiscal transfer data
- Varies by work camp “type”
- Increased local spending
 - Discretionary areas
- Loss of wages to the home community
- No investment in volunteer/civic groups
- Social disruption

Home Communities

- Fiscal transfers
- Emotional toll in households
 - Roles
 - Disrupted routines
- Challenges for voluntary/civic groups
 - People
 - Activities
 - Facilities
- Need to increase investment in supportive services
 - House, property
 - Families
 - Individuals
- Social disruption
- Danger of out-migration

Workcamps

Workcamps – Issues of Context

- Context 1
 - Cusp of most significant transformation of northern BC in 50 years
- Context 2
 - Readiness
 - If projects go – communities must be ready
 - If projects don't go – communities must be ready
- Context 3
 - Attention to our community development foundations
 - 4 key infrastructure
- Context 4
 - Imperative of industry
 - They need workers

Differences in Worker Accommodation

- Remote camps
 - Less community impact
 - Typically highly professional
- Proximate camp
 - Typically highly professional – managed
 - Can have significant community impact
- In town “camps”
 - Use existing housing, services
 - Unregulated

Project Phases

1. Construction phase (5-8 years)
2. Operations phase
3. Next generation workforce (+10-15 years)
 - What will attract and hold them in your community?

Getting Ready

Level One

- Sunk infrastructure investments of camps
- Service infrastructure (“accordion” model)
- Potential to donate

Level Two

- Local business opportunity
- Retail business for lower volume activity later

What will your community look like when the last construction vehicle drives out of town?

- Must have retooled services, infrastructure, amenities
- Must be debt free (or close to)
- Must be “set” for next 30+ years

Discussion

Discussion I

- Geography and Place Matter
 - Context matters
 - Distance from community impacts potential for embedding local benefit/costs
 - Stage of project development/operation matters
 - Need to know where we wish to be in the future:
 - Our communities, economies, environments

Discussion II

- Connections
 - Building understanding through communication
 - Foundation for planning and coordination
 - Ongoing communication
 - Facilitating connections

Discussion III

- Continuing points of focus:
 - Ongoing relationships between community, industry, and businesses
 - Benefit flows
 - Tracking responses:
 - Community
 - Labour
 - Industry
 - Tracking impacts of policy change

Greg Halseth, Co-Director
Community Development Institute
University of Northern British Columbia
3333 University Way
Prince George, BC
V2N 4Z9

Phone: 250-960-5826

Fax: 250-960-6533

Email: halseth@unbc.ca

Website: www.unbc.ca/community-development-institute

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Community Development Institute - UNBC

- [*NEW BOOK - "Investing in Place"*](#)
- [*NEW - NEV2 Final Report*](#)
- [*Partners in Community Development: Board Voice*](#)
- [*Spring 2013 - Speakers Series - Housing in a Changing Community: Opportunity for Innovation*](#)

The Community Development Institute at UNBC is interested in two fundamental issues for communities in northern BC: community capacity and community development. By undertaking research, sharing information, and supporting education outreach, the Institute is becoming a vital partner to communities interested in making informed decisions about their own futures.

The institute emphasizes the importance of capacity-building, collaboration, learning, and complementarity between UNBC research centres. Research that is undertaken balances academic credibility with practical relevance. Beyond research, the Institute is involved in outreach activities and serves as a conduit to expand and enhance local educational opportunities related to community development.

Major: [*Public Administration and Community Development*](#)

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For further information please visit our website at:
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Greg Halseth

Co-Director

greg.halseth@unbc.ca

Marleen Morris

Co-Director

marleen.morris@unbc.ca

