

2025 2nd QUARTER COMMUNITY UPDATE

QUARTERLY UPDATE

The Village of Fraser Lake has brought back newsletters that will be delivered on a quarterly basis and will be offered in print form at the following locations:

- Fraser Lake Public Library located, at 228 Endako Avenue;
- Autumn Services, located at 111 Chowsunket Avenue; and
- Menshed located at 80 Cougar Street.

Finally, the virtual edition will be announced on the Village of Fraser Lake Facebook page and a copy will be readily available on the municipal website at www.fraserlake.ca. All of these newsletters will be prepared within the first month of each quarter depending on capacity constraints within the Village office.

DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

The second quarter of 2025 has brought with it a remarkable pace of work, strong community engagement, and continued investment into Fraser Lake's future. From infrastructure improvements to successful grant applications and strategic partnerships, the Village has remained focused on delivering on the priorities set out in the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan. Below is an overview of highlights from April through June 2025.

OFFICE OF THE CAO – The Village continues to build on its commitment to transparency and inclusion in decision-making. In June, staff hosted two major open house events; one on June 26 and another on Canada Day. The public engagement welcomed residents to learn about and provide feedback on several strategic initiatives. Attendees engaged in discussion about the Official Community Plan (OCP), Waterfront Redevelopment, the Community Hall Phase III project, and solicitation of feedback on potential recreation programming.

Public input has been invaluable in shaping the next steps for these initiatives. Notably, the response was overwhelmingly positive, with many residents expressing support for

continued community-driven planning. Several attendees noted they were surprised these types of engagement events had not occurred sooner, something the Village aims to improve moving forward.

Another significant milestone came during National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 20, when the Village of Fraser Lake, in partnership with Stellat'en First Nation, announced a new hotel and commercial development on the south side lots. The announcement received regional media coverage and was met with excitement by residents and visitors alike. The project reflects our shared commitment to local economic development and intergovernmental collaboration.

Operationally, the Village welcomed a

new Recreation Coordinator who has quickly taken the lead in program development and community events. The Village has also onboarded a Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT) intern whose expertise is already contributing to our long-term planning and reporting work. These hires reinforce our broader goal of investing in organizational health and capacity.

Recognizing the administrative challenges posed by outdated procurement processes, Council has directed staff to revise the Village's Purchasing Policy. This move follows an increase in purchasing policy waiver requests and is intended to improve efficiency and flexibility while maintaining sound financial practices.

In May, Council and staff met in Victoria with several Ministers, including those responsible for Transportation, Health, Housing, Local Government, and Forests. These meetings led to progress on multiple fronts, including line repainting within Village boundaries and calcium treatment for Airport Road. Discussions with BC Wildfire Services also began around developing a prescribed burn plan for 2026.

Staff have continued to work on the Drone Transportation Initiative in partnership with Stellat'en and Nadleh Whut'en First Nations, Northern Health, UBC, and other stakeholders. Phase II will focus on transporting medical products by drone between local communities and is expected to begin in 2026 pending funding.

Fraser Lake staff also attended several economic development gatherings and conferences and continue to advocate for stronger regional collaboration. Work with

the Northern BC Film Commission and Northern BC Tourism is helping to promote Fraser Lake as a destination for visitors and creative projects alike.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT – Several major statutory requirements were completed, including the submission of the 2025 Five-Year Financial Plan Bylaw, the Tax Rates Bylaw, the 2024 SOFI (Statement of Financial Information), and the audited 2024 Financial Statements. These reports ensure that the Village remains compliant with provincial legislation and continues to operate with a high level of transparency and fiscal responsibility.

Staff attended the 2025 GFOA (Government Finance Officers Association) Conference, focusing on building resilient communities; a theme very much aligned with Fraser Lake's vision. Monthly taxation webinars also supported continuous learning within the department.

A significant achievement this quarter was the successful coordination of cybersecurity upgrades. New phone systems and multifactor authentication were introduced, adding greater protection to the Village's accounts and devices.

Additionally, the Village received over \$369,000 in grant funding in Q2 alone. This includes \$112,925 from the UBCM FireSmart program, \$42,000 for Indigenous engagement initiatives, \$31,153 for cross-country ski trails, and \$9,375 from the Nechako-Kitimat Development Fund for welcome signage. Composting, community video promotion, and Canada Day programming were also supported through regional and federal contributions.

FRASER LAKE FIRE DEPARTMENT - Fraser Lake Fire Rescue responded to a total of 20 emergency incidents during the first half of 2025. These included five fire-related calls (four within the Village and one at Stellat'en First Nation), three motor vehicle incidents, and twelve medical aid or lift assist calls.

Ongoing training remains a core focus for the department. Firefighters are revisiting last year's exterior firefighting tactics curriculum, and several team members are scheduled to participate in advanced fire service training this summer. Fraser Lake will also be hosting a Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) course on-site this September, enhancing the department's ability to respond to high-risk emergencies.

Community engagement was also a priority this quarter. At the annual Emergency Services Bike Rodeo, the department donated bikes, helmets, and scooters to local children and served up hotdogs and hamburgers for attendees. The event was well attended and received additional support from community members and local organizations such as TC Energy and Endako Mines.

Bylaw enforcement activity increased this quarter, particularly regarding dogs at large and unsightly properties. As we move into the summer months, staff — with support from the CAO and the NDIT intern — will be focusing on improving bylaw compliance and education. Staff are also pursuing training opportunities through the BC Employer Training Grant to support the department's ongoing professional development at minimal cost to taxpayers.

PUBLIC WORKS - Public Works had an

incredibly productive spring. Crews worked with Fraser Lake Elementary Secondary School to conduct a full-scale community cleanup. Seasonal beautification projects included the planting of over 100 trees and the installation of topsoil for park rehabilitation. Parks and open spaces have been significantly improved, especially with the repair of five taps and two pumps in public washrooms and the reinstallation of handrails at the Wharf following treatment and refinishing.

In Kin Park, a new perimeter fence was completed and has been well received by park users. However, persistent vandalism at the Skate Park washroom has led staff to begin locking its doors daily at 4:00 PM as a preventative measure.

Road maintenance continued with the completion of parking lot and street sweeping. Crack sealing work was done on all new pavement and along Tunasa Crescent. Public Works also undertook pothole repair and shoulder improvement using leftover gravel from the airport project. Ten five-gallon buckets of concrete sealer were applied to sidewalks to improve longevity.

Public Works also supported several major infrastructure projects. The wastewater treatment plant saw the installation of a new aeration blower system, and sewer line issues at the Legion caused by grease buildup. Hydrant maintenance was completed for hydrants 1 through 26, with two previously nonfunctional hydrants brought back into service.

COMMUNITY SERVICES - Community celebrations were a highlight of Q2. National Indigenous Peoples Day drew

over 300 attendees and included the official announcement of the new hotel development. Media coverage included CKPG, Global BC, and the Omineca Express. Meanwhile, the Community Feedback Open House saw around 60 attendees and offered opportunities to weigh in on several key projects.

The Visitor Centre opened for the season on May 16 and is now operating seven days a week. Visitor counts were up 10% compared to June 2024, a positive sign for

local tourism. Staff also launched a Recreation Survey to guide program development, and recreation equipment inventories are underway.

Fraser Lake's community bus service operated smoothly, with only one brief interruption due to an electrical issue, which was quickly addressed by Public Works.

BYLAWS OF NOTE

Council has adopted Tree Bylaw No. 852, 2024 and Enforcement Amendment Bylaw No. 859, 2024, establishing new regulations for tree cutting, removal, replacement, and enforcement within Village boundaries. These bylaws aim to preserve tree cover while supporting community safety, fire prevention, and infrastructure protection.

Residents must now obtain a permit before cutting, damaging, or disposing of any tree with a trunk diameter over 10 cm. Permits are also required for cutting or removing replacement trees. Applications must include photos, a rationale, a site map, and disposal/replacement plans.

You do not need a permit if:

- The tree poses an immediate safety hazard (e.g., storm damage).
- The tree is being removed under a valid development permit.
- The work is carried out by utility providers or Village staff in the course of regular operations.

If you cut a tree (with or without a permit), you may be required to plant replacement trees at your own expense. This includes:

- A 2:1 planting ratio for permitted removals.
- A 3:1 planting ratio for unauthorized removals.

Replacement trees must be:

- At least 2 metres tall or 7 cm in diameter.
- Fire-resistant and non-invasive species.
- Spaced at least 2.5 metres from structures, roads, utilities, and other trees.

FireSmart	Rules	Apply:
	To reduce wildfire risk, tree removal within 1.5 metres of a building is automatically permitted, and no trees or shrubs may be replanted in that zone. Within 10 metres of buildings, coniferous trees may be removed and must be replaced with fire-resistant species.	

CAPITAL PROJECTS

The Designated Water Line Project officially broke ground in May. The contractor, Dawson Construction, began hydro excavation and drainage upgrades along Park Drive. Unfortunately, progress slowed due to excessive soil moisture — compaction levels were measuring between 20–30%, compared to the ideal 14%. To mitigate this, crews have been transporting wet material to the compost site for drying. A change order approved by Council expanded the project scope to include the installation of larger water mains and replacement of sanitary services, all of which remains within the Five-Year Financial Plan.

The Water Tower Replacement Project has resumed following shipping delays. The required steel components and valves have arrived on site, and installation is now back underway. Delivery of the tower itself is expected in the third quarter, with final completion anticipated in early Q4.

Phase III of the Community Hall project continues, though progress has been impacted by subcontractor and supplier issues. A revised completion date of July 2025 has been set. During a recent site visit, Council and staff identified a stormwater management issue related to the arena expansion. Staff are now working with designers to address this in future phases.

VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS RECRUITMENT

The Village is once again reaching out to community members who may be interested in joining the Volunteer Fire Department. A recommended minimum commitment of two hours per week is required for training sessions, which are held on Monday evenings. Once training is complete, volunteers will be certified and able to respond to calls as needed.

It's important to note that certification for firefighting does not occur overnight—it requires time, dedication, and consistent participation in training. Our Fire Chief, Joe

Pacheco, is fully certified to deliver training in external structural firefighting and is prepared to support all interested residents through the process.

Residents interested in serving and helping protect our community are encouraged to reach out and get involved.

Any of those interested please swing by the Fire Hall to inquire about joining the Volunteer department or reach out to Fire Chief Pacheco at (250) 699-2859 or email him at fire@fraserlake.ca.

FIRESMART

Wildland fires are a natural part of our Ecosystems by extending our lifestyles and Communities further into forested areas, also referred to as the Wildland Urban Interface. We become more exposed to the danger of Wildland Interface Fires. Here are some recommendations to help you reduce the risk of wildland fire to your home and neighborhood with a description of the different Zones.

Immediate Zone (0-1.5m):

Reduce the chance of wind-blown embers

igniting materials near your structure. A non-combustible surface should extend around the entire structure and any attachments, such as decks. Creating a non-combustible surface can be as easy as clearing vegetation and combustible material down to mineral soil. To add to your landscape design, use non-combustible materials such as gravel, brick, or concrete in this critical area adjacent to your structure. Woody shrubs, trees or tree branches should be avoided in this zone, any that are present should be properly mitigated.

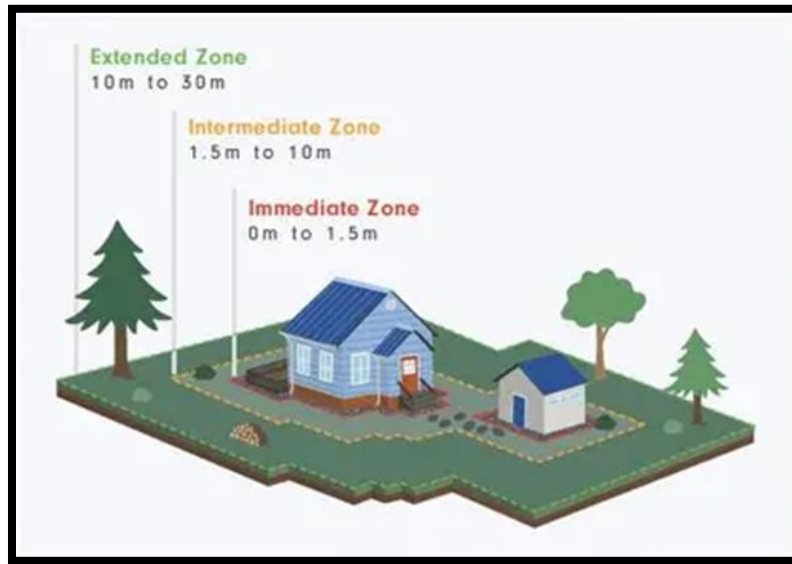
Intermediate Zone (1.5-10m): Create a landscape that will not easily transmit fire to the structure. A Fire Smart property includes making smart choices for your plants, shrubs, grass and mulch. Selecting

fire-resistant plants and materials can increase the likelihood of your structure surviving wildfire. Plant a low density of fire-resistant plants and shrubs. Avoid having any woody debris, including mulch, as it provides potential places for fires to start. Storing items such as construction materials, tools and decorative pieces

against or near a structure is a major fire hazard. Move storage sheds and other combustible structures out of this zone and into Zone 2. Mitigate sheds and other structures to the same

standards as those of your structure.

Extended Zone (10-30m): If your property extends out to this zone, thin and prune evergreen trees to reduce hazard in this area. Within 30 metres of your structure, selectively remove evergreen trees to create at least 3 metres of horizontal space between the single or grouped tree crowns and remove all branches to a height of 2 metres from the ground on the remaining evergreen trees. If possible, pruning trees up to 100 metres from your structure (Zone 3) is recommended. Regularly clean up accumulations of fallen branches, dry grass and needles from on the ground to eliminate potential surface fuels. Consider seeking the guidance of a forest professional with wildland fire knowledge on appropriate management



options for this zone.

If a property owner would like a Fire Smart Assessment of their property done, please Contact Fire Chief Joe Pacheco at 250-699-2859. If you live in the Regional

District of Bulkley Nechako, you are welcome to contact the Fire Smart Coordinator there as well.

For more information and general interest, here is Fire Smart BCs website.

LOOKING AHEAD

The Village of Fraser Lake remains committed to good governance, transparent communication, and thoughtful planning. The accomplishments of the second quarter are a reflection of Council's leadership, staff dedication, and the continued support of our residents.

We encourage everyone to stay involved — whether by attending open houses, providing feedback, or reaching out with questions or ideas. As always, we're here to listen.

Thank you for your continued trust and support.