

2026 1ST QUARTER COMMUNITY UPDATE

QUARTERLY UPDATE

Quarterly newsletters reflect work that has been completed since the last quarter. For printed copies please visit the following locations:

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

Virtual edition will be available on the municipal website at www.fraserlake.ca.

PROJECT UPDATES

Designated Water Line (Tunasa Drive, Tunasa Crescent, and Carrier Crescent)

Most projects experienced a slowdown during the first quarter of 2026, as work on several major capital initiatives shifted into the planning and design phase. For the Designated Waterline project, the Village entered the final months of the Winter Maintenance Plan. Efforts during this period focused on mitigating anticipated damage associated with the spring freshet along Tunasa Drive and Carrier Crescent. In late March, Dawson Civil crews attended the site to clear snow from stormwater ditches, helping to reduce the risk of potholing and water pooling on the roadway. Dawson Civil is expected to return in mid to late May to complete the remaining work, with the project anticipated to be fully completed by the summer of 2026.

Mouse Mountain Water Tower

The Village is entering the final phase of the water tower project. Remaining work includes addressing outstanding deficiencies and completing the associated landscaping and drainage improvements.

Community Hall Phase 2 (30 Carrier Crescent)

The contractor is working through the final outstanding deficiencies on the project, which are limited to minor operational items and are expected to be resolved prior to formally closing the project. At the same time, the Village is completing its remaining responsibilities, including the purchase and installation of indoor and outdoor plants for the planter boxes.

In addition, with the completion of the new Commercial Kitchen, staff are in the final stages of reviewing the Commercial Kitchen Policy, which will establish guidelines for facility use and rentals. It is anticipated that priority will be given to long-term users, with a Request for Proposals to be issued to invite applications for the use of the space. Potential uses may include food production, take-out services, or concession operations.

Resource Benefits Alliance Signage

Members of the Community may have started seeing billboards in the community to acknowledge the phenomenal contributions from the Resource Benefits Alliance has made in progressing some essential capital projects for our community. Signage for specific projects will be up for approximately 6 months following the



completion of ongoing capital projects that the funding directly supported. Funding signage regarding asset management planning will be up at the Public Works Yard and the Village Municipal Office until successful completion of a second agreement for a fair share agreement be established with the Province

For more information about the Resource Benefits Alliance and the various projects that has been supported in part or in full by the agreement that the Resource Benefits Alliance was able to assist in reaching.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

During the first quarter of 2026, the Village's Finance Department focused on year-end reporting, audit preparation, and building a strong foundation for the new fiscal year. Major efforts included providing financial documentation to auditors for the 2025 annual audit, submitting required year-end reports to external agencies, supporting other municipal departments, and preparing the 2026 operating and capital budgets. Routine activities such as utility billing, delinquent tax follow-ups, and ongoing financial monitoring also continued throughout the quarter.

From a financial perspective, first-quarter activity reflects expected seasonal patterns. Many revenue streams, particularly taxation and provincial grants, are weighted later in the year, while early-year operating expenses continue to support essential municipal services. As of the end of Q1, the General Fund recorded year-to-date revenues of approximately \$117,000 and expenses of approximately

\$889,000. This variance remains consistent with historical trends and does not indicate any budget concerns at this stage of the year.

The Village successfully secured several grants, sponsorships, and contributions during the first quarter. Funding included \$8,565 from the Union of BC Municipalities toward Fire Department equipment, \$1,500 from the Regional District of Bulkley.Nechako for Family Day celebrations, and \$23,000 from Optimum Crush to support boat launch lighting improvements. These funds help offset costs and enhance community services without increasing the local tax burden.

Overall, the first quarter of 2026 represents a steady and well-managed start to the fiscal year. Council and staff continue to monitor revenues and expenditures closely while advancing budget priorities, maintaining regulatory compliance, and ensuring the continued delivery of core municipal services to the community.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT UPDATE

The first quarter of 2026 was an active and productive period for Public Works, with a strong focus on winter operations, equipment maintenance, and preparing municipal infrastructure for the spring season. January and February brought below-average snowfall combined with higher-than-usual rainfall, allowing crews to shift time toward preventative maintenance and repairs while maintaining safe road conditions throughout the community.

Several key pieces of equipment were serviced during the quarter, including repairs and replacements to the street sweeper, sander, and Bobcat snow blade. These upgrades and fabrications are expected to extend equipment lifespan and improve reliability ahead of the busier construction and maintenance seasons. Wharf rehabilitation work also continued, with handrails removed, refurbished, and reinstalled, improving both safety and longevity at the waterfront.

With an early spring melt, Public Works crews worked proactively to clear catch basins and ensure stormwater systems were functioning properly, helping to reduce the risk of localized flooding. In addition, major upgrades to the Exceed SCADA system were completed, significantly improving control, monitoring, and troubleshooting capabilities within water and wastewater operations. Operators have reported positive early feedback, noting increased efficiency and reduced downtime.

The CH Foote Arena remained a hub of community activity during the first quarter, hosting tournaments and playoff games, including the U18 playoffs. Congratulations are extended to the Fraser Lake Hawks for winning the league championship and adding another banner to the arena, marking an exciting highlight.

Spring Clean Up

The Village has received a number of questions from the public inquiring of the timing of the 2026 Spring Clean up. This year will be held during the week directly following the May long weekend on May 18th, 2026. If you are a new resident to the community spring clean up allows residents to put out rubbish that would not normally be accepted in your weekly garbage collection. The Village will take the material and move it to the transfer station. This service is for residential properties only and the Village will not collect the following items:

- cardboard (you must take to the Transfer Station)
- batteries

- paint cans that are full or partially full (we can pick them up if empty and the lid is off)
- tires
- aerosol cans, and containers with flammable liquids, such as gas, oil, or paint thinner.
- propane cylinders
- refrigerators
- freezers
- vehicles
- grass clippings
- trees or shrubs that are over 2 inches in diameter.

EMERGENCY SERVICES DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Fraser Lake Fire Rescue remained active throughout the first quarter of 2026, responding to a total of 20 emergency incidents within the Village, Stelat'en First Nation, and surrounding regional protection zones. These responses included fire-related incidents, medical first responder calls, and a motor vehicle incident. This level of activity reflects the department's continued commitment to protecting life and property across the community and region.

One significant incident during the quarter was the Fraser Lake Inn structure fire, which resulted in the loss of the hotel, grocery store, pub, and adjacent businesses. The response required a large volume of water and heavy equipment to fully extinguish the fire, temporarily placing the community under water restrictions. Mutual aid support was provided by neighbouring communities including Fort Fraser, Vanderhoof, Fort St. James, and Burns

Lake, with Vanderhoof also supplying a fire engine. This collaborative response highlighted the strength of regional emergency partnerships.

Training and readiness remained a priority for Fire Rescue members. An in-house training weekend was held in April to support recruit firefighters completing the BC Exterior Firefighter Training Program. The department



also continued routine fire inspections of commercial businesses, worked on updates to the community emergency plan, and supported insurance documentation related to fire protection and hydrant water supply. Combined with ongoing bylaw and animal control activities, these efforts ensure continued public safety and emergency preparedness within the Village.

Bear Aware

In recent weeks, there have been reports of bear sightings in our area. While these magnificent creatures are an integral part of our natural environment, it is crucial that we take precautions to minimize the potential for human-wildlife conflicts.

As part of our commitment to promoting the safety and well-being of our community, we would like to draw your attention to an important issue that requires everyone's cooperation in securing garbage and other wildlife attractants to prevent bear encounters.

Bears have a keen sense of smell and are naturally drawn to the scent of food waste. An easily accessible garbage can or commercial dumpster can be a tempting invitation for them to explore our neighborhoods in search of a meal. By securing our garbage properly, we can help ensure the safety of both humans and bears.

Controlled Burns within Municipal Boundaries

The Village of Fraser Lake has been working closely with BC Wildfire Service during the first quarter to plan a series of controlled burns within the community. These burns are part of a coordinated and carefully managed wildfire mitigation strategy aimed at reducing fuel loads and enhancing community safety. It is important for residents to know that this work is fully planned, supervised, and carried out under strict safety protocols.

While the burns were initially scheduled to begin earlier in April, the early onset of wildfire season conditions resulted in a short delay. The Village and BC Wildfire Service continue to monitor weather and site conditions closely, and the work is now anticipated to be completed before mid-May. Further updates will be shared as scheduling is confirmed.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES UPDATE

Review of Service Levels in 2026 Budget

The first quarter of 2026 focused on setting a solid foundation for the year ahead. Council and staff concentrated on refining service levels, advancing long-term planning, and balancing affordability with the continued delivery of essential services. Early-year efforts center on budget preparation, infrastructure planning, and ensuring the Village remains responsive to community needs.

Infrastructure & Community Assets

Several key capital initiatives progressed during the quarter, particularly those supporting water system reliability and asset sustainability. Work continued on major projects including the Mouse Mountain Reservoir replacement, the Designated Water Line, and planning for comprehensive water, sewer, and stormwater master plans. These projects are critical to ensuring Fraser Lake's infrastructure meets current needs while preparing for future growth.

Additional investments included arena drainage improvements, generator maintenance, and preparation for updates to the Village's water tower infrastructure.

Sustainability, Livability & Community Partnership

Efforts to enhance sustainability and livability included advancing cybersecurity protections at key water facilities, exploring solar power opportunities on municipal buildings, and improving audio-visual capabilities at the Community Hall. Council also supported

community celebrations and events through sponsorships and grant applications, reflecting the Village's commitment to social connection and local vibrancy.

Community Forest Stewardship & Economic Contribution

Work continued to strengthen the Community Forest through resumed harvesting activities, early consultation on potential expansion areas, and ongoing discussions with external partners on resource stewardship. Revenues generated continue to support operations while reinforcing the importance of responsible land and forest management.

Supporting Organizational Health & Workforce Development

Strengthening organizational capacity remained a priority in Q1. Council approved updates to travel and training policies, supported inflationary wage adjustments, and invested in workforce development.

Senior leadership and Public Works staff began training in asset management and project planning, helping ensure municipal assets are managed responsibly throughout their lifecycle.

Collaboration also improved through joint health and safety meetings and regularly scheduled financial planning sessions.

Enhancing Community Appearance & Public Spaces

Community pride and safety were supported through several beautification and facility improvement projects. Planning advanced for the replacement of the "Welcome to Fraser Lake" signage, working with an experienced

Q1 priorities focused on affordability, service reliability, and long term planning.

regional designer. Exterior repairs to the Volunteer Fire Hall also moved forward, including vandalism repairs and enhanced

exterior lighting, improving both function and appearance

COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Strengthening Services & Securing Funding

The first quarter of 2026 was a busy and productive period for Community Services, with significant efforts focused on securing external funding to support community programs, infrastructure, and long-term planning. Multiple grant applications were approved during the quarter, including major funding for the Drone Transportation Initiative, FireSmart and community resiliency projects, downtown business façade improvements, water infrastructure, and community hall upgrades. These successes help advance important projects while reducing the financial impact on local taxpayers.

Recreation, Events & Community Life

Recreation and community events continued to bring residents together throughout the winter months. The Winter Scavenger Hunt and Family Day celebrations were well attended and well received, despite weather-related changes that required some events to be moved indoors. Planning is now underway for spring and summer programming, including Canada Day and Mouse Mountain Days, outdoor recreation programs, and regional events. The Visitor Centre is scheduled to reopen in mid-May, supporting tourism and local economic activity.

Transportation & Innovation

Community transportation services remained strong in the first quarter. The community bus

completed 484 trips, reflecting steady year-over-year growth in ridership. At the same time, Fraser Lake continues to lead in rural innovation through the Drone Transportation Initiative. With three-year funding now secured, training programs, infrastructure planning, and staffing preparations are moving forward. The program will expand medical delivery services and further position the Village as a leader in innovative transportation solutions.

Planning, Growth & Partnerships

Important planning and development work continued throughout the quarter. Progress was made on waterfront redevelopment, signage and tree plans, development bylaws, and implementation of Official Community Plan initiatives. Community Services also worked closely with neighbouring First Nations, regional partners, and economic development agencies to support shared priorities, joint projects, and long-term regional collaboration.

Looking Ahead

As 2026 continues, Community Services will remain focused on delivering engaging programs, advancing funded projects, and strengthening partnerships that enhance livability, resilience, and opportunity in Fraser Lake. Residents can expect continued updates as projects move from planning into visible, on-the-ground progress.

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 Tuesday evenings starting at either 6:00PM or 7:00PM. 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.