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Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation
BRIEFING NOTE FOR MINISTER

Ref #: 62061

FOR INFORMATION

Date:

Title: Wood Innovation and Design Centre

Issue:

The 2011 UBCM Convention will be held from September 26 to September 30 at the Vancouver Convention Centre. This Briefing Note is prepared for the Minister's meetings with stakeholders during the convention.

Background:

In March 2009, the Working Roundtable on Forestry recommended the establishment of a Wood Innovation and Design Centre (WIDC) focused on bringing together builders, architects, designers, artists and engineers to advance the commercialization of value-added wood building and design products. The project is also aimed at amplifying BC's expertise and global reputation as a leader in wood construction, engineered wood products and design.

The forestry sector is a vital part of the BC economy and has supported the livelihood of generations of families, especially in the northern communities. BC has made significant progress in continuing to support this industry, including the export of lumber to new Asian markets.

WIDC will play a key role in supporting the value-added innovation in the wood industry, furthering the province's policy objectives (Wood First), filling a critical gap in wood education and knowledge transfer to practitioners in the industry and supporting local communities. It is anticipated that skills gained through WIDC will have direct applicability in international markets.

Construction is estimated to begin in 2012 with completion in 2014.

Discussion:

There are several components to the WIDC project, including programming, site selection, building design and construction and financing.

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Site Selection

The City of Prince George has selected the block bounded by Dominion Street, George Street and 4th and 5th Avenues as the future site for WIDC.

Building Design

The overarching goal for WIDC's building design is to establish an "iconic building" that will utilize leading-edge building material (such as cross-laminated timber). Design work will commence upon finalizing secured funding and will go through a formal procurement process. An RFI is proposed to be issued in August.

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Key Messaging:

- WIDC will further the development of the forestry industry in BC by enhancing wood education and knowledge transfer/sharing throughout industry.
- Site selection and programming are well underway, and building design will be run through a formal procurement process.
- Funding sources are still being determined, and the province is continuing to consider potential partners for this project.

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Approvals			
Dir:	ED:	ADM: SC	DM:

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