

May 18, 2009

Dear Liaisons: I would like to welcome all new Liaisons who have joined us over the past few weeks. It is great to see that we have over 41 Prime NCMA Liaisons, 7 Second NCMA Liaisons, 28 Community Liaisons, 6 Coordinators and several Committee Chairs! You have great mentors to assist you: several of our Liaisons/Coordinators/Committee Chairs have been active for nearly two years and have their communities movin' and shakin'!! I am sending along some information to help you get moving forward and also to help current Liaisons with their work. (Reminders!) You will find enclosed the terms of reference for your position and for your committee.

The role of the Liaisons is to work in partnership: the NCMA Liaison and the Community Liaison and work together to form a committee of a variety of interests. The NCMA Liaison is someone on staff with your town or who is a councilor. The Community Liaison is a person with a disability or a senior. Your task is to form the committee (which should be sanctioned by the town, best if it is a standing committee); do a series of assessments to determine where problems lie (please see attached Livable Inclusive Communities Report Card) and also visit the City of Dawson Creek who have developed a very good on-line survey to give to communities (<http://www.dawsoncreek.ca/home.asp>) and then develop a strategic plan of how you will tackle them over the next year, 5 years, etc. Then you need to move forward with plans. One of our key goals for your community is that you will incorporate the principles of MUTN into your Official Community Plans. This must be done to ensure continuity even after you are no longer a Liaison.

The goal of MUTN is to assist over 40 NCMA communities to become livable, age-friendly, disability-friendly, universally designed, inclusive communities for all residents and visitors. We use a variety of approaches to create better communities including all concepts mentioned in the goal statement plus accessible tourism, economic development, sustainability, smart planning, visitable housing, active living by design, healthy built environments, and others.

MUTN is a partnership between the NCMA and BCPA with supporting partners: 2010 Legacies Now, the Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport, BC Healthy Communities, and Northern Health.

MUTN offers a variety of resources for you to tap into: 1) You will receive a by-weekly e-news that has all sorts of information including funding opportunities 2) We hold a monthly liaison phone call. Next one will be June 18 at 10:00am. You will receive notice of the phone in info 3) we have a great website full of resource information, information about your communities: www.measureupthenorth.com 4) we have a great MUTN forum for you to join and share information with each other: Please join at: <http://measureupthenorth.ning.com>. There you will have place to "meet" other Liaisons and other people from around the world. Encourage your committee members and others to join as well. 5) We have a place on the website where your committee members and others can sign up to receive news: see the left sidebar of www.measureupthenorth.com.

We want to hear about how you are doing on a monthly basis if at all possible. This monthly check in also helps you to keep on track with your committees. You will receive notices about these monthly reports via email. We have also launched a Livable-Inclusive Communities Assessment and many are filling this out right now as well. Your name will be entered in a draw to win a prize for filling these out. Draw will be held June 6th, 2009 which is Measuring Up The North Day! There is still time to enter the draw!

Measuring Up The North Day: is a day when you can do what you want to show case accessibility and inclusion in your community. Some communities do awareness raising activities; others show off what they have achieved over the past year, others showcase the assessments that they have done; others provide awards to businesses to encourage what they have done. So it is up to you! We will ask you to share with all of us what you have been doing. Watch the MUTN Forum for sharing of ideas.

We have a MUTN pamphlet that you can download from our website. You can go ahead and print off as many as you like. We have made an area on the back of the pamphlet where you can place your own contact info. You can also obtain the MUTN Logo and place it on your Town Website showing that you are a member of MUTN; you can also obtain a MUTN business card template. Please contact our Project Assistants: Katherine Lapadat-Janzen or Kory Heyland at 250-563-6942.

We have just held a very interesting and informative conference: *Creating Universally Designed Healthy Sustainable Communities: April 6-8, 2009*. Soon you will see all the information from the conference posted on our MUTN website. We held our fall conference in October of last year. Information from that conference is also posted.

You can also contact Laurie Ringaert, Project Director at lringaert@bcpara.org or at 250-563-6942. I will be pleased to assist you with your questions and activities.

Welcome Aboard! Please join the Forum and introduce yourself to our MUTN "Family". Our experienced Liaisons will be pleased to share with you!

Laurie Ringaert
Project Director
Measuring Up The North