



PROJECT OVERVIEW

TITLE: *Air Traffic and Airport Improvement Strategy*

Date: March 2011

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Phase One built on existing work done by the Federal and Provincial Governments and local airport authorities. It took into account community and regional plans and priorities for economic diversification. Existing airports (excluding Prince George and Smithers), were assessed for their real potential to support economic growth and diversification. Limiting conditions and upgrade opportunities for physical infrastructure and services were compiled.

The objective of Phase Two of the project is to develop an air industry strategy that will enable the OBAC region to target investments and provide recommendations aimed at attracting investment, enhancing existing business opportunities, and preparing for growth in this sector that are within realistic budgets/funding, community resources, and consistent with community plans.

RATIONALE: Airports are an important link in the region's infrastructure, and have been identified as key aspects of the economic growth and competitiveness strategies for the mining and tourism sectors. They also play a key role in the ability of communities to attract and retain skilled workers. The business climate for the service sector is improved considerably by dependable air transportation, as are emergency response services. Improvements to airports increase the capacity to handle larger aircraft, operate under adverse weather conditions, accommodate freight and passengers, and generate spin-off business.

PARTNERS: Work will be carried out in conjunction with the appropriate organizations, including Transport Canada, the provincial Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, local governments and airport authorities, the airline industry and user groups (including business sectors, health and emergency service providers, and local economic or community development groups).

TIMELINES: Development of the strategy will begin July 15, 2011 and be completed by October 15, 2011. Support for regional development will continue.

RESOURCES: OBAC has committed \$8,000 to facilitate the working group formed in April 2011 and up to \$70,000 towards the development of the Strategy.

REGIONAL STRATEGY: Integrated Regional Infrastructure / Mining and Minerals / Tourism / Emergency Management / Attraction and Retention

ACTIVITY

- An analysis at a regional and local level of the air industry that addresses essential services, economic, socio-demographic, and industry trend factors.

OUTPUTS

- A forward looking strategy aimed at strengthening and diversifying the regional economy, maintaining and improving essential services, and retaining/attracting residents.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

- Cost-effective investments in airports
- Identification of the possible synergistic relationships of the region's airports.

OUTCOMES

- Better access for emergency services
- Increased viability of airline industry
- Economic growth and diversification