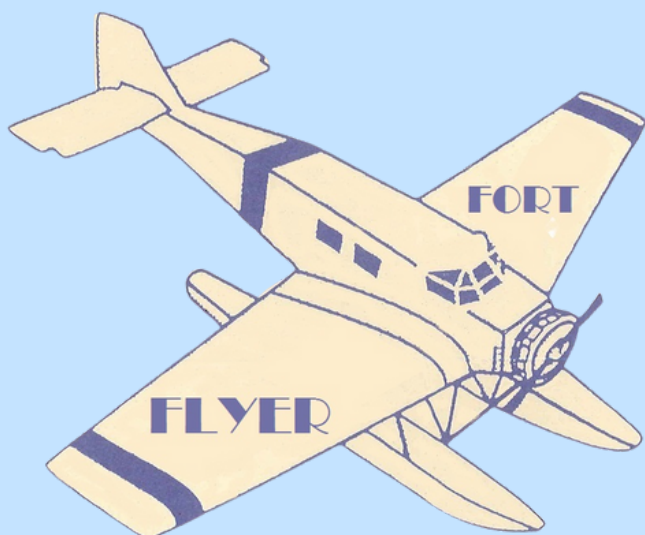


Fort Flyer

NEWS FROM THE DISTRICT OF FORT ST. JAMES

Photo by Ruth Lloyd



Mayor's Message

Department Updates

Community Events

FAQs



Message from the Mayor

I would like to welcome Jessica Froese to the team as our new Economic Development Officer. Jessica started early in the New Year and is a recent master's graduate from UNBC. She is full of enthusiasm with plenty of new and fresh ideas which will be great for the community.

There are lots of winter activities going on this year. The Caledonia Dog Sled Races are Jan 30th to Feb 1st and the Snowmobile Poker ride Feb 7th. There will be lots of activities to celebrate Family Day on Feb 16th. Check out the District's brochure

to highlight all the events for that day as well as the rest of the winter. You can pick it up at the District Office.

If you haven't been up to Murray Ridge in awhile, you're in for a treat. There are cross country track set trails with a lighted loop, snowshoe trails, and an outdoor rink to complement the downhill skiing experience. Wander up for lunch and a beverage and enjoy the breathtaking vista.

The Fort Forum Arena revitalization is now complete, and we have been granted our occupancy permit. There has been positive feedback from first impressions. The front lobby, kitchen area, washrooms, offices, as well as HVAC and electrical were upgraded. A dryland training facility was added for our players to stretch and limber up prior to hitting the ice.

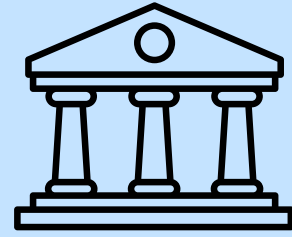
Congratulations to the Men's Shed. Thanks to all those that contributed time and money to get it up and running. They are open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 1-5pm, stop by and check it out. They are always looking for new members.

However difficult life may seem, there is always something you can do and succeed at.

Take care and enjoy,

Mayor Martin Elphee





Regular Council Meetings

January 13th & 27th

February 10th & 24th

March 10th & 24th

Council Budget Meetings

January 29th

February 12th & 26th

Council Meetings

COUNCIL CHAMBERS @ 5PM
477 STUART DRIVE WEST



Message from Finance

IT'S NOT TOO EARLY TO APPLY FOR YOUR BC HOMEOWNER'S GRANT!

Property owners can submit their application for their 2026 BC Homeowner Grants now - even before tax notices come out. The process is entirely online and it only takes a couple of minutes. Seniors 65 years and older get an additional discount, make sure to apply every year!

Gather your 2025 Tax Notice and [click here](#) to apply.

You will need your Jurisdiction and Roll Numbers:

- The District of Fort St. James is BC Jurisdiction # 519
- Your Roll Number is on your 2025 Tax Notice, you can also search by your address to find it

If you need any assistance with the online application, you can phone or visit Service BC at 250-996-7585 or 470 Stuart Drive West.



Public Works & Capital Projects Updates

2025 was a successful year for our Public Works team! Our Director of Operations is happy to share that all projects were completed successfully and under budget, and he hopes that 2026 brings the same results.

Coming this year:

1. We will begin Phase 3 of upgrading our local waterlines in the spring.
2. The lagoon de-sludging will continue this summer – it's a stinky job, but someone's got to do it!
3. Marina upgrades are expected to be completed this summer. Get excited for a new boat launch, breakwater, and upgrades to the lighting, walkway, and decking, among other important work!

As usual, the Public Works team will work hard to implement improvements within our parks, trails, flower beds, and boulevards once the snow melts. If you see them out and about, say hi and thank you!

News from the Fire Hall



The Fort St. James Fire Department received delivery of the new First-Out Engine! This 2025 Spartan Metro Star will continue to serve the community as a First Out Engine until November 2040. This purchase was completed to stay compliant with Fire Underwriters Survey which has specific regulations for the age of fire engines.

While it is still too early to know what the wildfire season may look like, it's never too early to prepare your home and property should a wildfire occur. You can find more information at the [FireSmart BC website](#), [Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako website](#), or contact the FireSmart Coordinator for Fort St. James at 250-996-8670.



By-Law Spotlight

UNSIGHTLY PREMISES

BYLAW # 995, 2018

"Unslightly" means...

- Buildings, structures, or fences that are:
 - Excessively dirty
 - Unfinished or need refinishing
 - Dilapidated
 - Broken
 - Leaning
- Graffiti on buildings, structures, fences, or finished ground surfaces
- Accumulations of garbage
- Landscaping or construction materials where there is no work being done
- Furniture, bedding, or appliances stored outside
- One or more broken-down vehicles
- Uncontained compost piles
- Overgrown vegetation or unmowed grass more than 25cm high

Causing or permitting unsightly premises: \$125 fine

Interfering with a Bylaw Officer: \$200 fine

Fire Smart Corner

As we (eventually) move into spring, it's a great time to start thinking about how to FireSmart your property. These actions will dramatically decrease the risk of wildfire damaging your home - and it's surprisingly easy to do!

[View the FireSmart Homeowner's Manual here](#)

Clean under your deck

- Keep the area underneath your deck and 1.5m around clear of leaves and debris
- It's recommended to sheath the base of your deck with fire-resistant materials

Assess your roof and gutters

- Locate areas where flammable materials, like dry leaves and moss, have gathered and remove them
- Consider installing metal gutter screens to reduce accumulation

Prune trees on your property

- Many types of deciduous trees are resistant to wildfire, including poplar, birch, aspen, and cottonwood
- Prune branches within 2m of the ground and remove any flammable debris

Reduce highly flammable plants

- Take a look around your property for flammable plants:
 - Leaves with a strong odour when crushed, branches with a gummy sap, and fine, dry, or dead materials within the plant

Create a wildfire evacuation plan

- [Visit PreparedBC](#) to make an emergency preparedness plan
- Make sure everyone who lives with you is familiar with the plan



FAQs

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. I want to have a campfire at my house, do I need a permit?

A. Yes. Burn permits are issued yearly for campfires and are free! You can pick up a campfire permit at the District Office as the owner of the property or with written permission from the owner. You need a new permit every year.

Q. How do I play racquetball at the Community Centre?

A. You need a membership to book the racquetball court which can be obtained from the District Office (you will also get a fob for access). Annual memberships are \$151.50, monthly memberships are \$22. Court reservations are made through the [District website](#).

Q. How does Seniors Snow Plowing work?

A. You must sign-up annually by filling out a form at the District Office. Your driveway windrows will be plowed after the roads, sidewalks, and parking lots are completed by our Public Works team.

Q. Is there a Seniors Discount for utility bills?

A. Yes. A Utility Senior Discount form goes out with the first utility bill in March. If you are 65 years or older, fill out this form and submit to the District Office. The discount will be applied to both the spring and fall utility bills but does not carry over to the next year, so you need to re-apply every spring. Your discount will only be applied if the bill is paid on time.

Q. Can I burn off my brush and grass in the spring?

A. No. District of Fort St. James Fire Regulation Bylaw No. 1001, 2018 5.1.13 prohibits the burning of vegetation, grass, or stubble when it is rooted in the ground.





Fort St. James Public Library News

[CLICK HERE FOR THE LIBRARY EVENT CALENDAR](#)

The Library isn't just for books, we added **snowshoes and ski passes** to our Library of Things! The **Seed Library** will be launching February 17th. Our newest addition is the **Swapagation Station** (like propagation, get it?) where you can bring in and exchange plant cuttings! This initiative was built by a FSJSS senior student.

Adult Programs

Tutor Tuesdays - *Tuesdays 1-4pm*
Northern Health - *Thursdays 1-3pm*
TRC Book Club - *Last Saturday of the month*
Home Service - *Third Thursday each month*

Children's Programs

Storytime (0-5 years)
Thursdays 10:30-11am
After School Drop-In (K-Grade 7)
Wednesdays 3-4:30pm
Pro-D Days (K-Grade 7)
SD91 Pro-D Days 1:30-3pm

[Click here to visit our website](#) & [Click here to visit our Facebook page](#)



News from the Chamber of Commerce

LET'S DO BUSINESS!

Annual General Meeting on February 2nd at 6pm

The View Hotel, 309 Stuart Drive West

Everyone is welcome! Refreshments and treats included!

Guest speakers & door prizes!

Community Events

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW OUR FULL COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR](#)



CALEDONIA CLASSIC DOG SLED RACES

January 30th starting at 10am
January 31st starting at 9am
February 1st starting at 9:30am

At the FSJ Snowmobile Club
11799 Dickinson Loop Rd.

[Click here for the full events
schedule](#)



MURRAY RIDGE
Murray Ridge Ski Area
1 Chalet Drive

RIDGE RUSH TRIATHALON
February 28th

MT. EVEREST CHALLENGE
March 7th

**RAIL JAM & BIG AIR
COMPETITION**
March 14th



WINTERFEST MARKET
February 8th at 1pm-4pm
Community Centre
190 Stuart Drive East



FSJ SNOWMOBILE CLUB POKER RIDE

February 7th at 9:30am
Last hand at 12:30pm

FSJ Snowmobile Clubhouse
11799 Dickenson Loop Rd.
\$20 per hand

[Facebook page](#)



LADIES CURLING BONSPIEL

February 13th - 14th

FSJ Curling Club
240 Stuart Drive East
250-996-1194

[Facebook page](#)



LIVE THEATRE

February 20th, 21st, 27th, & 28th
at 9pm

Music Makers
255 2nd Ave West

Community Events

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW OUR FULL COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR](#)



FEBRUARY IS WINTERFEST!

Winterfest Survival Challenge

Build your team! Challenge others! Collect prizes!
Pickup at the District Office or [click here](#)

Winterfest Mascot Hide & Seek

Look for the mascot hiding at events, out on the trails, and at local businesses!

Take a selfie with him and email it to recreation@fortstjames.ca

FAMILY DAY ACTIVITIES: FEBRUARY 16TH



Kwah Hall Activities

8-10am

Free pancake breakfast

10am-1:30pm

Tea & bannock

Board games, cards, puzzles

Mini Crib Tournament (10am-4pm)

Storytelling & Family Murals & More



Murray Ridge Ski Hill Activities

9:30am-3:30pm

Lift open (lift ticket discounts!)

11am-3:30pm

Free hotdogs, coffee, & hot chocolate

Fire pit with tea, bannock, & s'mores

Snowshoe races, relays, & games

Outdoor ice rink (bring your own skates)



Shuttle bus to Murray Ridge

Pick up at Nak'azdli Youth Centre, Kwah Hall, and Public Library

Call Murray Ridge for pick-up times: 250-996-8515