

District of

VANDERHOOF

Welcome Guide



DISTRICT OF
Vanderhoof

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Ahead in the clouds
Things are always looking up here

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Regional District Bulkley-Nechako

Welcome to VANDERHOOF

Welcome to the geographic centre
of B.C., the District of Vanderhoof —
come centre yourself!

One finds deep rural and
agricultural roots in this valley, but
also high-tech industry, commerce
and communications. Trails run
along the rivers and streams
and make their way through the
tapestry of flora and fauna to
old hills, and inside of that the
gigabytes of economic growth
also flow through streams of
information and fields of endeavor.
Year-round activities await you —
discover the spirit of Northwest
B.C. along Highway 16, on the
unceded, ancestral, traditional
lands of the Saik'uz First Nation.



This is a four-seasons wonderland for the 4,500 people who live in town and another 5,000 or so who reside close by. Enjoy the changing outdoor palette offered by four distinct seasons.

Winter is cold, snowy and sunny — perfect for outdoor adventures like skiing, snowmobiling, and enjoying the northern lights under a banquet of stars.

Spring comes with the first swans, calling everyone outdoors to the awakening warm breeze, an advancing carpet of green, and the sound of water- released from an icy sleep.

Summer is full-tilt action, from sports to camping, hard work to hard play, featuring any recreation that comes to mind. You can bask on the deck, splash in the lakes, or head for those hills. It's typically hot with some rain now and then, extra hours of daylight and cool nights.

Autumn is the best kept secret in the seasonal cycle. Ask the local folks, and these are often their favourite pages on the calendar. A crispness in the air, sunlit leaves bursting with colour, and the voices of the geese overhead tell you it's time to get outdoors or get together close to home.

Getting **HERE**

Road

Highway 16, the famed Yellowhead Highway, delivers most to Vanderhoof. Highway 27 connects to Fort St. James and its ancient history; Kenney Dam Road rolls through the Saik'uz First Nation's community and on to the eye-popping earth dam; plus many other routes to adventure. It's one hour from Prince George to the east, and onward to the Pacific Coast going west.

Air

Vanderhoof's airport is a small-town gem with a 5,018-foot paved runway and two grass runways (5,200 feet and 3,200 feet). Private planes are welcome, with a clubhouse equipped with wifi and washrooms.

Train

Via Rail's "Rupert Rocket" runs between Prince George and Prince Rupert, with Vanderhoof in between. Schedules and prices vary, depending on time of year. Visit the Via Rail website for current information.



Boat

The Nechako River is an ancient highway dating back thousands of years. Indigenous travellers paddled spruce bark or cottonwood dugout canoes, connecting the Saik'uz people to the Pacific and Rockies via this "big river" translated from the Dakelh language. Paddlewheelers and other trading vessels plied the Nechako in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Now it is a playground for pleasure boats.

Cultural ROOTS

Welcome from the **SAIK'UZ FIRST NATION**

When visitors first arrived in Saik'uz territory, the Chiefs of the nation and surrounding areas met to discuss what was to be done. They concluded that they would welcome the newcomers and endeavour to live peacefully with them.

The past history had negative impacts on the Saik'uz people and are still felt to this day. Our culture and way of being was threatened but we overcame the barriers that were forced on us.

Today, our people are determined to move forward with perseverance and resiliency. We will not let the past define who we are as Dakelh people. We will embrace our culture and traditions and we will continue to welcome those who appreciate our beautiful lands in a good way as we reclaim

and revitalize our songs, stories, history, language, governance, and culture. We think, in time, visitors to this region like yourself will come to appreciate, know, and enjoy it as we do.

Saik'uz First Nation is part of the greater Dakelh nation. Dakelh (formerly known as Carrier) is the name of our language and also refers to all First Nations that share this language and have similar cultural traditions. When translated, "Saik'uz" means "on the sand" and refers to the fertile soils of the Nechako River valley. We have lived in this valley and the surrounding areas for thousands of years, as supported by historical evidence and our oral records.

Today, we are divided into two clans, Tachek Whut'en (also known as Grouse Clan) and Noolk'ai Whut'en



"As elected chief of the Saik'uz First Nation, let me be the first to welcome you to these abundant lands we have called home for millennia. We appreciate visitors now, just as Saik'uz people always have, and we hope that people of kind hearts and sharp minds will choose to live here and work with us to make this community strong and beautiful for millennia to come."

- Priscilla Mueller, Chief

(also known as Frog Clan). We have a rich tradition of trapping, hunting, fishing, and medicine, and are currently revitalizing and practicing our balhats (potlatch) system, which is a ceremony integral to our governing structure, culture, and spiritual traditions. Our vibrant community of nearly 1,000 members today- 400 of whom live in the immediate area - has birthed renowned healers, scholars, war heroes, political activists, and an Order of Canada recipient. We are incredibly proud of who we were, who we are, and who we are becoming. As we have been here for generations uncouncted, so will we be here for generations to come.

We welcome you as stewards of this land, and invite you to visit, learn, and experience this incredible place we have the honour to call our home.

Want to Learn More?

Scan the QR code to learn about the rich history of the Saik'uz First Nation...



Pioneer PAST

Indigenous civilizations have thrived off the flora and fauna in the Vanderhoof area longer than years can be usefully counted.

It was flora and fauna that brought the first colonial settlers, when their numbers were small and lived in connection with the Saik'uz people. It was only about 40 kilometres upstream, as the crow flies, that the first cattle west of the Rockies were raised (the vicinity of today's Beaumont Provincial Park) by Simon Fraser's fur traders, so B.C.'s ranching history literally starts here.

This area first became famous for its stories of cattle ranching. *Nothing Too Good For A Cowboy* was only one of the truth-inspired books written by Rich Hobson, and it was turned into a movie, a TV series and a museum. He also wrote *Grass Beyond The Mountain* and *The*

Rancher Takes A Wife. His spread was located about 50 kms south of Vanderhoof from the 1940s until he died in 1966.

Today, this is home to the busy Vanderhoof Stockyards, a sales and service industry for farming, a thriving hay and grain industry, influential ranching figures with the BC Cattlemen's Association, multiple dairy farms, poultry and honey businesses, a lot of horses, and innovative operations like Judd Wu's compacted hay exports to Asian markets.

"Agriculture has always been the mainstay of Vanderhoof," one local farmer, Gerry Thiessen, told the *Omineca Express* during his time as mayor. It's as true today as it ever was in the days of the first and the famous.



Community Forest

Vanderhoof has a forest all its own. Since 2016 the Vanderhoof Community Forest has been an economic generator for the municipality, providing jobs and income for local taxpayers, plus a built-in recreation site with education features. It is 23,000 hectares (57,000 acres) in size, located about 15 kms north of town.

Peter Rodseth – Master Woodcarver and Trailbuilder

Making a path for others, that was what Pete was all about, literally, and figuratively.

Peter was an artist who never just did a job, he always did a job that was full of beauty, creativity and caring. He devoted the same masterful techniques and attention to detail to his trail building as he did to his woodcarving, a craft he travelled to Norway to study, in the valley where his father was born. This carved wooden mural was originally displayed at the Service BC building on Stewart Street. The carving was to be completed in six months. It took him six years.

It is 12 metres (39.4 ft.) long, 3.2 metres (10.5 ft.) high, made of 5.8 cm. (2 inch) thick solid Red Alder. It's a masterpiece — Peter's song about the bountiful landscape of British Columbia, its environment, its rivers, its rich Indigenous and pioneer history and his love for all of us.

"We must realize, each one of us, that we cannot depend on the Government for all our needs and problems to be solved. The solutions are within us. Give our Native Brothers and Sisters equality in all matters. Be industrious and self-sufficient as the homesteaders were. As the wise old Chief Adanas Alexis surveys his memories so must we too treat our fragile planet with great respect. Above all, loving families, our individual cultural differences and personal Faith should be nurtured."

– Peter Rodseth 1992

Mary John – Her quiet power changed Canada, starting in Vanderhoof



Truth. Reconciliation. These are two of today's most powerful words regarding Indigenous relations and the direction of Canada's culture.

There were once two equally powerful words that meant the same thing: Mary John.

This Saik'uz elder earned the Queen's Jubilee Medal, an honorary degree from UNBC, and the Order of Canada for her work to expose the truth of systemic prejudice excluding Aboriginal people, and to take the first steps towards what would one day be called reconciliation.

You can read about it in the books *Judgment At Stoney Creek* and *Stoney Creek Woman*, both by Bridget Moran. The first work details a pivotal Vanderhoof Court case in which Mary John was a catalyst for justice, while the second is Mary's biography. It tells her story as a residential school survivor who quietly, gently, and relentlessly became an Indigenous rights trailblazer and educator.

Perhaps the most moving honour bestowed upon her was the 1974 Vanderhoof Citizen of the Year Award (two years before the earthquake legal case). To be so highly regarded in such an ethnically divided town (province, nation) at that time was massive testament to her wise, irrefutable ways.

Want to Learn More?
Scan the QR code to learn more about Mary John and other resources...



Come VISIT

The centrepiece of B.C. **LIFESTYLE AND ADVENTURE ABOUNDS**

Who doesn't love a good road trip. That's a statement, not a question. There are so many benefits to being right in the middle, and Vanderhoof takes full advantage of being THE central town for the highway traveller.

It's close to a major urban centre, but just far enough away to have that quaint rural feel.

It's on the way to the wild Pacific coast, or spectacular Rocky Mountains, depending on your direction of travel.

It's the route to colourful ancient First Nations cultures, the living museum of Fort St. James, mine tours like Mount Milligan and Blackwater, mill tours at Plateau and L&M Lumber, splendid Nulki Lake

with Sinkut Mountain vistas (itself an attraction for hikers, cyclists, ATVers due to the spectacular views it provides), the feat of engineering Kenney Dam with Cheslatta Falls near it, and the greatest of the great outdoors with the lovely Nechako River as the centrepiece.

Vanderhoof is a respite spot that just might cast a spell on you. The eye is easily grabbed by the unique modern interpretive centre with its classic Indigenous pit-house motif. Around it is the well appointed museum grounds with plenty to learn about the pioneer era and beyond. Dotted around town are features like the swimming pool, library, skate park, golf course, sturgeon conservation centre, other recreational amenities.



"Vanderhoof walks tall in two worlds. It has an incredibly long and colourful history, and it also strives for a prosperous future. To be both traditional and progressive is a rare and exciting feat for any small town, and it makes me a very lucky mayor. I get a front row seat for honouring our past and advocating for development. I encourage you to join us!"

– Kevin Moutray, Mayor

Gas and groceries are easily accessed, all within view of Highway 16. Riverside Park has its family-friendly features including river lookout and bird sanctuary. There are campgrounds and restaurants, picnic sites and boutiques.

There is an EV charging station right at the Vanderhoof Tourism & Cultural Centre, another situated at the Cluculz Lake rest area east of town at Brookside, one downtown at the 7-11 convenience store, and another beside College of New Caledonia.

It's all tailor made to take the dog for a walk, let the kids run around awhile, stretch your legs, but while you're at it, enjoy all that Vanderhoof has to offer. It'll make your wheels turn.

Want to Learn More?

Scan the QR code to learn what to see and do in Vanderhoof...





Vanderhoof Tourism & Cultural Centre - **HOME OF THE VISITOR CENTRE**

“If there’s a building that encapsulates what Vanderhoof means — it’s past and it’s future, it’s tight-knit community and it’s aspirational world view — it is this one,” said mayor Kevin Moutray, marvelling at the beauty and innovation of the 4,000-square-foot multi-use Vanderhoof Tourism & Cultural Centre. Its inspiration from top to bottom is the pit-houses that Dakelh cultures lived in for millennia.

“We are excited to share our resilience and culturally rich ingenuity as Yinka Dene (People of the Earth), reflected throughout the infrastructure and through the various programs and services that could be delivered,” said a statement from the Saik’uz government upon its grand opening June 30, 2022.

Then-mayor Gerry Thiessen said at the time, “It will be a focal point for our community that will really allow us to celebrate our history, our past. And it’s also going to be a place for reconciliation. This is a great day for Vanderhoof.”



Designed and built by Colliers Project Leaders, paid for by federal, provincial and local government funds plus grants from Northern Development Initiatives Trust, Canfor-Plateau, Sinclair Group Forest Products and private contributions, it now stands as a cutting edge structure that harkens back to the oldest of structures.

Cultural Centre / Museum and Heritage Grounds

There is so much more than just the past at our museum, and so much more than just brochures at our Tourist Information Centre. Vanderhoof's heritage grounds is a whole Cultural Centre reflecting the historic and the modern, the ancient traditions and the latest developments. You can plug your electric vehicle in for a charge, and you can walk the site and get a charge out of all the interesting facets of this bustling community.

Pioneering and Indigenous life has been expertly preserved and arranged for fascinating viewing. You can touch the region's impactful railway and telegraph history, observe original banking and policing elements, admire the logs and lumber that encapsulated the farms and furs of Vanderhoof's past century.

Outside, it is fascination and charm everywhere you turn. The buildings, artifacts and flowerbeds along the sight-seeing trails make for a relaxing and thought provoking personal tour.

The site elevation provides a reflective viewpoint. Developed during the province-wide Expo 86 initiative, the museum grounds mark a bit of history all their own.

The OK Café is both historic spot and operational restaurant.

The sensational design of the Info Centre harkens back to ancient civilizations, wrapped in cutting edge architectural design, with knowledgeable people inside eager to make your acquaintance and tell you more.

Altogether, it's a visitor village that reflects the present day town. We're certain you'll enjoy both.

Want to Learn More?

Scan the QR code to learn more about the Cultural Centre / Museum and Heritage Grounds...



Ok Café

The OK Café is one historic site that still calls you in for a made-from-scratch meal just like when it was first built in 1918.

Although it remains the same building on the outside, the OK Café menu has undergone countless reinterpretations each tourist season, hosted by individuals inspired to keep the tradition of good food and good service going.

Guests to the OK Café in the summer of 2023 stepped through the door into an exciting mix of Filipino fusion by Jayson Alilin (aka Gifted Chef).

“I checked on the rich history of the OK Café,” Jayson said. “People told me the OK Café was famous for the pies, and people told me about Sharon Schmidt who was responsible for the pies. Unfortunately Sharon

had passed away, but I found out her daughter, Christy Goultry, was using the same recipe. So I asked her if she would like to do them for the OK Café. Filipino cuisine and Sharon’s pies together.” And it worked.

Jayson said the only thing better to his eye than the food coming out of the kitchen is the location itself.

“I call this place enchanting. When you sit down, take it all in, your stresses go away. You look around this place and feel ease. It is a beautiful spot, rich in history.” It is rich in convenience, also, with spacious parking even for multiple RVs, at the Visitor Centre and museum.

“I feel so blessed. All my dreams have been found. This is my dream land, my dream country, not only for me but for my kids. I want to continue serving the people in Vanderhoof. I love Vanderhoof. There are a lot of nice people around here.”

– 2023 OK Café proprietor Jayson Alilin, who moved from the Philippines to Vanderhoof





Come Visit

General Services **FOR TOURISTS**

Vanderhoof has the nourishment needed for travellers and their vehicles.

HARDWARE can be accessed at Ace Building Centre, CO-OP Home Centre, and Home Hardware.

AUTO REPAIRS are supplied by NAPA Auto Parts, tire, glass and muffler shops, autobody shops, diesel specialists, and a long list of dealerships and mechanics' shops.

GROCERIES are available at full-service Loblaws-Independent and CO-OP locations.

FAST FOOD, RESTAURANTS AND CAFÉS are plentiful (including the OK Café right at the Vanderhoof Tourism & Cultural Centre).

SPORTING EQUIPMENT AND ADVENTURE SUPPLIES available primarily at Nechako Outdoor Sports, Omineca Source For Sports, but also some specialty locations like Senders Bike Shop, Earthen Ware, and 3 Brothers Archery.

LOCAL ARTISANS AND FRESH AGRI PRODUCTS (food and handmade items) are available among the downtown boutiques, at the CO-OP shopping centre, and at the Farmers' Market in Ferland Park (Thursdays 10-2 during warm seasons — live entertainers and bouncy castles free of charge), and the Integris Community Centre Arts Wing.



Local producers create world class honey, jams, pickles, baking, all manner of preservers, berries, meats, veggies, leafy greens, coffee beans, soaps, candles, pottery, textiles, woodwork, and much more.

CRAFT BEER is available at Homestead Brewery. Enjoy it now, or get it for the road.

Want to Learn More?

Scan the QR code to learn more about general services for tourists...



Come PLAY

A force of nature **SOME VISITS LAST A LIFETIME**

Graham Stanley has lived in other locations, but the Community Futures general manager knows Vanderhoof is home because he's physically comfortable here. He thinks others will discover this, too.

"When it's over 40 degrees every day, you're going to find a lot of people driving north. The weather is lovely. I wouldn't want to be anywhere else. It feels so nice, here," he said.

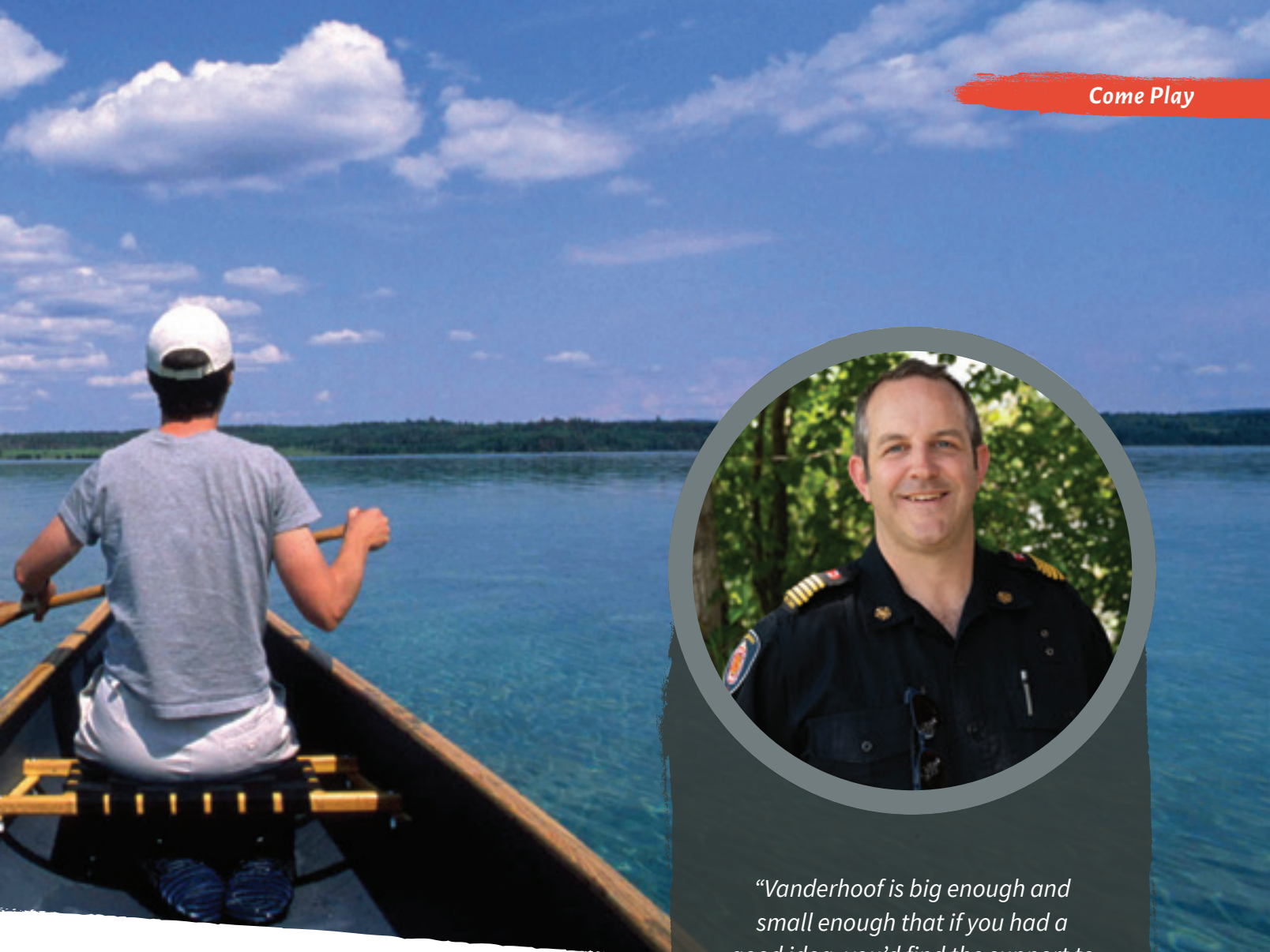
The Chamber of Commerce president, Lesley Domier, likewise chose Vanderhoof many years ago. She's never lived anywhere longer, and has no plans to leave.

"It's got that hometown feel almost like in the Hallmark movies," she said. "What I've noticed is, if you were raised here, you loved it; if you had to move away, you want to come back to raise a family. Nobody dislikes Vanderhoof."

Small towns are tight-knit. The sense of community is close; neighbours are well known to one another. What gets sacrificed in urban amenities is offset by familial and easy-going lifestyles, they both said.

It's also a place where you can do so much to stay active, fit, involved, and have fun.

"I get involved in all kinds of fun things, and I'm pretty



“Vanderhoof is big enough and small enough that if you had a good idea, you’d find the support to make it happen. You can float a lot of ideas and get a lot of community engagement, but it’s still small enough you’ll know a lot of the people to get involved.”

– Craig Smith, Fire Chief

passionate about Vanderhoof,” said fire chief Craig Smith. He is also heavily involved in operating the Rip’n the North Bike Club, the Vikes Wrestling Club, he’s helped out the Royal Canadian Legion, he sits on the Nechako-Kitamaat Development Fund Society board (which funds many projects and initiatives), and since he was 16 he has responded during emergencies with the Vanderhoof Volunteer Fire-Rescue Department, rising to rank of chief. He also has a busy family and finds time to play the trumpet.

These are exceptional people, but not exceptional examples. They are typical of Vanderhoof residents who usually have a lot of professional and recreational interests, and a community that works together to help it all happen.

Want to Learn More?

Scan the QR code to learn more about recreational activities in the Vanderhoof area...



Riverside Park

3100 Burrard Avenue: a premium RV park with wifi, showers, 38 sites with full hookups, near downtown, beside lovely Nechako River, with playgrounds, open spaces, viewing areas and much more.



Summer Events at Riverside Park

Riverside Park is where the community comes together. The big Vanderhoof events emanate from there, starting in spring with the Easter Egg Hunt and the town cleanup. In May, the sturgeon release is popular, Pride Day is held there, the Canada Day events on July 1, the music festival in July, the Terry Fox Run in September and the Pumpkin Walk in October. It's a central place, a favourite place, with more being added all the time.

Want to Learn More?

Scan the QR code to learn more about Riverside Park...



Bird Watching

Created in 1944, Vanderhoof's bird sanctuary is a federally sanctioned protected area on the Nechako River islands adjacent Riverside Park, the prime viewing area. It dovetails with the Nechako White Sturgeon Conservation Centre and the W.L. McLeod Wetland protection features in the same area. The most prominent bird to see is the Canada goose, the town's official symbol. Its 180 acres support trumpeter swans, northern pintails, Caspian terns, and white pelicans, among others.



Other Wildlife

All of Canada's postcard animals run wild here: bear (respect them with distance, please), moose, deer, and elk. Some local creatures are hard to find, like cougars and wolves. Others are more commonly seen like coyotes and grouse, or downright abundant like squirrels and ravens. There are no venomous animals of any kind, here. (We take no official position on the mosquito.)

Want to Learn More?

Scan the QR code to learn about wildlife in the region and download our Nature Guide...



Vanderhoof, Birdwatching Bliss

Vanderhoof trumpets a favourite feathered friend, the swan. Some white swans make this a winter home, some a migration pit-stop on the "Pacific flyway." Trumpeters — North America's heaviest bird — are the most common variety, sometimes more than 100 at a time hanging out at the Nechako River, especially spring and autumn.



Flora and Fauna

Gentle mountains, sprawling forests, and the wide Nechako Valley influence Vanderhoof's climate, which supported a bountiful way of life for the Saik'uz people. The wetlands and open spaces made for great flora/fauna variation. Pine and spruce blended with birch and poplar trees. Along the shorelines were bushy willows and towering cottonwoods. Grasslands and wildflowers flourished in the long days of summer.

This made for a diverse ecosystem. The top food chain creatures — humans and bears — were omnivores because of the abundance of fish, large game, small animals and plant life. The hard winters ensured few fruit trees, but a splendid array of berries. Those conditions prevail today.



Nechako White Sturgeon **CONSERVATION CENTRE**

Today, kids get to name them by the hundred as young little sturgeon get released into the Nechako River each May. But it wasn't that long ago the Nechako White Sturgeon (a genetically distinct species of this fascinating fish) was on the brink of extinction. They were declared an endangered species in 2006, six years after the creation of a grassroots protection group. This led to the fascinating and popular Nechako White Sturgeon Conservation Centre that opened in 2014.

Under the leadership of Wayne Salewski, this group and this centre are behind incredible advancements in the knowledge of sturgeon, fish spawning, the river



environment, predators, and other ancillary factors that pertain to the survival of not only these giants of the deep (they can live for 100 years), but salmon populations too.

Sturgeon recovery has become a catalyst for Vanderhoof's tourism industry and science sector as visitors, First Nation communities, and schools have taken a keen interest in the project.

Part of the decline in this key member of the ecosystem might be tied to the fact the Nechako is now only one-third the river it used to be, with flows cut and controlled for industrial purposes at the headwaters.

Early climate change symptoms may have been felt by these bottom-dwellers. Modernization effects are many.

The estimate is 600 adult sturgeon living today. In 2021, researchers caught (and released) the largest Nechako White Sturgeon ever recorded. She weighed 152 kilograms (336 pounds) and measuring 2.9 metres (9.6 feet).

Want to Learn More?

Scan the QR code to learn more about the Nechako White Sturgeon Recovery Initiative...





Hiking

There are fabulous hikes right inside town limits. Riverside Park is a great spot and the museum-cultural centre is the starting point for a network of easy/moderate routes. It's an easy drive to one of our favorite local hikes, Greer Creek Falls or the Sinkut Mountain lookout. But for the true hiking enthusiast, there is much more out there than can be experienced in a weekend — so grab a Bulkley Valley hiking guide at the Vanderhoof Tourism & Cultural Centre and plan your adventures!

Fishing

Anyone of Saik'uz nationality will tell you, fishing around here is so great it can sustain a civilization for centuries. Get your fishing license at Vanderhoof Four Rivers CO-OP or Omineca Sports and join in. Fly fishers go for salmon and trout on the rivers and streams, anglers are out on the plethora of lakes... Vanderhoof gets reel.

Camping / Resorts and

WILDERNESS RECREATION

RVs and tents can set up at Riverside Park right in town, at gorgeous Nulki Lake at the Saik'uz campground, or drive a short distance in any direction and almost stumble upon great resort options. Stick close to the highway or go deep into the backcountry; relax at a commercial resort, or find your way into raw wilderness! Options are rich here, whether you are looking for connection or seclusion. Come talk to the Visitor Centre staff about what you like and how much time you have.

Want to Learn More?

Scan the QR code to learn more about outdoor recreation opportunities in the Vanderhoof area...





Cycling / Biking and **MOUNTAIN BIKING**

Mountain Biking BC says “Northern B.C. has quickly become one of the most sought after mountain bike trips,” and here you are, right in the centre of it. Just up the street from the Visitor Centre — up the operative word — is the well equipped Rip’N The North downhill bike park with drops, jumps, skill zones and flow.

Vanderhoof is also central to great mountain biking facilities only an hour in any direction, so it’s a perfect hub for day-tripping to hot-spots like Boer Mountain, Mount Pope, Sinkut Mountain, or the Pidherny Rec Site.

Right on Highway 16 between Rockies and Pacific, en route between Far North and Lower 49, Vanderhoof is also a road bike nirvana of easygoing plateau terrain that is visually interesting every mile, out on the open road. It’s a favourite respite place between Prince George and Burns Lake for the long-haul rider.

If repairs are needed, Sender’s Bike Shop is a Vanderhoof hookup, and the Rip’N The North Bike Club has plenty of great contacts to set you up with anything you might need.



Motorcycling (ROUTE 16)

Riding Highway 16 is an epic but mellow meander, giving a motorcycle rider the sights and smells to rev your memories for a lifetime. Vanderhoof is right in the middle, with rest and relaxation at the ready. Do a tech check, fuel up, enjoy a picnic or a hot meal, pop up the tent or get a room, then check the map for picturesque sideroads to kick things up a gear.



Biennial Air Show draws **200,000 TO COMMUNITY**

Some of the greatest pilots in the world have carved their initials in Vanderhoof skies.

Vanderhoof is known for cowboys out on the range and some cowboys of the air as well. The Vanderhoof International Airshow draws thousands of people to one of the smallest airports to ever hold such spectacular events. The rural setting lets fans get incredibly close to the action.

Vanderhoof is not an aviation hawk by accident. Strategically located for national defense during World War II, its air facility is equally strategic today, providing support for the surrounding mining and forestry communities, and wildfire crews. Its practical location here in the long, wide plain of the Nechako Valley guarantees a demand for aviation services here in years to come.

The well populated Vanderhoof Flying Club got the airshows going in the 1960s and built them up to worldwide reputation by the 1990s, but economic factors grounded their plans for a while. The refitted events took off again in 2011 and every two years they bring in interesting military, stunt, utilitarian and historic aircraft for ground displays and aerobatic bonanzas.



To learn more about the
Air Show, see page 36.

Spring, Summer, Winter, Fall

When you're a four-season community, you create a calendar that cycles in short bursts of action for each one.

SUMMER is awash in Pride Day, Canada Day and its companion event the Mary John Walk, Indigenous Peoples Day, and concerts in the park.

FALL is coloured by Rivers Day, the Nechako Valley Exhibition Fall Fair, and the Movie In The Park shows every Friday when the days get shorter.

SPRING bursts with the Hooterville Hoot Classic Car Show, the great sturgeon release, the Wild Goose Chase running races, the spring Pitch In-Clean Up, and the Easter Egg Hunt.

WINTER the Northern Capitals and Cariboo Cougars come from Prince George to play their Cariboo Hockey Winter Classic Games. Minor hockey games, speed skating meets and figure skating exhibitions take the stage on the ice all winter long while the Nechako Nordics Ski Club gets its share of excitement with snowmobile, biathlon and cross country skiing events.

Every community association, every church, every benevolent society, every sports and recreation group has their own version of this seasonal cycle. Joining up with any of them draws you into the Vanderhoof rhythm.



Want to Learn More?
Scan the QR code to learn
about year-round event
opportunities...



Vanderhoof Aquatic Centre

The Vanderhoof Aquatic Centre is a jewel of a pool. It's splashy design came from Carscadden Stokes McDonald Architects and opened in 2019. It is operated by the YMCA of Northern BC, ensuring a year-round family-friendly atmosphere and a deep schedule of lessons and programs for the community's recreation, fitness and life-skills. It has 50 metres (164 feet) of length, 20 metres (66 feet) of width, and 2.4 metres (8 feet) of deepest depth.



Arena with year-round Activities

It might look like a hockey rink, and it is loaded from September to March with Canada's national sport, but there is so much more, all year round.

In winter, the full-service arena is home to the Nechako Valley Figure Skating Club, Vanderhoof Clippers Speed Skating Club, Vanderhoof Bears Minor Hockey Club and many other adult hockey recreation leagues. It is home ice for the Nechako North Stars of the Sr-AA Central Interior Hockey League.

In the off season, it hosts conventions and trade shows, job fairs, the circus, large events of all kinds, and the large floor once again feels the feet of athletes, just in running shoes instead of skates. Sports like lacrosse and ball hockey have done their fun under that roof.

Located in the heart of downtown, the steel arches of the arena have become as familiar to many residents as the Vanderhoof skies and the Nechako Valley. Nearby is the curling centre, another busy wintertime facility that gets put to great off-season use.



Dogs Can Have Fun Too!

If you're as family-friendly as Vanderhoof, with a history as old as time for animal interactions, you are certainly a dog-loving community. Vanderhoof opened a dedicated dog park in 2020 and it is conveniently located on Pine Street behind the museum and Visitor Centre for all those travellers who need to stretch four legs.



Accommodations – Come Stay with Us

When you're the centre of the province, you've got an array of places to stay. People are coming to visit from every which way. Vanderhoof has one member of the BC Hotel Association (Cariboo-Chilcotin-Coast chapter), and that is the North Country Inn downtown.

A long search of the popular accommodation websites yield a range of ways to spend the night, from wilderness resorts to quaint bed-and-breakfast locations.

The in-town listings include: Coach Light Motel, Hillview Guest Rooms, Homestead Inn & Suites, North Country Inn & Suites, Reid Hotel, Siesta Inn, Vanderhoof Inn, plus several Air BnB locations.

For those seeking more pastoral surroundings: Tatuk Lake Wilderness Resort, Finger Lake Resort, Willow Roots Guest Ranch, the Saik'uz Park & Campground on Nulki Lake and Nechako Lodge at Knewstubb Lake.

(These listings may not include all available options. They do not connote recommendation, or current status of upkeep.)

Want to Learn More?

Scan the QR code to learn about where to stay in and around Vanderhoof...



Why Not STAY?



Time and pace **OUR AMENITIES GO DEEPER**

If you compare house values — even to price-friendly Prince George only an hour away — Vanderhoof prices are amazing. You don't even give up urban amenities, with most basics covered within town or not far away. It makes Vanderhoof a great place to start a career, bring a family to level up a career, or come be near the grandkids when you retire.

Former mayor and real estate agent Gerry Thiessen has seen it frequently. “It’s easy to live here. You’re within minutes of your schools, your workplace, shopping — Vanderhoof is very convenient.”

The other asset Vanderhoof provides is time. Thiessen frequently talks with newcomers about how quickly they got their to-do list done, because everything needed was within a few minutes. The kids’ schools are nearby, getting to work has little distance and even less traffic, visiting friends, recreation, even running into the city is quick. It all affords you the most precious commodity of all: time. Time to work on other life projects, time to really make the important decisions, time to spend with family and friends, and even time to have a coffee with a retired mayor.



Why Not Stay?

Thiessen pointed out that the town's walking trails are plentiful and nearby. Within a few blocks you'll find "pretty fortunate access to a whole lot of recreation" like curling, tennis, track, hockey/ice sports, swimming pool, skateboard park, baseball fields, soccer fields, all within a few blocks. Also close, even by northern small town standards, is access to splendid wilderness features.

There's a community theatre company, so you can watch a play, or even be in the play; there's an orchestra so you can watch fine music, or even be in

the ensemble if you play an instrument; you can tour the visual arts facility, or have your work displayed.

It is hard to put a price tag on quality of life.

Want to Learn More?

Scan the QR code to learn more about all things Vanderhoof...



Farmers' Market

A day at the Vanderhoof Farmers' Market is a shopping trip and a social call. Vendors, entertainers and shoppers have been enjoying the moment at Ferland Park ever since 2012. Leafy greens, meats, root and vine vegetables, baking, berries, preserves, honey, juice, artisan crafts, fine art, live music... all of it handmade and/or homegrown. Every few steps at the Vanderhoof Farmers' Market makes your mouth water or your creative sparks ignite. It's an easygoing community festival, each Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. from spring-fall.



Dining Options

Food is where the mind and body connect. Nostalgia, possibility, memory and aspiration can all be ignited in a single bite. In miniature cosmopolitan fashion, Vanderhoof has embraced cuisine. Sure, the fast-food outlets are there, and that's great for life on the hustle, but when the mood calls for savouring life or branching into new territory, this town is a smorgasbord. Pick your way through these locations that are as much treats as the food they serve. Almost all of them are within six blocks of the town centre. In no particular order, you may enjoy the Cozy Corner Pizzeria (come for trivia night), Homestead Brewhouse, Tasty Tandoori Grill, The Cabin on Cluculz Lake, Scott's Grille & Pizzeria, the log surroundings of North Country Inn, Fancy Sushi, New Pagoda, the diner vibe of Roshell's Restaurant, the pub fare of The Reid Bar & Grill and My Place Pub, and the history-meets-modern kick of the OK Café at the Visitor Centre.

(These listings may not include all available options. They do not connote recommendation, or current status of upkeep.)



Want to Learn More?

Scan the QR code to learn where to dine in the Vanderhoof area...



Unique Indoor RECREATION

Crisp winters, balmy summers — that's the recipe for events and activities indoors. Major civic facilities like the swimming pool, library, curling centre and ice rink are underpinned by boutique facilities like community halls, movie theatre and our museum and Cultural Centre. There are options for going to the gym, dancing to the beat, stretching your body and mind with yoga, and if you move out of doors the fitness and meditation values of nature are boundless. All of your indoor/outdoor recreational and social needs have a home.

Comedy Club

Every community has its comedians, and Vanderhoof is no exception.

Scott's Grille & Pizzeria has been known to host live comedians for fundraisers, and churches have opened their doors to stand-up comics. ECL Productions has hosted shows at the Vanderhoof Arena Mezzanine, as well. Homestead Brewhouse is the regular home of hilarity.

Vanderhoof Library

The Vanderhoof Public Library is more than a place to read. It's the house of books, certainly, but also a social engine in the downtown. It has summer programs, mini movie theatre, live entertainment showcase, and general information station. It is simply one of Vanderhoof's most treasured facilities.

Want to Learn More?

Scan the QR code to learn more about the Vanderhoof Public Library...





Theatre Groups

Live theatre is one of the surest signs of cultural life. The Vanderhoof Community Theatre Society and The Vanderhoof Children's Theatre brings plays, musicals and dramatic readings to life. They also provide aspiration and inspiration to the town's ambitious school drama enthusiasts. Shows take place in venues large and small, each volunteer production a labour of love for the community.

Grand Reo Theatre

The Grand Reo Theatre in Vanderhoof is a gem of a building, showing all the latest movies, special features from past and present, and even sometimes using their quaint space for live performances. This is a delightful old-school movie house, family owned and operated, that reminds us how being small has big special effects.

"The Grand Reo Theatre has been a movie theatre since 1936. The theater's historical significance is its vintage marquee and charming facade. Whether showcasing the latest blockbusters, hosting special screenings, or offering a platform for local talent, the theater continues to be a cherished gathering place for residents of all ages. As the years pass, the small hometown theatre in Vanderhoof stands as a testament to the power of community support and the enduring magic of cinema. In this digital age, there is something truly special about stepping into a theatre and being transported to another world."



– Bryan Wallace (For 25 years the Wallaces have been the latest family operators of the Grand Reo Theatre)

Where to Sip Some Suds

Nightlife has a neon buzz in Vanderhoof, from the neighbourhood public house atmosphere of My Place Pub or The Reid Bar & Grill where you can watch the band or catch the game. Vanderhoof also has it's own suds factory, the Homestead Brewhouse. All are right downtown.

Want to Learn More?

Scan the QR code to learn more about indoor recreation opportunities in the Vanderhoof area...



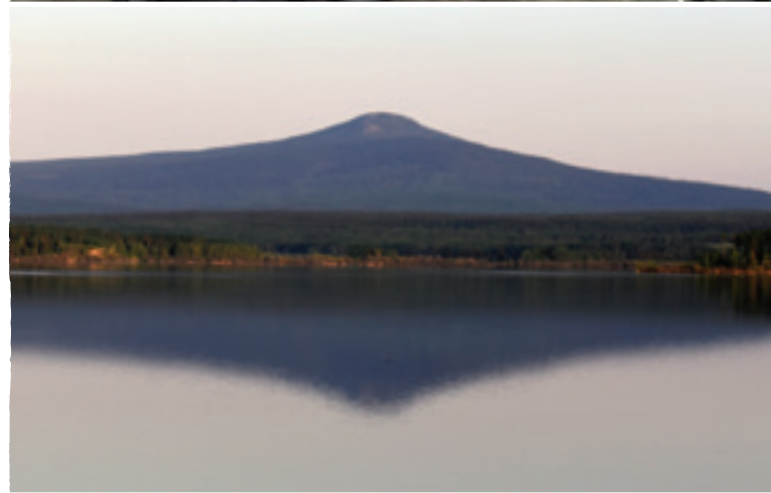
Art Society & Culture Opportunities

Creative forces as strong and timeless as the Nechako River are caught in the current of Vanderhoof's leading arts and culture society. This all-local, all-volunteer group works year-round to provide a home for artists to be their best, and provide destinations for the public looking for products and services that come from within the hearts and hands of local creators.

The Nechako Community Arts Council maintains a directory of all variety of artists. They organize regular art shows. They host live musicians and theatre performances. They facilitate other organizers, like those who started the Honey Beams Children's Choir. They operate the Arts Wing at the Community Centre where you can take a painting lesson, pottery classes, and see the works of established local artisans.

As their theme song goes: "We're keeping our arts, keeping our hearts alive"

The group is behind the annual Anonymous Art Show, photo contests, scholarships, mural and street art projects, and always puts local artists of all genres in their respective spotlights.



The NCAC is a member of the BC Arts Council, and maintains partnerships with peer groups in neighbouring communities to ensure a strong performing arts network is thriving. Their vision statement says it clearly:

"There are plenty of artistic opportunities in the Nechako region, gorgeous weather and amazing nature all around, wherever you look, a painter's dream, a writer's inspiration, and a song waiting to be sung."

Want to Learn More?

Scan the QR code to learn more about Arts and Culture in Vanderhoof...



Outdoor **RECREATION**

The great outdoors is what we do in Vanderhoof. From being out on the land on horseback or bikes, to motoring across the terrain on ATVs and boats and snowmobiles, to flying high in the local air, recreation around here is all about being outside. Skiing, skating, wheeling, walking, paddling, saddling... this town likes to head for the hills (and bring friends along!).

Canoeing and Kayaking

Vanderhoof's first freeway was the Nechako River. The lakes were the first community centres. Water is the connective force for local First Nations cultures, and it's what brought the fur traders to work with the Saik'uz First Nation people here.

Dakelh (the family of First Nations in closest proximity to Vanderhoof, including the Saik'uz First Nation) travellers could whip a spruce bark canoe together in a flash, or put the effort into heavy cottonwood dugout canoes that would last for decades.

Today, canoes and kayaks are still a beloved method of movement across our waters, and paddleboards are being added. The New Caledonia Paddle Club gathers people for training, excursions, beginner events, and a lot of fellowship on the water. There are sometimes voyageur canoe events involving enormous boats harkening back to fur trader history.

With all the rivers and lakes circling the area, whether your passion is running rapids or placidly meandering wilderness shorelines, Vanderhoof has the water for you.

Boating

Vanderhoof's boating culture has some of the most powerful pleasurecraft you'll find skipping over the waves. The Nechako is a jetboater's dream, with incredible vistas and side-streams. The lakes beg for everything from car-toppers to pontoon party boats, for fishing or fellowship. The area has sales and service aplenty, and there is a boat launch right downtown to get you started.

ATVing

Where cars and trucks can't go, there's an ATV to get you there. The Nechako Valley is a canvas on which people love to paint their adventures and pleasures, and that means quads, side-by-sides, dune buggies, youth machines, motorcycles, spyders, and more.

The Vanderhoof Offroaders is the club for those backcountry experiences. They can hook you up with rentals, friends who can show you around the local landscape, schedule your events calendar, find you a new or used machine for your preferred adventuring style, and even dress you up in their snazzy hoodies.



Golf

The Vanderhoof Golfers Association is here “fore!” you.

With a fine course only minutes from downtown, and many more within an hour’s “drive,” there is a lot of enthusiasm for the greens and fairways. Omineca Golf Course (4807 Northside Road) is an 18-hole beauty and it’s always swinging with action. It features trees, wetlands, and takes advantage of its open terrain.

First opened in 1979, it’s a Par-72 with +6,300 total yards of fun. There is a driving range and club rentals available.

The warm seasons are dotted with tournaments and special events, and each week there are regular features like Ladies’ Night, Men’s Night, Couples’ Night, and often it involves great food from their on-site restaurant.



Why Not Stay?



Other Activities

Not everyone joins the more common sports and recreational activities, but many who do also like to play at other things. Vanderhoof keeps your interest, no matter how niche it might be. There’s a sprawling disc golf field downtown, right behind the elementary school. Tennis and pickleball make a lovely racket. Riverside Park rents out rollerblades (in-line skates), and you can roll around in the arena, as well. The skatepark has great flow for the skateboarders and trick-scooters. The Nechako Valley Rodeo Association will bring out your inner buckaroo. There are all sorts of baseball opportunities. There is an active football program — go Vikings! — and the other kind of football, too, with the Minor Soccer Association. These are just some of the highlights, and it’s amazing how fast people join when you start something new yourself.

Want to Learn More?

Scan the QR code to learn more about outdoor recreation opportunities in the Vanderhoof area...





Alpine (downhill) Skiing

Alpine skiing is all around. Vanderhoof is a fabulous launch-point for hitting the slopes.

For downhillers, your nearest rush is only an hour away at Murray Ridge Ski Area in Fort St. James (snowboards welcome, 20km of runs, T-bar, plus nordic trails). It's only a smidge more driving time to the small but significant Hart Highlands Winter Club in Prince George.

Two hours gets you to Purden Ski Resort. Three hours takes you to any of Ski Smithers (west), Powder King (north) and Troll Ski Resort (south) — three of the best in B.C.



Nordic (cross-country) Skiing

When your winters are on the open plateau in a wide valley, that's where you'll find nordic skiing in full stride.

A litany of biathlon and cross-country Olympians have come from the region. In the most recent Games, Burns Lake's Emily Dickson and Prince George's Sarah Beaudry competed together. Vanderhoof's biathlete Tuppy Collard Hoehn was there in Nagano '98 as an athlete before switching to coaching and organizing.

A recreational favourite spot to ski is the multi-use (horseback, snowshoe, etc.) Waterlily Lake Trails, an extensive web of trails north of town on Smedley Road. Competitive skiers train at the Nechako Nordics Ski Club at 3501 Quail Road, which has 2kms of lit trail for night skiing as well as the extensive daylight network. Rent a pair of skis there, or try the biathlon shooting range — Olympians past and future might be there with you. It's only a few minutes west of downtown.

Downtown itself also has the well-lit Riverside walking path which, in winter, can be skied day and night, and you can switch to snowshoeing at any point, if you like the slower pace.

Target Sports

Vanderhoof is the bull's eye of the province, so of course marksmanship is on our minds. Archery and firearms for sport and for sustenance are busy in the area.

Three Brothers Archery is a private shooting facility and outfitter. Nechako Outdoors can also get you on target. Nechako Valley Archers and Nechako Valley Sporting Association are clubs for the beginner through to expert. The NVA group practices regularly and holds competitions. The NVSA has a facility on Quail Road with shooting range and clubhouse. They are affiliated with the Vanderhoof Fish & Game Club.



Other Activities & UPCOMING EVENTS

Want to Learn More?

Scan the QR code to learn about events and activities happening in and around Vanderhoof...





Air Show is a one of a kind **AIRSTRAVAGANZA**

It is admittedly unusual for a town so small to have an event as big as the Vanderhoof International Airshow, but it's also unusual to have prairie-sized skies in the midst of mountains.

Bush pilots, World War II air defenses (some of those structures are still on site), forest fire crews, flight school, flying club members, and critical medical air ambulance services all helped build and sustain this aero interest. That's the wind beneath these wings.

This airstravaganza was started in 1978 by the Blue Mountain Flyers pilots club. Down on the ground there



are food trucks, a dinner and dance, prizes, static displays, live music, games, and engaging features on the tarmac, while up in the sky there are jet fighters and other military machines, bi-planes, skydivers, wing walkers, helicopters, gliders, historical aircraft, and futuristic slices of aero technology.

It happens biennially on the even years, thanks to a volunteer effort that would put a Hercules to shame.

“Aviation enthusiasts will recognize Art Scholl, Bob Hoover, and the still unchallenged world record for flying inverted (upside down) established at the show

by Joanne Osterud in June, 1991 of 658 nautical miles and 4 hrs 38 mins,” said an airshow statement.

No two airshows are ever the same, so everyone will get the thrill and awe of air power, if you’re a first-timer or a repeat spectator.

Want to Learn More?

Scan the QR code to learn more about the Vanderhoof International Airshow...



Diverse DISTRICT

Ahead in the clouds

THINGS ARE ALWAYS LOOKING UP HERE

No other town has the look and feel of Vanderhoof, even among its neighbors along the Yellowhead Highway 16 corridor. Our wide skies, position on the Nechako River, and historic roots in Saik'uz First Nation history ensure its uniqueness, now and always. Proximity to urban Prince George and a junction point to nearby Fort St. James ensure Vanderhoof's connection to major industrial projects in the region.

There are parts of the town's past that have inspired incredible art, insightful politics, epic athletics, groundbreaking industrial innovation and ecological brilliance. It has also been home to shameful behaviour, over the course of its history, the greatest example being the heartbreaking treatment of Indigenous peoples of all kinds, the Saik'uz Nation most specifically. Efforts are deep and powerful to reconcile and rebuild those relationships, and head for the 22nd century arm in arm, bringing the best of it all with us — small but mighty.

Right now the population of Vanderhoof hovers around

4,500 people, with an average population age of 38, much younger than the provincial average of 42.3.

The average household size is 2.3 people, exactly even with the B.C. average.

Across the town's population, 135 people speak both English and French, while 200 people speak a language other than those.

Visible minorities have a small but growing handhold in the local population, the most common of those home regions being South Asia/India, China, Philippines, and of course the wide array of distinct Canadian Indigenous cultures who have settled here alongside the enduring Saik'uz originators of our community.

Those from non-visible minorities are plentiful as well, mostly from Ireland and the United Kingdom, but also recently arrived from France, Holland, Germany, Scandinavian countries, Ukraine, Russia, and some Italian-Spanish-Portuguese background as well. Africans comprise some of both visible and non-visible backgrounds.



This picture of many colours is painted by Statistics Canada. The full rainbow is welcome to come work, play and thrive in Vanderhoof.

Men's Shed — a support group for the whole community.

For some communities, a Men's Shed is a subtle group for men to get together and have some companionship, and share their common interests in a supportive environment. It's that way in Vanderhoof as well, except for the subtle part. The Men's Shed is an economic force in town, upcycling damaged furniture into things they sell. They work together to construct docks, picnic tables, or other items for sale (or just for fun!) They'll repair broken items for people with financial challenges, volunteer for people who need the help... and channel all the benefit from the organization back into the community.

The members — men of all ages and backgrounds — get fellowship and community purpose. Vanderhoof gets the best of these affable guys.

"We do all kinds of things to help in the community. Northern Health likes us because we'll move hospital beds and build wheelchair ramps, put up grab-bars to get in and out of chairs and beds. We help a lot of people. We give scholarships out to the high school, and community organizations — we dish out lots of bucks. We're doing okay. And the main thing for us is that fellowship among the guys."

*– Men's Shed spokesperson
Ron Embree*

Want to Learn More?
Scan the QR code to learn
more about the District of
Vanderhoof...



Agriculture

Crops and cattle, common and exotic, simple and innovative, the Vanderhoof agri-food industry is a mainstay of the local economy. In an era of ever increasing importance placed on food security, restoring healthy nutritional habits, and living a life of contribution, nothing grows those concepts like agriculture.

Vanderhoof has earned its place in B.C.'s food production sector. From residents' herb gardens and farmers' market tables to large-scale operations and ranches, Vanderhoof has explored further, to scientific research and international export operations. The area's diverse and abundant natural food supplies is what rooted Indigenous people here in the first place, and it continues to grow.

Vanderhoof Community Garden

The Vanderhoof Community Garden is a public green space located on View Street. The garden includes greenhouses, raised beds, a small orchard, a covered shelter, washrooms, and a kid's play area. The Harvest Festival is hosted here each fall.

Want to Learn More?
Scan the QR code to book
a garden plot, through
the Nechako Valley Food
Network's website...



"As ever, with the spring of the year coming and with new life coming, there is optimism for a new season," said longtime Vanderhoof farmer and rancher Alex Kulchar. "Agricultural activity surrounds us in the Nechako Valley. We see it if we drive in any direction (but) just because you drive past it every day doesn't mean you kind of know what's going on. You've got to talk to the people... If given the opportunity, talk to a local farmer and listen to what they are willing to share."

– Omineca Express newspaper, March 2022

ST. JOHN HOSPITAL

MAIN ENTRANCE

Employment OPPORTUNITIES

Every small town has unique economic opportunities, simply because there are aspects missing that people desire. What does a town need? Where might your skills and passions fit in?

Statistics show income levels in Vanderhoof are as strong as any town in the province, and little unemployment. With municipal calculations of population growth in the 3-7 per cent range in the coming 20 years, this town is humming, even in globally challenging times. When an examination by the Chamber of Commerce looked at which Vanderhoof businesses closed down as a result of the pandemic, “No one could name a single one,” said Chamber president Lesley Domier. “That shows the support that the community has for local businesses and vice versa. It’s great.”

There is an official Work BC job board for Vanderhoof, but according to staff at the Community Futures Development Corporation, there is substantially more available employment via word of mouth, and many of the postings are actually for multiple positions. The public service sectors (healthcare, education,

“Vanderhoof is a hub for the Omineca region’s range of health services. St. John Hospital, Stuart Nechako Manor, the primary care and community services in Vanderhoof serve the District of Vanderhoof and Saik’uz First Nation, and is the referral centre for several surrounding communities. Joining Northern Health’s team in Vanderhoof guarantees a supportive work environment with room to grow, plus a chance to be a real impact in the community!”

– Eryn Collins, Northern Health

administration) are constantly in need of new staffing as the national retirement wave rolls forward.

Whatever brings you to Vanderhoof, your background likely has a good fit in the local economy. If a job isn’t instantly available, entrepreneurship is either based from one’s home or in the commercial hub of town.

“I think people see opportunity here. I think that is what’s going to bring people here,” said Domier.

Want to Learn More?

Scan the QR code to learn more about current employment opportunities...





Mining and Heavy Equipment

Vanderhoof is a service centre for assorted heavy industry. Farming and forestry require big-ticket, high-tech, mechanically sound rigs. When you're doing resource-based work, you're building and maintaining roads and bridges. Sawmills, pellet plants, energy facilities, cattle and crops — it all needs trucks, trailers, bulldozers, loaders, forklifts and more.

Vanderhoof is situated between two major mines, Mount Milligan and Artemis-Blackwater, with other valuable mineral extraction industries nearby. If you want to work with wood, steel, and dirt, this is your town.



Transportation

Then Nechako River was once the highway for the Dakelh people and their many visitors. Today, Highway 16 connects this place to the rest of the province. Modern Vanderhoof also has a premier small-town airport, VIA Rail passes through three times per week in each direction (Prince Rupert to Prince George), and BC Transit's Route 161 from Prince George to Burns Lake twice a week in each direction.

Inside Vanderhoof, a community bus does three loops (12 stops per loop) and a trip to Saik'uz community each day for no charge.

Want to Learn More?

Scan the QR code to learn more about transportation within Vanderhoof and the surrounding area...



Retail

A small town near a big city has retail advantages, like easy access to merchant items and smaller shipping costs for the Vanderhoof consumer. Vanderhoof has a thriving retail district, and because of the busy industrial and recreational sectors, the basics are covered right here locally. There is room for more commercial offerings, though, so entrepreneurs are welcome!

Trades

With mining, forestry, agriculture and construction leading the Vanderhoof economy, the industrial trades offer a lot of employment. Mechanics, welders, millwrights, electricians, big-ticket drivers and equipment operators — these are the foundation professions. The spin-off jobs such as fuel, tires, and plumbing hammer everything into place. A lot of the jobs here involve steel-toed boots and hardhats, and that's working — literally.



Forestry / **WORKING COMMUNITY FOREST**

Agriculture might be the blood and sweat of this community, but forestry is the muscle and bones. As examples, Canfor's Plateau Mill is one of the largest lumber factories in the entire world. L&M Lumber and its adjoining pellet plant and interconnected energy facility make it a cutting edge wood processing site. There's a busy Ministry of Forests regional office. The 23,000-hectare community forest provides cyclical income for local government, employment, and an active recreation and education area only 15 kms from town. It is home to international BID Group of companies which is heavily involved in the tech side of forestry. In the general region, more than 3,600 jobs are directly tied to the timber industry.



Want to Learn More?
Scan the QR code to learn
more about the Vanderhoof
Community Forest...





Vanderhoof Airport

The Vanderhoof airport has been operational since 1940, built as part of Canada's western air defences during World War II. The site was chosen because of obvious logistics: huge skies, flat ground, proximity to town, and a natural companion to airports at Prince George, Burns Lake, Fraser Lake and Fort St. James.

Today it is home to a flight school, refueling facilities, medical flight amenities, forest fire air base, the biennial international airshow, and a number of air industry businesses. It has lighting, GPS approach system, and other landing aids and tarmac services.

St. John Hospital

On the north side of the Nechako, St. John Hospital (3255 Hospital Road) has one of the best views of the valley. It is a medical centre for a large surrounding area, with 24 acute-care beds, a 24/7 emergency department, labour and delivery department, diagnostic imaging,



blood transfusion capabilities, oncology, palliative care, teaching interface with the Northern Medical Program at UNBC, occupational and physio therapy, dietician, a 53-bed residential care facility, ambulance station, and so many more services and programs.

College of New Caledonia – **VANDERHOOF CAMPUS**

For decades, CNC's Vanderhoof Campus has helped learners to upgrade skills and explore new paths. In 1975 it became CNC's first community location, the new campus opening in 2021. It features space for 136 students, an in-house shop for trades and technologies, and digital links to courses at other campuses.

CNC Vanderhoof is tuned into the community's economy. Healthcare students have completed their studies at the campus, directly benefiting patients in area health facilities. Other recent offerings in Vanderhoof include the first industrial mechanic foundation course; regional expansions of web and graphic design along with early childhood care and learning; and professional driver training.



Want to Learn More?
Scan the QR code to learn
more about the College of
New Caledonia...



“CNC’s Vanderhoof staff enjoy working closely with students and employers to make learning and employment opportunities possible. We love being part of this community, and ensuring area learners can get the skills they need closer to home.”

– Anna Thomson, operations manager for CNC’s Vanderhoof and Fort St. James campuses

Investment OPPORTUNITIES

Investment opportunities in Vanderhoof are as wide as the Nechako Valley sky. With its in-town connections to road, rail and air; a direct interface with rural property; close proximity to a major urban centre; and an industrial profile that is well above small-town average, this is a community where any project can find a home.

Vanderhoof also has a track record, with world-class agriculture, forestry, and mining ventures all nearby.

The first stop for anyone interested in land-based development is the Saik'uz First Nation where a progressive and experienced leadership group is ready to help ideas to unfold in the most sustainable and responsible way.

The Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako and municipal government have clearly established Official Community Plans (OCP) that literally map out the best fits for residential, commercial, and industrial activities. The stated path Vanderhoof has enshrined in its development vision is "To build a healthy and sustainable community by capitalizing on opportunities that enhance the community's economic, social and environmental attributes and the quality of life."

The OCP is updated on a regular basis to maintain the clearest projections possible for the town's 20-year view. This forecast considers population demographics, established employment sources, housing and commercial space inventories, and identifies the areas of best use based on existing infrastructure and future potential. The goal is

to make the advancement of new and existing developers' jobs as easy as possible.

"Our District is a family-friendly community that embraces the natural environment around us and provides a cultural and recreational hub for our residents," said the District of Vanderhoof in their statement of welcome for business and residents. "We appreciate the small-town feel, natural beauty and opportunities provided for people throughout all of their life stages in our District. We are committed to strengthening our community identity, improving accessibility and affordability, providing more opportunities to be active and broadening our economic diversity to keep people in our community."

Saik'uz First Nation's public office is located at 135 Joseph Street, Vanderhoof. Call them at 250-567-9293 or toll-free at 1-866-567-9293.

The Vanderhoof Village Office is located at 160 Connaught Street and you can call them at 250-567-4711. The Village has at the ready maps and information pertaining to land use, infrastructure phasing, environmental and hazard areas, the Agricultural Land Reserve, roadways and infrastructure, and all zoning and building information.

Want to Learn More?
Scan the QR code to learn
more about investment
opportunities in the
Vanderhoof area...



Business DIRECTORY

The business community in Vanderhoof is friendly and supportive. There's a busy branch of the Community Futures Development Corporation and a well stocked Chamber of Commerce working to ensure every entrepreneur is seen and heard. The Chamber is the keeper of the town's most comprehensive business directory. This online listing of members is an alphabetical "Who's who?" of shops and offices, arranged conveniently by topic, with links to each business's website. It's a list that could always use more names, if you think there's an entrepreneurial opportunity for you or someone you know. Vanderhoof would like to know you, too.

Want to Learn More?
Scan the QR code to learn
more about the businesses in
the Vanderhoof area...



Local Support SERVICES

There are many support services available within the Vanderhoof area for children, youth, adults and seniors.

Want to Learn More?
Scan the QR code to learn
more and to access a local
community contact list...



Diverse District



Community Clubs & Associations

Vanderhoof operates on people power. Whatever the interest or initiative, there is a club or association or the openness to start one. At the top of the list is the Community Foundation and Chamber of Commerce. They and others are there to enhance healthcare, education, social needs, arts and culture, sports, environmental stewardship, recreation, economic development, youth development, public safety, and many more. Vanderhoof's residents serve by volunteering, and volunteers serve Vanderhoof's residents.

Want to Learn More?
Scan the QR code to learn
more about the many
community clubs and
associations in Vanderhoof...





DISTRICT OF
Vanderhoof

www.vanderhoof.ca