



For immediate release

NEWS RELEASE

June 29, 2026

Grand Forks extends successful medical clinic agreement and strengthens health care team

[Grand Forks, B.C.] – Grand Forks Council has approved a six-month extension of its agreement with the Grand Forks Medical Clinic, continuing support for clinic operations through May 31, 2027. Council also welcomed the addition of a new nurse practitioner who joined the clinic team in May, further improving access to care for residents.

The agreement extension builds on a one-year pilot program launched earlier this year to address a medical crisis resulting from physician departures.

Under the agreement, Grand Forks Mayor and Council have partnered with the Regional District of Kootenay Boundary's Electoral Area D Director Linda Kay Wiese, Electoral Area E Director Sharen Gibbs, and the Christina Gateway Community Development Association with support from Area C Regional Director Grace McGregor to cover the clinic's fixed operating costs, helping reduce financial barriers for physicians and nurse practitioners considering a move to Grand Forks.

Mayor Everett Baker said the extension reflects strong early results.

"Council took bold action to protect access to primary care in our community," said Mayor Baker. "We are now seeing clear progress and success with our investment. Extending this agreement keeps that momentum going while new health care providers arrive and establish their practices."

Since the agreement began, the clinic has recruited and retained multiple health care providers and expanded access to primary care services. The addition of a new nurse practitioner in May supports day-to-day clinical operations and helps improve patient flow and continuity of care. Renee Minor completed her nurse practitioners practicum at the Grand Forks Medical Clinic and chose to remain at the clinic to continue her professional practice. It is expected Renee will attach a minimum of 400 previously unattached patients (people without a family doctor) to her practice panel.

Clinic physician Dr. Mark Szykaruk said the extended agreement continues to make a difference for recruitment and retention.

"This model reduces the financial risk for new providers looking to join a practice and creates stability at the clinic," said Dr. Szykaruk. "That stability helps us attract and keep the people we need to care for the community."



Six months ago, the Grand Forks Medical Clinic faced the risk of eventual closure. The agreement with Grand Forks was instrumental in keeping the clinic operational, and it now serves up to 6,400 residents.

Physicians practicing at the clinic also contribute to coverage at Boundary Hospital, which helps reduce pressure on the emergency department.

Since the agreement in January, the clinic has added two healthcare practitioners. This includes Dr. Sandhar, who joined the clinic in December and has since taken over a panel of over 1,500 patients, including about 300 that were previously unattached.

The City will continue to monitor progress over the extension period, with a focus on measurable outcomes such as long-term recruitment success and patient attachment to a provider. This partnership will help ensure every resident has access to a primary healthcare provider, while easing pressure on hospital emergency rooms so they can deliver faster, more effective care during emergencies.

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BACKGROUND

About the Grand Forks Medical Clinic

The Grand Forks Medical Clinic is located at 7486 2nd Street in downtown Grand Forks currently has five full-time physicians and one nurse practitioner. The full-service general practice clinic operates Monday to Friday, has been in operation for 40 years, and when fully staffed, serves 7,500 patients.

Nurse Practitioner Renee Minor has been a Registered Nurse for the past 30 years in various specialties, most recently travel nursing through Northern BC and Alberta. Renee has completed her Nurse Practitioner training at the Grand Forks Clinic primarily under the supervision of Dr. Mark Szykaruk. After a fruitful practicum full of valuable learning, she decided to join the team here in Grand Forks.

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF GRAND FORKS

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About Grand Forks

Grand Forks is a small and scenic city of approximately 4,100 people located at the confluence of the Granby and Kettle Rivers in Kootenay-Boundary Regional District in south-central British Columbia. Grand Forks is known for its pristine environment and true four-season climate, and is the gateway to abundant outdoor recreation including camping, hiking, biking, golf, and skiing. Grand Forks offers affordability, a high quality of life, and a strong commitment to healthy living and quality of life.

Photo Caption (Photo_2)

Top Row From L-R, Councillor David Mark, Mayor Everett Baker, RDKB Electoral Area D Director Linda Kay Wiese.

Middle Row From L-R, Tracey MacGregor of the Christina Gateway Community Development Association, Councillor Deborah Lafleur, Councillor Christine Thompson.

Bottom Row From L-R, Area C Regional Director Grace McGregor, Dr. Gary Sandhar, Dr. Mark Szykaruk, Nurse Practitioner Renee Minor.