



For Immediate Release

## Lessons from the Yukon for Northern Ontario?

**January 26, 2017** – What can Northern Ontario learn from a community 4,500 kilometres away? A new commentary from the Northern Policy Institute shares the challenges and successes of Carcross/Tagish First Nation (CTFN), a small community in the Yukon Territory as it makes efforts to grow a sustainable and inclusive economy.

The commentary, *Lessons from the Yukon for Northern Ontario: First Nations, Tourism and Regional Economic Development* was transcribed from a [presentation that Justin Ferbey gave on January 7, 2016](#) at the *Goring Family Lecture Series on Sustainable Northern Economic Development* in Sudbury, ON. The purpose of the talk, was to share lessons learned and inspire new ideas that could translate to First Nation communities in Northern Ontario.

Catalyzed by the ratification of a self-government agreement in 2005, Ferbey describes how CTFN is establishing itself as a highly desirable tourism destination, creating a strong engine of economic development, and rediscovering a sense of self, through entrepreneurship, strategic investments and experiences that embrace both culture and sustainable business practices.

“What we wanted was to establish Carcross as a truly unique travel destination built on a triple-P economic strategy: people, planet, and profit, said Ferbey. “We wanted to address poverty in the community through training and promoting entrepreneurship. And we wanted to embrace distributive justice so that everyone would have the same chance to succeed.”

The commentary describes several examples of local community members embracing an entrepreneurial spirit, striking a balance between generating a profit and pursuing activity that further revitalizes their culture.

Examples include the First Peoples Performances production company, the world class Montana Mountain Biking Trails, studios dedicated to totem pole carving, and new restaurants and cafes.

“There are other achievements we take great pride in, we have attracted many new partners and investments in our community. More important however, is the fact that the people of Carcross have been working as a group, bringing all ages, genders, and experiences together to achieve our goals, just as we have done for generations, said Ferbey. “This is a true community success story and it demonstrates how you arrive at phenomenal ideas, and results, when you engage everyone in talks and planning.”

The full commentary is available on our website [www.northernpolicy.ca](http://www.northernpolicy.ca). This presentation is also viewable on [Northern Policy Institute's YouTube channel](#).

*The editor has adapted some of the text for the sake of structure and narrative. The Goring Family Lecture Series on Sustainable Northern Economic Development on January 7, 2016 was*



hosted by Laurentian University, Northern Policy Institute, and the Greater Sudbury Development Corporation.

**Media Interviews:** Northern Policy Institute President and CEO, Charles Cirtwill is available for comment. To arrange an interview, please contact:

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### **About Northern Policy Institute:**

*Northern Policy Institute is Northern Ontario's independent think tank. We perform research, collect and disseminate evidence, and identify policy opportunities to support the growth of sustainable Northern Communities. Our Operations are located in Kenora, Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury. We seek to enhance Northern Ontario's capacity to take the lead position on socio-economic policy that impacts Northern Ontario, Ontario, and Canada as a whole.*

### **About the Author:**

**Justin Ferbey** is Deputy Minister of Economic Development of the Yukon Government and President of the Yukon Development Corporation, the crown corporation responsible for promoting economic development of Yukon. He is also former Chief Executive Officer of the Carcross Tagish Management Corporation, where his efforts resulted in the 2013 Innovator of the Year Award from the Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon and made him an Innovator of the Year finalist in the 2013 Canadian Tourism Awards.

*Justin is a federal appointee to the Joint Public Advisory Committee of the North American Agreement for Environmental Cooperation, and former president of Skookum Jim's Friendship Centre. He was previously a federal fiscal advisor in the British Columbia treaty process, director of the Yukon Energy Corporation, vice-chair of the Yukon Chamber of Commerce, and an executive of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation.*

*Born and raised in the Yukon, Justin is a citizen of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation. He holds a Bachelor's degree in neuroscience and an MBA from the University of Liverpool. He is also a 2007 Action Canada Fellow and an alumnus of the US Department of State International Visitor Leadership Program (2013).*