



C.V.R.D

REGIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, MAY 25, 2011

6:00 PM / BOARD ROOM

175 INGRAM STREET

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The next Regular meeting of Regional Services Committee is scheduled to be held on Wednesday, June 22, 2011 at 6:00 pm, in the Board Room, CVRD, 175 Ingram Street, Duncan, BC.

DISTRIBUTION:

Regional Services Committee

Director P. Kent, Chair
Director R. Hutchins, Vice-Chair
Director K. Cossey
Director M. Dorey
Director L. Duncan

Director G. Giles
Director B. Harrison
Director D. Haywood
Director T. Walker
Director L. Iannidinardo

Director K. Kuhn
Director M. Marcotte
Director T. McGonigle
Director I. Morrison
Director G. Seymour

Cowichan Valley Regional District

Warren Jones, Administrator
Joe Barry, Corporate Secretary

Mark Kueber, General Manager, Corporate Services

(Agenda Cover Only):

Ron Austen, General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Culture
Tom Anderson, General Manager, Planning & Development
Brian Dennison, General Manager, Engineering & Environmental Services
Sybille Sanderson, Acting General Manager, Public Safety
Sharon Moss, Manager, Finance
Jacob Ellis, Manager, Corporate Planning
Kate McIntosh, Manager, Human Resources
Bob McDonald, Manager, Recycling & Waste Management
Geoff Millar, Manager, Economic Development
Brian Farquhar, Manager, Parks & Trails
Kate Miller, Manager, Regional Environmental Policy

Minutes of the Regular meeting of the Regional Services Committee held in the Board Room, 175 Ingram Street, Duncan, BC, on Wednesday, March 23, 2011 at 6:02 pm.

PRESENT: Chair P. Kent
Directors K. Cossey, M. Dorey, L. Duncan, G. Giles,
B. Harrison, D. Haywood, R. Hutchins, L. Iannidinardo,
K. Kuhn, M. Marcotte, I. Morrison, T. McGonigle, and
G. Seymour<at 6:12 pm>
Alternate Director R. Hartmann

ABSENT: Director T. Walker.

ALSO

PRESENT: Warren Jones, Chief Administrative Officer
Joe Barry, Corporate Secretary
Brian Dennison, General Manager,
Engineering and Environmental Services
Ron Auster, General Manager,
Parks, Recreation and Culture
Kate Miller, Manager, Regional Environmental Policy
John Elzinga, Manager, Island Savings Centre
Linda Blatchford, Manager, Cowichan Lake Recreation
Jacob Ellis, Manager, Corporate Planning

**APPROVAL OF
AGENDA**

It was moved and seconded that the agenda be amended by deleting the following item:

D3 – Delegation from Joseph Gollner, Coordinator, representing the Cameron Taggart Group Re: EcoDepot Site Cobble Hill Studies;

and that the agenda, as amended, be approved.

MOTION CARRIED

**ADOPTION OF
MINUTES**

2M1

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the Regular meeting of Regional Services Committee, held February 23, 2011, be adopted.

MOTION CARRIED

DELEGATIONS

D1

Kyle Braid, Vice President/PA, representing Ipsos Reid
Re: Results from March 2011 Community Survey of Cowichan Region

Kyle Braid provided a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the results of the March 2011 Community Survey of the Cowichan Region for information.

6:12 pm Director Seymour arrived to the meeting at 6:12 pm.

D2 Sergeant R.E. Webb, representing the Lake Cowichan/Shawnigan Lake RCMP
Re: Seasonal Shawnigan Lake and Cowichan Lake Policing Expenditures 2010 and Seasonal Policing in 2011

Sergeant R. E. Webb gave an overview and review of 2010 Shawnigan and Cowichan Lake boat patrols and the RCMP's plans for the 2011 boating season.

D3 This Item was deleted upon Approval of the Agenda.

STAFF REPORTS

SR1 The Staff Report from the Manager, Legislative Services dated February 25, 2011 re: Cowichan Sportsplex Annual Financial Contribution was considered.

It was moved and seconded that the Staff Report from the Manager, Legislative Services dated February 25, 2011, re: the Cowichan Sportsplex Annual Financial Contribution, be referred to the Regional Recreation Committee.

MOTION CARRIED

SR2 The Staff Report from the Manager, Corporate Planning dated March 15, 2011 re: Potential Projects – Regionally Significant Projects Gas Tax Fund was considered.

It was moved and seconded that it be recommended to the Board:

- 1. That the Board rescind Motion No. 10-259, of May 12, 2010, approving the amended Tier I and Tier II Regional Gas Tax projects as identified in the Report of the Administrator dated May 4, 2010 and directing that \$285,550 of Regional Gas Tax funding be reserved for future Regional Gas Tax projects.**

MOTION CARRIED

It was moved and seconded that the Board include the Cowichan Lake Sports Arena parking lot upgrade on the recommended list of Regionally Significant Projects.

It was moved and seconded that the motion be tabled until such time as a discussion has occurred on reductions to the dollar amounts.

MOTION CARRIED

It was moved and seconded that a Special meeting of the Regional Services Committee be called to review each of the proposed Regionally Significant Projects as set out in Item SR2.

MOTION DEFEATED

It was moved and seconded that it be recommended to the Board:

2. That the Board approve Regionally Significant Projects funding allocations to the following projects, and direct that staff submit proposals for approval to the Union of BC Municipalities:
 - a. Remotely Located CVRD Composting Facility;
 - b. Cowichan Valley Flood Protection Infrastructure;
 - c. Integrated Regional Sustainability Plan;
 - d. Cowichan Valley Trail Completion Initiative;
 - e. Peerless Road Recycling Depot Upgrades and Ash Fill Remediation;
 - f. Town of Lake Cowichan – Wastewater Plant Upgrades;
 - g. Bings Creek Organics Collection Facility Upgrades;
 - h. Regional Climate Action Plan;
 - i. Tri-Regional Waste to Energy Facility; and
 - j. Cowichan Lake Sports Arena parking lot upgrade;

and that staff review these projects and modify the dollar amounts to accommodate the addition of the Cowichan Lake Sports Arena parking lot upgrade.

MOTION CARRIED

It was moved and seconded that it be recommended to the Board that the Kerry Park Recreation Centre, Island Savings Centre and Fuller Lake Arena parking lot upgrades also be considered on the list of Regionally Significant Projects.

MOTION DEFEATED

It was moved and seconded that Island Savings Centre parking lot upgrade be added to the list of Regionally Significant Projects.

MOTION DEFEATED

It was moved and seconded that it be recommended to the Board:

3. That should the proposals for Regionally Significant Projects funding be approved by the Union of BC Municipalities, that the Chair and Corporate Secretary be authorized to enter into funding agreements with UBCM on behalf of the CVRD.

MOTION CARRIED

SR3 The Staff Report from Chief Administrative Officer dated March 14, 2011, re: Coastal Community Network – 2011 subscription, was considered.

It was moved and seconded that the Staff Report from the Chief Administrative Officer dated March 14, 2011, re: Coastal Community Network – 2011 Subscription, be received and filed.

MOTION CARRIED

INFORMATION

IN1 Correspondence from the Coastal Community Network dated January, 2011 Briefing Note re: information pertaining to organization repositioning and restructuring, was received for information.

ADJOURNMENT **It was moved and seconded that the Regional Services Committee**
8:17 pm **meeting adjourn.**

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 pm.

Chairperson

Corporate Secretary

Dated: _____

D1**Request to Appear as a Delegation****Meeting Information**

Request to Address:

☒ CVRD Board☒ Committee

If Committee, specify the Committee here:

REGIONAL SERVICES

Meeting Date:

~~06/08/11~~

MAY 25, 2011

Meeting Time:

6pm

Applicant Information

Applicant Name:

Sue Handel

Representing:

TimberWest Forest Corp

(Name of organization if applicable)

As:

Communications Coordinator

(Capacity / Office)

Number Attending:

3

Applicant Contact Information

Applicant Mailing Address:

#3-4890 Rutherford Road

Applicant City:

Nanaimo

Applicant Telephone:

250.729.3744

Applicant Fax:

Applicant Email:

handels@timberwest.com

Presentation Topic and Nature of Request:

This request for presentation is to provide the Board an overview of TimberWest's watershed management program, and to update the Board on TimberWest's operating plans in the area.

TimberWest takes great pride in the integrity of its watershed management program and long term approach to planning. It is timely to review this program with the Board and entertain any questions or concerns.

If there is an opportunity to extend the presentation to about 15 minutes, that would be greatly appreciated.

Presenter will be Domenico Iannidinardo, TimberWest Manager of Environment & Resource Integration.



SR1

STAFF REPORT

**REGIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
25 MAY 2011**

DATE: 9 May 2011 **FILE NO:** 0540-20-RSC/07
FROM: S. Sanderson, Acting General Manager **BYLAW No:**
Public Safety
SUBJECT: 911 Mount Wood Repeater Site License Agreement

Recommendation/Action:

That it be recommended to the Board that the five-year agreement for the Mount Wood Repeater Site for the period of January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2015 at an annual rate of \$1600 plus HST, between Timberwest and the CVRD be approved, and that the Chair and Corporate Secretary be authorized to enter into the agreement on behalf of the CVRD.

Relation to the Corporate Strategic Plan:

The provision of 911 services supports the goals of the Corporate Strategic Plan to provide a safe and healthy community.

Financial Impact: (Reviewed by Finance Division: *SEM*)

The annual cost of this agreement is \$1600 plus HST and has been incorporated within the approved 2011 Emergency 911 budget.

Background:

The CVRD agreement with Timberwest to use the Mount Wood site for a repeater lapsed in December 2010. The company has since provided a five-year agreement at an unchanged annual fee of \$1,600 plus HST for the period of January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2015.

Submitted by,

Sybil Sanderson

Sybil Sanderson
Acting General Manager
Public Safety

/bw



SR2

STAFF REPORT

REGIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
OF 25 MAY 2011

DATE: 18 May 2011 FILE NO: EDCG
FROM: Geoff Millar, Manager Economic Development Division BYLAW NO:
SUBJECT: Sustainable Economic Development Strategy Process

Recommendation/Action: For information purposes.

Relation to the Corporate Strategic Plan: The Sustainable Economic Development Strategy and associated documents are aligned with the CVRD Corporate Strategic Plan goal of "A Viable Economy".

Financial Impact: *(Reviewed by Finance Division:)* Not required for the purposes of this Staff Report.

Background:

In attendance is Pat Foster (representing EDC Chair Bruce Sampson), EDC member Jane Worton, EDCD Consulting principals Dale Wheeldon and Colleen Bond, EDC Manager Geoff Millar and EDC Business Development Officer Kathy Lachman.

We will provide a presentation outlining the Sustainable Economic Development Strategy goals and objectives, a brief explanation of the EDC Work Plan 2011-2012 and the Sustainable Economic Development Strategy Summary.

Timelines:

August 11, 2010 - the CVRD Board of Directors authorized the Economic Development Commission (EDC) to create a Sustainable Economic Development Strategy funded through the General Government budget (100).

September 22, 2011 - Conforming to CVRD Board Policy, EDC awarded the Strategy contract to EDCD Consulting. Initial background research and data collection took place throughout October 2010.

November 2, 2010 - January 20, 2011 - Extensive community-wide consultation and development of the strategy culminated with EDCD Consulting presenting an updated progress report to the Commission on January 26, 2011.

March 17, 2011 – EDCD Consulting gave a video presentation overview of the Sustainable Economic Development Strategic Plan goals and objectives to the Commission.


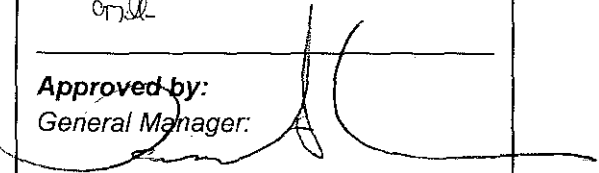
March 29 2011 - EDC members reviewed the strategy in detail and agreed to a process of prioritizing and ranking the goals and objectives facilitated by EDC member Jane Worton.

April 8, 2011 – A compilation of EDC member and staff survey results was circulated showing Work Plan priorities for 2011-2012 along with a summary of the entire Sustainable ED Strategy and its linkages to the CVRD Corporate Strategic Plan. The two documents were named (1) EDC Work Plan 2011-2012 and (2) Sustainable Economic Development Strategy Summary.

April 21, 2011 - The EDC met and evaluated the Work Plan and Summary. Members reviewed the level of importance of each objective and action and aligned the items in relation to the CVRD Strategic Plan. Commission member Jane Worton grouped the extensive list of detail and re-circulated the material to EDC members for final review prior to the next meeting.

May 11, 2011 - EDC members voted to accept the final Sustainable ED Strategy Report from EDCD Consulting and in a separate motion to approve the Economic Development Work Plan 2011-2012 and the Sustainable Economic Development Strategy Summary. The motions are to be forwarded to the CVRD Board of Directors as recommendations from the Commission.

Submitted by,
Geoff Millar, Manager
Economic Development Division

Reviewed by: Division Manager:

Approved by: General Manager:




Economic Development Commission

**SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

2011

FINAL DRAFT

This document was prepared by EDCD Consulting. While every effort has been taken in the compilation of this information to ensure that it is accurate at the time of publication neither EDCD Consulting, or any person acting on their behalf accepts warranty or liability from incorrect, incomplete or misleading information or its improper use.

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SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Cowichan Valley Regional District's Corporate Strategic Plan, approved in September 2010, outlined objectives and strategic actions to ensure a healthy economy in the region. One key component of the plan was to update the Economic Development Strategic Plan to reflect current priorities in consultation with the Economic Development Commission and Board. Commencing in October 2010, with a fairly intensive and extremely productive public consultation process, the Cowichan Sustainable Economic Development Strategy was completed in March 2011. With input from approximately 400 individuals, the Strategy evolved through a process made up of three distinct phases:

1. A review and analysis of the current situation to evaluate the state of the local economy and changes that have occurred in recent years;
2. Comprehensive community and stakeholder engagement through online surveys, one-on-one interviews and focus groups; and
3. The development of this Sustainable Economic Development Strategy for the Cowichan Valley Regional District.

In general, it is recognized that this strategy will help to increase the competitiveness of Cowichan, while at the same time focus on key initiatives and plans to ensure a sustainable future for the Region.

It is important to keep in mind that while sustainability is an overall goal of this strategy, there are important economic conditions and economic development considerations to keep in mind. These conditions cannot be ignored, nor can new focused initiatives work to undermine their effectiveness. Rather, new initiatives must work within existing conditions to help improve the future for Cowichan.

"The future will be green, or not at all. This truth lies at the heart of humankind's most pressing challenge: to learn to live in harmony with the Earth on a genuinely sustainable basis."

Sir Jonathon Porritt

It is also important to note that during the strategic planning process it became clear the residents are excited about the future and they want to be a part of it. Certainly there were issues raised that will need to be addressed, however, the overall general feeling was one of optimism and a can do attitude. There is a spirit of cooperation that many communities would envy and a pride that, by working together positive changes can be realized and a sustainable future can be achieved.

The plan focuses on eight key strategies aimed at growing, diversifying and sustaining the Cowichan Region's overall economy. More specifically, the goals outlined include:

1. Increase Cowichan's Capacity as a Place for Business
2. Increase Competitiveness of the Cowichan Region
3. Create a Unique Sense of Place
4. Community of Choice for Green Business
5. Cowichan – Creative and Cultural
6. Thriving and Diverse Agriculture
7. Support Tourism Cowichan
8. Lead by Example

Defining Sustainability & Sustainable Economy

A number of communities in North America are engaged in efforts to encourage and foster sustainable, or green, economic development. The State of Oregon has instituted a progressive business tax credit to attract renewable energy industry to their state. Washington State has made renewable energy a key piece of its economic development plan, creating a net-metering law and waiving sales taxes on photovoltaic systems produced with the state. On a smaller scale, Whatcom County's Sustainable Connections group rewards businesses conducting sustainable practices with publication exposure and free marketing and advertising.

In addition, several communities across the U.S. and Canada have completed, or are in the midst of creating, community-wide sustainability strategies, however, the development of a *sustainable economic development strategy* is still quite unique, particularly in Canada. The Cowichan Region should be applauded for its leadership in creating this Strategy. Since the development of a sustainable strategy for economic development is uncommon, it is important to define sustainability and sustainable economy.

WHAT IS SUSTAINABILITY?

Sustainability is generally defined as meeting the needs of this generation without compromising the needs of future generations; ideally making things even better for those who come after us. Today, the term "sustainability" includes not only natural capital or the environment but now encompasses social and economic capital as well. It is generally accepted that the health of each of these three forms of capital – environment, social and economic – are inter-related. In order to have a healthy society or community, all three aspects must be addressed and structurally sound.

In their book titled, "Sustainable Cities", Graham Haughton and Colin Hunter, define a sustainable city as "*one in which its people and businesses continuously endeavour to improve their natural, built, and cultural environments at neighbourhood and regional levels, whilst working in ways which always support the goal of global sustainable development.*" This is a wonderful vision for the Cowichan Region.

Fortunately for the Cowichan Region, there is tremendous support for sustainability from residents and business alike. Evidence of this support of sustainability is clear in the surveys of Cowichan's residents and businesses conducted for this Strategy, as well as the participation in community focus groups and one-on-one interviews. It is also reflected in the community's overwhelming support for agriculture, local farmer's markets, and environmental groups such as the CVRD Environment Commission.

The CVRD Environment Commission is a major force in sustainability. In November 2008, a Sustainable Cowichan report was completed and, more recently, in June 2010, a State of the Environment report was finalized. The Commission put forward "12 Big Ideas" to indicate where the Cowichan communities should focus their efforts to have a positive influence on the condition of the regional environment.

These efforts provide a good basis for addressing the Cowichan Region's economic challenges using a sustainable approach, resulting not only in a stronger economy, but also laying the groundwork for evaluating and improving long-term investments in the Region's natural and social capital.

DEFINING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY AND ITS VALUE FOR THE COWICHAN REGION

Sustainable economies are at their core, healthy economies – strong, resilient, and diverse – that includes and supports a network for local green businesses, good green jobs and best green business practices. Green businesses offer green products and/or services. Green jobs are offered, for the most part, by green businesses. Green business practices can apply to any business type and describes operations that reduce a business' consumption of resource (material, energy, water) as well as waste output.

Sustainable economic development also offers global benefits that go beyond the Cowichan Region's physical boundaries, including:

- Less dependence on the global economy (localization)
- Less dependence on non-renewable resources
- Elimination of materials and chemicals harmful to humans and the environment
- Smaller ecological footprint (i.e. reduce waste stream)
- Contributing to a more socially responsible society

The value of sustainable economic development to Cowichan's business community is that it can offer the opportunity to reduce operational expenses, to be more competitive, and be a vital part of the social texture of the community. Resource conservation, competitive edge, and social responsibility are all aspects of sustainable economies that can help buoy local businesses in a time of economic contraction. In that respect, this strategy comes at a critical time for the Cowichan Region. While the Region's vision "The Cowichan Region celebrates diversity and will be the most livable and healthy community in Canada" is clear, economic conditions in the Region (and nationally) make achieving this vision more challenging. However, by undertaking this strategic planning process and the development of a Sustainable Economic Development Strategy, the Region is taking pro-active steps to distinguish Cowichan from its regional neighbours as a good, stable, green, and "smart" community to do business.

Sustainability Framework

The primary goal of the Sustainable Economic Development Strategy is to promote a prosperous economy that can be sustained over the long term. To achieve this goal, the Cowichan Region's economic base must be more diverse than the Region's former reliance on the resource sector that was vulnerable to changes in the national and global economy. A related issue is the need for flexibility and the ability to adapt to continuing change, suggesting that an economic base consisting of small scale businesses and entrepreneurs is preferable to one dominated by a few large companies or one industry. Finally, a sustainable economy implies that Cowichan's basic assets – its natural setting, historic resources, cultural heritage, social institutions, and its people – should be maintained for the future. In the 21st century economy, successful communities will:

- Differentiate themselves from their competitors through quality of life assets attractive to:
 - Residents (to retain a quality workforce needed to attract business)
 - Businesses (to provide employment opportunities for residents)
 - Visitors (not only to generate direct economic activity but also to increase the visibility of the community for prospective residents and businesses)
- Leverage these assets through place-based development strategies and organizational initiatives

One of the most commonly accepted definitions of sustainable development is – *“Development that meets the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”* (Brundtland Commission, 1987). In considering how this definition or concept might apply to the Cowichan Region's economy, it is useful to bring back the three forms of capital mentioned earlier – environment, social and economic.

The classic definition of *economic* sustainability involves keeping capital intact (similar to living off interest without depleting a savings account). Current approaches to sustainability expand the definition of capital beyond financial and manufactured capital (the focus of traditional economics) to include natural and human (social) capital:

- Natural capital is the stock of environmentally provided assets/natural resources that provides flow of useful goods or services
- Human capital includes people, their capacity levels, institutions, cultural cohesion, education, information and knowledge.

How, then, might the concept of sustainability apply to the Cowichan Region? The focus sessions provided an excellent opportunity to discuss how sustainability and economic development can co-exist. Throughout the focus sessions three common themes emerged:

1. Economic development activities should not *compromise* those natural and historic resources that are central to Cowichan's identity and quality of life. The preservation and enhancement of the quality of life was a very important message heard throughout the focus groups.
2. Economic development activities that *“invest in community”* should be encouraged. Participants in the focus groups were not opposed to economic development but they want to ensure that attracting businesses, entrepreneurs, and development is done with accordance with community principles. The

groups talked about wanting people willing to live in and make a commitment to the Region rather than companies or development where decisions are made elsewhere.

3. The economy and environment are complementary rather than competing interests. The relevance of this theme for Cowichan is increasing as its economy becomes more dependent on quality of life assets that make it a good place to live, work and visit and less dependent on historic growth trends based on the resource sector.

Given the above considerations, the Sustainable Economic Development Strategy establishes a framework to be used in applying the concept of sustainability to efforts to improve the Region's economy. This framework must include criteria to be used in evaluating potential economic development projects and programs. Traditionally, economic development is measured by number of jobs created, value of exports, tax revenue, etc. Though these measurements have value it is important to re-define meaningful criteria as it applies to sustainable economic development. A starting point to develop the criteria is from LASER, a software tool developed for use by communities interested in developing sustainability programs. The criteria, or Sustainability Test, are fairly limited and with the benefit of extensive community input we are able to build on their criteria to offer a more substantial method of evaluation.

SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPERATIONAL CRITERIA

1. Economic development activities should increase dollars that flow into Cowichan from outside the region. Examples include visitors who spend disposable income during trips to Cowichan, persons who retire to Cowichan with life savings earned outside the region, and export of specialty products and crafts. A quantitative value can be determined for this benchmark by comparing the investment to support the activity/project with the projected dollars generated for the Region.
2. Economic development activities that re-circulate dollars in the local economy are preferred over those that export dollars outside the region. An example is the purchase of local products or services instead of those imported from outside the Region. Another example would be the use of energy conservation measures that employ local contractors and reduce the need to import high-priced fossil fuels.
3. Economic development activities should not adversely affect the Cowichan Region's key environmental resources. Further to this, activities should conform to:
 - a. Having minimal impact of environmental resources
 - b. Enhancing environmental resources (i.e. preservation or compatible reuse of historic resources, restoration of natural habitat)
 - c. Contributing to environmental sustainability (i.e. recycling of water or waste products, energy conservation/use of renewable energy sources)
4. Economic development activities should not adversely affect the viability of civic institutions. This addresses the extent to which economic development activities support Cowichan's "civic infrastructure" (social, cultural/arts, economic development, and other community based organizations and groups). Further to this, activities should conform to:
 - a. Having minimal impact on established civic institutions

- b. Involving partnerships among existing local/regional civic institutions
 - c. Building capacity of existing local/regional civic institutions
- 5. Economic development activities should create meaningful employment opportunities. These opportunities should be available to both current residents and to former residents who wish to return to the area. This can be quantitatively measured by the number of jobs and average wages generated by economic development activities. A related factor is the extent to which economic development activities leverage job training opportunities for residents.

A BRIEF ECONOMIC SCAN

For the purposes of a concise document, this section provides a summary of the key points resulting from an economic scan of available demographic information including previous economic base analysis research provided as Appendix A.

Demographics

This section looks at three demographic categories – population, income, and labour force – and is intended only as a quick overview of the Cowichan Region

POPULATION AND INCOME

As of the 2006 census (last available census), Cowichan's population was 76,929 persons, which represented a net increase of 6.8 percent since the 2001 census. Current population is estimated to be 82,802.

Cowichan has an estimated 34,052 households in 2010. The average household size in the CVRD is 2.4 persons. It should be noted that the average number of children at home is 0.9. Regarding household income, the estimated 2010 average household income in Cowichan is \$71,321 and per capita income is estimated at \$29,331. This is slightly lower than the BC averages of \$82,100 and \$33,300 respectively. Per capital income is projected to be \$37,473 for CVRD residents. In 2010, 17.85 percent of households had income in excess of \$100,000.

Cowichan 2010 Estimated Income	
Average Household Income	\$71,321
Average Family Income	\$80,312
Per Capita Income	\$29,331
Average Employment Income Males	\$44,893
Average Employment Income Males – Full time	\$61,993
Average Employment Income Females	\$26,864
Average Employment Income Females – Full time	\$43,620

Source: FP Markets (Year 2010)

LABOUR FORCE

In the Cowichan Region there was an estimated 38,105 residents over the age of 15 in the labour force. Of those employed 16.23 percent were self-employed and there was an unemployment rate 6.4%, only slightly higher than the provincial average of 6.0%. Current estimates put the labour force at 41,691.

Cowichan 2010 Estimated Labour Force	
Males in Labour Force	21,995
Females in Labour Force	19,696
Male Participation Rate	65.4
Female Participation Rate	56.1
Males Employed	20,653
Females Employed	18,711

Source: FP Markets (Year 2010)

The following breaks down the occupations by major groups for the Cowichan Region:

Cowichan 2010 Estimated Occupations by Major Groups	
Management	3,988
Business Finance & Administration	5,715
Natural & Applied Science and related	1,728
Health	2,371
Social Science, Gov't Services & Religion	1,775
Education	1,347
Arts, Culture, Recreation and Sport	1,245
Sales & Service	10,677
Trades, Transportation & Equipment Operations	7,737
Primary Industries	2,439
Processing, Manufacturing & Utilities	1,809

Source: FP Markets (Year 2010)

Consumer Spending Patterns

During the course of 2010, Cowichan residents are estimated to have spent \$895.7 million on consumer retail expenditures, such as food, personal care, entertainment, electronics, furniture, travel, car expenses and apparel. Average household consumer retail expenditure is \$26,303.

This year each household within the Cowichan Region is anticipated to spend an average of \$69,095 on consumer expenditures. This includes an average of \$7,870 on food, \$14,057 for shelter, and \$5,514 for recreation and entertainment. It should be noted that consumer expenditures are different than consumer retail expenditures. Consumer expenditures includes non-retail categories like travel, entertainment, and housing expenses, which is why the average household expenditures are greater under consumer expenditures than consumer retail expenditures.

Cowichan 2010 Estimated Average Household Expenditures	
Food	\$7,870
Shelter	\$14,057
Clothing	\$2,593
Transportation	\$9,438
Health & Personal Care	\$3,103
Recreation, Reading & Education	\$5,514
Taxes & Securities	\$15,730
Other (includes furnishings, tobacco, alcohol, gifts & contributions)	\$10,791

Source: FP Markets (Year 2010)

Economic Base Analysis

In examining the economic or employment base of the Cowichan Region, the source of data is Statistics Canada census data, which is more than four years old – but it is the only source from which this data can be obtained. This information is provided with the notation that changes have occurred in Cowichan’s local economy since that time, particularly with respect to the resource sector.

- Overall the economic base analysis indicated a favourable pattern of employment growth diversified across a number of industry sectors (2001 – 2006).
- Employment is highly concentrated in the retail trade sector, health care sector and public administration sector.
- In Cowichan, the primary industries (agriculture, forestry) was highly concentrated, however, it must be noted the data is from the 2001 to 2006 census period.
- Cowichan experienced large job increases between 2001 to 2006 in construction, wholesale & retail trade, and accommodation & food services. In fact, these sectors were growing at much faster rates than provincial growth within each of the industries.

Appendix A is the full economic base analysis and additional details of the Cowichan Region economy can be found there.

Additional Notes

The background research revealed that the Cowichan Region has many of the attributes in place for economic growth and prosperity, however, obstacles do exist. Important observations include:

- A challenge to interpret the various OCPs, land planning policies and regulations due to the number of communities within the CVRD
- A lack of communication from the political leaders is felt from the business community and residents
- Development decisions based on comments on small minority versus the silent majority that do not oppose specific projects
- An aging demographic
- A lack of understanding of the cost of doing business in the Cowichan Region

The following section provides additional information on these observations along with others.

STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As a part of the strategic planning process to develop the Cowichan Region Sustainable Economic Development Strategy, several methods were used to engage and solicit input and feedback from the business community and residents. This included:

- Conducting one-on-one interviews with stakeholders
- Online surveys – one for residents and one for business
- Facilitating focus groups
- Meetings with local government councils
- Economic Development Commission meetings
- Contacting EDCD Consulting directly with any comments

Approximately 400 individuals participated in or had direct input during the public consultation process. This phase included the preparation and distribution of two surveys – a Business Owner Survey and a Resident Survey. The business survey contained 28 questions and the resident survey contained 26 questions. On October 20, 2010 both surveys went live on the internet and were available until November 19, 2010. A link was posted on the CVRD homepage and a blast email was sent to EDC's database and media coverage was included. A summary of how people participated follows:

Interviews:

- 17 individuals were interviewed representing a broad range of local businesses, individuals representing various organizations or groups, government, First Nations and community partners.

Online Survey:

- 164 responses to the online resident survey
- 88 responses to the online business survey

Focus Group Sessions:

- 20 focus groups representing input from agriculture, art & culture, social & health, real estate & development, environment, tourism, clean tech, and local governments.
- 5 business groups from Chemainus, South Cowichan, Lake Cowichan, Duncan, and Ladysmith.

The Results

The following section provides some of the findings of both the resident and business surveys. A separate document has been provided to Economic Development Cowichan detailing the findings from both surveys. In addition, an economic workshop regarding the online survey was held at the CVRD offices on January 26, 2011.

S.W.O.T.

The next phase of the strategic plan process included a look at the Cowichan Region's economic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). The information was gained through various methods including the stakeholder and community engagement phase.

The SWOT Analysis provides an inventory of the area's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) and assesses the degree to which each economic factor supports future growth. The overall goal of this

section is to have a clear understanding of the Cowichan's strengths and areas of potential that can be built upon and better marketed. The findings in this analysis, combined with other research are used to assist in developing recommendations for inclusion in the overall strategic economic development plan.

Observations in this report are based on significant consultation collected from local citizens, businesses, and the Regional staff. EDCD Consulting, in consultation with Economic Development Cowichan completed a survey of residents and businesses in order to gather additional input. Analyzing the perception that residents and businesses in the region have is an important step as it directly relates to how well the region conveys its strengths, or tells its economic development story.

The Cowichan Valley Regional District strengths and challenges are examined within two key factors which are important economic development topics:

- Regional Area
- Business and economic development climate

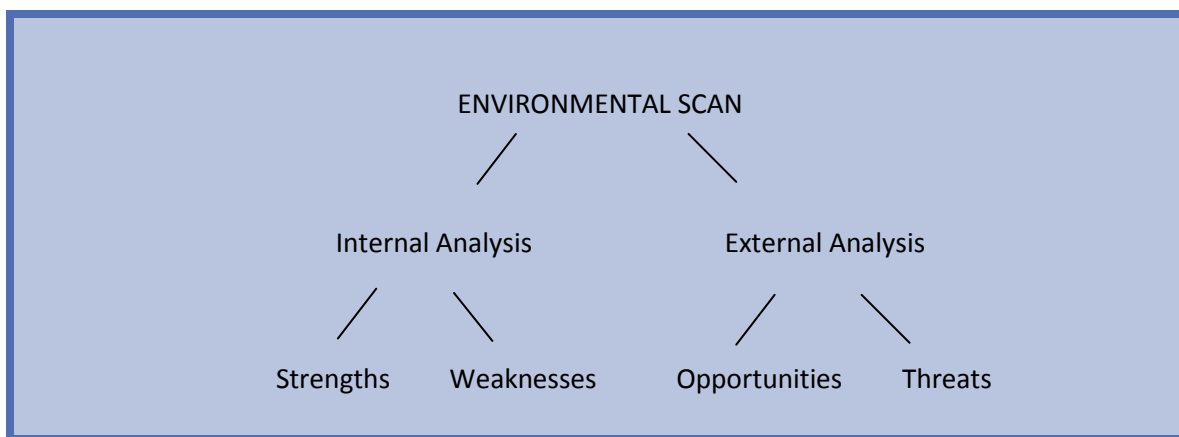
Companies, site selectors and residents looking to expand or relocate a business will analyze these factors to determine how well a city ranks compared to other communities. It is important for the region to be aware of its strengths and opportunities to be able to expand upon them. At the same time they need to be aware of its threats and weaknesses. It is only through understanding the SWOT of a community or region that programs can be developed to adjust and proactively work towards a resolution that will increase opportunities.

Overall, through our research, it has been determined that the CVRD's strengths far exceed the weaknesses or threats. It is important however to recognize that some of these weaknesses are significant and need to be overcome in order to capitalize on the strengths that have been identified. Failure to do this can result in not achieving the region's goals towards a sustainable economy. The key will be to also communicate these strengths to ensure that the perception of the region is improved.

What is SWOT Analysis?

A scan of the internal and external environment is an important part of the economic development strategic planning process. Environmental factors internal to the city, community or region being reviewed usually can be classified as Strengths (S) or Weaknesses (W) and those external can be classified as Opportunities (O) or Threats (T). This analysis of the strategic environment is referred to as SWOT Analysis.

The SWOT Analysis provides information that is helpful in matching the city, community or region's resources and capabilities to the competitive environment in which it operates. As such, it is instrumental in strategy formulation and selection. The following diagram shows how a SWOT Analysis fits into an environmental scan.



We have characterized our “SWOT Analysis” in these terms:

STRENGTHS Positive Local/Regional Internally	OPPORTUNITIES Positive Local/Internally External
WEAKNESSES Negative Negative Local/Regional Externally	THREATS Negative Internally/Regional Provincial/Federal/International

- Strengths (Positive, Local/Regional/Internally): Positive attributes currently present in Cowichan, particularly in comparison to competitors.
- Weaknesses (Negative, Local/Regional/Internally): Local issues or characteristics that limit the current or future growth opportunities for Cowichan.
- Opportunities (Positive, Local/Internally with External impacts): Areas where Cowichan can remedy its weaknesses (learning from others, regional/provincial/national change, aggressive marketing, targeted investment, etc.)
- Threats (Negative, Internally/Regional/Provincial/Federal/International): Trends that threaten Cowichan’s future and attractiveness to new industry, from local weaknesses or external threats.

KEY SWOT FINDINGS

We have identified several key ingredients that are vital to creating a sustainable economy.

- Respected economic development program
- Commitment by local government(s) for Green Initiatives
- Internal/external marketing and communications
- Creating an “External” identity

These key ingredients will be expanded upon and action plans developed as part of the various components that make up parts of the sustainable economic development strategy.

RESPECTED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Cowichan Region is fortunate to have an economic development team that is respected internally and externally. While challenges exist in certain areas of the region in securing the support for some of the initiatives that EDC carries out, generally, the region as a whole supports the need for a strong economic development program. Challenges can easily be overcome for the most part by improving communications with the various local governments. Externally the EDC is well respected by both Provincial and Federal agencies and is recognized as one of the leaders on Vancouver Island for communities that have a strong support team to work in partnership with. EDCD completed an Investment Readiness Assessment exercise with the region and, while there are improvements required, the region can pride itself that it is in many ways further ahead than its competitors in the ability to respond to inquiries.

COMMITMENT BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT(S) FOR GREEN INITIATIVES

It was evident in our dialogue with the various local governments that they are committed to creating projects and initiatives that support the region being seen as a leader in the green economy. Developing new programs and initiatives that help to attract new green industries or industries that recognize the value of the environment is an important piece of the strategy. Equally important though will be how local governments implement programs that make them greener and encourage existing businesses to follow the lead.

INTERNAL/EXTERNAL MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

In order for the Cowichan Region to increase the awareness of the opportunities that exist to the external market, Cowichan must maintain and potentially expand its marketing efforts. Economic Development Cowichan should implement a marketing campaign that includes, and expansion of, earned media, communication, maintaining its membership in industry associations, expanding relationships with federal and provincial agencies responsible for economic development, and maintain the participation in key economic development partnerships in the region and in the province. This may include adding programs that work closely with the Provincial Asia Pacific initiatives.

Internally the economic development program would benefit from increased exposure of its economic development activities with the local business community and local governments. Through discussions with the community and local politicians we have identified that they would like to be more engaged in what the EDC is doing as far as encouraging economic growth. The business community can be engaged through a comprehensive business retention and expansion program where the economic development staff can meet with them on a regular basis to ensure they are aware of what the Regional District is doing. This will also help the Regional District be aware of the business needs and can work towards meeting them. Entrepreneurship and existing business expansion is one of the most critical roles for a community to support. When an existing business expands and local residents put into use the entrepreneurial spirit it shows strong community pride and support for the attraction of new businesses.

Special attention must be given to increasing the level of communication with the various local governments and as well the Regional District board and key staff.

Cowichan Identity

One of the biggest strength of the Cowichan Economic Development department is the incredible support for the branding that has been created. It is the opinion of EDCD that the work that has been done by EDC to create a standardized brand is worth nominating for awards. We have not seen many communities achieve what Cowichan has in developing this brand and getting the recognition from it that both local residents and businesses provide. This branding should be expanded on to really make it clear externally that Cowichan is not just Duncan or Chemainus but instead is a partnership of communities that is welcoming to visitors, new residents and businesses as a whole.

Factors

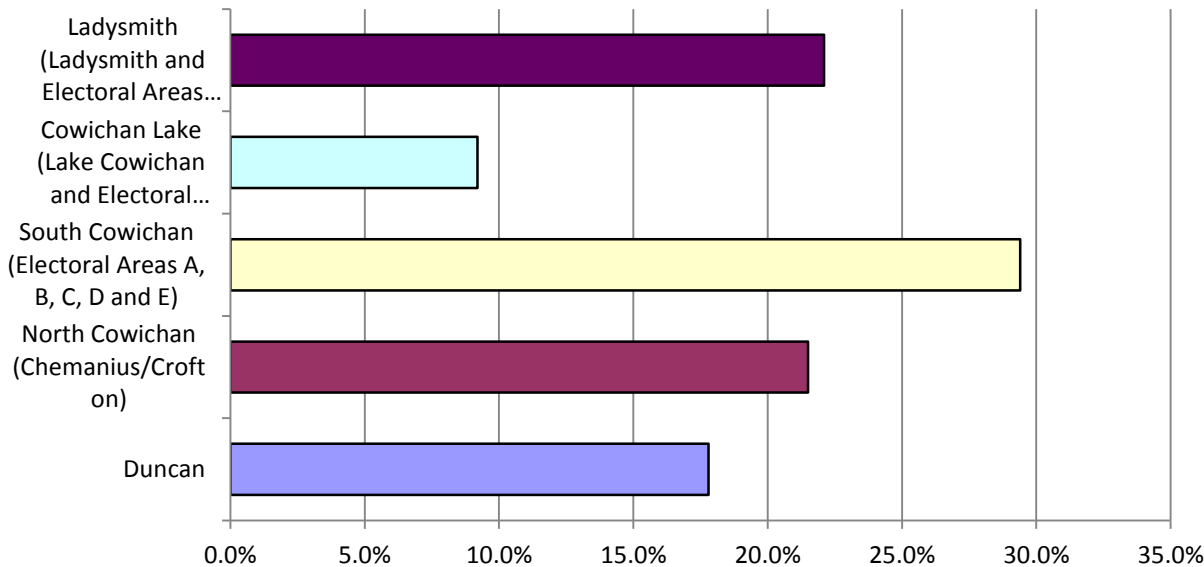
SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Regional Area	Strengths	Weaknesses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Life • Transportation access • Recreational amenities • Entrepreneurial talent • Housing Affordability • Community Pride • University • Coastal Location • Proximity to Victoria • Positive Perception locally • Agriculture (food supply) • Strong Branding • Arts and Culture • Community Amenities (Hospital, etc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Jobs • Aging Population • Losing Youth • Inadequate Transportation Infrastructure • Local and Regional Government • High costs • Lack of quality accommodations • Affordability of housing • Misconception of region by outsiders • Retail/Service Sector - low paying jobs • Loss of resource based industries • Lack of opportunities for young families
Business/Economic Development	Strengths	Weaknesses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Life • Location • Transportation • Good climate to support agriculture • Access to supplies • Local Customers • Affordable Real Estate • Partnerships • Low Taxes • Universities • High disposable incomes • Supported Economic Development Program • Skilled Labour Force • Business Retention and Expansion Program • Strong Brand • Committed and respected Economic Development Staff • Recognition of importance of Environment • Participant in Regional/Provincial Marketing Initiatives • Strong provincial and federal linkages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation • Access to supplies • Perceived Red Tape/Regulations at all levels of Local and Regional Government • NIMBY attitude • No Regional Growth Strategy • Aging population • Lack of exposure • Cost to do business • Shortage of skilled workers • Lack of support for business • Slow permitting (bureaucracy) • High business taxes • Lack of Industrial and Business lands • Lack of Industrial Facilities • Business Retention Program not collecting data • Development Information not readily available

FACTOR #1 – REGIONAL AREA

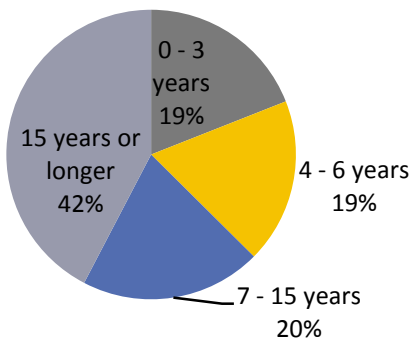
ECDC Consulting in consultation with the CVRD developed a survey to gather input from community residents. In total 164 responded to the survey. The results have provided an excellent overview of the residents’ impressions of the region and were completed by a good cross section of those living in the different areas that make up the CVRD.

Where do you live in the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD)?



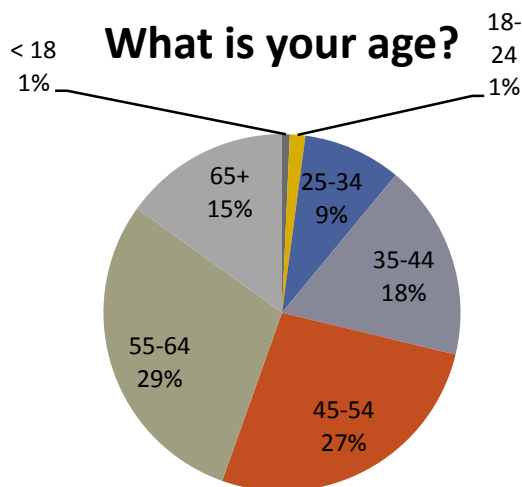
The majority of residents surveyed (42%) have lived in the community for more than 15 years with only 19 percent living here less than three years. This indicates that the region is a place that once you move here you want to stay. 35 percent of respondents indicated that the reason they stay or moved here was because of the quality of life.

Years of Residence



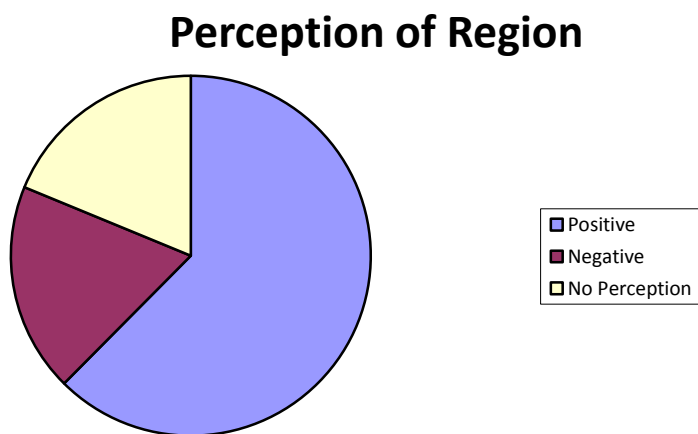
However new people are moving into the region indicating that more must be done to create opportunities for these new residents along with the attraction of new residents in order to service the aging population. With 71

percent of the population older than the age of 45 the community will find itself within the next 10 years of not having sufficient workforce to service the population in any aspect, including retail, medical and other important services.



The income levels of local residents were very impressive with 43.6 percent earning between \$50,000 and \$125,000. Six percent earned more than \$125,000 per year. The education levels of the regions residents are also ranked very high which can be used as a competitive advantage for attracting new business.

Community residents have a very strong impression of the community. This positive reception will make it easier for the region to market for new industry and also in efforts to attract new residents. A high amount of local residents felt that those living outside of the region have a negative or no impression of the region (45.5%).



The community residents have a good understanding of sustainability and its importance. However community residents also felt that economic development focus needs to be on finding new companies to locate in the region (49.7%), as well as supporting existing businesses (55.2%). The expansion of the agriculture industry, tourism and hospitality and professional, scientific and technical industries and green industries rounded out the

top four priority sectors that local residents supported. They also offered an overwhelming support for providing incentives to attract certain industries, particular those involved in the green sector.

Regional Area	Strengths	Weaknesses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Life • Transportation access • Recreational amenities • Entrepreneurial talent • Housing Affordability • Community Pride • University • Coastal Location • Proximity to Victoria • Positive Perception locally • Agriculture (food supply) • Strong Branding • Arts and Culture • Community Amenities (Hospital, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Jobs • Aging Population • Losing Youth • Inadequate Transportation Infrastructure • Local and Regional Government • High costs • Lack of quality accommodations • Affordability of affordable housing • Misconception of region by outsiders • Retail/Service Sector - low paying jobs • Loss of resource based industries • Lack of opportunities for young families
	Opportunities	Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Enterprise Programs • Skilled worker attraction and retention • Partnerships with Education Providers • Expanded Arts and Culture Initiatives • Partnerships with First Nations • Environmental Sustainability Programs • Expansion of "Quality of Place" • Regional Growth Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Cooperation • Aging Population • Global Economy • Transportation Costs • Lack of "Buy in" from regional communities

FACTOR #2 – BUSINESS/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

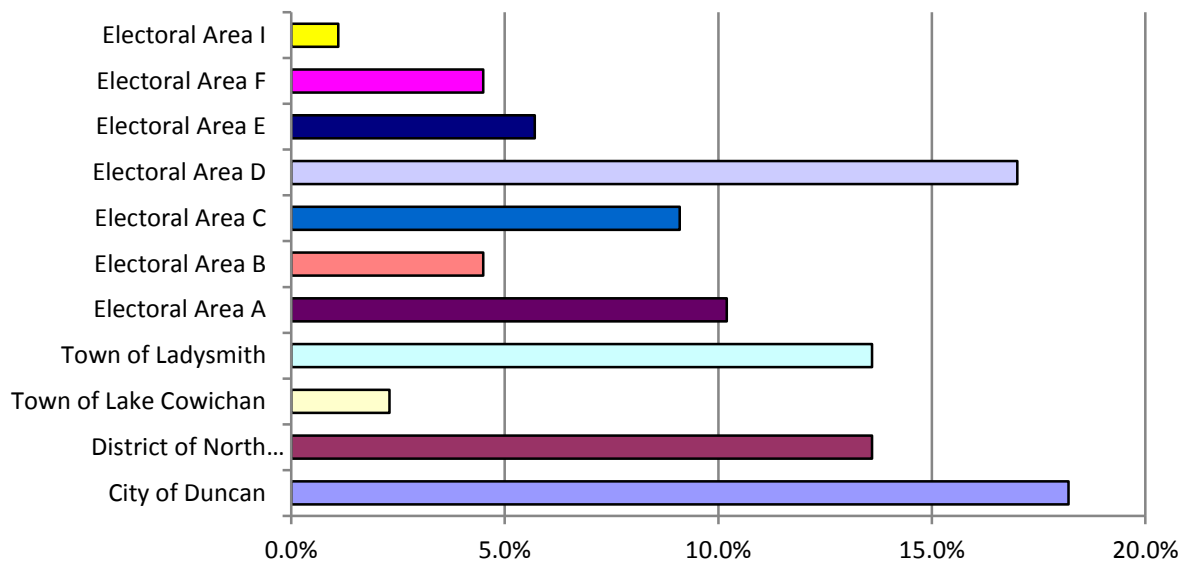
The Cowichan Region has several challenges when it comes to the attraction of new industry and business and in keeping the existing business community viable. The lack of a Regional Growth Strategy is one of the biggest impediments to growth, combined with a perception that getting approvals is too daunting of a task resulting in costly delays and in many cases cancelling of projects. By having fragmented OCP's and zoning bylaws the confusion level is high on what can actually be accomplished and where. These are not the only issues though that the region faces - lack of employment opportunities for youth is resulting in an aging population that will not be able to staff the existing industry and small businesses. It will also result in some businesses closing with aging business owners and no one around to take over the operations when they want to retire, this may be particularly important in the agriculture sector.

The Cowichan Region offers competitive land prices and a high quality of life, making it an ideal location to expand or relocate a business, or encourage new residential growth. The critical piece though will be to resolve the negatives and to build marketing campaigns that highlight the new way of doing business – that the Cowichan Region is *Open for Business*, creating jobs, and pursuing every effort to increase employment opportunities.

Through the Investment Readiness Assessment, completed in February 2011, we identified that the Cowichan Region has a number of challenges that need to be addressed. Most of the negatives were directly attributed to the lack of a Regional Growth Strategy and other issues that are beyond the control of the economic development staff. However it did identify improvements that the staff can make to its existing programs to help make the region more investment ready.

EDCD Consulting developed a survey to gather input from business leaders. In total 88 business located throughout the region responded to the survey. The largest amount of response came from the retail sector (23.8%), followed by agriculture, arts and culture, and then tourism. Every sector came forward with responses. The majority of the businesses employ less than 5 employees and 39% of them have been in business in the region for more than 15 years. This is high and indicates a level of satisfaction from small operators to doing business in the region.

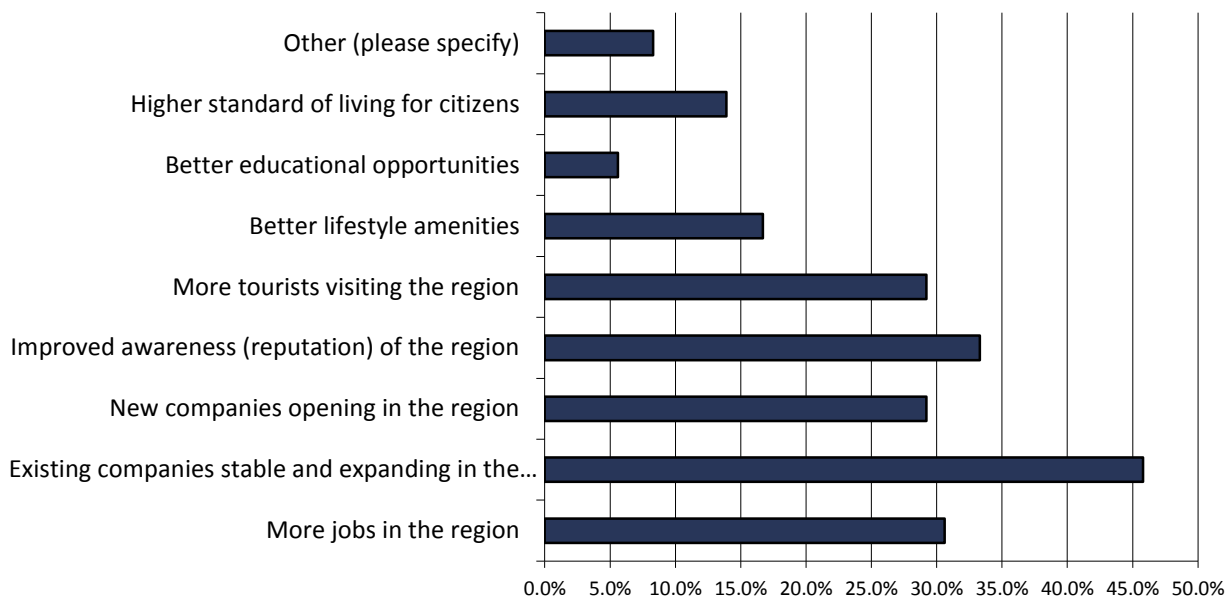
Where in the CVRD is your business located?



Businesses in the Cowichan Region have confidence that things will improve in the future and that they will be able to hire additional employees. 40 percent% of all businesses plan on increasing the number of staff they have in the next five years with 27 percent planning additional staff in the next two.

Support exists amongst the business community for economic development. Support is demonstrated for Business Retention and Expansion initiatives as well as the attraction of new industry that can create more jobs within the region. Support also exists for the expansion of tourism and adds support for the continuation of tourism services as an economic development activity. A follow up question on whether or not the businesses knew about the services of Economic Development Cowichan indicated a high percentage (50%) is not aware. Clearly the EDC need to look at ways of increasing the awareness of the services and programs that they are working on and how they can work with the local business community.

What does effective economic development mean to you?



80.3 percent of business feels that customers perceive their business as green or becoming green oriented and 86.6 percent of businesses believe that it is important for the customer to view them as being green. While businesses believe it is important for customers to perceive them as green only 48.5 percent of all businesses have a sustainability mission statement or vision. Of those that do not 19.7 percent plan on having one. In addition, only 49.2 percent of businesses purchase energy efficient products. One of the biggest challenges that businesses indicated with going green is the lack of financing or other support that can help them achieve this.

Business/Economic Development	Strengths	Weaknesses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of Life • Location • Transportation • Good climate to support agriculture • Access to supplies • Local Customers • Affordable Real Estate • Partnerships • Low Taxes • Universities • High disposable incomes • Supported Economic Development Program • Skilled Labour Force • Business Retention and Expansion Program • Strong Brand • Committed and respected Economic Development Staff • Recognition of importance of Environment • Participant in Regional/Provincial Marketing Initiatives • Strong provincial and federal linkages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation • Access to supplies • Perceived Red Tape/Regulations at all levels of Local and Regional Government • NIMBY attitude • No Regional Growth Strategy • Aging population • Lack of exposure • Cost to do Business • Shortage of Skilled workers • Lack of Support for business • Slow permitting (bureaucracy) • High business taxes • Lack of Industrial and Business lands • Lack of Industrial Facilities • Business Retention Program not gathering data • Development Information not readily available
	Opportunities	Threats
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activate BR+E Program • Develop Community Profile • Land Inventory • Increase Marketing for new Investments • Creation of a "Business First" attitude at CVRD • Expanded Agriculture Initiatives • Land and Resource Inventories • Develop Regional Partnerships between communities and rural areas • Certified Green Program for Business • Social Enterprise Programs • Entrepreneurship Initiatives • Sustainability Benchmarks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited support for Economic Development • Limited Financial support • Fractured relationships amongst communities and rural areas • Perception of CVRD being anti-business

STRATEGY DIRECTION

The development of the Sustainable Economic Development Strategy comes at a pivotal point in time for the Cowichan Region. To remain competitive Cowichan will have to adopt economic development strategies and actions that are flexible, innovative and sustainable. Just as the development industry has begun to accept that new building must include renewable energy design and practice, the economic development industry is starting to accept the requirement of sustainable plans and direction. With an economy that has been anchored long term in agriculture, forestry and tourism, the threshold for change is here.

The Cowichan Region has experienced job losses during the most recent global economic downturn within the local industrial employment base. The Cowichan Region's resource and manufacturing base has specifically experienced dramatic loss and operational hardships. As a result several local companies have been forced to down-size or cease operations. Cowichan leaders, from both the private and public sectors, have recognized this temporary downturn in the local economy has created an opportunity to shape the future growth and well-being of the Region in a sustainable fashion.

Although the Cowichan Region is strategically located on Vancouver Island with close proximity to both Victoria and Nanaimo, and has several competitive advantages when compared to surrounding communities, it is without a current and relevant plan to provide strategic economic development guidance.

The overall desired objectives of this Strategy are to build a sustainable future for the Cowichan Region. In addition, strategy objectives include:

- Increase higher value added quality employment opportunities
- Achieve local economic stability
- Build a diverse economic and employment base that will provide for a strong and prosperous community of the future

Economic Development Cowichan has engaged the region in an exercise which has led to the development of the Cowichan Region's first Sustainable Economic Development Strategy. This Strategy provides the required tools to help the Region develop its local employment base and to increase their competitive readiness to position the Region to move towards a more sustainable economic future. The Strategy also brings together the various plans that have been developed over the past year including the Cowichan Region Area Agricultural Plan, Regional Tourism Plan and the Green Business Development Plan.

Context for Strategy Direction

It is recognized at a general level that this economic development strategy must help to sustain the economy of the Cowichan Region while at the same time help to increase the competitiveness of the Region. It is important to keep in mind that while increased competitiveness is one of the overall goals of the strategy, there are important considerations arising out of current economic development programs and economic conditions that must be taken into account. These conditions cannot be ignored nor can new focused initiatives work to undermine them in any way. Rather, new initiatives must lever these to achieve the sustainability and competitiveness that the new economic development strategy demands. The programs and conditions to be considered follow.

- Though the primary sectors are in a decline they still play an important role in the Cowichan Region. Forestry and agriculture cuts across several industry and new methods for developing within the sectors need to be addressed. This strategy seeks to reinforce and build on the strengths of the sector through growth into new market segments for which there is substantial opportunity and capability.
- The resident labour force is educated and skilled, yet there is some who are forced to seek employment outside of the Region. Creating new opportunities for business growth and attraction and growing entrepreneurship will create employment opportunities in the Cowichan Region.
- At the same time, it should be recognized that skills requirements are ever changing. These changes require monitoring so that evolving requirements can be met through appropriate training – preferably at local educational institutions.
- It is commonly accepted that a large portion of business growth and job creation is from within the existing business in any community. Therefore there is a need for continued business retention and expansion efforts. In addition to regular business visits, other activities should be considered including:
 - Maintenance of the existing business database and inclusion of local success stories, testimonials. Increase public awareness and regular communication of these successes to key stakeholders.
 - Continue to work closely and align activities with other organizations involved in economic development (i.e. Community Futures, Chambers of Commerce, etc.).
 - Work closely with the Region supporting activities related to agriculture and tourism, specifically as it relates to enhancing the Cowichan Region's position in these sectors.
- Given that substantial business growth occurs from within – and the importance of that growth continuing, a substantial portion of this strategy addresses issues that can improve the competitiveness of the Cowichan Region business climate for all businesses.
- There is lack of understanding about what economic development is and what it does for the Region. It will be important to move into a strong communication plan to educate and inform residents, key stakeholders and political bodies of economic development activities.
- Currently the EDC is working with far too many goals and objectives. In excess of 20 goals are outlined in the current work plan. This strategy aims to refocus and streamline activities so that economic development can be successful and targeted.

Considering the preceding as the overall context for the economic development strategy for the Cowichan Region, the following section details the eight goals focused on building a sustainable future for the Cowichan Region:

1. Increase Cowichan Region's Capacity as a Place for Business
2. Increase Competitiveness of the Cowichan Region
3. Create a Unique Sense of Place
4. Community of Choice for Green Business
5. Cowichan – Creative and Cultural
6. Thriving and Diverse Agriculture Industry
7. Support Tourism Cowichan
8. Lead by Example

Each of the eight goals has specific strategies that work towards achieving the goals. Some of these strategies can be implemented immediately while others are longer term in nature. The Implementation Plan section of this strategy provides additional information regarding timelines.

Goal 1: Increase Cowichan Region's capacity as a place for business

1. Develop a Regional Community Profile with sub-profiles for each community within the CVRD.
2. Develop a land inventory.
3. Define economic development governance structure.
4. Enhance communication and education among economic development, local government, the business community, media and general public.
5. Develop "how to start a business" guide specific to each community within the CVRD.
6. Work with First Nations on identifying economic development initiatives creating mutual benefits.

Goal 2: Increase Competitiveness of the Cowichan Region

7. Expand Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) program.
8. Initiate a review of the development approvals process in the CVRD and all the communities within including the development of a Regional Growth Strategy.
9. Develop a streamlined process dedicated to successful business expansion.
10. Create stand-alone economic development website.
11. Participate in the next KPMG Competitive Alternatives review in 2012.
12. Focus marketing around the targeted industries.

Goal 3: Create a Unique Sense of Place

13. Support social enterprise through the creation of a social financing program.
14. Create an environment that attracts and retains a diverse, talented pool of young professionals and meets the needs of recent graduates.
15. Improve industry-academic links and expand entrepreneurship.
16. Partner with Chambers of Commerce to welcome new business to the Region.
17. Take advantage of opportunities that arise to create one or more distinguishing features of the Cowichan Region.

Goal 4: Community of Choice for Green Business

18. Adopt and Implement actions within the Green Business Development Plan.
19. Develop education programs for greening local business and Green Solutions.
20. Partner with local farmers and agriculture landowners to explore the interrelationship of agriculture and the renewable energy industry.

Goal 5: Cowichan – Creative and Cultural

- 21. Support creation of a regional arts and culture committee.
- 22. Develop an inventory of arts and culture businesses and opportunities.
- 23. Create an arts & cultural plan.

Goal 6: Thriving and Diverse Agriculture Industry

- 24. Implement actions from the Cowichan Region Area Agricultural Plan.
- 25. Continue to encourage greater participation in community-supported agriculture programs.
- 26. Partner with local farmers and agricultural landowners to explore options for succession planning.
- 27. Strive for the Cowichan Region to become a centre of excellence for food and wine.
- 28. Educate the public and promote agriculture

Goal 7: Support Tourism Cowichan

- 29. Adopt and Implement actions from the Cowichan Region Tourism Plan.
- 30. Work with Tourism Cowichan to create and promote agri-tourism and eco-tourism initiatives.
- 31. Work with First Nations to identify opportunities and promote tourism initiatives.

Goal 8: Lead by Example

- 32. Create sustainability benchmarks.
- 33. Work with local government and planning departments to influence that all new buildings be developed under LEED guidelines.
- 34. Strive to maintain and create a healthy environment with a dedication to environmental sustainability.

Goal 1: Increase Cowichan Region's Capacity as a Place for Business

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Develop a Regional Community Profile with sub-profiles for each community within the CVRD.

A community profile is usually the first piece of information that a prospective investor, business or site selection consultant will look for regarding a community's potential suitability. EDC does produce a Site Selector Profile, however does not have a community profile. The information provided in the Site Selector Profile does not provide all the information in the manner that a community profile will. The community profile is used to accomplish the following: 1) The prospect requests community and site profiles for each viable community within the geographic area of the search; 2) Information provided through the community profiles will then be reviewed to determine which communities the prospect wishes to include in the initial pool of potential project locations.

Through the public consultation there was a clear frustration that demographic information is not readily available on the specific areas within the CVRD. Though census information may not be available for every area, there is information available at some level. It would benefit the EDC to develop an overall community profile for the Cowichan Region along with sub-profiles for each of the areas that census information is available, (i.e. Duncan, North Cowichan, Lake Cowichan, etc.). In addition, the collection of additional data and development of community profiles would support the CVRD Corporate Strategic Plan's objective to promote and assist with investor templates.

Actions:

- **Start process to create community profiles**
 - **Maintain and update community profile information**
-

2. Develop a land inventory.

One of the most critical pieces of information that is required in responding to enquiries (both internal and external) is the inventory of available land and buildings. While a community may meet the criteria in terms of labour and other key decision-making issues it is essential for the required land to be available in order to attract new investment or satisfy local expansion needs. The development of a land inventory can benefit the EDC in a number of ways. It demonstrates the ability of the Region to accommodate a company's needs. The information can be used to provide local government with rationale for new zoning or OCP changes. The information can also be used when approaching the Agricultural Land Commission for removal of land from the ALR.

Actions:

- **Working with local and external real estate representatives develop a comprehensive land and facilities inventory, broken out by region/community/First Nation**
 - **Publish an updateable detailed land and facility inventory to distribute to potential clients**
 - **Create an online inventory of available lands and facilities; searchable by size and permitted uses**
 - **Maintain and update inventory**
-

3. Define economic development governance structure.

There is evidence that environmental concerns and regulation can contribute positively to the economy. In a recent study by the Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts, it was found that, based on the requirements attributable to the US Mercury and Transportation Rules, creation of 1.46 million jobs over the next five years could result, and most of these would be jobs requiring high skilled workers.

Certainly a stronger working relationship between economic development and the environment commissions is highly recommended but the joining of the two commissions should be done with caution. It is recommended that discussion continue between the two commissions regarding a future amalgamation. At the February 22nd workshop on sustainable land-use a discussion was held regarding the pros and cons of combining the Economic and Environment Commissions. Participants agreed that further discussion is required before a decision to merge is moved forward. It is our recommendation that these discussions continue and that meeting dates be established for quarterly joint meetings to discuss specific topics of mutual interest and to work together on joint initiatives or projects. The outcomes should be carefully reviewed to examine whether a formal joining of commissions is necessary or effective. It is our view that the best option is for the commissions to remain separate to ensure that both economic and environmental goals and objectives are not jeopardized. We also believe that quarterly meetings be established on a permanent basis to ensure communication and economic and environmental agendas are understood and incorporated into the future development of the region.

Actions:

- **Research other organizations that have joint economic development and environmental commissions**
 - **Schedule four (4) dates in 2011 to hold joint meetings and debrief success, advantages and disadvantages**
 - **Determine next steps for future year(s)**
-

4. Enhance communication and education among economic development, local government, the business community, media and general public.

Communication of economic development – its role, its vision, its sustainability – is vital to success. The goal is to identify fundamental ways elected officials, organizations, businesses and the general public, can become informed and become advocates of economic development. They can and should actively participate in and support strategies that make sense within the Region. This cannot be accomplished without the EDC providing the necessary information about what economic development is, what it does for the Cowichan Region and the connection between economic development and other local government policies, the business community and other stakeholders and partners. This is supported by the CVRD Corporate Strategic Plan's objective to focus on regional priorities and to develop a communications plan to improve information flow between Economic Development Cowichan and the Board and ensure that Economic Development Cowichan activities reflect current Board priorities.

Actions:

- **Activity Reports**
 - **Meet with all local governments on annual basis to update activities and to identify potential new partnerships or initiatives**
 - **Electronic newsletter**
 - **Host EDC Board meetings at local businesses or local government offices every quarter**
 - **Identify ways to promote economic development**
 - **Utilize social media to focus on economic development**
 - **Utilize BR+E results and Business Visitation program to submit business success stories and increase public awareness**
-

5. [Develop a “how to start a business” guide specific to each community within the CVRD.](#)

It is well known that entrepreneurial small businesses create most of the new jobs and innovations that fuel an economy, and it is estimated that half of the private sector labour force work in small business. Even knowing this, many communities do not make it easy to start a business. The EDC can develop a “how to” guide on starting a business within the CVRD to provide the information necessary. The CVRD has a number of communities within its boundaries and this document can help to simplify the process immensely by providing the information required for each area.

Actions:

- **Research other start-up guides**
 - **Design and develop a guide (in-house)**
 - **Promote and distribute to media and add to website**
 - **Determine if an informative series about how to start a business is of value**
-

6. [Work with First Nation on identifying economic development initiatives creating mutual benefits.](#)

A strong partnership with First Nations is a critical factor that must be in place to ensure that new development can proceed with their full support and assistance. First Nation communities can provide employees for new business as well as potential land for development. Communities like Osoyoos and Kelowna have developed strong working relationships with neighbouring First Nation communities. Both the First Nations and local governments receive mutually beneficial outcomes as a result of these relationships.

Actions:

- **Establish regular meetings with First Nations Chief and Administration to identify potential joint projects**
 - **See Land Inventory and Tourism**
-

Goal 2: Increase Competitiveness of the Cowichan Region

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Expand Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) Program.

The ability of the Cowichan Region to keep their existing businesses often is easier than attracting new businesses to the Region. It is recommended that the EDC focus 75% of their time to existing businesses while the other 25% of their time is spent attracting new business. The EDC does have a BR+E program and they do meet with local business to hear issues and concerns, however, no formal collection of qualitative or quantitative data is performed. Recommitting to a Business Retention and Expansion program would set out to do just that. In addition, the CVRD Corporate Strategic Plan has an objective to maintain key economic development programs including the existing BR+E Cowichan First Program. Currently, the EDC has recently announced they will be participating in a new BRE program called BC Business Counts. The program is offered through a partnership with the Economic Development Association of BC, BC Hydro and the Ministry of Regional Economic and Skills Development. It is expected the program will launch in March 2011.

A BRE program seeks to identify and understand the issues and obstacles faced by a variety of local businesses in the Region, through a series of detailed surveys and interviews. The program will assist in understanding the immediate concerns among local businesses, seeking to improve the EDC’s efforts in retaining and encouraging growth. Once the core issues and obstacles are addressed within the Region, the business climate is bound to improve. Upon witnessing a successful business climate, this program will assist in marketing and attracting new business and investment into the Cowichan Region, and will therefore allow for an increased provision of stable and sustainable employment opportunities for current and future residents.

A growing BR+E trend is incorporating a “Business Walk” into the program. This trend is becoming popular in the US and is only now being recognized in Canada. A business walk allows for a more informal approach to BR+E while increasing the flexibility of participation from local leaders. The business walk is designed to pinpoint successes and struggles in a community, which then allows business and civic leaders to use that information to help create a more affluent business climate.

Actions:

- Establish BR+E Program
 - Business Visitation Program
 - Business Walk
-

2. Initiate a review of the development approvals process in the CVRD and all the communities within including the development of a Regional Growth Strategy.

Input received by public consultation along with the results from the investment readiness assessment indicates a more efficient process would create encouragement for local business to expand. Furthermore, a streamlined understanding of the various approval processes involved within the CVRD would encourage new business and investment to locate in the Cowichan Region, providing additional employment

opportunities for current and future residents of the Region. The CVRD Corporate Strategic Plan has an objective to support policies and initiatives that strengthen the local economy and to review CVRD regulatory practices and policies and make recommendations for improvements to better support the local economy. As such, it is recommended the EDC and the CVRD establish a real estate development committee to identify challenges and recommend solutions to improve the development approval process.

The lack of a Regional Growth Strategy is one of the biggest impediments to growth. There is also a perception from the development community that getting approvals is too daunting of a task and results in costly delays and potential loss of projects. By having fragmented OCP's and zoning bylaws the confusion level is high on what can actually be accomplished and where.

Actions:

- **Establish a real estate development committee**
 - **Open discussions with CVRD regarding developing a Regional Growth Strategy**
 - **Continue to monitor development process**
-

3. [Develop a streamlined process dedicated to successful business expansion.](#)

Providing a regulatory and easy to understand environment that eases the burden on business can have just as much impact as providing financial incentives to companies. Time is money and businesses appreciate locating or expanding in communities with minimal government delays and bureaucracy. The CVRD has some degree of support from the business community but there is improvement to be made to be seen as being supportive and accommodating. The EDC can implement a few initiatives that would increase or improve on the current image including making the process a “how can we help you” approach. One recommendation includes a “Business First” program that provides expedited site plan and building approvals, enabling businesses to fast-track their development plans.

Actions:

- **Develop a flow chart of the development process in each of the communities within the CVRD**
 - **“Business First” program**
-

4. [Create a stand-alone economic development website.](#)

The EDC is mandated to participate within the CVRD website and the current economic development webpages for Cowichan are within the main CVRD website – there is not a dedicated, unique URL associated for economic development, business or investment opportunities within the Cowichan Region. This can make finding appropriate information extremely difficult to find especially given the number of communities within the CVRD.

From a site selector or investor's point of view nearly 90 percent of location information is derived from the internet and a recent corporate study showed that 88 percent of respondents said they use the internet for obtaining community information.

The current website is lacking in demographic information and target industry specific information. EDC should consider incorporating aspects of top economic development websites. Consideration should be given to each targeted industry – Clean Tech, Agriculture and Tourism – and include the following best of class information for potential business and investment:

- Detailed profile of the target industry(s)
- Regional statistics on the target industry(s)
- Regional map of targeted industry(s) companies and assets
- List of workforce training & education assets supporting the targeted industry(s)
- Cost of operations comparison of targeted industry versus competitor communities
- Research & Development in the region
- Specialized facilities in the region catered to the target industry(s)
- News related to the target industry(s)
- Occupations supporting the target industry(s)
- Regional collaborations already in place
- Infrastructure in place that supports targeted industry(s)

Actions:

- **Start the process to create a stand-alone website**
 - **Website design and site map**
 - **Expand and increase website content**
 - **Maintain and update website information**
-

5. [Participate in the next KPMG Competitive Alternatives review in 2012 to fully understand how the Cowichan Region compares competitively on location cost \(and non-cost\) factors compared to other communities.](#)

There is a lack of clear understanding on the cost of doing business in the Cowichan Region. Participation in the next KPMG Competitive Alternatives will provide the information in a number of ways. The study is a thorough comparison of international business locations and provides valuable information for any company looking for location information. The study looks at 26 specific business cost components that are most likely to vary by location. The study also compares data on a variety of non-cost competitiveness factors and examines 17 industry operations in 10 countries.

Actions:

- **Contact KPMG for details in participating in 2012 study**
 - **Participate in 2012 study**
 - **Develop strategy to disseminate study results**
 - **Develop business operating costs comparisons for each of the region's targeted industries**
-

6. [Focus marketing around the targeted industries.](#)

An effective marketing program is essential to success in attracting, creating and retaining investment and quality jobs. EDC has identified their target industries to be Clean Tech, Agriculture and Tourism. They do participate in a number of marketing activities related to the targeted industries including participation in Linx BC, trade and expo attendance, relationships with provincial and federal investment agencies and

targeted site selection activities. Rather than add numerous new initiatives, elevation of the existing programs from “good” to “excellent” can be achieved through prioritization of those programs and increasing program enhancements.

Actions:

- **Review past three years attendance at trade/expo shows to evaluate value**
 - **Attend at least one trade show or industry conference per targeted sector**
 - **Maintain and increase current relationships with site selectors, decision influences in target industries, government agencies, etc.**
 - **Continue membership in LinxBC and their related activities**
 - **Meet with BC Asia Pacific Branch to identify potential areas of participation**
-

Goal 3: Create a Unique Sense of Place

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

1. Support social enterprise through the creation of a social financing program.

Social finance is an emerging practice in Canada. At the core it is about using forms of borrowing that is traditionally used in the for-profit sector, in the not-for-profit sector. Emerging social enterprises and organizations with for-profit operations are looking to lenders to help them pay for activities that advance their mission, their operations or their growth. Current momentum in the field of social finance is looking to mainstream financial institutions and the development of social enterprises to provide financing options that fit the needs, realities and structures of the not-for-profit sector. Examples of how social finance can support organizations in a community can include providing working capital or providing development capital (i.e. loans for projects if financing cannot be found elsewhere, loan guarantees).

Social financing is an important tool in the development of a sustainable economy as it assists in helping social enterprises emerge and flourish. It contributes to organizational sustainability, innovation and growth. Cowichan can partner with institutions already established in social financing including Vancity and Ecotrust Canada.

Actions:

- Identify financial institutions for partnership
 - Investigate establishing a local venture capital fund targeting social enterprise
-

2. Create an environment that attracts and retains a diverse, talented pool of young professionals and meets the needs of recent graduates.

It is recommended that the EDC partner with VIU and educational institutions to create a joint task force to find ways to create a significant number of regional entry-level and professional jobs for recent graduates and young professionals. The task force could survey local businesses (this could easily be accomplished through the BR+E program and reviewing the results and information gathered) – including large employers such as Catalyst and other businesses that cater to the Region's aging population, as well as local farms, wineries, clean tech, and/or hospitality, restaurants, banks and other service-based establishments – about their upcoming employment needs and work with VIU (and identify other institutions outside the Region) to recruit graduates to fill these positions. This should be revisited on an annual basis, to encourage a constant influx of younger residents.

Through the public consultation there was indication that the effort to find skilled workers made the Cowichan Region a less desirable place to start or relocate a business. Further, the aging workforce within the Region raises concerns as to what will happen when existing workers retire. When coupled with the current uncertain economic future, and a desire to reverse the "brain drain", an improved job-training and workforce development program would assist with the provision of stable and sustainable employment opportunities for current and future residents of the Cowichan Region.

Program curriculum should focus on bolstering skill sets within both the established industries within the Region, as well as the emerging industries that the next generation is interested in. In addition, it is recommended that the program include an avenue for job placement for high school and post-secondary students, with the aim at increasing the number of employment opportunities for youth and the retention of young professionals.

Actions:

- **Create young professional steering committee**
 - **Establish an annual forum for the region's workforce providers and the economic development community to discuss needs, current programs, innovative practices, and methods of collaboration**
 - **Investigate social media usage in the attraction of young professionals**
 - **Engage young professionals in economic development**
 - **Develop a workforce attraction strategy**
 - **Create a labour recruitment package**
-

3. [Improve industry-academic links and expand entrepreneurship focused on the targets sectors of Clean Tech, Agriculture and Tourism, along with other sectors.](#)

Together with the local school district form a Business Advisory Board that works with local businesses to provide students with career education. These programs allow students the opportunity to explore careers that interest them through a variety of programs. The local school district should work to boost student participation through increasing the number and type of opportunities being offered, including programs that appeal to the next generation within the targeted industry sectors of Clean Tech, Agriculture and Tourism, as well as providing specific programs geared towards entrepreneurship. This will ensure that the skills of high school graduates meet the needs of the employers and prominent industries in the Cowichan Region, while fostering interest in returning to the Region if post-secondary education takes them out of the Region. Entrepreneurship should be shown to be a viable option for students and should include a program specific to the needs and interests of local high school students. Such a program would teach local high school students about entrepreneurship and business planning, as well as providing mentorship opportunities. This would generate interest among students in what the Region has to offer, as well as fostering additional employment opportunities for youth.

Actions:

- **Invite educational representatives on appropriate business retention visits where training is crucial and communicate business and labour force needs as required**
 - **Form Career & Entrepreneurship Advisory Board**
 - **Utilize website to provide a one-stop workforce development portal that lists the educational resources of the region**
 - **Ensure education has a representative on the economic development commission**
-

4. [Partner with Chambers of Commerce to welcome new business to the Region.](#)

Upon the opening of new businesses, the EDC should partner with the Chamber of Commerce to deliver a "welcome basket" to the new business within one month of the commencement of operations. The team

should introduce themselves as representatives of the business community and explain the benefits of chamber membership and the role of the Economic Development Commission, as well as available resources for small businesses, including those offered at other organization such as Community Futures. The “basket” should include maps of the Region, a calendar of events, EDC contacts, local business directory and a small sampling of local product. Such initiative will go a long way in assisting new business, and emphasizing the Region’s business climate as one that is welcoming and supportive of local business development.

Actions:

- **Create a working group to develop welcome package**
-

5. **Take advantage of opportunities that arise to create one or more distinguishing features of the Cowichan Region.**

The stakeholder consultation and public input brought forward a common thread of a community questioning what it is the Cowichan Region really is and why is it people want to visit or stay in the Region. Participants recognize Cowichan is no longer a forestry and resource region and that traditional agriculture is changing. Both sectors still play a role in the Cowichan Region economy but the Region is evolving into something not yet clearly defined. Arts & Culture is starting to play a stronger role, agri-tourism and the wine industry is emerging, and there was strong opinion that Cowichan needs to be a leader in environmental efforts. There is a desire for the Cowichan Region’s unique sense of place to be easily recognized and articulated by residents as well as visitors. Distinguishing features that collectively define the Cowichan Region’s unique sense of place need to be incorporated in the business, cultural, social, recreational and residential aspects of the Region.

Actions:

- **Inventory existing features that may be unique along with features that may be identified as “Cowichan”**
 - **Identify common threads/themes from inventory that could be broadly incorporated into business and local government**
-

Goal 4: Community of Choice for Green Business

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Adopt and implement actions within the Green Business Development Plan

In 2009, the EDC completed a Green Business Development Opportunities study. The report provided a number of recommendations that could form the basis for a cluster development strategy. The report was accepted and endorsed by the Green Business Development Committee; however, no action has been taken to date on the recommendations and actions outlined in the report. In addition, the CVRD Corporate Strategic Plan includes the objective to maintain key economic development programs and to implement phase I and II of the project. It is not the desire of this economic development strategy to re-invent the wheel and, therefore, we recommend the plan (Appendix B) be adopted and recommendations from the report are reviewed and incorporated into the EDC's annual work plan.

Actions:

- **Adopt the Green Business Development Plan**
 - **Review existing plan to prioritize recommendations for implementation**
-

2. Develop education programs for greening local business and green solutions.

Various businesses have implemented green practices; several businesses have started to offer green products, and the EDC is in the processing of developing a new marketing theme – Sustainable Cowichan – to promote the sustainable businesses in the Region. However, lack of information was cited as one of the primary reasons why businesses have not incorporated more green practices, even if they were interested in them. Current information for greening existing businesses is available, but this is not readily apparent to those who need them. There are many methods that can be utilized including creating a local green business certification program as a tool for education and implementation of green practices.

It is important to develop short term goals within the strategy and there are some immediate benefits that can be gained by pursuing easy wins with existing businesses and business practices. Easy wins can result from focusing on key sustainable practices that can help businesses improve their bottom line in the short term, as well as focusing on businesses that are particularly impacted in the current economy by fossil fuel prices and the related costs of food.

Actions:

- **Investigate and create a Certified Green Program for local business**
 - **Utilize new website (sustainablecowichan.com) to provide education and links to green programs or other programs that provide significant benefits**
 - **Utilize new website (sustainablecowichan.com) to display certified green businesses and promote their products and services available**
 - **Create education marketing piece on greening a business to provide to existing business during BR+E visits**
 - **Assist existing businesses with implementation of green practices to help them save money**
-

-
- **Identify partners to conduct outreach to businesses through a series of educational seminars focused on short and long-term operational strategies**
 - **Investigate creation of incentives for making energy efficiency upgrades in building facilities**
 - **Investigate incentives for installing solar hot water systems on buildings that use large amounts of hot water as part of operations (i.e. hospitals, laundry or recreational facilities)**
-

3. **Partner with local farmers and agriculture landowners to explore the interrelationship of agriculture and the renewable energy industry.**

Public input indicated the Region's residents' desire for continued environmental sustainability through renewable energy sources including the use of wind, solar, and other natural-powered efforts. There was interest in finding new methods for local farms and agricultural landowners to help sustain agriculture's importance within the Region's economy through the creation and adoption of renewable energy.

Actions:

- **Identify any existing agriculture business utilizing renewable energy methods to understand what is currently being done and how it can be increased throughout the region**
 - **Identify best practices for other communities that can be incorporated into CVRD**
 - **Invite representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture to meet with local producers and describe the program available through BC Agriculture Plan and the Climate Action Initiative**
-

Goal 5: Cowichan – Creative and Cultural

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Create a regional arts and culture committee.

Over the last decade, the work of Richard Florida on the creative economy has captured the attention of many communities. At the heart of Florida's creative economy is the argument that economic growth is now dependent on the talent of a "creative class" who innovates and creates new ideas, new technologies, and/or creative output. Florida argues that the creative class flourishes in places that offer the "3T's" of economic development – Talent, Tolerance and Technology – as well as a wide range of natural, cultural and recreational amenities. The Cowichan Region's creative economy is expanding and public input indicates strong support for its continued growth. There is a need now to ensure the growth can be measured, monitored and capacity can be strengthened. This can be done through the formation of a regional committee focused on the sector.

Actions:

- **Create committee**
-

2. Develop an inventory of arts and culture businesses and opportunities

There was large support for the arts and culture sector; however there was also a lack of clear understanding of who, what and where the sector is. The EDC should work in partnership with the CVRD Arts & Culture Division to evaluate methods for completion of an inventory of sector businesses, employment and opportunities including cultural mapping. This could be pulling in other partners to help fund the project or with post-secondary institutions as a student-lead project.

Actions:

- **Work with CVRD Arts & Culture Division Manager to assist in inventorying existing business**
-

3. Create an arts and culture plan.

Arts and culture are important in community economies. Arts and culture-related industries, also known as "creative industries", provide direct economic benefits to communities. They create jobs, attract investments, generate tax revenues, and stimulate local economies through tourism and consumer purchases. These industries also provide an array of other benefits, such as infusing other industries with creative insight for their products and series and preparing workers to participate in the contemporary labour force. In addition because they enhance quality of life, arts and culture are an important complement to community development, enriching local amenities and attracting young professionals to the area.

The Cowichan Region has a growing arts and culture sector and desire has been expressed to expand the sector. The previous strategies will assist in understanding what is currently happening in the arts and culture sector and the next step will be to understand the feasibility of growing the sector.

Actions:

- **Work with Arts & Culture Division Manager to develop necessary steps for a cultural plan**
-

Goal 6: Thriving and Diverse Agriculture Industry

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Implement actions from the Cowichan Region Area Agricultural Plan.

In October 2009 the EDC completed its Cowichan Region Area Agricultural Plan. The focus groups and stakeholder interviews provided overwhelming support for the plan and its recommendations. Along with the support there was frustration and discouragement expressed that the actions outlined in the plan have not been acted upon. The CVRD Corporate Strategic Plan includes the objective to support agriculture and to implement the Cowichan Regional Area Agriculture Plan. With such overwhelming support of the plan (Appendix C) we propose the recommendations from the report be reviewed and incorporated into the EDC's annual work plan.

Actions:

- **Review existing plan to prioritize recommendations for implementation**
-

2. Continue to encourage greater participation in community-supported agriculture programs, in addition to promoting the purchase of various types of local product, wine and other goods native to the Cowichan Region.

Since many people are not able to grow their own food or wine there is a strong desire to buy it locally and support the local farming industry. While many farms in the Cowichan Region have already done so, there are still farms that have not joined in a Region-wide agricultural "bandwagon". Local farms should consider formalizing a community-supported agriculture program (CSA). These programs have become a popular way for consumers to buy local, seasonal food directly from a farmer. The basics of the program are: a farmer offers a certain number of "shares" to the public. Typically the shares consists of a box of vegetables, but other farm products may be included, interested consumers purchase a share and in return receive a box of seasonal produce each week through the farming season. Information can be found through various sources including www.localharvest.org. This initiative is supportive of CVRD Corporate Strategic Plan's objectives to support agriculture and to expand the promotion of Cowichan region products.

Actions:

- **Pursue the establishment of a CSA and its feasibility for the CVRD and garner support from the agriculture industry**
-

3. Partner with local farmers and agricultural landowners to explore options for succession.

As the Cowichan Region looks towards the future of their farming operations there are many issues to consider. One issue is the aging demographic of the farm owner. Few farmers have a succession plan in place and fewer still have a family member who is interested in taking over the farm. During the consultation period there was interest express by younger residents who are interested in farming but may not have the financial capacity to invest in a farm. Young farmers may not only need capital to purchase farmland they may also need training. There are communities and organizations across North America that are addressing these challenges.

Actions:

- **Build in an agriculture specific component to the BR+E to identify those farms lacking succession plans**
 - **Identify partners or other communities that have developed specific programs or initiatives to assist farmers and their future**
-

4. **Strive for the Cowichan Region to become a centre of excellence for food and wine experience through encouraging complementary uses and economy of scale businesses to locate in the Region.**

The Cowichan Region is one of the major agricultural areas on Vancouver Island. The last census (2006) indicates the total area farmed in the CVRD is 11,559 ha with 700 farms reporting. Agriculture employs 845 people and another 210 are employed in food manufacturing. The Cowichan Region is gaining a reputation for producing premium produce, organic products and most recently – wine. The strength of the local wineries, restaurants, recreational facilities and the tourism industries present a major opportunity to the region's economy.

The Cowichan Region should be developed as a centre of excellence for food experience, through the continued promotion of local foods, wines and organic produce. There presently exists a range of quality restaurants, cafes and specialty food stores, which complement the Region's food and wine industry, and continued efforts, should be taken to promote the Region and its relationship of the food and wine industry. This could be further developed through the attraction of new and appropriate businesses to the region including bed & breakfasts, specialty foods, as well as diverse restaurants ranging from high-end placed to more economical restaurants. In addition, the EDC could develop and/or promote agri-tourism initiatives including food and wine festivals.

Actions:

- **Create website dedicated to the local food and wine experience in the CVRD**
-

5. **Educate the public and promote agriculture**

The EDC can further agriculture by educating local business and residents about the evolution of the agricultural industry and its changing methods and landscape, i.e. slow food movement, viniculture, etc. There is an increased interest in agriculture yet most people have never been on a working farm. In 2009, New Zealand developed an initiative, *Farm Day*, to educate and promote agriculture to the public. Last year's event placed emphasis on explaining how farmers make decisions in respect to their environment. The day helps explain industry guidelines, resource management and what best practice is. Farm day focuses on how environmental management forms a big part of modern farming.

Actions:

- **Prepare an agriculture awareness program targeting residents**
 - **Host a farm day in the CVRD**
-

Goal 7: Support Tourism Cowichan

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Adopt and implement actions from the Cowichan Region Tourism Plan.

The Cowichan Region Tourism Plan was completed in 2010. There was overwhelming support for the plan and its recommendations from the public and stakeholder consultation. As well, the CVRD Corporate Strategic Plan includes the objective to promote tourism and to implement the Cowichan Tourism Marketing Plan. The EDC should review the tourism strategy document (Appendix D) and develop a list of priorities from the recommendations in order to begin to move forward with the plan and incorporate into the EDC's annual work plan.

Actions:

- **Adopt the Cowichan Region Tourism Plan**
- **Review existing plan to prioritize recommendations for implementation**

2. Work with Tourism Cowichan to create and promote agri-tourism and eco-tourism initiatives meant to mutually benefit agriculture and tourism.

The symbiotic relationship of the food and emerging wine industry can be further developed through agri-tourism initiatives including food and wine festivals, in addition to recreational and eco-tourism efforts such as golf outing, fishing and boating tours. EDC should continue to support the existing wine & culinary festival bringing local farms, wineries and other food producers together to showcase their products on an annual basis. The EDC should work with the Cowichan Wine and Culinary Festival Committee and Tourism Cowichan to explore these and other such efforts geared toward agri-tourism and eco-tourism.

Actions:

- **Continue to support the growth of the agri-tourism and eco-tourism industry**
- **Formalize a partnership with the Cowichan Wine and Culinary Festival Committee**
- **Evaluate existing tourism events focused on agriculture and eco-tourism for successes**

3. Work with First Nations to identify opportunities and promote tourism initiatives meant to mutually benefit the Region and First Nation lands.

Through the consultation process Cowichan First Nation expressed strong interest in working in partnership to develop initiatives and programs that would respect their lands and provide benefit to their people. The Cowichan Region Tourism Plan touched upon product development as it relates to aboriginal cultural tourism. As mentioned previously, recommendations from this plan should be revisited and prioritized for implementation.

Actions:

- **Create a working group between First Nations, EDC and Tourism Cowichan to develop an inventory of existing tourism facilities, events, opportunities, etc., on First Nation Lands**
- **Meet quarterly with working group to continue discussions and identify new opportunities**

Goal 8: Lead by Example

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Create sustainability benchmarks.

Develop benchmarks to more sensitively measure the Cowichan Region’s economic progress and ensure dynamic course corrections in a timely fashion. Since the basis of a sustainable economy is a strong and healthy economy, benchmarks should include metrics such as: economic diversity (number of industries represented); high wages; strong, stable tax base; broad range of services; as well as the number of green jobs, green businesses and locally available green product types.

Actions:

- Develop new “sustainability” benchmarks to mark progress of economic development
- Implement a “triple bottom line” (community, environment, economic) program to support projects that have the potential to create employment in the region
- Communicate new benchmarking principles to councils and general public

2. Work with local government and planning departments to influence that all new buildings be developed under LEED guidelines.

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) is an internationally recognized green building certification system that verifies that a building is designed, built-retrofitted, operates and maintained using strategies aimed at increasing energy savings, water efficiency, and indoor environmental quality, while reducing carbon dioxide emissions, and improving stewardship of resources and sensitivity to their impacts. Such buildings are designed to lower operating costs and increase asset value, reduce waste sent to landfills, conserve energy and water, be healthier and safer for occupants, reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions, qualify for tax rebates, zoning allowances and other incentives and demonstrate an owner’s commitment to environmental stewardship and social responsibility. In an effort to set an example for environmentally-responsible development, the EDC should promote that all new buildings be developed under LEED guidelines and strive for certification whenever possible.

One of the actions within the strategy is to identify initiatives or projects for the Economic Development Commission and the Environment Commission to work together on. This objective could be a potential joint initiative.

Actions:

- Take steps to understand LEED certification and requirements

3. Strive to maintain and create a healthy environment with a dedication to environmental sustainability through encouraging renewable energy sources and green business practices through local government.

Environmental sustainability is more than just a trendy buzz-word. It strives to meet the needs of today’s residents without compromising the needs of future residents. Now more than ever, environmental sustainability is a necessity for the future of the Cowichan Region. Over the past few

years, the Cowichan Region has begun to look at renewable energy sources and green practices. According to both the business and resident surveys there is an overwhelming receptiveness and increasing demand for green products. The EDC should work within local government and with businesses to expand environmental stewardship and practices. This can be as simple as insuring food for meetings is always obtained from an independent, local source, printing is done locally, recyclable products only and energy efficiency is maximized.

Collaboration of this objective provides another potential joint initiative for the Economic Development Commission and the Environment Commission.

Actions:

- **Review existing practices within EDC offices**
 - **Develop educational brochure highlighting distribution of money and how it protects the environment of community**
 - **Continue to work with and support the 12 Big Ideas with an economic development framework**
 - **Ensure a “local first” attitude is adopted**
-

ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

This section outlines the specific actions and implementation guidelines for the completion of the eight goals identified in this strategy. Though the plan lays out a roadmap to achieve the goals and objectives of the strategy it is important to note that there must be adequate resources – financial, staff, time – to implement the actions in an effective manner. This is a challenge for many economic development organizations where resources can be tight and the opportunities for increased resources may be limited. There are a variety of federal and provincial programs that may assist in the financial side of implementation and where applicable we have indicated the program.

In addition to the actions outlined below staff is also responsible for day to day activities and considerable time is devoted to the following core activities that take place on an ongoing and/or daily basis:

Core Activities

- Respond to public inquiries daily by phone, fax, e-mail and walk-in traffic;
- Clearing house for information;
- Data Updates (community profile, website);
- Regional initiatives;
- Work with companies or individuals seeking to locate in the Cowichan Region;
- Work with groups of companies within specific industry sectors to ensure new markets developed;
- Newsletter development;
- Ongoing communication with various governments, agencies and organizations (CVRD, councils, Chambers of Commerce, business associations, etc.)

This Action and Implementation Plan is structured in the following way. The first section contains a summary table of actions organized by short-term, medium term and long-term timelines. The section following provides details of the implementation plan including specific actions, responsibilities, funding sources, timelines, and budget.

It is important for the EDC to act upon a number of the activities immediately while others can be implemented at a slower pace. Therefore, each action is assigned a priority ranking.

- Level One: High priority and should be completed within six to twelve months
- Level Two: Medium priority and should be completed within twelve to eighteen months
- Level Three: Lower priority that focus on long-term goals and ongoing economic development commitments.

In addition, Cowichan, like many other economic development organizations, has a volunteer commission. The EDC is made up of individuals from the region representing various interests including business, government and industry sectors. There is a challenge for most commissions or boards to understand what their roles and responsibilities are. This can become more of a challenge when a new strategy is completed and commission members are left wondering what role they can play in its implementation. In the spring of 2010 a planning and visioning day was held with the EDC to address the roles and responsibilities of board members. The following provides an overview of the meeting outcomes and, in addition, Appendix E is a copy of the current bylaw for the Economic Development Cowichan Commission:

1. Formally approve the new Role Definition for the Commission:

“CVRD EDC is an advisory body to the CVRD Board of Directors on ensuring a sustainable, healthy economy in the Region”.

2. Confirm:

- a. How and when the Commission reports to the CVRD Board (it was agreed the Commission through its Commissioners needed to be higher profile in this process ~ e.g. Commission Chair to occasionally report to the Board);
- b. Discuss the process for Commission members to also raise profile and attend Board meetings;
- c. Discuss approaches to having the Commission members actively represent the Commission in the community.

3. Formally endorse the Sustainability Planning process.

4. Define/clarify in greater detail the information and data Commission members would like to have in order to carry out their role.

5. Make the case to the CVRD for the value of developing and implementing a much more robust planning process for the District which would include an economic development component (it was agreed the present District Corporate Strategy would continue to its conclusion, likely in September, while a more “robust” process would require 2/3 years for development and implementation).

6. Review and agree to Commission input to the Corporate Development Strategy. It was mentioned the existing input was based on limited discussion and against tight time constraints.

Goal 1: Increase Cowichan Region's Capacity as a Place for Business

1. Develop a Regional Community Profile with sub-profiles for each community within the CVRD.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Start process to create community profile(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine if profile(s) are to be done in-house or contracted out Start data collection process Design community profile(s) Completion of draft profiles(s) Distribute to communities, councils for input Completion of final profile(s) Add to website(s) Communicate new profile(s) to media and community(s) 	June July/August July/August October October November November November	In-house is minimal cost and is staff time Contracted out cost is \$20,000	In-house – student could be utilized to collect information Contracted out project could be delayed to 2012 and ICCI funding could be applied for	EDO/staff
Action – Level Two				
Action – Level Three				
Maintain and update community profile information	Ongoing	Staff Time	N/A	EDO/Staff

2. Develop a land inventory.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Action – Level Two				
Working with local and external real estate representatives develop a comprehensive land and facility inventory, broken out by region/ community/First Nation, with information on the following characteristics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of municipal water Availability of municipal sanitary sewer system Electrical supply Natural gas Services with high speed 	March 2012	Minimal costs if done in-house \$10,000 if contracted out	ICCI funding may be available for a contract project	EDO/Staff

telecommunications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No man-made environmental issues, such as chemical contaminations Size of land and/or facility Designated in the municipality's official community plan and zoning bylaws as industrial, commercial or other designations allowing industrial uses such as manufacturing, assembly and warehousing 				
Publish an updateable detailed land and facility inventory to distribute to potential clients	March 2012	Staff Time	N/A	EDO/Staff
Create an online inventory of available land and facilities; searchable by size and permitted use	May 2012	\$3,000 if searchable database	ICCI funding may be available	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Three				
Maintain and update inventory	Ongoing	Staff Time	N/A	EDO/Staff

3. Define economic development government structure.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Research other organizations that have joint economic development and environmental commissions See Best Practices “Roundtable on Sustainable Development”	April	Staff Time	Environment Commission	EDO/Staff
Schedule four (4) dates in 2011 to hold joint meetings and debrief success, advantages and disadvantages	April	Staff Time	N/A	EDO Environment Commission
Action – Level Two				
Determine next steps for future year(s)	December	Staff Time	N/A	EDO Environment Commission
Action – Level Three				

4. Enhance communication and education among economic development, local government, the business community, media and general public.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Activity Reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a template to update EDC board members on active activities of the economic development office Develop a quarterly template to update all councils on active activities of the economic development office (include in council packages) 	May May	N/A	N/A	EDO/Staff
Meet with all local government on an annual basis to update activities and to identify potential new partnerships or initiatives	Ongoing	N/A	N/A	EDO
Action – Level Two				
Electronic newsletter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redefine the objective, timing and distribution of newsletter Review existing database and expand distribution reach 	September	Staff Time	N/A	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Three				
Host EDC Board meetings at local businesses or local government offices every quarter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If at a local company's boardroom or council office - provide the opportunity for the company to give a presentation to the board on their operations including a tour of the facilities If at a council office invite all council members to attend 	Quarterly	N/A	N/A	EDO
Identify ways to promote economic development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify agencies and organizations for speaking engagements Establish a speaking schedule 	Ongoing	Staff Time	Chambers Rotary Associations Business Groups	EDO/Staff
Utilize social media to focus on economic development:	4 th quarter activity/Ongoing	Staff Time	N/A	EDO/Staff

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an account on Twitter specific to economic development Expand awareness of economic development initiatives through Facebook Post videos of community activities with a focus on business and economic development on YouTube Assign staff or volunteer program to ensure accounts/posts are updated regularly 				
Utilize BR+E results and Business Visitation program to submit business success stories and increase public awareness	Ongoing	Staff Time	N/A	EDO

5. Develop a “how to start a business” guide specific to each community within the CVRD.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Action – Level Two				
Research other start up guides	October	Staff Time	Community Futures	EDO/Staff
Design and develop a guide (in-house)	November/December	Staff time	Community Futures	EDO/Staff
Promote and distribute to media and add to website	January 2012	Staff Time	Community Futures	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Three				
Determine if an informative series about how to start a business is of value <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for partnerships (i.e. Community Futures) Work with local media/newspaper to run series of articles 	January 2012	Staff Time	Community Futures	EDO/Staff

6. Work with First Nations on identifying economic development initiatives creating mutual benefits.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Establish regular meetings with First Nations Chief and Administration to identify potential joint projects	April/Ongoing	Staff Time	First Nations	EDO
Action – Level Two				
See Land Inventory & Tourism				
Action – Level Three				

Goal 2: Increase Competitiveness of the Cowichan Region

1. Expand Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) program.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Establish BR+E program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of businesses to visit Survey questions Determine if a consultant will be utilized to start BR+E 	May	\$30,000 if consultant utilized	Employment and Labour Market Services	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Two				
Business Visitation Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set annual number of businesses to visit Determine method to disseminate information 	Ongoing	Staff Time	TBD	EDO/Staff
Business Walk: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research Business Walk models Define parameters, date(s) and participants Collect data Collate results Disseminate findings to community See Best Practices “Business Walk Series”	October	Staff Time	Local Government	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Three				

2. Initiate a review of the development approval process in the CVRD and all the communities within including the development of a Regional Growth Strategy.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Establish a real estate development committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify participants including developers, commercial real estate (Colliers), CVRD staff, EDC staff Complete a review of development processes and costs Complete comparison to communities of similar size Determine where improvements can be made 	October	Staff Time	CVRD	EDO/Staff

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define how information will be disseminated Communicate information to community 				
Action – Level Two				
Open discussions with CVRD regarding developing a Regional Growth Strategy	October	N/A	CVRD	EDO
Action – Level Three				
Continue to monitor development process	Ongoing	Staff Time	CVRD	EDO/Staff CVRD

3. Develop a streamlined process dedicated to successful business expansion.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Develop a flow chart of the development process in each of the communities within the CVRD	June	Staff time	CVRD	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Two				
“Business First” program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize information gathered from Objective #2 Together with CVRD departments define a realistic and achievable process to fast track process Release program to public 	November	Staff Time	CVRD Business Development Community	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Three				

4. Create a stand-alone economic development website.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Start the process to create a stand-alone website: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form a website committee to receive input and direction on a new website focused on economic development – not just a sub-page(s) off CVRD website Establish own website domain name – register name See Best Practices – Airdrie Now	September	Staff Time	N/A	EDO/Staff

Action – Level Two				
Website design and site map: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire a website designer Review other economic development websites for ideas and best practices Work with website designer and website committee to determine design 	January 2012 Jan/Feb 2012 Feb/March 2012	\$15,000 minimum	ICCI funding may be available	EDO/Staff
Expand and increase website content: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine if content will be created/written in-house or contracted out Work with website committee to define content Collect data for content Submit content and review drafts(s) of website Communicate new website to media and community 	Feb/March 2012 March/April 2012 April/May 2012 May 2012	Staff Time	N/A	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Three				
Maintain and update website information	Ongoing	Staff Time	N/A	Staff

5. Participate in the next KPMG Competitive Alternatives review in 2012.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Action – Level Two				
Contact KPMG for details in participating in 2012 study (i.e. costs, timeframes, etc.)	June	TBD	ICCI may provide funding for participation	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Three				
Participate in 2012 study	2012	\$5,000	N/A	EDO
Develop strategy to disseminate study results	2012	Staff Time	N/A	EDC/Staff
Develop business operating costs comparisons for each of the region's targeted industries	2012	Staff Time	N/A	EDC/Staff

6. Focus marketing efforts around the targeted industries.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Action – Level Two				
Review past three years attendance at trade/expo shows to evaluate value	September	N/A	N/A	EDO/Staff
Attend at least one trade show or industry conference per targeted sector <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify all applicable shows for 2011/2012 Target one show per target Set schedule 	2011/2012 and beyond	TBD	Local industry groups	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Three				
Maintain and increase current relationships with site selectors, decision influences in target industries, government agencies, etc.	Ongoing	Staff Time	N/A	EDO/Staff
Continue membership in Linx BC and their related activities	Annually/ Ongoing	\$3,500	N/A	EDO
Meet with BC Asia Pacific Branch to identify potential areas of participation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strategies and budgets related to identified participation/activities 	May 2012	TBD	Provincial Government	EDO

Goal 3: Create a Unique Sense of Place

1. Support social enterprise through the creation of a social financing program.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Action – Level Two				
Identify financial institutions for partnership	December	Staff Time	Financial Institution(s)	EDO/Staff
Investigate establishing a local venture capital fund targeting social enterprise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact provincial fund management Identify best practices (www.socialfinance.ca) 	April 2012	Staff Time	Financial Institutions(s)	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Three				

2. Create an environment that attracts and retains a diverse, talented pool of young professionals and meets the needs of recent graduates.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Create a young professional steering committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify potential members including VIU Define expectations of the committee 	September	Staff Time	VIU Community Futures Chambers	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Two				
Establish an annual forum for the region's workforce providers and the economic development community to discuss needs, current programs, innovative practices, and methods of collaboration	May 2012	Staff Time	VIU	EDO/Staff
Investigate social media usage in the attraction of young professionals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research what other communities are doing 	January 2012	Staff Time	N/A	EDO/Staff

Action – Level Three				
Engage young professionals in economic development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current board and appoint young professional representative if needed Encourage prominent community boards to engage young professionals 	2011/2012 and Ongoing	Staff Time	N/A	EDO/Staff
Develop a workforce attraction strategy	May 2012	TBD (staff time or consultant)	Employment agencies and local business	EDO
Create a labour recruitment package <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine use of recruitment package (i.e. foreign recruitment versus local) Identify local businesses to understand the relevant information to include (use BR+E results) Begin process to development package 	May 2012	Minimal and Staff Time	Employment agencies and local business	EDO/Staff

3. Improve industry-academic links and expand entrepreneurship.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Invite educational representatives on appropriate business retention visits where training is crucial and communicate business and labour force needs as required	Ongoing	N/A	VIU School District Other educational institutions	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Two				
Form Career & Entrepreneurship Advisory Board: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify potential members Include representatives from target industries and education Schedule first meeting to define roles, responsibilities and objectives Develop an entrepreneurship strategy for targeted industries <p>See Best Practice – “Bridges” & “CART”</p>	December	Staff Time	VIU School District Target Industry representation	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Three				
Utilize the website to provide a one-	Ongoing	N/A	VIU	EDO/Staff

stop workforce development portal that lists the educational resources of the region			School District Community Futures	
Ensure education has a representative on the economic development commission	Annual	N/A	N/A	EDO

4. Partner with Chambers of Commerce to welcome new business to the Region.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Action – Level Two				
Action – Level Three				
Create a working group to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop method to identify new business in CVRD Determine who will take lead in program Develop welcome package and method of distribution (i.e. mail versus personal visit) 	January 2012	Staff Time	Chamber	EDO/Staff Chamber Manager

5. Take advantage of opportunities that arise to create one or more distinguishing features of the Cowichan Region.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Action – Level Two				
Inventory existing features that may be unique along with features that may be identified as “Cowichan”: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify partners Develop mapping project parameters 	September	\$3,000	First Nation Tourism Groups Chambers	EDO/Staff Co-op student could be utilized
Identify common threads/themes from inventory that could be broadly incorporated into business and local government: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate outcomes to determine next steps 	September	Staff Time	First Nation Tourism Groups Chambers	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Three				

Goal 4: Community of Choice for Green Business

1. Adopt actions within the Green Business Development Plan.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Adopt the Green Business Development Plan	May	N/A	N/A	EDO/Staff
Review existing plan to prioritize recommendations for implementation See Best Practices “Clean Tech Jobs”	June	TBD	Clean Tech Committee	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Two				
Action – Level Three				

2. Education programs for greening local business and green solutions.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Investigate and create a Certified Green Program for local businesses this could include a “green” test, development of certified logo, promotion of products and services, etc. See Best Practices “Green Business”	June 2012	Staff Time	Environment Commission BC Hydro CVRD	EDO/Staff CVRD
Utilize new website (sustainable cowichan”) to provide education and links to green programs or other programs that provide significant benefits	June 2012	Staff Time	TBD	EDO/staff
Utilize new website (sustainable cowichan) to display certificated green businesses and promote their products and services available	June 2012	Staff Time	N/A	EDO/Staff
Create education marketing piece on greening a business to provide to existing business during BRE visits See Best Practices “Going Green with the City Booklet”	June 2012	Staff Time	N/A	EDO/Staff
Assist existing businesses with	Ongoing	Staff Time	N/A	EDO/Staff

implementation of green practices to help them save money. Examples include:

- Restaurants composting
- Paper waste reduction
- Use local suppliers
- Eliminate disposable shopping bags

Action – Level Two

Identify partners (i.e. BC Hydro) to conduct outreach to businesses through a series of educational seminars focused on short and long-term operational strategies

September 2012

TBD

BC Hydro

EDO/Staff

Investigate creation of incentives for making energy efficiency upgrades in building facilities

September 2012

TBD

CVRD

EDO/Staff

Investigate incentives for installing solar hot water systems on buildings that use large amounts of hot water as part of operations (i.e. hospitals, laundry or recreational facilities)

September 2012

TBD

N/A

EDO/Staff

Action – Level Three

3. Partner with local farmers and agriculture landowners to explore the interrelationship of agriculture and the renewable energy industry.

Action – Level One

Timelines

Budget

Program/Partner

Responsibility

Action – Level Two

Identify any existing agriculture business utilizing renewable energy methods to understand what is currently being done and how it can be increased throughout the region.

October

Staff Time

N/A

EDO/Staff

Identify best practices from other communities that can be incorporated into CVRD

December

Staff Time

N/A

EDO/Staff

Invite representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture to meet with local producers and describe the

December

Staff Time

N/A

EDO/Staff

program available through BC
Agriculture Plan and the Climate
Action Initiative

Action – Level Three

Goal 5: Cowichan – Creative and Cultural

1. Create a regional arts and culture committee.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Create committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify individuals to represent the arts & culture industry on committee Develop invitation letter to form committee Hold first meeting to define roles, responsibilities and objectives 	June	N/A	CVRD Arts & Cultural Division	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Two				
Action – Level Three				
See Best Practices “Handmade in America”, “PEI – Canada’s First Creative Rural Economy”				

2. Develop an inventory of arts and culture businesses and opportunities.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Work with CVRD Arts & Culture Division Manager to assist in inventorying existing businesses	January 2012	N/A	CVRD Arts & Culture Division	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Two				
Action – Level Three				

3. Create an arts and culture plan.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Action – Level Two				
Action – Level Three				
Work with Arts & Culture Division Manager to develop necessary steps for a cultural plan	2013 and beyond	TBD	CVRD Arts & Culture Division	EDO/Staff

Goal 6: Thriving and Diverse Agriculture Industry

1. Implement actions from the Cowichan Region Area Agricultural Plan.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Review existing plan to prioritize recommendations for implementation	June	TBD	Agriculture Committee	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Two				
Action – Level Three				

2. Continue to encourage greater participation in community-support agriculture programs.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Pursue the establishment of a CSA and its feasibility for the CVRD and garner support from the agriculture industry	October	N/A	Agriculture Committee	EDO
Action – Level Two				
Action – Level Three				

3. Partner with local farmers and agricultural landowners to explore options for succession.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Build in an agriculture specific component to the BR+E to identify those farms lacking succession plans	June	N/A	N/A	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Two				
Identify partners or other communities that have developed specific programs or initiatives to assist farmers and their future “hand down”	December	N/A	Community Futures Ministry of Agriculture Farm Credit Canada	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Three				

4. Strive for the Cowichan Region to become a centre of excellence for food and wine.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Action – Level Two				
Action – Level Three				
Create a website dedicated to the local food and wine experience in the CVRD. Information could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map of local producers • Map of retailers utilizing local products • Online orders • Circle tour(s) • Special events • Business opportunities • Specific niches (i.e. cittaslow) 	June 2012	\$3,000	N/A	EDO/Staff

5. Educate the public and promote agriculture.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Prepare an agriculture awareness program targeting residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a community awareness brochure highlighting the importance of agriculture and what is involved • Distribute brochure through various venues including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Welcome Wagon, ○ Chamber of Commerce ○ Visitor Information Centre ○ City licensing and permitting department ○ Financial Institutions 	December Ongoing	\$3,000	Investment Agriculture Foundation	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Two				
Action – Level Three				
Host a farm day in the CVRD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote to general public • Invite key local stakeholders, including: 	2012	\$2,000	Chambers of Commerce Tourism	EDO/Staff

- Local politicians and city staff
- MLA, MP
- Chamber
- ALC

Cowichan

Goal 7: Support Tourism Cowichan

1. Adopt actions from the Cowichan Region Tourism Plan.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Review existing plan to prioritize recommendations for implementation	June	TBD	Tourism Cowichan	EDO/Staff
Action – Level Two				
Action – Level Three				

2. Work with Tourism Cowichan to create and promote agri-tourism and eco-tourism initiatives.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Continue to support the growth of the agri-tourism and eco-tourism industry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a brochure promoting local agri-tourism operations Create a brochure promoting local eco-tourism Include agri-tourism and eco-tourism operations in the BR+E program 	December December Ongoing	\$4,000	Tourism Cowichan	EDO
Action – Level Two				
Formalize a partnership with the Cowichan Wine and Culinary Festival Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with committee to determine partnership roles and responsibilities 	December	Staff Time	Cowichan Wine & Culinary Festival Committee	EDO
Action – Level Three				
Evaluate existing tourism events focused on agriculture and eco-tourism for successes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify any gaps Identify opportunities for future events/festivals 	December	Staff Time	Tourism Cowichan	EDO

3. Work with First Nation to identify opportunities and promote tourism initiatives.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Create a working group between First Nation, EDC and Tourism Cowichan to develop an inventory of existing tourism facilities, events, opportunities, etc. on First Nation Lands: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify gaps • Identify new and future opportunities • Identify initiatives that can be worked on together 	June	N/A	Tourism Cowichan First Nations	EDO
Meet quarterly with working group to continue discussions and identify new opportunities	Ongoing	N/A	N/A	EDO
Action – Level Two				
Action – Level Three				

Goal 8: Lead by Example

1. Create sustainability benchmarks.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Develop new “sustainability” benchmarks to mark progress of economic development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review benchmarks outlined in best practices section Chose and adopt from best practices section or develop own set of criteria See Best Practices “Genuine Progress Indicator”, “Sustainable Calgary”, “The Calvert-Henderson Quality of Life Indicators”	December	N/A	N/A	EDO
Action – Level Two				
Implement a “triple bottom line” (community, environment, economic) program to support projects that have the potential to create employment in the region: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate processes to evaluate projects based on triple bottom line Encourage CVRD to implement program See Best Practice “Hamilton LEEDING the Way”				
Action – Level Three				
Communicate new benchmarking principles to councils and general public	December and beyond	N/A	N/A	EDO CVRD

2. Work with local government and planning departments to influence that all new buildings be developed under LEED guidelines.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Action – Level Two				
Action – Level Three				
Take steps to understand LEED certification and requirements:	Ongoing	Staff Time	CVRD	EDO/Staff

- Familiarize and educate staff
- Investigate possible incentives for the CVRD to implement
- Tell the economic development benefit of LEEDs
- Identify new projects
- Work with planning staff to incorporate LEED guidelines

3. Strive to maintain and create a healthy environment with a dedication to environmental sustainability.

Action – Level One	Timelines	Budget	Program/Partner	Responsibility
Review existing practices within EDC offices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include regulatory policies under CVRD (i.e. car fleet, recycling, etc.) • Identify where improvement(s) can be made See Best Practices “Environmental Renewal as Economic Development”	December	N/A	N/A	EDO
Action – Level Two				
Develop educational brochure highlighting distribution of money and how it protects the environment of community	June 2012	\$1000	Environment Committee	EDO
Action – Level Three				
Continue to work with and support the 12 Big Ideas with an economic development framework	Ongoing	N/A	N/A	EDO/Staff
Ensure a “local first” attitude is adopted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food • Office supplies • Printing See Best Practices “Environmentally Preferable Procurement”, “Healthy & Sustainable Food”	Ongoing	N/A	N/A	EDO

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

A Best Practice Brief

Sustainability and economic development are often viewed as incompatible goals. Yet both of these desired outcomes can be achieved through the same local investments, and in fact, can support one another. Cities and Regions have been addressing these issues, creating innovative projects that find ways to save money, promote new jobs, conserve energy, and support new technology.

This Best Practice Brief presents examples of community programs working towards economic development and sustainability goals.

AIRDRIE NOW

City: Airdrie, Alberta

Airdrie has a colourful and highly interactive website. The agency uses a rich library of information sources to cover a wide range of subject areas. Novel ideas that have been incorporated into the site include Social Media platforms and BizPal Answer, a short series of questions about your current or proposed business to create a customized list of the permits and licences you may need from all levels of government. There are also interactive property and business search tools.

BRIDGES

City: Huntsville/Madison County, Alabama

Bridges is a professional and social development program for co-ops, interns and recent college graduates presented by the Chamber of Commerce. It is designed to help young, entry-level professionals bridge the gap between school and career while learning more about living, working and playing the Huntsville/Madison County. The program helps new workers make personal, professional and social connections that keep them in the community.

BUSINESS WALK SERIES

City: City of Roseville, California

The Sacramento Metro Chamber, City of Lincoln, Lincoln Chamber of Commerce, City of Rocklin, Rocklin Area Chamber of Commerce, City of Roseville, Roseville Chamber of Commerce and Placer County developed a Business Walk Series. In 2010, the program represented a joint business walk between economic development and Chambers of Commerce and was the largest business walk in California. In total 283 business and civic leaders visited 1,347 businesses and made personal contact with 1,297. Their conversations focused on three basic questions: How is business? What do you like about doing business in the area? What improvements are needed in the area?

CENTER FOR ADVANCED RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY

City: Fresno-Clovis, California

CART was created in 2000 to collaborate with businesses and community agencies to educate students in an atmosphere using a variety of curricular disciplines. The program is organized to prepare students to work in four career clusters: Professional Sciences, Engineering, Advanced Communications and Global Economics. Students work in career-specific laboratories to complete industry-based projects and receive advanced

academic credit for english, science, math and technology. All classes at CART are college preparatory and satisfy all academic requirements of the California State University and University of California systems.

CLEAN TECH JOBS

City: San Jose, California

San Jose's Green Vision first goal is its Clean Tech Strategy with an overall mission of job creation through clean technology. More specifically, in order to reach its goal of 25,000 new jobs by 2022, San Jose's Clean Tech Strategy is outlined by a number of elements including: incentives to attract, maintain and expand manufacturing jobs; incubate upcoming technologies; implement the Demonstration Policy; ensure local residents have the training opportunities. The City also hosts the Clean Tech Open – an annual innovation competition among entrepreneurs to connect competition winners with free space in San Jose's incubator program. The Clean Tech Open has assisted in the start-up of 125 green tech businesses and in turn created over 500 jobs.

ENVIRONMENTAL RENEWAL AS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

City: Chattanooga, Tennessee

Chattanooga, TN, has made environmental quality and sustainable development the centre piece of its regional economic strategy. Instead of following the traditional development model of low-cost business attraction, the city has crafted a sustainable plan for development based on environmental technology research and business creation, environmental quality, preservation of natural amenities, and encouragement of smart growth. In doing so, it has become a model for sustainable economic development based on the full use of all its resources.

ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERABLE PROCUREMENT

City: San Jose, California

The City adopted a policy to utilize environmentally preferable goods and services where possible, demonstrate leadership, and help move the market towards more environmentally sound commerce. In implementing this policy, the City procures hundreds of different products such as recycled paper and supplies, re-refined oil, retread tires, and recycled toner cartridges. By further incorporating environmental considerations into public purchasing, the City of San Jose will positively impact human health and the environment, remove unnecessary hazards for its operations, and reduce costs and liabilities.

GENUINE PROGRESS INDICATOR

City: Burlington, Vermont

A new generation of ecological economists has been developing alternative measures of social well-being. One is the Genuine Progress Indicator, or GPI, which combines performance on 26 variables – economic, social and environmental – to give a more well-rounded view of our quality of life (see below). All of these variables are converted to dollars, so you can add them together.

GOING GREEN WITH THE CITY BOOKLET

City: Denton, Texas

Denton realized that citizens and businesses wanting to “go green” might not know how to find the best city program for their needs. It was decided that a central source directly matching city resources to the needs of the community would be very helpful, so the Going Green with the City booklet was created. This fun and easy to comprehend 12 page booklet highlights environmental terminology and outlines simple steps citizens can implement at home, at work, and on the go. The booklet is available on the city's website as well as in print. This program was awarded a Municipal Excellent Awards by the Texas State Municipal League for City Spirit.

GREEN BUSINESS

City: San Francisco, California

The Green Business Program recognizes local businesses that have adopted measures to prevent pollution at its source, reduce waste and energy use, conserve water, and reduce their overall carbon footprint. The first step in qualification is compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations. Next, businesses must implement minimum standards listed on a comprehensive check list which include elements in the areas of waste & recycling, energy conservation, water conservation, and pollution prevention. The program standards or measures are developed by program staff with input from industry experts, utility companies, pollution prevention professionals, City inspectors and trade associations.

HAMILTON LEEDING THE WAY

City: Hamilton

As part of the City of Hamilton's Leeding the Way Strategy, the city has committed to evaluate projects based on the "Triple Bottom Line" (community, environment and economic implications). The program makes choices that have value across all three bottom lines making them closer to the vision of a sustainable community. They have developed a process to evaluate projects by taking into consideration various factions including: community, environmental, and economic-wellbeing. Projects that meet these requirements may be eligible to receive grants based on various levels of LEED certification (bronze, silver, gold).

Hamilton has also implemented a program where they will enter into public/private partnerships with developers to achieve a desired public good. An example could include the development of a co-generation heating plant. The city may participate financially or otherwise with private sector entities for the objective of furthering the objectives of the city.

HANDMADE IN AMERICA

Cities in North Carolina

HandMade in America is a partnership of local and regional organizations which promote the handmade craft production industry of Western North Carolina. The handmade craft industry generates \$122 million annually for the local economy, according to the Center for Business Research at Appalachian State University. HandMade's projects include establishing a Craft Heritage Corridor along the Blue Ridge Parkway, developing a registry of all regional crafts people and suppliers, creating studio incubators at landfill sites that utilize methane as a power source, and incorporation craft into architecture, interior design, and housing construction. HandMade in America lists over 3,000 volunteers and 21 partnerships that enhance economic opportunities while constructing sustainable communities unique to the region.

HEALTHY & SUSTAINABLE FOOD

City: San Francisco, California

The Healthy and Sustainable Food Directive requires eight major departments to conduct audits of land under their jurisdiction to identify land suitable for gardening; new health and sustainability measures to be applied to food vendors under city permits; a "healthy meeting policy" for all City meetings, and to purchase only healthy and locally produced food; create a new ordinance to require all food purchased by the City to be locally grown (within a 200-mile radius) using sustainable methods. Future, more general expectations incorporated in the policy are the improvement of healthy food distribution to low-income neighbourhoods and residents; the promotion of urban agriculture through community, backyard, rooftop, and school gardens; the creation of green jobs and support of local food business; and the advancement of public education concerning healthy and local food choices.

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY – CANADA'S FIRST CREATIVE RURAL ECONOMY

City: Prince Edward County, Ontario

Over the last decade, PEC has led an aggressive strategy to attract educated and creative workers to the area. The County has capitalized on the place-based amenities that make the area unique. For example, PEC is fortunate to have over 800 kilometres of coastline and vintage architecture with a long history. With this rich quality of life, PEC has attracted many “Escape Artists”, creative professionals who desire to leave the city to work and live in rural areas. PEC is already home to over a hundred independent artists and galleries, complemented by artistic institutions and uses an aesthetically-pleasing website – www.buildanewlife.ca – to attract creative investment. PEC has further recognized the importance of industry clustering in the creative economy through the Taste Trail. This involves strategic partnerships and co-marketing between farms, cheese producers, wineries, breweries and restaurants in the County.

ROUNDTABLE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

City: Detroit, Michigan

The Detroit/Wayne County Roundtable on Sustainable Development focuses on integrating environmental and economic growth concerns. Forty representatives from neighbourhood organizations, environmental groups, lending institutions, businesses, governments, and charitable and religious groups comprise the Roundtable. Its ten-member board is co-chaired by designees of the mayor and county executive. The six operating principles of the Roundtable are: diversify membership, promote the concept of sustainability, build consensus, support existing efforts, combine the resources of the group’s diverse stakeholders, and set up regional cooperation and communication. Much of the Roundtable’s efforts address the redevelopment and marketing of brownfield sites, and the condemnation of such sites. The group reviews state environmental regulations pertaining to hazardous site mitigation as well. Several major redevelopment projects have been launched, including a stadium, airport, and casino.

SEATTLE GREEN FACTOR

City: Seattle, Washington

The Seattle Green Factor is a new landscaping requirement to make the densest urban areas of Seattle cooler, quieter, cleaner and more beautiful by increasing the amount of landscaping new commercial developments are required to provide. It promotes vegetated walls, pervious paving, rainwater gardens, and provides incentives for developers to plant in public rights-of-ways. In addition to aesthetic benefits, plantings also provide environmental benefits including improved energy efficiency, decreased urban heat island effects, decreased storm water runoff and better air quality. An audit of Green Factor projects found significant increases in innovation practices by developers: half of the site plans included green roofs, two-thirds included pervious paving, and nearly three out four included the use of vegetated walls. The Department of Planning and Development has expanded the program to all multi-family zones in the city.

SUSTAINABLE CALGARY

City: Calgary, Alberta

The Sustainable Calgary State of Our City project is an in-depth look at the health of Calgary’s living environment. The project is based on the understanding that the quality of our life here in our city is sustainable only if the processes that support it generate long-term health and vitality for all. The goal of this collaborative project is to develop the necessary tools and processes to help our city move towards a sustainable future. More specifically, we are tracking Calgary’s long-term health and vitality by using a set of sustainability indicators such as rates of volunteerism, housing affordability, bird population surveys, adult literacy and transit usage, and more.

THE CALVERT-HENDERSON QUALITY OF LIFE INDICATORS

The Calvert-Henderson Quality of Life Indicators are a contribution to the worldwide efforts to develop comprehensive statistics of national well-being that go beyond traditional macroeconomic indicators. A systems approach is used to illustrate the dynamic state of our social, economic and environmental quality of life. The dimensions of life examined include: education, employment, energy, environment, health, human rights, income, infrastructure, national security, public safety, re-creation, and shelter.

EVALUATION PLAN

There are a number of assessments or data sets that economic development uses to measure economic performance. One of the recommendations of this report is to develop specific sustainability benchmarks to measure the success of the Cowichan Region's economic development efforts. The Best Practices section of the report provides a few examples; as well the Sustainable Economic Development Operational Criteria on page 8 of this report provides additional measurements.

The following provides information regarding the more traditional benchmarks that many economic development organizations across North America use. The data is easily found from provincial or national sources that are available at the city level and are generally accepted as good indicators of the overall economic health of the community and its residents. Many communities and provinces already use performance metrics. The data or benchmark is usually placed side-by-side provincial or national data for comparison. Prior to the finalization and acceptance of sustainability-based benchmarks, Economic Development Cowichan can include the following performance metrics:

Economic Development

- Local, regional and provincial media mentions relating to economic development
- Prospect activity (info requests or visits)
- New project announcements
- Number of companies met with by Retention and Expansion Program

Business Climate

- Net new firm creation
- Membership growth in Chamber of Commerce for CVRD's businesses
- Reduction in development permitting timelines
- Percentage of population in the 25-44 year-old demographic
- Average wage growth

Industrial/Commercial

- Number of new industrial/commercial establishments
- Office and industrial vacancy rates
- New projects/developments

Entrepreneurship

- Increase of business licenses
- Tax revenue
- New business job creation

Marketing

- Increased local, regional and provincial media mentions related to the Cowichan Region
- Increase number of qualified business leads
- Increase in visitors
- Increased visitor spending

Partnerships

- Number of formalized partnerships and events
- Increase of potential partners contacting EDC

APPENDIX A: ECONOMIC BASE ANALYSIS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

To help economic development organizations think about the future a solid analysis of current baseline conditions is necessary. It is also important to give consideration to past trends that may continue into the future and alter current conditions.

This report will provide the analyses necessary for Economic Development Cowichan to identify and assess relevant industrial trends. These analyses form the basis for informed and strategic decisions regarding the allocation of critical resources aimed at promoting sustainable local economic development.

1.1. Project Background

Economic Development Cowichan (EDC) produces an annual Benchmarking and Indicators report. This report is presented to the EDC Board of Directors and helps to answer the following questions:

- What is the state of the local economy and where is it going?
- Where should EDC focus their efforts for 2009?
- How is the region doing compared to other benchmark communities?
- What are the region's constraints to a healthy economy?

The report is based on five main indicators – Population, Income, Labour Force, Building Development and Business Development. Each of these broader categories is broken down to provide additional details.

The indicators chosen provide an excellent starting point for an analysis of the Cowichan Region and how the region compares to the four identified benchmark regions of Comox-Strathcona, Okanagan-Similkameen, North Okanagan and Central Kootenay.

EDCD Consulting has been retained to provide the next step. This step involves analytical techniques designed to measure the performance of industries in the community. The two methodologies used are the location quotient analysis and the shift-share analysis. The location quotient analysis identifies industries in which the community specializes. A shift-share analysis assesses the performance of industries in a community over time.

This report provides EDC with the necessary data required to evaluate the state of the local economy at the next level. It identifies the information required for a comprehensive analysis of the economic performance of the region. The report also outlines the fundamental competitive analysis techniques and provides EDC with the information necessary for self-evaluation.

1.2 Project Approach and Methodology

The analysis of the data was prepared, in part, by using a customized spreadsheet model developed by EDCD Consulting. It is based on a variety of regional analysis techniques and models accepted by various economic development associations and research institutions including the C2ER organization, International Economic Development Association, and the Research Department of the American Planning Association.

This section explains the general methodology utilized in this report. It should however be noted that the individual sections provide additional methodology and information on each technique. The additional information serves to further explain how the analysis was completed and helps economic development organizations to interpret the results.

The economic base approach used for this report seeks to identify the sectors of the local economy that serve other regions (through exporting industries) that are often viewed as the primary basis of local economic growth. The Economic Base method is based on the theory that the structure of the local economy is made up of two broad activities:

- The *basic sector* which produces and distributes goods and services for export to individuals or firms from outside the local area.
- The *non-basic sector* whose goods and services are consumed entirely within the local area.

The Economic Base theory is based on the concept that only the basic sector brings new money into the community, and therefore is the key to the community's economic growth and prosperity. Examples of the *basic sector* include firms in the manufacturing, mining, and forestry industries. The *non-basic sector* includes such industries as construction, transportation, utilities, and retail trade.

The analysis in this report compared the composition of employment in the Cowichan Region ("local" or "CVRD") to that of Canada (the "nation"), the province of British Columbia (the "province" or "BC"), and the four regions identified as having similar economic composition to the Cowichan Region. The four regions in order of geographic location to CVRD are Comox-Strathcona ("CSRD"), Okanagan-Similkameen ("OSRD"), North Okanagan ("NORD"), and, Central Kootenay ("CKRD").

A location quotient approach is used to compare the local concentration of industry with the nation, the province, or the region. The location quotient (L.Q.) is simply the ratio that equals an industry's share of the local economy divided by its share of the nation, the province, or the region. When interpreting the data a location quotient greater than 1.0 indicates that the economy is self-sufficient and may even be exporting the good or service of that particular industry. It is generally accepted that a LQ greater than 1.25 almost certainly identifies exporting industries. A location quotient less than 1.0 suggests that the region tends to import the good or service. The applicable rule is that a LQ less than 0.75 indicates an importing industry.

This report also uses the shift-share analysis technique in its analysis. The shift-share analysis is a technique used to identify regional departures from national and/or provincial industrial growth rates and to compare and contrast growth rates. It may also be used to project economic activity. In explaining differentials among regions the shift-share analysis breaks down the gross amount of change, whether positive or negative, as measured by the industry group's employment.

The report analysis will begin by looking at goods-producing industries and service-producing industries as identified by the North American Industry Classification System at the two-digit level. Data is used from the 2001 and 2006 census. Statistics Canada conducts the comprehensive census every five years which provides detailed data of various characteristics of national, provincial, regional, and metropolitan economies. There are other sources of qualitative and quantitative data about local and regional economies. This report utilizes census data unless otherwise noted.

Limitations of the Economic Base Analysis

The Economic Base Analysis provides information on where a community was and where it currently is with regard to employment concentration based on the latest available and most consistent data at the national, provincial, regional and local level. Also, by analyzing the results of the data trends can be identified. This analysis should be used in conjunction with other economic analyses of the community to determine whether the existing economic development policies and strategies are accomplishing the community's goals in economic development.

2.0 Economic Base Analysis

2.1 Economic Base Theory

One of the most commonly used and accepted models to describe how local economies function is the Economic Base Theory. The Economic Base Theory assumes that all local economic activities can be identified as basic or non-basic.

- **Basic industries:** This sector is made up of local businesses that are entirely dependent upon external factors. For example, Boeing builds and sells large airplanes to companies and countries located throughout the world. Their business is dependent almost entirely upon non-local firms. Boeing does not sell planes to families or households locally, so their business is very much dependent upon exporting their goods. Manufacturing and local resources-based firms (like forestry, oil and gas, mining) are usually considered to be basic sector firms because their income depends largely upon non-local factors.
- **Non-Basic industries:** The non-basic sector, in contrast, is composed of those firms that depend largely upon local business conditions. For example, a local grocery store sells its goods to local households, businesses, and individuals. Its clientele are locally based and, therefore, its products are consumed locally. Almost all local services (like drycleaners, restaurants, health care providers, elementary and secondary education, etc.) are identified as non-basic because they depend almost entirely on local factors.

Basic elements are often found in *Non-Basic* industries. For example, a local retailer manages to attract customers from outside the community – say for instance a shoe store, “big box” retailer, a large agricultural equipment dealer, or a car dealership – a portion of their business becomes *Basic*.

The Economic Base Theory contends that the means of strengthening and growing the local economy is to develop and enhance the basic sector. The basic sector is therefore identified as the “engine” of the local economy. It also suggests that by developing firms that rely primarily on external markets, the local economy can better insulate itself because external markets usually remain strong even if the local economy experiences problems. In contrast, a local economy solely dependent upon local factors will have great trouble responding to local economic downturns.

Therefore, traditional economic development programs tend to focus on *Basic* industries (ie. manufacturing and tourism) for two fundamental reasons:

1. The potential growth for most *Basic* industries is not constrained by the size of the local marketplace because these industries export most or all of their production. Assuming there is sufficient labour to meet production demands, there is almost no limit to how big a basic industry can become.
2. *Basic* industries also stimulate the growth of the community’s *Non-Basic* industries as a result of the “new money” they use to pay their employees and to purchase goods and services.

Supporters of the Economic Base Theory argue that economic development programs should focus exclusively on *Basic* industries to grow the local economy. They maintain that there is only need to focus on Basic industries because non-basic industries will find its own level in the community based on population of the marketplace. However, local markets rarely operate as efficiently as theories would suggest. This is especially true for smaller communities.

2.2 Economic Base Analysis

An Economic Base Analysis is a tool used to profile a local economy and compare it to a reference area or areas. After discussions with the Cowichan Region, comparison areas were chosen for this analysis based on the locations of identified communities and the similar mix of economies. The analysis includes comparisons with the regional districts of Comox-Strathcona, Okanagan-Similkameen, North Okanagan, and Central Kootenay.

The analysis consists of two sets of calculations:

- The Location Quotient Analysis which is used to measure the relative concentration of each industry in the community, compared to the Reference Area.
- The Shift-Share Analysis which examines the “net change of employment” over a period of time and measures the relative growth or decline of each industry in the region compared to the performance of that industry across the rest of the province.

NAICS Code

EDCD Consulting uses the *North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS)* to categorize each industry sector. The following gives a brief description of the NAICS classifications.

Select Industries in the NAICS Code

- Wholesale & Retail Trade – retail activity typically accounts for 80% of the total employment in this sector
- F.I.R.E. – is an acronym for Finance, Insurance and Real Estate. It also includes “leasing” activities
- Professional, Scientific & Technical – is dominated by Accounting and Legal services. It also includes Computer Systems Design, Architectural & Engineering services
- Management, Administration & Support Services – covers such services as Temporary Personnel Agencies, Security Services and Property Management Services. It also includes Call Centres and Back Office operations
- Information, Cultural & Recreation – includes Telecommunication Companies, Broadcasters and Internet Service Providers. It also includes Recording and Publishing operations and the Performing Arts, Theatres, Galleries and Recreation Centres.

Sectors/Industries in NAICS Cord – 2 digit level

11 – Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting
21 – Mining & Oil & Gas Extraction
22 – Utilities
23 – Construction
31-33 – Manufacturing
41 – Wholesale Trade
44-45 – Retail Trade
48-49 – Transportation & Warehousing
51 – Information & Cultural Industries
52 – Finance & Insurance
53 – Real Estate & Rental & Leasing
54 – Professional, Scientific & Technical Services
55 – Management of Companies & Enterprises
56 – Administrative & Support, Waste Management & Remediation
61 – Education Services
62 – Health Care & Social Assistance
71 – Arts, Entertainment & Recreation
72 – Accommodation Food Services
81 – Other Services (except Public Administration)
91 – Public Administration

Data Sources

Community level analysis is often hindered by lack of comparable statistics. Fortunately EDCD Consulting was able to source information from the previous two census periods (2001 and 2006). To ensure the data we used produced accurate results we compared results utilizing labour force survey data as an additional source when required.

2001 and 2006 Census – Census data is the most comprehensive and reliable information available at the community level. However, Statistics Canada switched from the SIC code (Standard Industrial Classification) to the NAICS code (North American Industrial Classification System) in 1997. As a result we can not measure changes from previous census periods. Census statistics are measured every five years (2001 and 2006 being the last census periods) and Stats Canada released 2006 labour statistics in March 2008. *Census data presented in this report is subject to suppression and random rounding in order to preserve the confidentiality of respondents to the census. This technique randomly rounds figures either up or down to a multiple of 5. This procedure does not add significant error to the data but does result in certain inconsistencies.*

Labour Force Survey – To measure changes in the economy we utilize the Labour Force Survey (produced by Statistics Canada) when required. It provides comparable data (using NAICS) back to 1990. Unfortunately, data is not available down to the community level – only the “Census Metropolitan Area”. We were able to use labour force survey data as back up data only and to ensure that the results obtained are accurate.

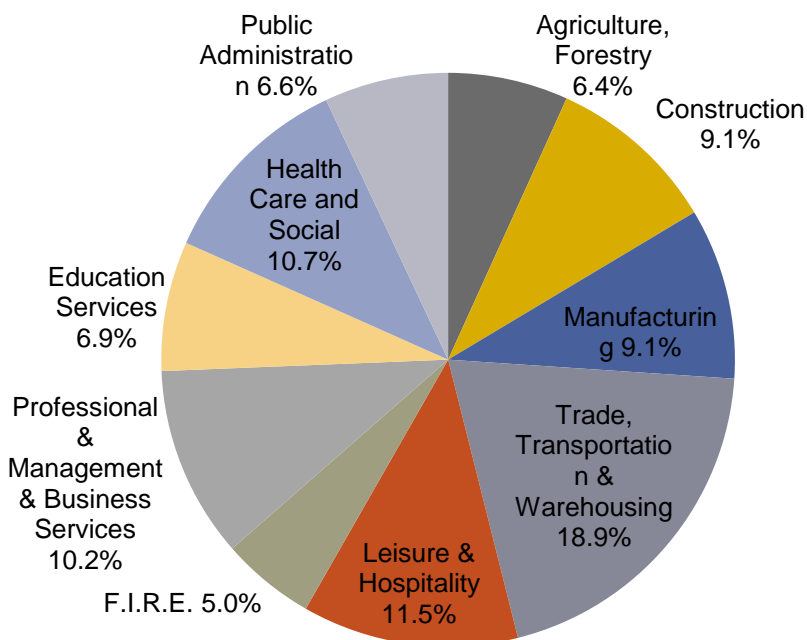
The first step is to look at the employment of Cowichan Region residents.

Table 1: Cowichan Region Employed Residents By Industry Sector

Sector	Employed	% Total
Agriculture & Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	2,425	6.4%
Mining, Oil & Gas Extraction	135	0.3%
Utilities	185	0.5%
Construction	3,455	9.1%
Manufacturing	3,470	9.1%
Wholesale Trade	935	2.5%
Retail Trade	4,955	13.0%
Transportation & Warehousing	1,305	3.4%
Information and Cultural Industries	535	1.4%
Finance, Insurance	1,130	3.0%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	780	2.0%
Professional, Scientific & Technical	1,595	4.2%
Management, Administration & Support Services	1,415	3.7%
Education Services	2,625	6.9%
Health Care & Social Services	4,080	10.7%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	880	2.3%
Accommodation & Food Services	2,975	7.8%
Other Services (except public administration)	1,955	5.1%
Public Administration	2,510	6.6%
Total – All Industries	37,365	

Source: Statistics Canada Census Data 2006

Figure 1: CVRD Employed by Industry



Employment in Cowichan Region is concentrated in three main industry sectors – Trade, Transportation & Warehousing; Leisure & Hospitality; and, Health Care and Social Assistance.

Management & Business Services, Construction and Manufacturing are the other leading employment sectors.

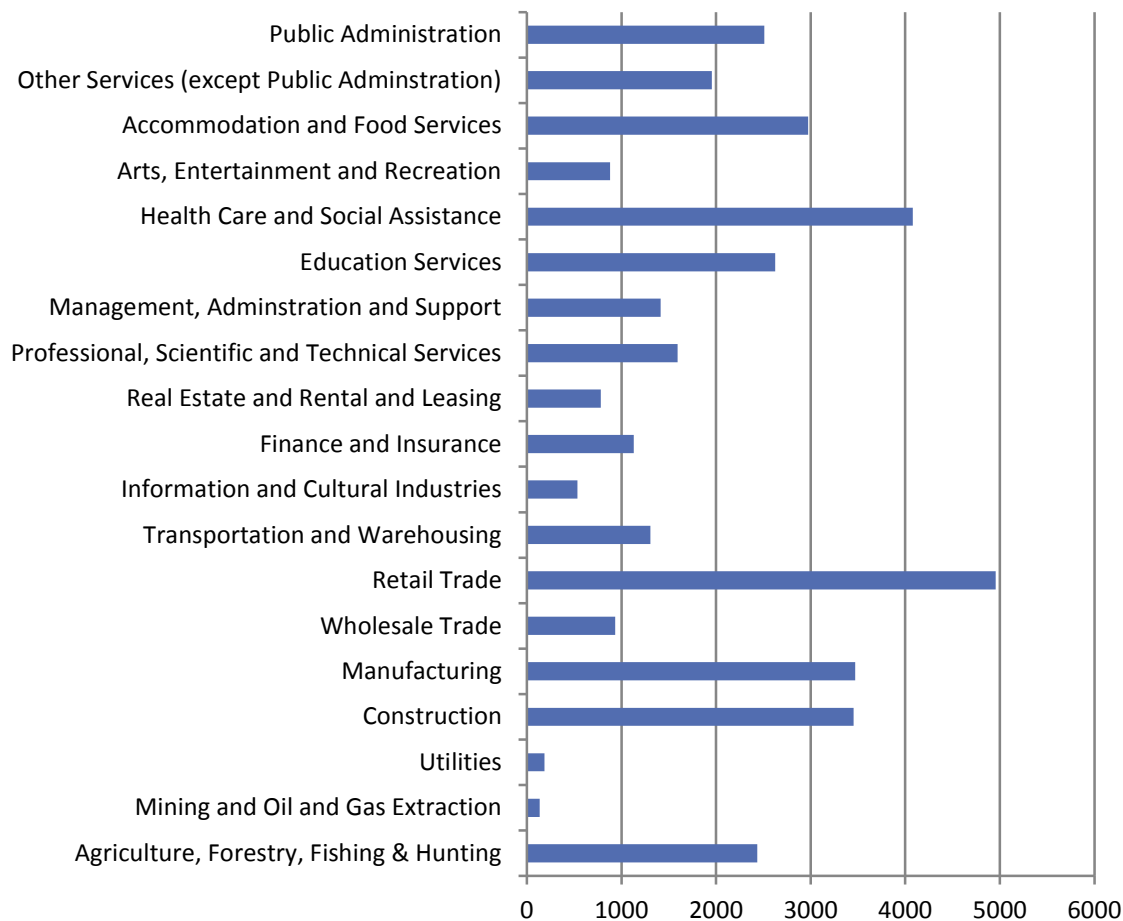
Given the location of the Cowichan Region and the region it serves the industry breakdown is not surprising.

Looking at the labour by industry data at the two digit North America Industry Classification System (NAICS), Cowichan Region labour is broken out in Figure 2.

According to the 2006 census, the Cowichan Region had a population of 78,929 (2001 was 71,998) and an employed labour force of 38,105. The region’s participation rate was 59.7% (labour force to population) and 56.6% employment rate (employment to population).

The unemployment rate for the Cowichan Region in 2006 (census) was 6.4% (unemployment to labour force). By comparison the provincial rate was 6.0%.

Figure 2: Cowichan Region Employed Residents by Industry Sector



3.0 Location Quotient Analysis

A Location Quotient Analysis is used at this point to provide some understanding of the labour force numbers. The analysis is a simple ratio of “sector employment” to “total employment” compared to the ratios in a reference area. In this case we will compare Cowichan Region and the four identified regions using the reference area of British Columbia. We also use Canada to provide another level of data for comparison purposes. This analysis was prepared only for Cowichan Region.

When reading the results of the Location Quotient (LQ) analysis the following applies:

- When the $LQ = 1.00$, the ratio of that industry’s employment in the local area (Cowichan Region or “CVRD”) is the same as that for the reference area.
- When the $LQ > 1.00$, the ratio of employment in that industry is higher than that for the reference area. A high LQ ($LQ > 1.25$) implies the local area possesses a “competitive advantage” for that industry. It also shows that the industry has grown larger than the local marketplace and therefore must be serving customers outside the region.
- When the $LQ < 1.00$, the ratio of employment in that industry is less than that for the reference area. When the LQ is significantly lower than the norm ($LQ < .75$) it shows there is a significant leakage of dollars from the local economy to another nearby marketplace.

It is important to note that census data presented in this report is subject to suppression and random rounding in order to preserve the confidentiality of respondents to the census. This technique randomly rounds figures either up or down to a multiple of 5. This procedure does not add significant error to the data but does result in certain inconsistencies.

**Table 2: 2006 Employment by Industry
Cowichan Region And Comparison Regions**

Sector	CVRD	CSRD	OSRD	NORD	CKRD
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	2,435	4,775	3,305	2,950	2,050
Mining, Oil & Gas Extraction	135	770	390	335	295
Utilities	185	235	210	315	345
Construction	3,455	4,175	3,525	4,065	2,750
Manufacturing	3,470	3,355	3,830	4,355	2,875
Wholesale Trade	935	985	970	1,355	440
Retail Trade	4,955	6,860	4,730	5,015	3,355
Transportation/ Warehousing	1,305	2,030	1,190	1,375	1,145
Information and cultural industries	535	770	655	420	425
Finance and Insurance	1,130	1,190	935	1,055	650
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	780	1,060	915	780	360
Professional, Scientific & Technical	1,595	2,255	1,455	1,920	1,435
Management, Admin & Support Services	1,415	2,170	1,370	1,675	1,005
Education Services	2,625	3,485	1,775	2,365	2,085
Health Care & Social Services	4,080	5,205	4,260	4,435	3,105
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	880	1,070	925	925	780
Accommodation & Food Services	2,975	4,625	3,305	2,545	2,105
Other Services (except public administration)	1,955	2,295	1,755	1,870	1,270
Public Administration	2,510	3,440	1,720	1,130	1,110
Total	37,365	50,765	37,225	38,910	27,600

Source: Statistics Canada Census Data

**Table 3: Labour Force by Industry as a Percentage of Total Employment
Cowichan Region and Comparison Regions**

Sector	CVRD	CSRD	OSRD	NORD	CKRD
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	6.4%	9.4%	8.9%	7.9%	7.4%
Mining, Oil & Gas Extraction	0.3%	1.5%	1.0%	0.9%	1.1%
Utilities	0.5%	0.5%	0.6%	0.8%	1.3%
Construction	9.1%	8.2%	9.5%	10.4%	10.0%
Manufacturing	9.1%	6.6%	10.3%	11.2%	10.4%
Wholesale Trade	2.5%	1.9%	2.6%	3.5%	1.6%
Retail Trade	13.0%	13.5%	12.7%	12.9%	12.2%
Transportation/ Warehousing	3.4%	4.0%	3.2%	3.5%	4.1%
Information and cultural industries	1.4%	1.5%	1.8%	1.1%	1.5%
Finance and Insurance	3.0%	2.3%	2.5%	2.7%	2.4%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2.0%	2.1%	2.5%	2.0%	1.3%
Professional, Scientific & Technical	4.2%	4.4%	3.9%	4.9%	5.2%
Management, Admin & Support Services	3.7%	4.3%	3.9%	4.3%	3.6%
Education Services	6.9%	6.9%	4.8%	6.1%	7.6%
Health Care & Social Services	10.7%	10.2%	11.4%	11.4%	11.3%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	2.3%	2.1%	2.5%	2.4%	2.8%
Accommodation & Food Services	7.8%	9.1%	8.9%	6.5%	7.6%
Other Services (except public administration)	5.1%	4.5%	4.7%	4.8%	4.6%
Public Administration	6.6%	6.8%	4.6%	2.9%	4.0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Statistics Canada Census Data 2006

The previous two tables (Table 2 and Table 3) illustrate the employed labour force for the Cowichan Region compared to the four comparison regions. The second table (Table 3) presents the data as a percentage of total employment labour force. This table shows that each region has a diversified employment base. Looking closer at the data, it shows the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting sector has a larger employment base in the four comparison regions than in the Cowichan Region. The Okanagan Regions (OSRD and NORD) have a strong agricultural sector comprised of both the fruit and wine industry, while both CSRD and CKRD have an increased labour force employed in forestry and logging activities than the Cowichan Region.

The trade sectors for all regions indicate a strong employment base as well as education services and health care services. The Okanagan's education base is smaller while its health care base is larger indicating the shift in age demographics from both the Island regions (CVRD and CSRD). Using the labour force percentage numbers we are able to calculate the location quotients for each region (Table 4).

**Table 4: Location Quotient – Cowichan Region and Comparison Regions
British Columbia as Reference Area**

Sector	CVRD	CSRD	OSRD	NORD	CKRD
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1.86	2.70	2.55	2.17	2.13
Mining, Oil & Gas Extraction	0.40	1.66	1.15	0.94	1.17
Utilities	0.97	0.90	1.10	1.58	2.44
Construction	1.22	1.09	1.25	1.38	1.32
Manufacturing	1.08	0.77	1.19	1.30	1.21
Wholesale Trade	0.60	0.46	0.62	0.83	0.38
Retail Trade	1.17	1.19	1.12	1.14	1.07
Transportation/ Warehousing	0.67	0.76	0.61	0.67	0.79
Information and cultural industries	0.53	0.56	0.66	0.40	0.57
Finance and Insurance	0.79	0.61	0.65	0.71	0.61
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	0.90	0.90	1.06	0.87	0.56
Professional, Scientific & Technical	0.58	0.60	0.53	0.67	0.70
Management, Admin & Support Services	0.83	0.93	0.80	0.94	0.80
Education Services	1.01	0.99	0.69	0.87	1.09
Health Care & Social Services	1.12	1.06	1.18	1.17	1.16
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	1.01	0.90	1.06	1.01	1.12
Accommodation & Food Services	0.97	1.11	1.08	0.80	0.93
Other Services (except public administration)	1.04	0.90	0.94	0.96	0.92
Public Administration	1.33	1.34	0.92	0.58	0.80

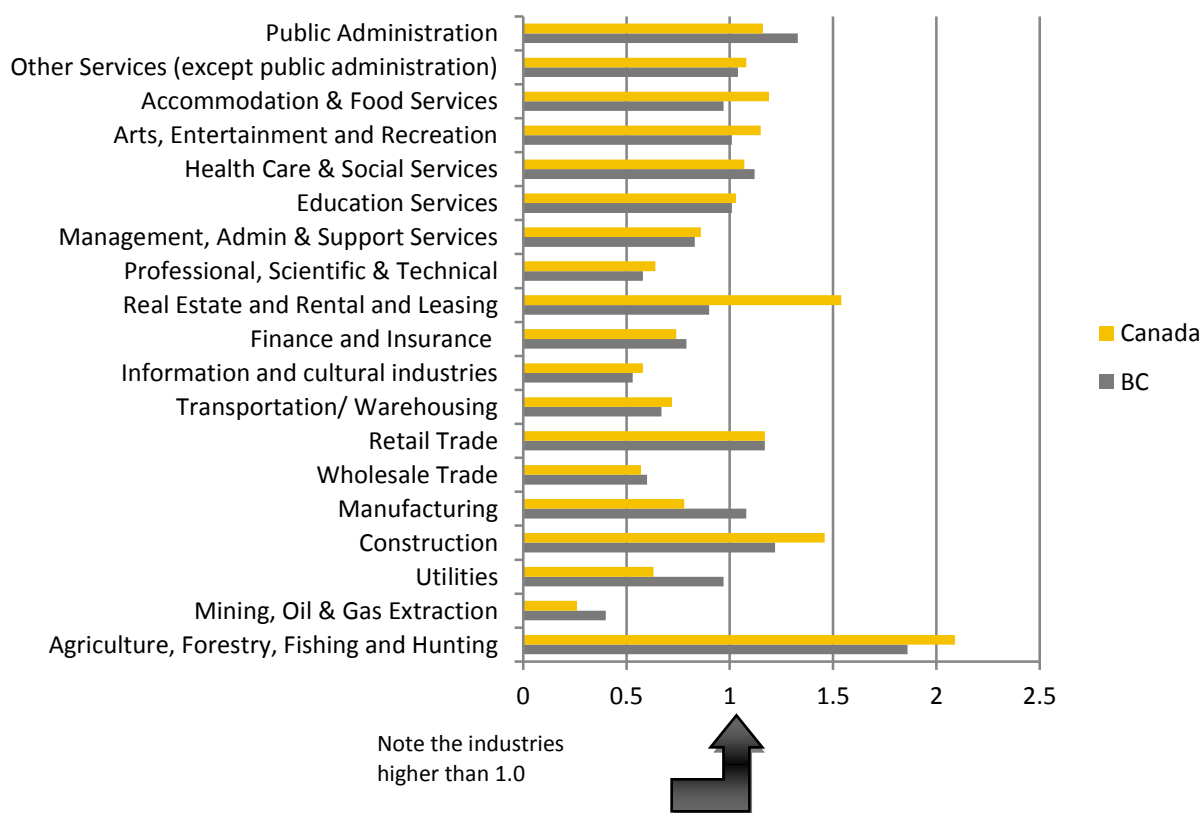
The location quotients show a stronger agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting sector in the four comparison regions. This supports what was already illustrated in the labour force breakdown in Table 3. Though the Cowichan Region has a very strong location quotient within the sector, the other regions experience a greater level of activity when BC is used as a reference area.

As mentioned earlier, any location quotient at 1.25 or over implies that the region may possess a competitive advantage and the industry exports the goods and services out of the region. For the Cowichan Region this would include the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (1.86), construction (1.22) and public administration (1.33) sectors. The location quotient alone is not enough to understand the local economy and should not be used solely for decision making purposes and developing an economic development policy.

Table 5: Location Quotient – Cowichan Region (BC and Canada as Reference Area)

Sector	Canada	BC
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	2.09	1.86
Mining, Oil & Gas Extraction	0.26	0.40
Utilities	0.63	0.97
Construction	1.46	1.22
Manufacturing	0.78	1.08
Wholesale Trade	0.57	0.60
Retail Trade	1.17	1.17
Transportation/ Warehousing	0.72	0.67
Information and cultural industries	0.58	0.53
Finance and Insurance	0.74	0.79
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1.54	0.90
Professional, Scientific & Technical	0.64	0.58
Management, Admin & Support Services	0.86	0.83
Education Services	1.03	1.01
Health Care & Social Services	1.07	1.12
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	1.15	1.01
Accommodation & Food Services	1.19	0.97
Other Services (except public administration)	1.08	1.04
Public Administration	1.16	1.33

Figure 3: Location Quotient – Cowichan Region to BC and Canada



The interpretation of location quotients in the context of an economic development policy can present challenges. One common interpretation is that location quotients show the comparative advantage of an area in attracting and retaining various industries, and that they reflect the degree to which businesses find an area advantageous. This interpretation is mostly correct; however location quotients do not provide much information about trends.

In order to introduce another data set to include in the analysis the overall growth rate of the labour force by industry needs to be analysed. For the Cowichan Region the labour force in 2006 was 37,365 compared to 33,920 in 2001. This represents a growth rate of 10.2% over a five year period. The following table provides the data for each industry.

Table 6: Labour Force by Industry and Location Quotient for Cowichan Region

Sector	2001	2006	% Chg	LQ
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	2,550	2,435	-4.5%	1.86
Mining, Oil & Gas Extraction	85	135	58.0%	0.40
Utilities	180	185	2.8%	0.97
Construction	2,135	3,455	61.8%	1.22
Manufacturing	4,015	3,470	-13.6%	1.08
Wholesale Trade	710	935	31.6%	0.60
Retail Trade	3,985	4,955	24.3%	1.17
Transportation/ Warehousing	1,190	1,305	9.7%	0.67
Information and cultural industries	635	535	-15.7%	0.53
Finance and Insurance	1,070	1,130	5.6%	0.79
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	510	780	52.9%	0.90
Professional, Scientific & Technical	1,800	1,595	-11.4%	0.58
Management, Admin & Support Services	1,355	1,415	4.4%	0.83
Education Services	2,610	2,625	0.6%	1.01
Health Care & Social Services	3,750	4,080	8.8%	1.12
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	795	880	10.7%	1.01
Accommodation & Food Services	2,570	2,975	15.8%	0.97
Other Services (except public administration)	1,750	1,955	11.7%	1.04
Public Administration	2,235	2,510	12.3%	1.33

The table above shows some conflicting data – the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting sector has a high location quotient indicating it may be a key industry for the region and might be a strong candidate for further development; however, employment has decreased over the past five years indicating the industry may be declining.

The construction industry also has a strong location quotient and employment growth has been substantial. The location quotient indicates that this industry might serve as the core of an industry cluster or, alternatively, the data could be interpreted as an industry that requires more workers than average to produce a level of output necessary to meet local needs. In other words, the local industry or workforce is inefficient.

The location quotient alone cannot be the only measurement for economic development and must be combined with other analyses. The next step for the analysis is to look at the labour data using the shift-share technique. The following section breaks down the labour force data to understand if the sectors within the Cowichan Region enjoy a competitive advantage or if local industry growth is simply mirroring provincial trends.

4.0 Shift-Share Analysis

To determine which industries are growing or which are declining in the region we conducted a Shift-Share Analysis. A Shift-Share analysis is a standard regional analysis method that helps to determine how much of the regional job growth can be attributed to national or provincial trends and how much is unique to regional factors. To do this a Shift-Share Analysis splits regional job growth into three components

- Reference Area Growth Effect – is the portion of the net change in employment that can be attributed to the overall growth or decline of the provincial economy. This helps adjust for the business cycle in the province.
- Industrial Mix Effect – is the portion of the employment change attributable to the growth or decline of the individual industry sector.
- Differential Shift Effect – the differential is attributable to local factors for the growth or decline of that industry when compared to the reference area.

The Differential Shift Effect (DSE) is the key measurement in the Shift-Share Analysis. It shows how each industry is performing in the context of that industry's performance across the rest of the province.

The Shift-Share Analysis is similar to the Location Quotient Analysis in that it highlights the uniqueness of a regional economy, but it does so in terms of job growth rather than total jobs in an industry. Industries with high regional competitiveness highlight the region's competitive advantages or disadvantages. A Shift-Share does not indicate why these industries are competitive but will show the sectors in which the region is out-competing or under-competing the nation.

The following is an analysis of the changes taking place across the Cowichan Region using the BC economy as a reference area. We have selected the most recent five year census periods available (2001 and 2006) as our study period. A review of changes in employment data for the Cowichan Region reveals there was a net increase of 10.2% in employment, compared to labour force growth in BC at 8.9% for the same period.

It is important to note that census data presented in this report is subject to suppression and random rounding in order to preserve the confidentiality of respondents to the census. This technique randomly rounds figures either up or down to a multiple of 5. This procedure does not add significant error to the data but does result in certain inconsistencies.

Table 7: Employment Data for British Columbia and Cowichan Region

British Columbia				
Industry	2001	2006	Change in Jobs	% Chg
Total Employment	2,014,600	2,193,115	178,555	8.9%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	78,645	76,485	-2,160	-2.7%
Mining, Oil & Gas Extraction	14,040	20,020	5,980	42.6%
Utilities	11,645	11,250	-395	-3.4%
Construction	118,705	166,100	47,395	39.9%
Manufacturing	194,365	189,120	-5,245	-2.7%
Wholesale Trade	82,465	92,020	9,555	11.6%
Retail Trade	232,960	248,955	15,995	6.9%
Transportation/ Warehousing	114,180	114,915	735	0.6%
Information and cultural industries	62,185	58,905	-3,280	-5.3%
Finance and Insurance	80,620	84,215	3,595	4.5%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	41,540	50,725	9,185	22.1%
Professional, Scientific & Technical	136,985	162,430	25,445	18.6%
Management, Admin & Support Services	82,175	100,410	18,235	22.2%
Education Services	139,660	152,565	12,905	9.2%
Health Care & Social Services	200,065	213,090	13,025	6.5%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	46,150	51,370	5,220	11.3%
Accommodation & Food Services	167,130	180,055	12,925	7.7%
Other Services (except public administration)	98,285	109,895	11,610	11.8%
Public Administration	112,790	110,585	-2,205	-2.0%
Cowichan Region				
Industry	2001	2006	Change in Jobs	% Chg
Total Employment	33,920	37,365	3,445	10.2%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	2,550	2,435	-115	-4.5%
Mining, Oil & Gas Extraction	85	135	50	58.5%
Utilities	180	185	5	2.8%
Construction	2,135	3,455	1,320	61.8%
Manufacturing	4,015	3,470	-545	-13.6%
Wholesale Trade	710	935	225	31.7%
Retail Trade	3,985	4,955	970	24.3%
Transportation/ Warehousing	1,190	1,305	115	9.7%
Information and cultural industries	635	535	-100	-15.7%
Finance and Insurance	1,070	1,130	60	5.6%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	510	780	270	52.9%
Professional, Scientific & Technical	1,800	1,595	-205	-11.4%
Management, Admin & Support Services	1,355	1,415	60	4.4%
Education Services	2,610	2,625	15	0.6%
Health Care & Social Services	3,750	4,080	330	8.8%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	795	880	85	10.7%
Accommodation & Food Services	2,570	2,975	405	15.8%
Other Services (except public administration)	1,750	1,955	205	11.7%
Public Administration	2,235	2,510	275	12.3%

**Table 8: Shift-Share Analysis – Reference Area Growth Effect
(British Columbia)**

Industry	CVRD 2001	BC Employment Growth Rate	BC Growth Effect
Total Employment	33,920	8.9%	3,019
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	2,550	8.9%	227
Mining, Oil & Gas Extraction	85	8.9%	8
Utilities	180	8.9%	16
Construction	2,135	8.9%	190
Manufacturing	4,015	8.9%	357
Wholesale Trade	710	8.9%	63
Retail Trade	3,985	8.9%	355
Transportation/ Warehousing	1,190	8.9%	106
Information and cultural industries	635	8.9%	57
Finance and Insurance	1,070	8.9%	95
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	510	8.9%	45
Professional, Scientific & Technical Management, Admin & Support Services	1,800	8.9%	160
Education Services	1,355	8.9%	121
Health Care & Social Services	2,610	8.9%	232
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	3,750	8.9%	334
Accommodation & Food Services	795	8.9%	71
Other Services (except public administration)	2,570	8.9%	229
Public Administration	1,750	8.9%	156
	2,235	8.9%	199

Before analyzing what the above tables mean it is important to keep in mind the following:

- A Shift-Share Analysis minimizes the impact of issues such as business cycles.
- The method alone does not identify comparative advantages.
- The Shift-Share Analysis is a “snapshot” of two particular points in time, and the results are sensitive to the period of time chosen.

The overall reference area growth effect (RA) shows that if the Cowichan Region was identical to the provincial economy, then the region should have grown by 3,019 jobs between 2001 and 2006. However, as the data from Table 7, shows the region added 3,445 to the labour force, outpacing the overall provincial economy.

A deeper examination of the data shows there are a number of sectors that outperformed the provincial growth rate. For example, Construction significantly outperformed the overall provincial growth rate adding 1,320 jobs compared to the 190 jobs if Cowichan Region experienced the same BC growth rate. However, further analysis is required to determine how much of the growth or decline in the sectors are attributable to differences in industry mix found at the regional level relative to what is occurring at the provincial level.

The next table will look at the Industrial Mix Effect. Some industries add jobs more rapidly than others and some lose jobs. The “mix” component helps to determine if the local economy is weighted towards industries

that are growing faster or slower than the provincial average. Each industry is calculated and added up to yield the Industrial Mix Effect for the entire local economy.

Table 9: Shift-Share Analysis – Industrial Mix Effect

Industry	CVRD 2001	BC Industry Growth Rate	BC Employment Growth Rate	Industrial Mix Effect
Total Employment	33,920		8.9%	
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	2,550	-2.7%	8.9%	-296
Mining, Oil & Gas Extraction	85	42.6%	8.9%	29
Utilities	180	-3.4%	8.9%	-22
Construction	2,135	39.9%	8.9%	662
Manufacturing	4,015	-2.7%	8.9%	-466
Wholesale Trade	710	11.6%	8.9%	19
Retail Trade	3,985	6.9%	8.9%	-80
Transportation/ Warehousing	1,190	0.6%	8.9%	-99
Information and cultural industries	635	-5.3%	8.9%	-90
Finance and Insurance	1,070	4.5%	8.9%	-47
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	510	22.1%	8.9%	67
Professional, Scientific & Technical	1,800	18.6%	8.9%	175
Management, Admin & Support Services	1,355	22.2%	8.9%	180
Education Services	2,610	9.2%	8.9%	8
Health Care & Social Services	3,750	6.5%	8.9%	-90
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	795	11.3%	8.9%	19
Accommodation & Food Services	2,570	7.7%	8.9%	-31
Other Services (except public administration)	1,750	11.8%	8.9%	51
Public Administration	2,235	-2.0%	8.9%	-244

The overall industrial mix effect is a negative 254 (-254). This means that the Cowichan Region would have lost 254 jobs overall if the region's industry growth rate was identical to that of BC's growth rate by industry. The losses would have been most significant in the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, manufacturing, and public administration sectors.

In reality, the region lost less than half of the industrial mix effect number in agricultural (115 compared to 296) and actually gained employment in public administration (275 compared to a loss of 244). Although the region's manufacturing sector lost 545 jobs compared to what would have been lost if the industry was identical to BC's industry rate (437 job losses).

The analysis so far has provided data on actual job change from 2001 to 2006, reference area (BC) growth effect and the industrial mix effect. Table 10 below will help to determine whether local industries are growing faster or slower than similar industries at the provincial level. Accordingly, the local share is often interpreted as indicating whether local businesses are more or less competitive than the provincial average. Each industry is calculated and then added up resulting in a competitive growth component for the entire local economy.

Table 10: Shift-Share Analysis – Differential Shift Effect

Industry	CVRD 2001	CVRD Industry Growth Rate	BC Industry Growth Rate	Differential Mix Effect
Total Employment	33,920	10.2%	8.9%	
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	2,550	-4.5%	-2.7%	-46
Mining, Oil & Gas Extraction	85	58.5%	42.6%	14
Utilities	180	2.8%	-3.4%	11
Construction	2,135	61.8%	39.9%	468
Manufacturing	4,015	-13.6%	-2.7%	-437
Wholesale Trade	710	31.7%	11.6%	143
Retail Trade	3,985	24.3%	6.9%	695
Transportation/ Warehousing	1,190	9.7%	0.6%	108
Information and cultural industries	635	-15.7%	-5.3%	-66
Finance and Insurance	1,070	5.6%	4.5%	12
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	510	52.9%	22.1%	157
Professional, Scientific & Technical	1,800	-11.4%	18.6%	-540
Management, Admin & Support Services	1,355	4.4%	22.2%	-241
Education Services	2,610	0.6%	9.2%	-225
Health Care & Social Services	3,750	8.8%	6.5%	86
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	795	10.7%	11.3%	-5
Accommodation & Food Services	2,570	15.8%	7.7%	207
Other Services (except public administration)	1,750	11.7%	11.8%	-1
Public Administration	2,235	12.3%	-2.0%	320

According to the Differential Shift Effect, the Cowichan Region experienced a rate of growth in excess of BC. Total employment gain was 660 when we measured the difference between the rate of change in industry employment at the local level and the rate of change in industry employment in BC. The Differential Shift Effect, also called the regional competitiveness effect, is the most important in the shift share analysis. It helps to explain how much of the change in the industry is due to some unique competitive advantage that the region might possess. This is because the growth cannot be explained by provincial trends in that industry or the economy as a whole.

By putting together the three effects into one table we can analyze the full results. If we continue to look at the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting industry, the Cowichan Region lost 115 jobs from 2001 to 2006. The industry might have grown by 227 jobs if provincial trends in the economy as a whole were followed, while a loss of 296 jobs might have been expected due to provincial trends in the agriculture sector specifically. This makes a total loss of 69 jobs expected from provincial trends (227 jobs – 296 jobs). The regional competitiveness effect indicates that the region only lost 46 jobs instead of the expected 69 which indicates there is a slight regional advantage attributable to the industry. For the Cowichan region this may be the fairly recent diversification of the agriculture industry into a wine and cider producing region.

Table 11: Shift-Share Analysis for Cowichan Region

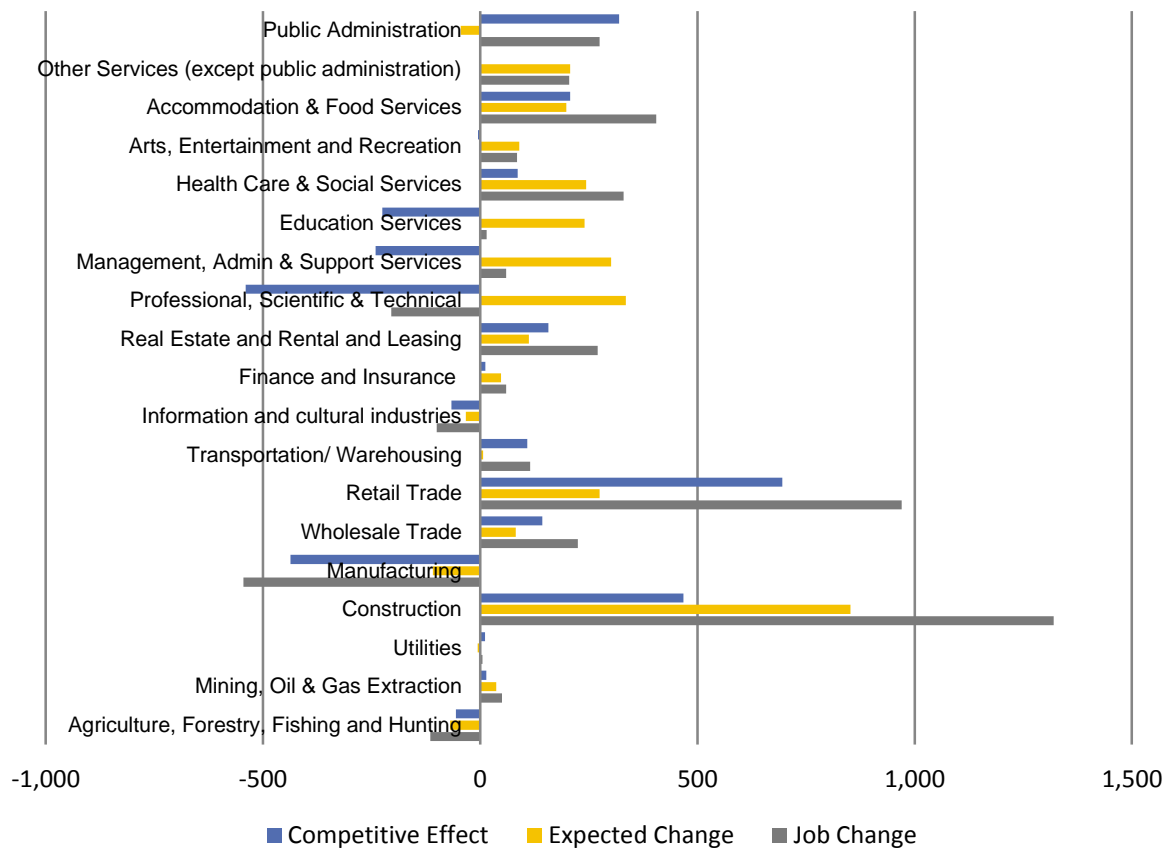
Industrial Sector	2001 – 2006 Net Change Employment	Reference Area Growth Effect	Industrial Mix Effect	Differential Shift Effect
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	-115	227	-296	-46
Mining, Oil & Gas Extraction	50	8	29	14
Utilities	5	16	-22	11
Construction	1,320	190	662	468
Manufacturing	-545	357	-466	-437
Wholesale Trade	225	63	19	143
Retail Trade	970	355	-80	695
Transportation/ Warehousing	115	106	-99	108
Information and cultural industries	-100	57	-90	-66
Finance and Insurance	60	95	-47	12
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	270	45	67	157
Professional, Scientific & Technical	-205	160	175	-540
Management, Admin & Support Services	60	121	180	-241
Education Services	15	232	8	-225
Health Care & Social Services	330	334	-90	86
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	85	71	19	-5
Accommodation & Food Services	405	229	-31	207
Other Services (except public administration)	205	156	51	-1
Public Administration	275	199	-244	320
Totals	3,455	3,019	-254	660

The Cowichan Region grew its labour force base by 3,455, but 3,019 of those jobs might have been expected due to provincial trends overall. As well, industry trends provincially indicate the region should have lost 254 jobs. This makes a total of 2,754 jobs (3,019 – 254) that can be expected from provincial trends. That leaves a total of 701 jobs that cannot be attributed to either provincial trends overall or provincial industry specific trends. It is however best to look at each industry to see its real growth or decline to ensure the best understanding of the region's economy before economic development programs or policies are developed.

While the data in Table 11 provides some insight into the economy of the Cowichan region, it may be more effective to see the results in a visual format. The following simplifies the analysis into three basic components:

- **Job Change** – this is the actual job change in the local economy for each industry from 2001 to 2006.
- **Expected Change** – this is the sum of the reference area growth rate effect and the industrial mix effect. It is basically the job growth that would be expected in the regional industry if it followed reference area trends exactly.
- **Competitive Effect** – this number explains how much of the change in a given industry is due to some unique competitive advantage that the local economy possesses because the growth cannot be explained by the reference area trends in the industry or as a whole.

Figure 4: Cowichan Region Shift Share Analysis

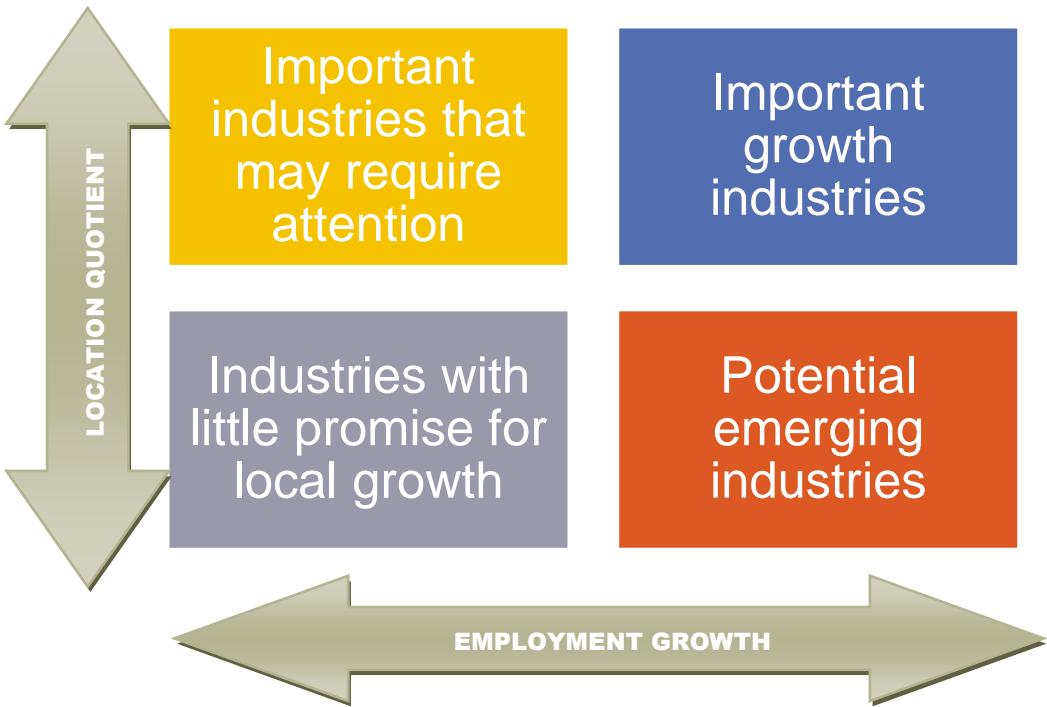


5.0 Ranking the Performance of Industry Sectors

The report has used two models to provide the data needed to rank the performance of different sectors in the Economic Base Analysis for the Cowichan Region. The data EDCD Consulting provides in this report is to be used by the economic development organization to help provide a focus for targeting the economic development programs of the community.

The location quotient data and the growth rate data can be combined to classify industry clusters or target industries. The following is a simplified chart utilizing various cluster and targeting analysis methods including the McLean/Voytek model.

Figure 5: Target Industry Method



Another method developed by the University of Waterloo to classify target industries is to combine the three separate measures generated in the Economic Base Analysis. The first is the concentration of each industry sector as measured by the Location Quotient. The second is the overall growth or decline of the industry across the reference area as indicated by the Industrial Mix Effect. The third is the relative growth or decline of the industry in the local economy based on the Differential Shift Effect. The classification system ranks these factors into 12 categories divided into High, Medium and Low divisions.

Table 12: Economic Performance Classification System

Classification	Location Quotient	Industrial Mix Effect	Differential Shift Effect
High			
12. Driving	>1.25	Positive	Positive
11. Accelerating	0.75 – 1.25	Positive	Positive
10. Rising	<0.75	Positive	Positive
Medium			
9. Evolving	>1.25	Negative	Positive
8. Transitional	0.75-1.25	Negative	Positive
7. Moderate	<0.75	Negative	Positive
6. Promising	>1.25	Positive	Negative
5. Yielding	0.75 – 1.25	Positive	Negative
4. Modest	<0.75	Positive	Negative
Low			
3. Challenging	>1.25	Negative	Negative
2. Vulnerable	0.75 – 1.25	Negative	Negative
1. Marginal	<0.75	Negative	Negative

Source: Economic Development Program, University of Waterloo

This report provides all the necessary data for the economic development organization to develop strategies for targeting industries, identify industry clusters, and develop programs or policies to further mature potential growth industries.

We have provided some sample interpretation of the data throughout the report. EDCD Consulting recommends considering the following as your organization interprets the data:

- What is the major exporting industry in your community?
- Compared to other regions, does your region seem highly dependent on any particular industry?
- Compared to other regions, does your region seem highly competitive in any particular industry?
- Are there any obvious relationships between industries with high location quotients and other sectors of the local economy?
- Does this information support popular perception?
- Are growth rates due to differences in employment mix found at the local level relative to the provincial economy or does your region have a competitive advantage or disadvantage?

6.0 Next Steps

The results presented in this report provide Economic Development Cowichan with the data required to examine the local economy at a more detailed level than the current annual Benchmark and Indicators report.

The location quotient provides another indicator for comparing the Cowichan Region to the four competitors regions and should be included as part of the Benchmark and Indicator's report on an annual basis. The Shift-Share analysis is not as useful as a benchmark as each competitor community would need to be analysed. This analysis would provide information on each region's industry strengths and whether they are attributable to location advantages or other factors including an economic development policy and specific programs and strategies.

The next step is for EDC to extract the data for each industry and apply the two methods of identifying those industries that are driving growth in the region and that present the best growth opportunities.

Once the data has been fully examined it is recommended that a full strategic planning process be undertaken to develop specific programs and policies to ensure that the region is targeting the industries that provide the best growth opportunities.

APPENDIX B: GREEN DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS PLAN



Economic Development Cowichan Green Business Development

Introduction

The transition to an efficient low carbon economy, driven by global policy initiatives to address climate change, is providing the regulatory and commercial incentives for a growing demand for Green products and services. The Green Business Sector in the Cowichan Valley is in its infancy and is primarily found in the smart building materials, wastewater treatment, energy production, heating controls and agriculture industries. While the sector is modest in size, the participants are at the forefront in applying new technologies.

Economic Development Cowichan has embarked on a Green Business Development Strategy to accomplish a number of goals:

1. To use the global trends in Green initiatives to facilitate sector development in the region thus stimulating economic growth
2. For the Cowichan region to become the location of choice for Green Businesses
3. For the Cowichan Region to become the Centre of Excellence for Green Businesses on Vancouver Island

The Cowichan Region has long held sustainable practices as more than just a mantra. Beginning in the 1970's, people moving to the Cowichan Region have done so in part, because of the lifestyle and pristine environment.

With the environmental movement coming into mainstream consciousness, residents will no longer tolerate massive resource extraction and traditional smokestacks.

In addition, our geographic location close to Vancouver and Victoria means the Cowichan Region can benefit by participating in what is clearly the next wave of innovation. Vancouver ranks among the top 10 new "Silicon Valleys" of the Green Business sector worldwide, according to U.S. authors Clint Wilder and Ron Pernick.

Development of the Green Business sector, by which we really mean the growing demand for the products and services that it produces, is being driven by a number of world-wide trends and conditions, all of which are likely to remain as dominant economic themes for the next several decades. These economic drivers are:

1. Increased economic viability of the sector.
2. The continuing and growing relative scarcity of, or assured access to petroleum products
3. Mounting demands for energy, water and other municipal service at the same time that traditional supplies are shrinking,
4. International policy initiatives are setting the agenda for the introduction of low carbon foot print technologies and products.

5. British Columbia has taken a leading policy and legislative role to establish standards for the reduction of carbon emissions.

6. Over the past several years, Green products have transitioned from an “alternative” investment primarily suited for socially responsible investors, to a viable investment option for main-stream investors.

The interplay between technology, policy and financing decisions involving both public and private sector actors will largely determine the direction and pace of the transition to Green solutions. Efforts to bring about change must often — of necessity — involve multiple actors and address multiple barriers in a coordinated manner.

Alternative Energy Development

Effective economic cluster development requires a good supply of managerial talent, supportive government policies and programs, ready access to capital from both public and private sector investors and an abundance of technology innovation. Development of effective business clusters is often associated with the opportunistic commercial evolution from the existing commercial/industrial base in response to changing economic and regulatory conditions. Biofuels (global production and wholesale pricing of ethanol and biodiesel) reached \$25.4 billion in 2007 and are projected to grow to \$81.1 billion by 2017. In 2007 the global biofuels market consisted of more than 13 billion gallons of ethanol and 2 billion gallons of biodiesel production worldwide.

Value Streams

- ✚ Existing municipal landfill- This stream deals with the collection and utilization of landfill gases.
- ✚ Municipal wastewater - This stream deals with municipal wastewater treatment systems.
- ✚ Municipal solid waste- This stream deals with the utilization of waste, organic and non-organic fractions, to energy
- ✚ Small-large heating-electricity-gas-greenhouse systems- This stream deals with the utilization of any variety of biomass sources for the production of energy in the form of heating, electricity generation, gas generation and CO2 utilization for greenhouses
- ✚ Harvesting and pelleting- This stream deals with the transformation of biomass and its densification as fuel inputs for a variety of energy processing systems, thermochemical, biochemical or combustion.
- ✚ Solid wood residues- This stream deals with by products from solid wood processing.
- ✚ Pulp and paper residues- This stream deals with by products from the pulping process including waste treatment systems.
- ✚ Agriculture residues- This stream deals with agricultural animal wastes, crops, and other agricultural residues

Investments in energy and energy related products and services comprise the largest component of the Green Business Sector. U.S.-based venture capital investments in energy technologies more than quadrupled from \$599 million in 2000 to \$2.7 billion in 2007, according to New Energy Finance. As a percent of total Venture Capital investments, energy tech increased from .6 percent in 2000 to 9.1 percent in 2007. Between 2006 and 2007, venture investments in the U.S. clean-energy sector increased by more than 70 percent.

New global investments in energy technologies—including venture capital, project finance, public markets, and research and development—have expanded by 60 percent from \$92.6 billion in 2006 to \$148.4 billion in 2007, according to research firm New Energy Finance.

Further proof of Green Businesses move from marginalized to mainstream is abundant. A growing number of governments announced plans to generate electricity from renewables. Corporations continued to jump on, if not lead, the race to transition to a cleaner, greener economy. Clean Edge2, which has been tracking the growth of clean-energy markets since 2000, reports a 40 percent increase in revenue growth for solar photovoltaics, wind, biofuels, and fuel cells in 2007, up from \$55 billion in 2006 to \$77.3 billion in 2007. For the first time, three of these are generating revenue in excess of \$20 billion apiece, with wind now exceeding \$30 billion.

Utilization of wood waste in small scale Combined Heat and Power systems is a potential opportunity that should be explored further. Companies such as Timberwest, which have significant holdings of privately owned timber lands, should be encouraged to investigate opportunities to supplement their traditional revenue streams from timber harvesting with new opportunities from biofuels derived from logging wastes. The historic basis of forest sector development in the Cowichan Region would provide an easy avenue for the introduction of this carbon neutral technology.

Research

In 2009, Economic Development Cowichan commissioned the development of two clean technology reports. Both reports were partially funded by Invest Canada Community Initiatives (ICCI). Highlights of the first report included:

- ✚ Definition of clean technology and identification of sub-sectors
- ✚ Identification of 14 companies in the region ranging from wastewater treatment, advanced building components to renewable energy
- ✚ Identification of opportunities in the building components and energy sectors in region

The second report focused on energy. Highlights included:

- ✚ Taking existing resources (wood waste) and exploring business opportunities
- ✚ Identification that few local markets existed for renewable energy products
- ✚ Focus on waste to energy, solar, wood and wind as potential energy sources

It is important to note that when these studies were commissioned, the definition of a clean technology sector did not include all aspects of Green Businesses. Since the studies have been completed, EDC has incorporated not only clean technology companies but all aspects of green businesses into the overall strategy.

Subsequent Research

While both Clean Technology studies provided valuable information related to moving the sector ahead, one area that needed further research was around developing a business case for a biomass facility. FP Innovations agreed to provide further research and develop a business plan for a pellet/puck plant in the Cowichan Lake area. The results of that research will be completed by April 2011.

Setting the Stage

In order to develop the Green Business sector in the Cowichan Region, a number of elements need to come together.

- ✚ Interview Green Businesses to gain an understanding of their issues and challenges. With the adoption of the new BC Business Counts business retention and expansion program offered by the

Economic Development Association of British Columbia, EDC will have to tools to gather important sector data.

- ✚ Understand community demand for energy- CVRD Regional Energy Plan. In order to grow the green energy sector, it is important to understand what the demands are for energy.
- ✚ Work with political and regulatory environment to encourage new green businesses. With many communities jumping on the green business attraction bandwagon, providing incentives and a favourable business climate will be essential to attracting these businesses
- ✚ Encourage local governments to look at local solutions to local problems. We are starting to understand that “Going Global” has a high environmental cost associated with it. By adopting local solutions to local needs/issues, environmental impacts can be mitigated.
- ✚ Become educated- learning as much as we can about the sector. EDC has attended a number of Green conferences including the BC Bioenergy Conference to gain an understanding of the sector
- ✚ Allocate dollars and look for funding- as part of our core budget, ICCI dollars. others

Role for Local Government

Local government can play a key role in developing the Green Business sector. Actions can include:

- ✚ Local government procurement policies can offer support for the sector either directly, by specifying certain product characteristics in tender documents i.e., building contracts can stipulate the use of certain technologies; or indirectly, through the award of bonus points in proposal evaluations for the inclusion of Green products in the contract specifications/approach.
- ✚ Local governments also have the ability to include Green Business elements in their existing bylaws and operating procedures. For example, zoning bylaws can include incentives for developers to incorporate green products in their building designs.
- ✚ As part of their leadership role, local government officials are able to Champion development issues to higher levels of government
- ✚ Local governments can enter into partnerships with other local governments in order to increase the potential scale of any initiative and to coordinate focused development efforts.
- ✚ Local governments may sponsor and participate in Green Business alliances that act as sector advocates both locally and towards more senior levels of government.
- ✚ Local government leaders can leverage their influence and visibility to promote their region as a desirable investment area for Green Business firms
- ✚ Partnerships between local government and local universities can be designed to market Green degree programs both to prospective students and also to potential investors.
- ✚ Financial institutions will generally consider the stability of a business revenue stream when assessing a funding application. In certain instances it may be appropriate for a government to enter into a long term supply contract with minimum price and quantity guarantees as a mechanism to assist with a financing initiative. Such a contract would represent a valuable asset that can be provided as part of an overall security package to the financing entity.
- ✚ Local governments are able to establish special use industrial parks and may elect to offer eligible firms and businesses rental or lease rates that are significantly lower than market rates for similar premises. This mechanism is frequently adopted to provide assistance for start-up businesses and/or to establish an early stage development business centre. Formerly known as Business Incubators, these facilities are generally created in partnership with an educational, research or economic development agency.

Creating Demand

Since Green Businesses are a new industry sector, work needs to be done to create demand for Green products and services.

- ✚ Work with existing businesses to become green. There is an opportunity for local businesses to convert existing energy needs to renewable energy. In addition, local businesses can adopt green business practices that will lessen the impact on the environment and create auxiliary business opportunities.
- ✚ Encourage the public sector to incorporate Green energy into new and existing public buildings. Work with institutions to incorporate LEED standards into their building designs.
- ✚ Encourage district energy systems into new subdivisions, industrial parks and public buildings. District energy systems are great candidates for the utilization of waste materials including municipal waste, wood waste and solid waste.
- ✚ Demand side awareness. There are a number of groups in the Cowichan region that work to create demand for green products and services. It is important to ensure a relationship with these organizations and assist in their efforts whenever possible. These groups include Cowichan Tribes, the Cowichan Green Community and Cowichan Carbon Busters.

Creating Supply

The other side of the supply and demand equation is ensuring that there is a supply of Green products and services to meet demand.

- ✚ Utilize existing resources and develop opportunities. The Cowichan Region has abundant natural resources including agriculture land, wood biomass, and solar and wind energy opportunities
- ✚ Identify new business opportunities based on available resources.
- ✚ Market to potential investors
- ✚ Market existing businesses for export opportunities to increase the financial viability of the businesses and make them sustainable and resilient

Partnerships

Partnerships are essential to the development of a Green Business sector. It is also essential to understand who the players are and what they are doing.

- ✚ Work to understand who is doing what and how we can link in
- ✚ Get the community involved
- ✚ Link in with other agencies- Government- BC Bioenergy Network, Solar BC , Linx BC

Marketing a Sustainable Cowichan

Economic Development Cowichan (EDC) has created a Sustainable Cowichan theme that is being used in a number of marketing efforts. www.sustainablecowichan.com directs people to the discovercowichan.com web site. A new “Sustainable Cowichan” section will be added that will keep the community informed on the clean technology efforts.

EDC has also created a Green Business category under the Resource Directory section of the web site. Businesses can list themselves under this category. A hard copy “Green Business Guide” is under development and will be used at trade shows. EDC is attending a number of trade shows in 2011 that have a sustainable or green theme- specifically the Green Solutions Trade Show in Nanaimo (March 19, 20) and EPIC Sustainable Living Expo in Vancouver in May 2011. A new banner for the trade show booth has been developed with the Sustainable Cowichan brand. Both shows will highlight the existing green companies in the Cowichan Region.

APPENDIX C: COWICHAN REGION AREA AGRICULTURAL PLAN

Cowichan Region Area Agriculture Plan

Goals and Action Plan

Goal 1 – to create a strong communication network between agriculture and the community

Objective 1a: to strengthen the farm network - improve communication within the farm community

Actions

- 1) Each Agricultural Organization to adopt the Agricultural Plan and create an internal strategy that will address the issues or actions relevant to the organization. This includes prioritizing the issues, setting goals, timelines and assigning responsibility within the organization and/or in cooperation with other stakeholders
- 2) Hold a joint strategic planning session with local agricultural organizations. This session will help identify and address issues that are relevant to the region and overlap between organizations. It could also identify issues to be dealt with on an island wide basis.
- 3) Implement the internal strategies by “putting them on the agenda”. It is suggested that one or two, a manageable number, of the issues be discussed in detail at each meeting
- 4) Develop Internet-based resources with local information. Use the new tools that the Internet provides – social networking to improve information flow. A local “discussion group” could increase communication and information flow – especially for potential new producers. And, it will likely attract new members to the organizations
- 5) Monitor and measure progress. Set aside one meeting per year to review progress, set new goals and timelines.

Objective 1b: improve connection between local government and agriculture

Actions

- 1) Form an ad hoc Agricultural Committee for the CVRD. Note: this could be the existing agricultural plan committee. Its purpose would change to implementation of the plan. Alternatively, the committee may decide to dissolve in favor of an Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) if it is desirable to add plan implementation to the terms of reference for the AAC.
- 2) Develop and adopt terms of reference for, and establish, an AAC.
- 3) Advertise and/or request expressions of interest for membership. This would probably include a request to each of the Farmers’ Institutes for a nomination to the committee.

- 4) Develop a job description and contract or employ an agricultural advocate or Agricultural Support Officer who will provide support services to the industry, interact with the AAC, and help with implementation of the plan.
- 5) Continue to promote agriculture by developing and hosting events that connect the community with agriculture, ie farm tours, open houses, etc.

Objective 1c: improve connection between community and agriculture

Actions

- 1) Continue to promote agriculture by holding events that connect the community with agriculture, ie farm tours, open houses.
- 2) Encourage, promote and attend Farmers' Markets.
- 3) Work with organizations like the Cowichan Green Community who have an expressed interest in supporting local agriculture
- 4) Support the BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation. Ask for their materials, conduct farm tours and gain an increased presence in the classroom.
- 5) Use new tools, such as social networks, to reach out to a larger portion of the population. If necessary, invite a specialist to a meeting to describe these and how they can be used to connect with the broader community.

Goal 2: to create a local government policy framework that supports and welcomes increased agricultural production, encourages land improvements and helps provide access to resources

Objective 2a: establish an Agricultural Advisory Committee and develop a process that allows open two way communication between the agriculture industry and local government

Actions

- 1) Develop or adopt terms of reference for the Agricultural Advisory Committee. Suggested terms of reference can be provided by the authors of this plan. Based on discussions during consultations, the committee will:
 - a. respond to referrals from the regional district and
 - b. have the capacity to recommend motions for policy change forwarded by industry.
- 2) Advertise for Committee members. How this is done will depend on the terms of reference, however, it is suggested that a portion of the committee would be made up of members nominated by the local Farmers' Institutes.
- 3) Hold a joint meeting between the AAC and the Regional Board to further define and discuss the roles and expectations of the committee in terms of referrals and advocacy.

Objective 2b: adjust local policy to support agriculture

Actions

- 1) Review and harmonize zoning bylaws to ensure that wording and permitted /conditional uses, related to agriculture, are consistent between Electoral Areas and municipalities.
- 2) Amend zoning to allow and encourage value added production as a permitted use in agricultural zones. Complex cases may require a referral to, and recommendation from, the AAC
- 3) Clearly describe permitted uses in each of the agricultural zones within the zoning bylaws and develop a handbook or webpage describing "what to expect when living in farm areas". This could provide information about "normal farm practices". New landowners would be advised of what to expect from the farm next door.
- 4) Edge Planning - where development has not occurred along the edge, implement the policies and use the tools recommended by the Land Commission. This may include a combination of Development Permit Areas, buffers and possibly some restrictions on the type of agriculture along the edge
 - a. Encourage urban agriculture type operations along the urban rural interface.
- 5) Create a preferred zoning for intensive agriculture. Dairy farmers and other intensive operators would be classified as such within the Zoning Bylaw. Permitted and conditional uses would be stated as part of that category of "Intensive" Agriculture Zone.
- 6) Recognize that blanket land use policies for agriculture do not always work. In some cases, policy may need to be flexible. Allow these cases to be referred to the AAC.
 - a. Farm Labour Housing – Develop detailed guidelines for determining legitimacy of a request for additional residences. Refer complex cases to the AAC.
- 7) Encourage the Regional District to undertake a Regional Growth Strategy
- 8) Overlay current land uses on a soils/agricultural capability map to determine the highest and best use for the land and base it on the performance of the land. The 1:20,000 soils and agricultural capability mapping currently available is not digitized. The land use/soil map may need to be done using a hard copy atlas version.

Objective 2c: improve local government services to agriculture

Actions

Note: many of the following actions could be developed or facilitated by the Agricultural Support Officer.

- 1) Provide online access to soil and agricultural capability mapping as well as zoning information. Ultimately, the entire area (CVRD and municipalities) would be viewable at one site.
- 2) Identify, map and protect areas that are suitable for:
 - a. Greenhouses and other intensive operations that don't require good soil
 - b. Processing facilities including abattoirs
 - c. Site for Permanent Farmers' Market
 - d. Intensive livestock operations
 - e. Specialty crops, like grapes and berries, with specific soil and microclimate requirements. Specifically, create an atlas of suitable sites for Vineyard operations
- 3) Where possible, map the agricultural capability of forestry lands or other lands outside the ALR that may be suited for agricultural use. Note: it is suggested that immediate mapping of remote or semi-remote

timberlands is not a high priority. The use of the existing agricultural land base has declined significantly over the past 20 years and most of these lands are accessible and are already cleared. It doesn't make economic sense to develop remote lands when capable sites in good climates near town are being abandoned. Very little land has been cleared for agricultural purposes in the past 20 years.

Goal 3: to improve viability and profitability in the local agriculture industry

Objective 3a: To attract and develop new farmers

Actions

- 1) To support established farms that are not planning inter-generational transfer
 - a. Recruit buyers for large operations and promote Cowichan Valley farm opportunities in a strategic and targeted method.
 - b. Hold a workshop that deals with farm structures including leases, co-ops, corporate structure and addresses succession issues.
- 2) Develop and maintain a land for lease registry and sample lease agreements to assist new/young farmers. This could also include assistance with formation of co-op farms and other new farm structures.
- 3) Recruit new farmers from two potential target groups:
 - a. Early retirees, and
 - b. Existing farmers wanting to change or reinvesting.
- 4) Develop programs to assist young people who are interested in farming. This could include development or promotion of farm cooperatives, leasing, information exchange, equipment co-ops and sharing, mentoring, or any combination of these.
- 5) Develop mechanisms for dividing and using large parcels of ALR to accommodate the climate of small lot farming and urban agriculture

Objective 3a: to prevent further decline and ultimately expand the livestock industry

Actions

- 1) Ask the AAC to develop a motion, to be presented to the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC), requesting that quota levels on Vancouver Island be increased to levels that support regional food self-sufficiency. The motion could be framed so that new quota would be allocated to regions that are producing less than regional consumption
- 2) Increase public and political awareness of the issue and the importance of the livestock sector
- 3) Recruit livestock producers from areas where production intensity may be creating environmental, bio-security and/or odour issues.
- 4) Support initiatives that:
 - a. reduce input costs for agricultural producers (cost of transportation, feed, fertilizer and energy)
 - b. reduce the cost of, or improve access to, processing

- 5) Assist in developing solutions for disposal of Specified Risk Materials (SRM). SRM is currently shipped, at significant cost, to Alberta where it is processed and landfilled.

Objective 3c: to deliver training and education programs to the agricultural industry

Actions

- 1) Organize, or partner in the organization of, a Vancouver Island Agricultural Show which provides a venue for a major trade show, promotion of island products and short courses/mini-workshops.
- 2) Lobby the provincial government to reinstate extension services.
- 3) As part of the Farmers' Institutes' strategic planning process, identify short courses, workshops, etc. to address training and education needs for the industry. The following have been identified in the consultation process:
 - a. Small Farm Development Program – materials for the course are available from “From the Ground Up”.
 - b. Access to credit – how to find and deal with lenders/investors
 - i. Lending sources – there are lenders, other than the commercial banks, who may be prepared to lend to farmers, i.e. Farm Credit Canada, Community Futures, Business Development Canada, private lenders, AgCapita
 - ii. Alternatives to borrowing – leases, cooperatives, etc.
 - c. Business planning and budgeting.
 - i. The “BC Farm Business Advisory Services Program” will soon be available to assist farmers in developing budgets and benchmarks for their farm operations which may help with loan applications
 - d. Farm Business Succession
 - e. Using technology to increase profit – from social networks to new tractors.
 - f. Direct farm marketing

Objective 3d: to increase revenues and/or reduce costs

Actions

- 1) Investigate joint purchase of inputs. Bulk purchases of some products, coordinated by farm organizations, could allow cost reductions. This is one of the constitutional mandates of Farmers' Institutes and it has been a common practice of the institutes in the past
- 2) Consider joint purchase of equipment, or equipment pooling, to allow farmers access to better or more efficient equipment.
- 3) Support existing suppliers, especially local agribusinesses.
- 4) Investigate beneficial re-use of waste products and alternative energy possibilities. These could be addressed at the Island Agriculture Show.

Goal 4: To improve water management for agricultural purposes

Objective 4a: Increase access to water for irrigation

Actions

- 1) Initiate discussions with Catalyst Paper to secure access to increased water (part of the unused portion of their water license).
 - a. Catalyst also releases heated wastewater. There may be potential to beneficially reuse this for agricultural production - perhaps greenhouses
- 2) Allow farmers access to Municipal water at a favorable rate
- 3) Develop strategies that will allow reallocation of water within the current infrastructure
- 4) Revisit the Cowichan Basin Water Management Plan
- 5) Review potential water storage options throughout the Regional District. Apparently, there is considerable resistance to raising the level of Cowichan Lake. At a glance, this is the most obvious place to increase water storage at the district level because it is already tied into distribution systems. Are there other options? If so, where and how?
- 6) Provide support, such as engineering, to assist farmers with development of on-site or small local irrigation improvements. During consultations, at least one farmer commented that it was very difficult to find engineers with appropriate skills to assist with these types of design and, those that are available, are prohibitively expensive in large part because of the process required for approvals.
- 7) Encourage Environmental Farm Plans and on-going Implementation.

Objective 4b: improve water use efficiency

Actions

- 1) Hold a workshop that deals with water, irrigation design and water use efficiency.
- 2) Encourage Environmental Farm Plans and on-going Implementation.

Objective 4c: improve drainage on farm and within local drainage channels

Actions

- 1) Provide support to farmers/landowners to develop or maintain water management systems, including water control structures on wetland areas, that impact multiple users or landowners
- 2) Assist with creation of Improvement Districts¹ to coordinate regular maintenance of drainage channels
- 3) Encourage Environmental Farm Plans and on-going Implementation.

Objective 4d: Develop and maintain water control systems in low-lying areas

Actions

- 1) Provide support to farmers/landowners to develop or maintain water management systems, including water control structures on wetland areas, that impact multiple users or landowners
- 2) Assist with creation of Improvement Districts to coordinate regular maintenance of water control structures.
- 3) Encourage Environmental Farm Plans and on-going Implementation.

Goal 5: to improve and extend the access to market for local foods.

This includes:

- increased access to storage, processing and distribution
- increased on farm value added production, and
- improved access to markets

Objective 5a: To extend the season through storage, processing and new production methods and facilities.

Actions

- 1) Encourage changes to provincial and federal policy that will allow increased value-adding on farm.
- 2) Ensure that local zoning and OCPs are written to allow and encourage on-farm storage and processing facilities. Complex cases may be referred to the AAC.

Objective 5b: improve access to markets

Actions

- 1) Maintain and continue to support a local Grower's Guide, whether it be online or paper copy, or both, so consumers can easily find local growers. A version of this guide could be targeted to the Greater Victoria area to draw on that large population to the South.
- 2) Work towards developing a year round Farmers' Market site
- 3) Develop consumer awareness programs. The major supermarkets and restaurants will respond to consumer demand. Customers vote with their dollars. If more people ask for local product, these businesses will find a way to supply it or use it.
- 4) Develop a local distribution, marketing system between a number of farmers who service similar markets, ie CSAs, restaurants, independent grocers
- 5) Develop a branding program for Cowichan Valley agricultural products, and
- 6) Revive the "Rooster Booster" marketing campaign that was initiated by the Island Farmers' Alliance
- 7) Certify local farms so consumers know they are buying local and are buying direct from the producer. Certification helps to assure local consumers are not being misled.

- 8) Food safety programs will increase consumer confidence in local products. Local farm organizations may want to ensure that their members and members' employees have access to "Food Safe" training.

Goal 6: to preserve the character and environment of the community

Objective 6a: Promote and encourage completion and implementation of Environmental Farm Plans (EFP)

Actions

- 1) Discuss and encourage EFPs at the Farmers' Institute meetings and at strategic planning sessions
- 2) Set up a table at the "Market in the Square" to promote environmental farm planning to producers and to educate consumers. Encourage consumers to "look for" the Environmental Farm Plan sign when they are supporting local farmers.
- 3) Recognize, and improve awareness in the community of, the contributions to land stewardship and the environment made by landowners. Many landowners are more than willing to provide these services to society. They feel it is part of land stewardship. Problems often arise when someone else imposes limitations or expectations on farmers without any form of consultation, communication or appreciation.

Objective 6b: to improve environmental stewardship

- 1) Access government programs, such as the Canada Revenue Agency's Scientific Research and Experimental Development (SR&ED) Program, to conduct research into improved environmental practices including alternate energy and beneficial re-uses of waste.
- 2) Reduce or eliminate property taxes on the portion of land that is not available for farming. The most obvious of these areas would be Riparian areas, especially those set aside to protect fish habitat. However, there are also low-lying peat lands that farmers are unable to use because of flooding.
- 3) Compensate. There are programs evolving that will help to compensate farmers and landowners for some of these services. Landowners can receive compensation for conservation covenants in some cases. There are programs for compensation for wildlife losses. Carbon credits may be available in the future.
- 4) Conduct an inventory of organic wastes generated within the regional district.
- 5) Work with other regional districts or local governments on Vancouver Island to develop this beneficial reuse options. Often these are capital intensive so large volumes of waste are required to justify the capital expense.

APPENDIX D: COWICHAN REGION TOURISM PLAN

COWICHAN REGION TOURISM PLAN

Goals and Tactics

TOURISM MANAGEMENT

1.1 Role of Tourism Cowichan

Develop a stronger regional tourism function through strengthening Tourism Cowichan and its underlying capacity to represent the interests of the regional tourism industry.

There is a high level of support for strengthening Tourism Cowichan as the lead regional tourism organization. While the options for restructuring were considered carefully, there was a general understanding that without new core funding there was little to be gained from developing an elaborate Council structure at this initial stage. Rather, the first step should be to establish a new Tourism Advisory Committee for Tourism Cowichan that becomes a strong 'champion' for regionalization and has the capacity to act as a catalyst in the implementation of regional initiatives, particularly those that have been at proposal stage for some time.

Specifically, the Committee will focus on:

- Maintaining the current regional dialogue and becoming a regional 'voice' for the tourism industry;
- Identifying and reviewing all sources of new funding and funding models for a regional tourism function, and recommending tactics to pursue specific opportunities;
- Working with the wider industry to advocate for a regional approach and supporting Tourism Cowichan in its current activities; and
- Reviewing alternative governance models for Tourism Cowichan in anticipation of a stronger funding formula.

The current operational relationship that Tourism Cowichan has with Economic Development Cowichan will assist in strengthening a holistic approach to tourism development and in facilitating the implementation of initiatives that are dependent on regional public sector support.

In the initial phase, it is imperative that this Tourism Advisory Committee has a strong Chair-person and reflects a range of regional and community interests. All members should be committed to promoting the value of a regional function and to the core activities outlined above. Highlighting the importance of working in collaboration on regional initiatives does not detract from the need to plan and develop tourism locally. Rather, it creates new opportunities to complement and strengthen what is happening at the community level, and to ensure a more integrated approach to building on regional strengths and addressing areas of weakness.

TACTICS:

- EDC/Tourism Cowichan develops Terms of Reference for the Tourism Advisory Committee.
- EDC recruits Committee members to reflect a range of community and sectoral interests and appoints the initial Chair.
- Continue to encourage the strengthening of local tourism structures that can facilitate the development of tourism at the community level. As the Tourism Cowichan structure evolves, representation of these local

tourism structures in a regional body will become a critical process for highlighting community priorities at a regional level and will set the stage for developing local/regional, public-private partnerships.

- Review governance models in anticipation of the Tourism Advisory Committee evolving into a structure with executive authorities should funding increase significantly.

Should new core funding become available, undertake a visioning workshop and update the vision statement for the region.

1.2 Funding

Pursue new core funding to facilitate developing a broader role for Tourism Cowichan.

There is significant potential to expand the role of Tourism Cowichan as a regional lead tourism organization in a way that will increase its ability to support the wider industry and to act as a catalyst in facilitating product development and industry growth. However, with the current funding and staff time that is available (a half-position and \$120,000² from the CVRD to cover all operational and marketing costs), it is not possible to broaden the mandate. Although Tourism Cowichan has been highly successful at leveraging these limited funds, the emphasis has focused primarily on marketing and promotion. The end result is a regional/local tourism system that is characterized by both gaps and duplication in tourism management roles. This duplication of effort, the loss of efficiencies through economies of scale, and the lack of strategic coordination undermine the competitiveness of the industry as a whole. Indeed, without additional funding in place to develop and promote tourism in a more strategic manner, the best that can be achieved through the implementation of this Plan is an enhanced local and regional awareness of the significance of tourism and a new momentum to maintain regional dialogue and consensus building. Although these achievements will represent progress, the added value that can be gained through expanding the role of Tourism Cowichan is considerable.

The initial task of the new Tourism Advisory Committee will be to identify potential new sources of core funding. A key source of funding that over 50 communities have pursued in the province is the 2% Additional Hotel Room Tax³. This option has elicited strong opinions within the region, and its implementation will only be successful if it has the necessary level of support from the accommodation sector. This tax is under review by the Province, and while it may be renamed, it is unlikely to be displaced as an option for raising community funds for tourism marketing and development.

TACTICS:

- Task the Tourism Advisory Committee with identifying potential new sources of core funding and developing an action plan to pursue funding that is considered appropriate for the Region. The Committee should explore the following options in developing a funding model:
 - Membership fees
 - ◀ This is only relevant if Tourism Cowichan is to become a membership-based model – the cost of pursuing members needs to be factored into this option together with the local Chamber/Tourism Cowichan relationships);
 - A portion of each business license

² This level of funding has remained static since the introduction of a regional funding policy for tourism through the CVRD in 2003.

³ Including 14 jurisdictions on Vancouver Island.

- ◀ Can only be administered by municipalities⁴. Businesses in the Electoral Areas would be exempt.
- Revenue streams based on new business activity, such as a centralized reservations service.
 - ◀ This option has costs associated with meeting the requirements set by Consumer Protection BC that need to be reviewed. For further detail refer to: <http://consumerprotectionbc.ca/businesses-travel-services-home/do-i-need-a-licence>.
- Voluntary contributions such as a pillow levy.
 - ◀ The reliability of funds from year to year and the ability to 'collect' can be an issue. Discount incentives for cooperative marketing initiatives can be used to encourage participation.
- The 2% Additional Hotel Room Tax
 - ◀ Choosing not to pursue this option will have limited impact on the consumer price for accommodation-only products. The current tax levied on accommodation amounts to 8% Hotel Sales Tax plus 5% GST for a total of 13%. The 2% AHRT would raise this total to 15%. With the introduction of the Harmonized Sales Tax and the rescinding of the Hotel Sales Tax on July 1st 2010, the total tax on accommodation will amount to 12%. A further 2% AHRT would raise the total to 14% – a 1% increase on current taxes on accommodation costs⁵.

A key to developing a funding strategy is to have a well developed business plan that clearly shows the benefits that will accrue from the proposed course of action. Based on practices elsewhere, the 2% AHRT remains the most viable option for creating a relatively consistent stream of incremental core funds. However, there is no reason why other options cannot be considered in a blended formula.

- Should a decision to pursue the 2% AHRT be made, consideration will have to be given to the application process. The initiative would require either the CVRD to take a lead with agreements in place regarding a partnership model with the municipalities, or Tourism Cowichan to apply as a 'special entity'.

Tourism Cowichan was initially established under the BC Society Act and has retained its society status. With a stronger governance model and a clear definition of geographic scope, the application could be pursued through Tourism Cowichan for the entire region, with Tourism Cowichan having responsibility for receiving and disbursing the 2% AHRT funds. It is recommended that under this approach a funding formula is developed that ensures a proportion of the funds can be channelled to community tourism projects.

1.3 Management Systems

Develop management systems that will ensure the industry has a current understanding of market trends, visitor expectations, product development and funding opportunities.

A market-oriented industry is one that is based on a sound understanding of market trends and has the ability to respond proactively to emerging opportunities and address identifiable weaknesses and unexpected crises in a timely manner. An appreciation of market trends, visitor expectations, product developments in adjacent regions, and government funding and policy initiatives are all critical in this process and can offer valuable opportunity to gain leverage. Tourism Cowichan can play a distinct role in maintaining this market-focused approach through taking on a range of functions that individual tourism operators are not in a position to do on their own. These 'destination management' functions include:

⁴ This option is already used by the Town of Ladysmith as a source of revenue for funding the Visitor Centre.

⁵ The most recent tax bulletin indicates that the HST will now be applied to both the room charge and the 2% AHRT. This is a federal requirement.

- Ongoing strategic tourism planning;
- Monitoring, measuring and evaluating market trends and local industry performance;
- Integrating tourism interests and objectives with economic development and land-use planning processes;
- Facilitating investment and business development in tourism consistent with the region's vision for tourism; and,
- Ensuring an enabling environment for quality improvement in product and human resource skills.

While the lead tourism organizations at the community level could perform these roles to some degree, there is much greater scope for cost-efficiencies and strategic integration of tourism with other regional and community plans and policies through managing these functions at a regional level.

TACTICS:

- Continue to work on maintaining a comprehensive electronic database of product inventory and related tourism services. This should be developed at the local level and passed on to Tourism Cowichan. Include product/service description, key contact name and contact details (including e-mail address, mailing address and telephone number), and expand in a way that allows for the identification of potential development and marketing opportunities. Keep the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts (MTCA) and Tourism Vancouver Island (TVI) informed of changes to the product inventory.
- Tourism Cowichan is currently producing a stakeholder newsletter. This initiative should be maintained and can be used to disseminate information relating to new product, market trends, emerging opportunities, training programs etc.
- Work with TVI and MTCA to encourage further participation in existing research programs. To be effective in implementing this tactic, local tourism organizations and Chambers will have to assist in raising awareness regarding the importance of stakeholder involvement. The following two programs are reliant on cooperation from the accommodation sector and generally require significant encouragement to initiate participation.
 - Work with local accommodators and campground owners to implement the *Value of Tourism Model*. This project in particular will benefit from local 'champions' to generate stakeholder commitment. The core data collection component of the model is based on an accommodation survey that gathers the most recent annual performance data from all commercial accommodation operators, including campgrounds. Through the use of local, regional and provincial population and tourism indicators, in conjunction with the community accommodation performance data, it is now possible to make an informed estimate of the total number of visitors (overnight, day, and visiting friends and relatives) and their expenditures in the community. With this model, all information provided by the accommodation sector is submitted directly to MTCA, and is only used for the purposes of estimating tourism contribution to the local economy. The data is aggregated to ensure anonymity and confidentiality.
 - Similarly the regional tourism industry would benefit from increasing its participation in MTCA's Provincial Accommodation Survey. This program is based on a minimum of five reporting properties and requires each to submit their occupancy and average daily room rate for the preceding month and a forecast for the next three months direct to MTCA. Participation in this program has been expanded to include campgrounds. Participating properties and Tourism Cowichan would receive a copy of the regional forecast report each month, which would assist in overall business planning and marketing.
 - Consider incentives such as discounts in partnership marketing programs in the initial phase of implementation.
 - Report aggregated results to the wider tourism community as and when available. Report value of tourism to the key public sector stakeholders and keep local media informed to ensure that performance is reported to local residents.
- Explore opportunities to partner with TVI for the purpose of undertaking research.
- Develop marketing feedback systems that will demonstrate return on investment and will assist operators in becoming more targeted in their marketing operations.

Commit to ongoing strategic planning with annual reviews to assess progress and establish new priorities.

1.4 Customer Service

Work toward improving customer service through increasing relevant skills within the tourism sector and encouraging appropriate certification.

The importance of quality service and the need to deliver a visitor experience that is in keeping with market expectations are fundamental elements of building a competitive destination. To play an effective role in destination management and industry development, Tourism Cowichan should promote opportunities for improving customer service and the region's ability to 'host' visitors and deliver experiences that meet market expectations. This can be achieved through facilitating access to appropriate training and professional development programs for stakeholders, and highlighting certification programs that focus on improving customer service or differentiating product on the basis of specific criteria that may be of interest to the target visitor.

TACTICS:

- Tourism Cowichan should play a role in highlighting available programs and promoting workshops with partners such as TVI, Go2, MTCA and Retail BC. Work with the Chambers of Commerce and Community Futures to host relevant workshops.
 - MTCA's WorldHost® Training Services continues the *SuperHost*® legacy by offering a series of eight dynamic and interactive customer service-based training workshops to support people working in service industries. For further detail see: http://www.tca.gov.bc.ca/WorldHost/pdfs/WorldHost_Q_and_A_corp.pdf.
 - The MTCA *Tourism Business Essentials* program provides a series of guide books on key aspects of running a tourism business, and five specific workshops: Tourism Packaging and Product Distribution (Introductory and Advanced), Travel Media Relations, Ads and Brochures That Sell, and Sport Tourism.
 - The *emerit* certification program offers owners, operators and employees an excellent opportunity to gain recognition for existing knowledge and experience in a wide range of tourism sectors. This program is recognized across Canada and raises the standard of excellence in the delivery of tourism. The training is structured in such a way that individuals can receive recognition at different levels of their career and includes the Tourism Essentials Certificate, the Occupational Knowledge Certificate, the Occupational Experience Certificate and the Professional Certification Certificate. For further detail see www.emerit.ca.
 - Retail BC offers workshops that include Selling Memories and Serving World Customers, both of which would strengthen the retail sector as an integral component of the visitor experience.
- Promote relevant funding opportunities such as the Workplace Training for Innovation Pilot program that is currently open for application. This program provides small business and not-for-profit employers access to funding to support employee training and offers up to \$1,500 per employee – to a maximum of \$5,000 per employer.
- Encourage ALL accommodation properties to participate in the MTCA Approved Accommodation program. This approval process not only increases their exposure in the marketplace through HelloBC.com and the Accommodation Guide for the province, but it also ensures that property owners have met minimum requirements in relation to cleanliness and state of repair. Only approved properties should be included in Tourism Cowichan's promotional material.

- Promote the value of participating in relevant certification programs.
 - The Canada Select™ program is Canada's only national accommodation rating program and has been applied to hotels, motels, inns, resorts, condominiums, B&Bs, and campgrounds. The program provides visitors with a nationally consistent standard of quality within each accommodation category and assists visitors in making choices that are in keeping with their expectations.
 - The BC Agritourism Alliance offers a quality assurance program. Accreditation provides operators with the ability to use the BC Agritourism accreditation logo, access to the Highway Sign Program, and preferential rates for marketing through the Alliance.
 - The Culinary Tourism Society BC offers an accreditation program to all food service establishments, culinary retail shops, tour operators and specialty culinary tourism experiences. The Society has developed ten core certification criteria that relate to the use of BC product, service/hospitality, value, uniqueness, quality, integrity, informative experience, 'enviro' sustainability, 'local favourite', and cultural/authentic factors.

The Pets can Stay™ travel services provides a national certifying and marketing body that has established standards and guidelines for accommodation providers that cater to the rapidly growing pet travel market. This program was piloted initially by Tourism BC, but now extends to all of North America.

1.5 Tourism Awareness

Build a greater awareness of and appreciation for the tourism industry as a key component of the regional economy.

Building a competitive tourism industry requires support from the entire community – residents, businesses and politicians alike. A general lack of awareness will undermine potential support and can create challenges that will constrain the industry's growth. Given the significance of tourism to the region's economic base, it is essential that there is a strategy in place designed to build an understanding of the benefits that are being derived from this sector.

TACTICS:

- Creating awareness occurs at many different levels and should start by focusing on the tourism industry itself. The regional meetings that have occurred through the planning process have generated the type of dialogue that needs to be maintained. This can be facilitated through networking events and workshops.
 - Initiate a program of networking events (one or two per annum) at specific sites and attractions. Use the event to raise awareness of the particular attraction. Consider developing a hosting policy with funding assigned to the initiative. Events of this nature will assist in informal cross-marketing and should also be promoted to front-line staff within the wider business community and to Visitor Centre staff in neighbouring regions.
 - Promote attendance at TVI's annual AGM and conference.
- Focus on building awareness within the local population. Local residents will have a substantial impact on the activity patterns of visitors who fall into the category of 'visiting friends and relatives', and tactics need to be in place that will assist residents in being effective hosts.
 - Consider developing a "Be a Visitor in your own Region" and promote locally and regionally. Work with local operators to create viable incentives that will encourage visitation. This type of initiative is highly successful in Victoria.

- Encourage local community organizations and service clubs to feature presentations on tourism and its benefits at local networking events.
- Establish working relations with Cowichan Valley School District 79 and Nanaimo-Ladysmith School District 68 and explore ways of promoting tourism and related opportunities in the schools.
- Work with local media on an ongoing basis to enhance knowledge and understanding of the tourism industry and its value to the economy.
 - Develop regular press releases for the local press and radio on tourism 'stories' of interest and the overall tourism economy. Use these opportunities to reinforce the concept of a regional tourism industry.
 - Use the media to highlight research findings as and when they become available, including the value of tourism.

Present Tourism Cowichan's annual tourism development and marketing plan to the Municipal Councils, the Regional District Board, and the Economic Development Commission.

1.6 Responsible Tourism

Encourage further adoption of environmentally sustainable business practices.

The concept of sustainability has become a cornerstone of government policy in British Columbia. The establishment of the *BC Partnership for Sustainable Tourism* in February 2009 (operating as ETHOS) is further indication that the Province and industry leaders together are committed to promoting appropriate action that will increase the overall sustainability of the industry and enhance the 'green positioning' of British Columbia as a destination in the global market place. Through the launch of a new website in January 2010 (www.ethosbc.com), the partnership is seeking to promote sustainable practices which are measurable and practical. This website has been established to act as an industry networking mechanism and a comprehensive resource centre with tools and information to assist small and medium-sized businesses in their business operations. A basic network membership is free and benefits include a travel calculator for businesses to imbed on their website to encourage travel related offsetting that invests in projects taking place in British Columbia.

This emphasis on positioning BC as a green destination coincides with changing market trends as international visitors increasingly look for tourism operators that practise responsible tourism. This trend has become particularly evident in the European markets and responding to these trends should be a strategic priority for the Cowichan region. In time, many of these practices will be assumed as the new norm.

TACTICS:

- Highlight examples of best practice to the industry and build an awareness of general trends in sustainability. *Green your Business: Toolkit for Tourism Operators*⁶ has a wide range of initiatives and practical steps that small and medium sized tourism businesses can begin to implement. The handbook has been designed for multiple tourism sector audiences and provides suggestions and case studies that have been arranged by tourism sector, business process, and the needs of small and medium sized enterprises. Similarly, MTCA's Tourism Business Essentials guidebook series publication, *Environmentally Responsible Tourism*⁷, is a practical guide that will assist

⁶ Handbook produced by Marr Consulting Services for the Tourism Industry Association of Canada, Parks Canada and the Canadian Tourism Commission – October 2008. Available on various websites, including Tourism Vancouver Island – http://www.tourismvi.ca/pdf/best-practices/green_your_business_en.pdf

⁷ For further detail see:

<http://www.tca.gov.bc.ca/industryprograms/BuildingAndGrowingYourBusiness/TourismBusinessEssentials/BusinessEssentialsPublications.htm>

businesses in making financial savings and gaining a competitive edge when marketing to consumers with increased environmental awareness and demands.

- ETHOS, in partnership with *Climate Smart*, has recently launched a new training initiative for small businesses to assist in identifying practices that will reduce the carbon footprint of tourism operations.
- Encourage wider participation from the accommodation sector in the national Green Key Eco-Rating program – (current participants include the Best Western Chemainus Festival Inn with a rating of 4, and the Travelodge Silver Bridge Inn with a rating of 2). This program is based on a graduated rating system designed to recognize hotels, motels, and resorts that are committed to improving their fiscal and environmental performance. It assists participants with opportunities to reduce operating costs and environmental impacts through reduced utility consumption, employee training, and supply chain management. The program has considerable value as an awareness tool, although it is based on self-verification. ETHOS is currently working on developing an appropriate rating scheme for BC that will involve a more rigorous process of assessment.
- Build awareness for the GreenTable Network – a Vancouver-based certification program for the culinary sector that is in its early days of development and is spreading across the province and into Alberta. There are two membership categories – one for food service operators and professionals, and the other for suppliers and growers. The Network’s mission is to foster sustainability through collaborative action and innovative solutions.

Highlight good practices within the community and the region to the resident and visitor alike. Use Tourism Cowichan’s e-newsletter to profile new practices.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

1.7 Visitor Services and Visitor Centres

Implement regionalization of visitor services strategy

This proposal has been at the recommended proposal stage for some time. The overriding goals to this initiative include:

- Creating consistency in the messaging and raising the profile of the region as the destination, with communities acting as a hub for a regional experience.
- Increasing the ease with which the visitor can enjoy a regional experience and spreading the benefits of tourism throughout a wider area.
- Reducing promotion costs for tourism operators.

TACTICS:

- Moving forward will require developing a Memorandum of Understanding between Economic Development Cowichan acting on behalf of Tourism Cowichan and the five Chambers. Developing a comprehensive Memorandum that addresses the following should assist in allaying any concerns that may lie behind the stalling of this initiative to date:
 - The development of package membership fees to enable tourism businesses to rack in all Visitor Centres for a single fee. This should be done in conjunction with Tourism Cowichan, with the racking fee including a presence on the Tourism Cowichan website.
 - The introduction of joint training initiatives for Visitor Centre staff that includes a region-wide familiarization program to ensure that staff are knowledgeable of product throughout the region. This may be expanded to include opportunities for rotation of staff and volunteers.
 - Maintenance of a local product database and regular submissions of updates to Tourism Cowichan.
 - The development of uniform business systems in relation to the day-to-day administration of the Visitor Centres.
 - Consideration of a joint application to Canada Summer Jobs program through Services Canada for seasonal positions.
 - An exploration into the use of Visitor Centres as a point for collecting visitor data that is in addition to what is routinely collected for MTCA.
 - Increased profiling of Tourism Cowichan branding in local visitor publications that are racked in Visitor Centres.
 - In the longer term, efforts should be made to work towards promoting Tourism Cowichan's website as the key source of web-based visitor information for all communities. This will create greater consistency in messaging and will reinforce the positioning of the region as the destination, while also reducing efforts and costs in web maintenance. Further discussion is needed on the role of the regional website versus local community websites to minimize confusion for the visitor and to create synergies.
 - The concept of a Cowichan Region Chamber of Commerce has been discussed. This should be explored further, but it is not a prerequisite for regionalizing the delivery of visitor services through the various Visitor Centres.

Continue to move forward with the Duncan/North Cowichan Visitor Centre Project and determine optimum locations for other Visitor Centres.

- In addition to regionalizing the delivery of visitor services through the Visitor Centres, there are Visitor Centre infrastructural projects and related matters in various stages of progress or discussion⁸. The Visitor Centres are a shop-window for the region and it is vital to focus on the message, image and services that they present in their totality.

TACTICS:

- Work is proceeding on the construction of the new Duncan-Cowichan Visitor Centre near the BC Forest Discovery Centre. It is anticipated that this facility will become the flagship Visitor Centre for the region. As such there should be a strong branding association between the Centre and the Cowichan branding. Administration services associated with this Centre would be in the strongest position to coordinate the delivery of a regionalized visitor services program as outlined above.
- Assuming that services are regionalized, regional support should be added to the efforts being made by the Ladysmith Tourism Committee and the Ladysmith Chamber of Commerce to secure funding for the renovation of the train station as a new location for the community's Visitor Centre.
- The planning discussions raised the need for a new point of delivery for visitor information for visitors as they enter the Region from the south. The current visitor booth is constrained by both visibility/location and size. A potential location on the Highway has been identified and consideration initially should be given to using the location for a roadside information exhibit.

Commit to exploring funding options for the ongoing viability of providing the existing visitor information services across the region, including those at Cowichan Lake.

Explore opportunities to develop a centralized reservation service.

Interest in a central reservations service was expressed in the planning discussions. This would be regarded as an extension of the Visitor Centre services and would likely be implemented through the new Duncan-Cowichan Visitor Centre when it is completed. Caution is needed in considering this service as it may not generate sufficient net revenue to justify developing the service.

TACTICS:

- Review options for developing this type of service. If the service is based on referrals and bookings for spontaneous business without a cash transaction, there would be few issues. However, if the service was expanded to include advance reservations for packaged products with cash transactions taking place, the organization responsible for the centralized reservation service would have to comply with the Regulations under the Business Practices and Consumer Protection Act for travel wholesalers. For further information refer to Consumer Protection BC.

The success of a central reservations service or the booking of 'spontaneous' business is dependent on working closely with tourism businesses. The former will require building and promoting new and innovative packages and promoting with the call-to-action and the reservation process going through the new central reservations service. There are obvious staffing implications with developing this program. Kimberley Vacations offers this type of service, but it has the added advantage of managing 1st Tee Golf for Kootenay Rockies which increases the economic viability of the service.

⁸ There is no presumption of increased funding from MTCA for Visitor Centres based on current or future changes to the Visitor Centres that are part of the BC Visitor Centres Network.

1.8 Signage

Promote support for Economic Development Cowichan's regional signage initiative and continue to pursue the implementation of local signage and way-finding projects.

Signage issues are a recurring theme and the region has already undertaken an extensive evaluation of signage. The Boulevard Report (2007) has highlighted a series of recommendations that have been agreed to in principle but have yet to move forward to implementation. The Report recommended the implementation of a regional signage plan through the Cowichan Valley Regional District. Under this approach the Regional District would coordinate all requests for tourism signage in the region by being the primary contact in the application process. Currently there is a confusing process that relies on business operators contacting the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure directly. Under a regionalized initiative it was proposed that the CVRD would take control of this application process and coordinate all requests for signage and subsequent requirements, thereby creating a more streamlined process in theory. Furthermore, the Report recommended adding the Cowichan logo to the signage to strengthen the concept of the regional destination. Insufficient funding and general difficulties in resolving Highway signage problems with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure have been regarded as the key constraints to moving forward.

Similarly, way-finding is an area that needs to be assessed if the region is to promote hiking and off-road biking, and if visitors are to navigate successfully around communities.

TACTICS:

- The Boulevard Report identified the need to establish a roads and highways signage committee to represent the municipalities, the electoral areas and Cowichan Tribes. The *Community Tourism Foundations* planning workshops highlighted the need to move forward with setting up this committee as the first step in dealing with the ongoing signage concerns.
- Specific highway signage issues were raised in relation to Ladysmith, Crofton, and Chemainus, and the need for regional 'gateway' entrance signs was again identified. Assuming that a new signage committee is established, these issues should be looked at as pilot projects.
- Evaluate way-finding within the region. As cycling and trail initiatives are developed and their related experiences marketed, this becomes an increasingly important element of the infrastructure that needs to be assessed. Good way-finding enhances the visitor experience, heightens a sense of safety and can assist in extending the length of stay.
 - Commence by undertaking a detailed sign audit of a given area. Consider working with the Vancouver Island University or a local senior secondary school to gain assistance in undertaking this stage of the work. For further guidelines, refer to a new manual, *Conducting a Sign Audit* (October 2009), developed through the REDTREE Project (Thompson Rivers University). This manual provides guidelines which will assist a community with undertaking a sign audit. The use of an audit tool helps with evaluating overall signage, and identifying current strengths and weaknesses. The focus of attention for these guidelines is on audits for rubber tire traffic, but the procedures are transferable to all settings. The document is available at: <http://redtree.tru.ca/Resources/howtosignageaudit.pdf>.

Develop a way-finding plan. Funding for implementation can be difficult to obtain, but having a plan will strengthen a funding application and will facilitate moving forward once resources are available.

1.9 Inter-Regional and Intra-Regional Access

Work with a range of partners and regional stakeholders to improve access to and within the region.

There are a number of access issues that are either in the stage of ongoing discussions or need to be elevated as matters of significant concern.

These include:

- Rail access that has the capacity to better service the needs of short-stay visitors and to generate new visitor demand;
- Developing a regional BC Transit schedule that includes connections to Ladysmith;
- Developing a transportation service that can connect visitors arriving by recreational boats to key centres within the region;
- Air access to Nanaimo – issues relating to competitive scheduling and pricing, and connectivity with communities; and,
- Developing connectivity between Lake Cowichan and the northern terminus of the West Coast Trail and/or Port Alberni.

TACTICS:

- There is a Transportation Task Force that is currently looking at the effectiveness, efficiencies and problems relating to transportation on Vancouver Island north of Duncan. The Task Force is seeking to initiate the development of an Integrated Strategic Transportation Plan for this geographic area and is continuing to look at efficient transportation options.
 - Where relevant, work through this initiative to look at particular issues. Ensure that stakeholders are kept informed of progress and ongoing discussions.
- Continue to support the work of the Island Corridor Foundation in its efforts to establish a commuter rail service. In the short term work with tourism operators and accommodation properties to develop overnight packages with rail as the mode of travel. The package would have to provide for intra-regional transportation to be competitive.

Should there be significant scheduling changes to the Via Rail schedule, BC Transit has indicated that it would look to alter its timetable.

- Continue to support BC Transit in the development of a local paratransit system for Ladysmith as outlined in the *Transit Business Plan for the Cowichan Valley*. A key element of this support is promoting intra-regional themed routes and developing collateral that would encourage the use of transit as an optional mode of travel. Partnership discounting for attractions and retail could also be used as incentives to promote the use of public transport, and could be developed as an integral part of the region's commitment to sustainability and low carbon footprint.
- Providing a transport service that links with the marinas will require a partnership-based approach to developing a service. Review opportunities for sponsorship, and explore the option of developing a pilot project to determine the sustainability of such an initiative. This will require tracking associated visitor spend and length of stay, on the assumption that a transportation service facilitates an extended visitor experience (by time and distance). The nature of visitor spend will assist in identifying appropriate sponsor partners.
 - Continue to review and analyse models from elsewhere. Identify 'success factors'.

Matters relating to connectivity with the north end of the West Coast Trail and Port Alberni are components of wider issues relating to the use of lands that have complex First Nations and logging company ownership rights associated

with the use of the lands. This area should be the subject of wider recreation land-use planning discussions – see Section 5.2.

1.10 Tourism Business Growth Services

Identify new tourism business and investment opportunities and provide support services to strengthen existing tourism businesses.

Economic Development Cowichan staff are already actively involved in this role. As efforts continue to collectively review and analyze the tourism industry and its individual niche sectors from a regional perspective, gaps in infrastructure and tourism business opportunities will become more apparent. The need for a boutique hotel as an alternative accommodation venue for golf packaging was highlighted in the planning discussions, together with issues related to developing farm accommodation. Similarly, the area no longer offers accommodation inclusive of spa and wellness facilities, which is a distinct gap given the focus on healthy foods and lifestyles throughout the region. The services required will vary from developing appropriate investment strategies to working with partners such as the Chambers of Commerce and Community Futures to strengthen and expand existing businesses.

TACTICS:

- Ensure that there is an up-to-date profile of the regional tourism industry to assist prospective entrepreneurs in the analysis of the opportunity. Data on the value of tourism to the regional economy would be a significant asset in building this service.
 - Consider identifying specific investment opportunities on the EDC website. Review the Government of Alberta’s website as an example of this approach:
<http://tpr.alberta.ca/tourism/investment/regionalopportunities/default.aspx>
 - Include services that guide clients through the regulatory processes involved in tourism development projects.
- Work with the Chambers of Commerce and the Community Future to develop the key elements of a business support program. It should seek to connect small business owners to existing training and business development resources within the region (including financing services), provide training where there is sufficient demand, and open up avenues for networking. While key elements of these services already exist, there is a need to profile them more actively within the tourism industry – particularly in relation to ongoing mentorship services.
 - Highlight provincial resources including Small Business BC and Front Counter BC, and federal resources such as Canada Business Services.
 - Where appropriate, play an advocacy role in assisting small business with regulatory issues.

Meet with local lending institutions and discuss the significance of tourism as a key component of the regional economy.

1.11 Strengthening ‘Sense of Place’

Provide ongoing support for revitalization and beautification projects that will enhance the appeal of individual communities.

While revitalization and beautification projects are generally local priorities, their importance in strengthening the appeal of the overall destination is significant. Communities with a strong sense of place will act as ‘honey-pots’ in the destination and will provide a stronger base for tourism businesses to build on. Spreading the benefits and generating visitor spend throughout the region is highly dependent on being able to market local distinctiveness and authenticity.

TACTICS:

- Create awareness of the value of tourism and the benefits of street appeal and local distinctiveness with local politicians.
- Promote applicable funding opportunities as and when they arise.

Encourage local tourism operators to participate in all relevant community planning processes.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

1.12 Marine Tourism

Recognize marine tourism as a key product sector of the Cowichan Region and encourage a stronger partnership based approach to its development.

The region has unique marine assets and attributes that have international recognition. The protected and safe waterways, scenic anchorages, and the area's association with the Gulf Islands archipelago and proximity to the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve have the capacity to attract high-value international visitors. The Cowichan eastern coastline provides a range of marine-based facilities, such as Maple Bay Marina with its array of support services and onshore food and beverage venues. While these marinas should be regarded as alternative gateways to the region, the reality is that there is a generally a 'disconnect' between these facilities and the remainder of the region.

Clearly, given the region's invaluable natural assets, marine tourism has strong potential for growth and capacity to generate further visitor spend within the region. However, the sector is currently constrained by significant fragmentation, infrastructural issues, and low community awareness and appreciation for its role as an economic driver. The planning discussions highlighted a need to look at this high-value sector in a more strategic manner, and to identify areas of action that have the potential to capitalize more fully on existing strengths.

TACTICS:

- The strengths and constraints associated with this sector are well understood by those directly involved in it. There is a need to assess the status of the industry and prioritise infrastructural and land-use requirements that are needed to increase the value of this sector in a sustainable manner. Any discussions of this nature should include representatives from the different municipalities and CVRD to further increase awareness of the sector's growth potential.
 - A preliminary assessment was made in the *Commercial Marine Based Tourism Study Report* completed in 2005 (see Appendix 2). It would appear that many of the issues identified in this report remain valid. This work should be reviewed as a starting point to further discussions.
 - Supplement this existing work with a further review of current facilities and develop a comprehensive electronic inventory of marine-based product.
- A detailed on-line inventory was developed for the former Cowichan/Ladysmith Marine Tourism Authority. This material should be retrieved, up-dated and made available again as an on-line planning tool for marine-based visitors.
- The Ladysmith Maritime Society is moving forward with the Ladysmith Community Marina Visitor Facilities Project which will include construction of a visitor reception centre with washrooms, showers, laundry facilities, meeting and resource rooms, and Wi-Fi capabilities; construction of a visitor special events dock; installation of a sewage pump-out station; and, construction of a new approach, ramp and main dock. It is anticipated that these

facilities will attract a significant increase in recreational boaters to Ladysmith and will extend the marina's current peak season.

- New proposed activity packages that include kayaking and a First Nations cultural experience (in partnership with the Stz'uminus First Nation) will further enhance the attractiveness of Ladysmith as a marina stop-over. A growth in visitor nights is anticipated and these should be carefully tracked to demonstrate return on investment.
- There is a need to assess on-shore visitor opportunities that are readily available to marine visitors in moorage areas along the entire coastline. The transportation issue has already been identified (Section 4.3) and needs to be resolved, at least in the peak summer months, if the wider community is to fully benefit from this visitor segment. Similarly, the recreational opportunities that are immediately adjacent to docking areas should be a focus of attention if the region is to be successful in 'holding' these visitors for any length of time. Concerns regarding shore access to back country, the availability of near-shore campsites, and the limited transient moorage at areas of existing interest are all issues that would benefit from further assessment and identification of priorities.
 - Develop new collateral material that presents existing opportunities for recreational boaters. Creating this in a form of a map that highlights moorage areas, shore activities, marine services, and local amenities should be considered.
- Review land to water access for all marine-based users and determine appropriate strategies to address significant constraints.
- Review the work of the Georgia Strait Alliance and work towards eco-rating certification under the BC Clean Marine Program. Maple Bay Marina is in the process of pursuing this certification. Other marinas should seek to be compliant, thereby enabling the region as a whole to position itself as a "Clean Marine" destination.
- Undertake market research that focuses on this sector. Length of stay, seasonality, visitor expenditures and on-shore activities are all areas of interest that would assist the sector in its ongoing development. Explore opportunities to work with the MTCA, TVI and/or Vancouver Island University on a research initiative.
- The region has unique strengths in relation to winter diving. Further consideration needs to be given to promoting this activity – particularly in light of its ability to attract visitors out of peak season.
- The marine sector can be strengthened through innovative packaging with other product sectors, culinary experiences, events and on-shore accommodation, provided that transportation is included.

Cross-marketing with other product sectors and within the sector will raise the profile of the marine-based tourism sector. Maple Bay Marina and Genoa Bay Marina partner on a discount moorage coupon program. The effectiveness of this program in extending length of stay should be assessed.

1.13 Nature-Based Tourism

Develop a nature-based tourism strategy and action plan for the Cowichan Region.

The Cowichan Region has potential for a spectrum of nature-based activities from eco-tourism and soft adventure to more extreme pursuits and hard adventure. Activities such as camping, hiking, kayaking, boating, fishing and more recently mountain biking, are associated with the region (see Appendix 2), but there is substantial scope to strengthen this association and to develop product and related infrastructure that will expand on available opportunities. This area of product development will need considerable public sector involvement as there are infrastructural, access and land-use issues that should be addressed.

TACTICS:

- The planning discussions identified numerous opportunities for specific activities, including niche pursuits such as paragliding on Mount Prevost and mountain biking on Tzouhalem, but many of these activities could not be regarded as fully 'market ready'. While there are a number of well-established outfitters and operators providing sought-after experiences, there remains potential to further develop nature-based niche sectors in a way that will meet the resurgence in demand for this type of product. It is therefore recommended that a public sector partnership is established with the Regional District as the lead, to develop a nature-based tourism strategy. The strategy should include an analysis of the commercial and recreational opportunities within the Cowichan Region and an action plan for further developing and utilizing these opportunities to expand tourism and increase the appeal of the area for local residents.
 - The methodology should include an identification of existing opportunities and current levels of activity as an initial step in assessing the potential for expansion; an analysis of required facilities and support infrastructure (including signage and trails development and maintenance); and associated land-use issues.
 - The discussions with the Cowichan Lake stakeholders identified wide-ranging back-country opportunities in the area. At the same time major constraints associated with land ownership were identified. Clearly, there is a need for a facilitated series of discussions with the forestry companies and the First Nations to explore collaborative options. Expanding on wilderness and lake-based opportunities in this area would increase the overall market profile of the Cowichan Region substantially, particularly if a stronger association could be built between the destination and its potential to act as a gateway to West Coast wilderness experiences associated with the iconic West Coast Trail/Pacific Rim National Park Reserve.
 - The first half of the new Runner's Trail from Headquarters Bay at the southern end of the Canadian Northern Pacific Railway Alberni Inlet Trail to Francis Lake (about halfway to Cowichan Lake) is near completion. This is a collaborative initiative involving the City of Port Alberni, Tseshaht First Nation and funding from the Island Coastal Economic Trust. There are discussions regarding establishing a funding partnership to complete the trail through to Cowichan Lake. A trail of this nature would be a primary asset to the region and discussions should take place to assist in securing funding for the remaining half.

The paved road to Port Renfrew presents 'gateway' opportunities for Lake Cowichan. While the area has strong potential for growth in a range of nature-based activities, including mountain biking and ATV use, there are constraints that need to be looked at in relation to ownership (as already cited), accommodation and lake access. The 76 km circle route around Cowichan Lake is of interest to visitors, but is inaccessible to those in rental vehicles without off-road insurance.

- Similarly, the Port Renfrew road creates potential to develop circle route packages for rubber tire traffic and cyclists. The full circle route is already packaged through Cycle Treks from Victoria as a five day full circle cycle tour of southern Vancouver Island via Lake Cowichan. The route is packaged with accommodation, guides, van escort, and various agritourism/viticulture and activity-based experiences such as white water kayaking.
- There is considerable scope for building specific cycling product – back road, off-road cycling and mountain biking. The Trans Canada Trail and the imminent completion of the Kinsol Trestle open up new opportunities for product development and associated packaging. There is scope to partner with neighbouring jurisdictions, particularly Capital Regional District and Salt Spring Island to develop circle cycling routes that would link in with the Island, the Lochside Regional Trail and the Galloping Goose. Effective development of this product will require identifying appropriate accommodation venues and associated support services.

- Review potential of all community trails and regional authorized back-country trails for different types of off-road cycling experiences. Refer to Whistler Trail Standards⁹ for definition of trail types.
- Ensure that there is a communication link between the MTCA *Experiences BC* Mountain Bike Tourism initiative and Tourism Cowichan. This sector group has just completed a plan that is designed to raise the profile of mountain biking as a key provincial experience and British Columbia as an international destination for the activity. For other resources, refer to the handbook developed by Tourism BC – *Developing Community Mountain Bike Tourism Experiences* (2008) and the work of the Western Canada Mountain Bike Tourism Association¹⁰.
- Any development of trail-based product will require supportive print and web-based collateral. The CVRD GIS department will work on mapping initiatives with Tourism Cowichan.
- The trails open up options to develop and promote new activities such as Geocaching. This is a low-impact growth product that will assist in extending the length of stay. Review the activities of Shuswap GeoQuest as an example of using Geocaching to build shoulder season business and generate new interest in a destination – <http://shuswapgeoquest.com/index.html>.
- Similarly, the region offers significant potential for birding tourism, particularly in relation to the migrating and wintering birds associated with the estuarine areas.

The Cowichan River has heritage designation at both national and provincial levels. It offers a range of unique opportunities associated with fishing, hiking and 'drifting' and potential for interpretive experiences that would enhance the region's ecotourism product.

1.14 Arts and Cultural Heritage

Work with partners to strengthen the role of arts and cultural heritage within the tourism industry.

The Cowichan Region has a rich cultural heritage and a strong tradition of arts. The attractions and experiences on offer embrace an array of product associated with First Nations culture, visual and performing arts, and a diverse range of artisans. The international recognition of the Chemainus murals, Duncan's positioning as the City of Totems together with the Quw'utsun' Cultural Centre, and the opportunities for live performances are indicative of the strengths that the region has in arts and cultural heritage. The specific attractions that highlight the regional ecological diversity, such as the Pacific Northwest Raptors Bird of Prey and Falconry Visitor Centre, the BC Forest Discovery Centre and the Freshwater Eco-Centre; the opportunities for boutique shopping; and, the range of festivals and events that celebrate the region's distinctiveness add further value to the visitor experience. However, despite the extensive product base, the planning discussions raised concerns regarding the general fragmentation of this sector, the lack of coordinated marketing, insufficient packaging, a weak presence on the internet, signage and hours of opening issues. The Regional District has just created an arts and culture staff position and it is anticipated that this position will play a key role in integrating arts and cultural heritage with tourism in a more effective manner.

Building local and regional awareness is critical in developing cultural tourism and in strengthening the arts and cultural heritage sector. There is often a tendency to assume a high level of awareness locally which generally results in a lower priority being placed on quantifying assets and capacity or the overall economic value of the sector. Addressing these gaps is an important step in leveraging local and regional political support and in attracting funding from outside the region. The following tactics reflect the need for a comprehensive analysis of the existing sector.

⁹ http://www.ownthetrail.com/TrailStandards_Whistler.pdf

¹⁰ See <http://www.mbta.ca/mbta.asp>

TACTICS:

- Undertake a comprehensive scan of arts and culture in Cowichan and an analysis of its economic value. This is a significant project but it will establish essential baseline data, and it will provide an inventory of product and an overview of facilities, capacity, specific needs, and a better understanding of actual and potential markets. The research should include a review of sales outlets, promotional tools, professional development, access to studio space, involvement in related education, and associated issues and challenges. In looking at the economic impact, attention should focus on measuring spending and related employment associated with the entire arts and culture sector, including arts-related education, relevant events and festivals, societies and organizations.
 - To undertake this work in a comprehensive manner, it is recommended that a number of research tools are used including questionnaires, focus groups and interviews. Ideally there should be consultation with residents and the wider business community, as well as artists and cultural organizations. Achieving high levels of participation is important and will require a public relations strategy involving the local media that highlights the benefits of this work. This is a significant project and the availability of funding for professional assistance would be of value. In the absence of funding, review work completed in other jurisdictions and tools developed by organizations such as 2010 Legacies Now.
 - The research findings should assist in attracting outside funding and investment. With ongoing tracking the data will also demonstrate return on investment and can be used to monitor the impact of new policies and initiatives.
- Encourage further development of authentic experiences based on traditional First Nations culture. The Cowichan Tribes play a strong role in tourism and raised the profile of the region considerably through the North American Indigenous Games in 2008. Related product includes the Quw'utsun' Cultural Centre and Aboriginal cultural events, such as the Walk-of-Nations and the Cowichan International Aboriginal Festival of Film & Art. The interest in Aboriginal cultural experiences has increased substantially in recent years, particularly with the hosting of the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games, and the Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC (ATBC) is seeking to build on this new level of market interest through further product development and marketing.
 - Encourage close working relations with ATBC and review opportunities to build on current product offerings.
 - Explore opportunities to create 'experiences' that can be packaged with other products. The discussions with the Stz'uminus First Nation in Ladysmith regarding developing a cultural experience that can be packaged for marine-based visitors exemplifies this approach (see Section 5.1).
- Identify existing heritage product such as the Ladysmith Heritage Route and the Cowichan Valley Museum, and review the potential to develop a regional heritage-based product that incorporates these local elements. The region has numerous 'stories' and interesting sites such as Whippletree Junction associated with its more recent settlement that could be incorporated into an historical interpretive trail.
- Chemainus has taken a lead on developing a packaged product that includes theatre and accommodation. Further consideration needs to be given to expanding this approach and to working with existing consortiums such as the Visions Art Tour Society. Packaging needs to be creative – existing packaging approaches should be reassessed to see where there is room for innovation that would bring a 'freshness' to the experience.
 - Consider the potential for developing new regional circle tours that offer a range of local authentic experiences based on local products (see Sections Agri-tourism and Nature based tourism).
 - Cowichan hosts a number of Christmas events and festivals that seek to promote local arts and crafts. Explore the potential for packaging these events with accommodation and promote in the near-in regional market.

- Work with artists and artisans to explore the potential for developing new ‘experiential’ product based on interactive workshops. Examples of success elsewhere are often based on a packaged product that includes spa and wellness components, nature-based activities and/or unique culinary experiences.
- Establish a working group to review existing events and festivals and to identify ways of consolidating this sector. Events and festivals can be a key economic driver, particularly when there is a clear strategic approach to building the product.
 - There are opportunities to create greater efficiencies in planning and marketing. Although many of the current events are community-based, consideration should be given to developing a regional marketing template that raises the awareness of the region at each event and strengthens the association of the community with the region. A consistent regional emphasis in the marketing message will build a profile of a dynamic regional destination and will assist in cross-marketing events.
 - Focus on packaging key events with accommodation and promote regionally.
 - Create a process for evaluating the events and use this process to determine tactics for enhancing each event and generating new benefits. Various tools have been developed to assist with this process and consideration of an appropriate methodology should be built into the festival and events planning process¹¹.
 - Hold an annual networking workshop for all event planners and organizers. Review strengths and weaknesses and develop tactics for future events.
- Encourage the municipalities and CVRD to expand or develop public art programs. The totem poles in Duncan and the murals in Chemainus are both central to the identity of the two communities. Other opportunities to expand on the provision of artistic expression should be explored as public art can play a strong role in contributing to a ‘sense of place’ and in enhancing an association with arts and culture.
 - There are a range of funding models for public art that could be considered. Examples include:
 - ◀ Capital Regional District – Four municipalities within CRD (District of Saanich, City of Victoria, District of Oak Bay, and the Township of Esquimalt) have “percent for art” policies in place. In Saanich the municipality has committed 1% of the value of the capital budgets for above ground projects towards the purchase or commission and maintenance of public art to be integrated into or displayed in public areas; and 1% of the budget for municipal building construction/renovation projects, or park redevelopment, in excess of \$250,000 to the purchase or commission of public art for that building, structure or park.
 - ◀ City of Surrey – through the Public Art Policy's Funding Strategy, selected civic capital projects are required to provide 1.25% of the construction budget for the inclusion of public art. The percentage of art funds arising from smaller park development construction projects are pooled and included for allocation within the annual Public Art Master Plan.
 - ◀ City of Kelowna – contributes a sum equal to 1% of the City’s annual capital budget from general taxation revenue (a minimum of \$100,000 per annum) to create a Public Art Reserve Fund to be used to fund civic public art projects, and to provide matching funds to encourage the provision of public art by the private sector within publicly accessible portions of developments.

¹¹ Examples include Research Resolutions & Consulting Ltd., August 2005, Guidelines for Measuring Tourism Economic Impact at Gated Events and Festivals, and Guidelines: Survey Procedures for Tourism Economic Impact Assessments of Ungated or Open Access Events and Festivals – both these documents were financed by the CTC and the province/territory DMOs. This material can be accessed at:
<http://www.tca.gov.bc.ca/research/ResourcesForResearchers/HowToGuides.htm>

◀ City of Revelstoke – \$1 per capita is annually allocated to a Community Public Arts Program.

1.15 Agri-Tourism, Culinary Tourism and Viticulture

Strengthen the capacity of this sector to be a major component in defining the ‘essence’ of Cowichan and adding value to other sector experiences.

The combination of a Maritime Mediterranean climate and fertile soils has resulted in a rich abundance of agri-product. Cowichan’s positioning as a destination has increasingly come to be associated with its wide variety of experiences in this sector, and many of the region’s festivals and events celebrate the food and beverage produce associated with the land and the ocean. There is a strong level of appreciation for organic and healthy eating within Cowichan, and the region has received further acclaim through Cowichan Bay becoming the first named *Cittaslow* community in North America. These strengths are significant and there needs to be a concerted effort to build on them and to identify and address any areas of concern in a more strategic manner.

The concept of promoting Cowichan as a ‘Feast’ was raised in the planning discussions. This theme not only embraces the local flavours associated with diverse wine and culinary products, but it can also be expanded to include the array of other products already discussed – nature, the ocean, arts, culture, and retail. As local writers have highlighted, there is a *joie de vivre* associated with a ‘land of plenty’ that provides considerable potential for innovative packaging and marketing to regional and international visitors alike.

TACTICS:

- Establish a working group of stakeholders from within the sector to assist in further defining strengths, areas of weakness and possible tactics. The discussions associated with this regional planning process identified a range of issues, but there remains scope for additional input from operators that are directly involved in related businesses. This working group should develop a summary report for Tourism Cowichan and should be disbanded upon completion of the project. The following activities will need to be addressed:
 - Ensure that Tourism Cowichan has a complete inventory of all related product, including hours of opening, types of facilities and services offered, group capacity, awards and recognition, and nature of access and accessibility (including signage issues).
 - Identify opportunities for and interest in packaging and cross-marketing.
 - Identify weaknesses in current collateral related to this sector.
- Explore the opportunity to develop a regional self-guided agri-tourism product or an event-styled theme tour. There are a growing number of circle tours and agri-tourism consortiums within BC that are becoming significant attractors, including the Fraser Valley Circle Farm Tour that consists of a series of farm tourism tours in a number of adjacent regions and communities – (Abbotsford, Agassiz-Harrison Mills, Chilliwack, Langley, Mission, and Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows). These tours demonstrate the value of developing partnerships and creating product that features a range of agri-tourism businesses, together with local and regional agrarian themed festivals and events and farm-based or rural accommodation.
 - Explore opportunities to work with the wider region in developing themed routes, including the Gulf Islands.
 - There are already a number of festivals and events associated with this sector. The potential to build on these events through amalgamation, expansion or further diversification should be discussed.

- Utilize the concept of ‘feast’ in developing a trail that embraces all forms of produce and product from the region.
- Review examples elsewhere, such as the ***Taste Trail*** in Prince Edward County. This self-guided tour route links together Prince Edward County's finest artisanal food producers, restaurants, wineries (as well as a cidery and a brewery) – all dedicated to crafting products from local ingredients. The tour showcases 23 participating locations and offers visitors the opportunity to wander from place to place alternating between tastings, tours and dining experiences. All participants provide an added-value experience, such as a tea-room, a tasting area and/or on-site entertainment. Referred to as *an authentic epicurean experience*. An interactive web-map, a print brochure and signage all promote this example of *terroir-based gastronomy*. <http://www.tastetrail.ca/tourroute.html>.
- There is a growing interest in using Farmers’ Markets to promote awareness in local experiences and product. Cooking demonstrations in the Market or the current linkages that Fairburn Farm Culinary Retreat and Guesthouse has with the Duncan Farmers’ Market are examples of tactics that can be developed further.
- South Cowichan has a strong equestrian sector that has not been looked at as a potential tourism product. Equestrian tourism includes a wide range of participatory and spectator activities and would be a natural fit with the pastoral landscapes and the back country access. An inventory of operators should be developed and a workshop hosted to review capacity and level of interest.
 - Potential exists to develop bale and breakfast accommodation.
- Issues were highlighted in the planning discussions regarding CVRD bylaws and farm-based accommodation. Business advisory services should be offered to assist in developing farm-based accommodation. There may be a need for advocacy (where appropriate).
- Facilitate sector net-working events.
- Work through the EDC to expand on high-end boutique style accommodation that aligns itself to product in this sector. The closure of the Aerie has left a gap in the ‘opportunity spectrum’.
- Direct Farm Marketing is targeting local residents. Work with stakeholders to develop collateral that will also target the visitor market.

Regional stakeholders are currently involved in provincial initiatives such as the Culinary Tourism Society, the BC Agri-Tourism Society and the BC Food and Beverage Tourism Alliance. Ongoing involvement and participation in relevant programs, such as quality assurance/accreditation, insurance, and in related marketing initiatives should be encouraged. The MTCA *Experiences BC* sector group (the BC Food and Beverage Tourism Alliance) offers new opportunities for leveraged partnership marketing.

1.16 Sport Tourism and Golf

Develop a coordinated approach to pursuing sport tourism.

The Region has significant assets for a wide range of sport tourism events and has already had success in hosting the high profile North American Indigenous Games in 2008 and the BC Seniors Games in 2005. The facility base has grown substantially in recent years with key venues in the Duncan/North Cowichan area, including the Cowichan Sportsplex and the Aquatics Centre. There is ongoing expansion with infrastructural developments such as the all-weather sports field to be completed in 2011 in Ladysmith, and the current renovation and extension of Cowichan Lake Sports Arena. The golf sector offers a variety of experiences to a range of golfers, and has distinct advantages with the region's long season and good access.

With regard to constraining issues, accommodation was highlighted as an area that needs to be addressed for both sport tourism and golf tourism. The golf industry could benefit from a high-end boutique facility that would offer a more intimate packaged experience, while sporting events that focus on attracting teams have issues with coordinating appropriate accommodation requirements.

Efforts are already underway to address issues and leverage opportunities. Economic Development Cowichan is actively promoting a range of hotel and resort investment opportunities and Tourism Cowichan has been working with provincial partners to highlight the Region's potential to host sport tourism events. The following tactics seek to reinforce these efforts.

TACTICS:

- An Expression of Interest was submitted to Tourism BC to participate in the Advanced Sport Tourism Planning Workshop. The region is anticipating the opportunity to participate in this program in 2010-11. Many of the following tactics are likely to be highlighted in this planning process.
- Ensure that there is a comprehensive database of all sport related facilities and venues, sport tourism organizations, and sport/tournament organizer clients.
 - Cowichan has been profiled on www.HostingBC.com by Tourism Cowichan. The content on this website needs to be maintained on an ongoing basis.
- Develop communications tools and procedures to facilitate the preparation of bids and the hosting of events.
 - Ensure that Tourism Cowichan is kept aware of all bid applications and is given an opportunity to support the bid where appropriate.
 - Develop a 'manual' for sport events to guide staff involved in assisting client groups. Establish systems that will facilitate the booking of accommodation and guarantee the availability of suitable food and beverage services.
 - Focus on shoulder season and winter season opportunities as the accommodation base may be insufficient in peak season.
- Build hosting strategies to gain leverage from sport events.
 - Create a hosting package that includes destination promotional material and opportunities to extend the visit. Include opportunities for other members of the family or group that may be accompanying the athletes.
 - Create welcome packages for overnight participants and spectators. Partner with the accommodation sector to distribute these. Include incentives that would generate return leisure travel and/or extended length of stay.

- Local appreciation for the value of sport tourism is low. Develop an awareness program to create an understanding of this sector and its potential impact on local businesses.
-
- Explore opportunities to promote the region as a location for sport training camps. Lake Cowichan has been successful in this area and there is scope to expand this type of product.
- Build on existing high profile events such as the Subaru Shawnigan Lake International Triathlon.
- Ensure that Cowichan is represented at the annual BC Sport Tourism Events Marketplace. This is a province-wide business-to-business conference for community tourism industry representatives and provincial sport organizations from across the province.
- Ensure that Cowichan is involved in the BC Sport Tourism Network. This network facilitates interaction and the sharing of knowledge between members of the BC sport tourism community, and includes quarterly conference calls, a bimonthly e-newsletter informing network members of upcoming event bid deadlines, grants and industry news, as well as updates on Provincial programs.
- Develop methodologies for assessing the delivery and the economic impact of major sporting events.
- Continue to work with the golf sector to determine appropriate support tactics. There is potential to utilize golf more effectively as an ‘added value’ product for the business market.
 - The Golf Vancouver Island consortium is a well organized golf alliance that has raised the profile of golf on Vancouver Island substantially. Support this consortium in partnership marketing to build awareness of the wider region.
 - Explore the opportunity to develop a regional alliance that can promote incentives to attract visitors on the basis of discounted rounds for multiple games in the region.

Work with accommodation operators to develop golf packages that will broaden the appeal of golf as a destination activity.

MARKETING

1.17 The Role of Tourism Cowichan

Tourism Cowichan has put considerable effort into building market awareness for the region as the destination through regional branding, the ongoing development and distribution of the regional vacation planner, and a wide range of marketing activities. This regional focus should be maintained and supported in a manner that:

- Ensures consistency between regional and local messaging;
- Creates leverage between the two levels of marketing;
- Reduces duplication of effort;
- Maximizes scarce resources.

Tourism Cowichan’s key role is to generate awareness for the destination as a whole – tourism stakeholders and communities should seek to capitalize on this and highlight unique selling propositions that will capture a specific component of this regional market demand. Where the objective is to attract a specific market, such as sport event planners or marine tourism segments, it is recommended that Tourism Cowichan and the local stakeholders work in partnership on collaborative marketing.

1.18 Target Markets and Audiences

In implementing a marketing strategy, consideration needs to be given to identifying the range of target markets and audiences. These can be grouped into two main categories – ‘external’ and ‘internal’ as follows:

External:

- Primary geographic markets:
 - ◀ British Columbia – particularly the near-in regional markets in Victoria and Nanaimo, and the Lower Mainland. This includes international visitors that are based in Victoria.
 - ◀ Anecdotal evidence suggests that the ‘visiting friends and relatives’ segment is a strong component.
- Secondary markets:
 - ◀ The Pacific North West – particularly in relation to marine tourism. In addition, there are direct flights from Victoria to San Francisco which opens up possibilities for strategic marketing.
 - ◀ Calgary, Edmonton and Ontario – direct flights to Victoria from these markets.
 - ◀ Europe.
- Niche markets:
 - ◀ Key niche sectors include golf, wine, culinary and agritourism, marine tourism, and the touring market.
 - ◀ The family market.
 - ◀ Sectors with potential to expand include arts and cultural heritage, sport tourism, and specific nature-based sectors such as mountain biking and trail cycling.
- Other external audiences:
 - ◀ The travel trade – tour operators and travel agents.
 - ◀ The travel media.

Internal:

- All tourism stakeholders in the Cowichan region.
- The wider business community.
- Local, regional and provincial politicians and local and regional government staff.
- Local residents.
- Regional and provincial tourism organizations – Tourism Vancouver Island, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts.
- Other near-in tourism and local government organizations – as a means of increasing regional collaboration.

1.19 Marketing Strategies

The following strategies and tactics focus on regional marketing. It is recognized that proposed activities not currently undertaken could only be pursued with new core funding. A new marketing plan that reflects coordinated stakeholder input should be developed in the event that there is a marked increase to core funding.

1.19.1 TARGETING THE LEISURE MARKET

While funding for Tourism Cowichan remains at the current level, it is anticipated that the existing marketing activities will be maintained. Tourism Cowichan has had a high level of success in leveraging funds to date, and ongoing efforts to pursue marketing initiatives that offer a greater return on core investment will be pursued. Further emphasis on region-community collaborative marketing would increase the potential for cooperative marketing and would enhance current regional marketing activities. The ability to secure partnership funding through MTCA's *Community Tourism Opportunities* program will strengthen this partnership approach, as the Ministry's current emphasis is on collaborative activities.

Continue to implement a marketing strategy that focuses on building market awareness for Cowichan within the targeted markets, and increasing independent leisure travel visitation.

TACTICS:

- Continue to target key market segments through collaborative marketing and promotional activities with Tourism Vancouver Island and regional stakeholders.
 - Maintain current participation in relevant TVI consumer marketing programs, including a presence in the Vacation Guide, and related niche product publications.
 - Publications such as *Westworld* and the *British Columbia Magazine* reach wide audiences and are particularly appropriate given the significance of the touring market and niche product. Tourism Cowichan's ability to utilize these opportunities will depend on a strong commitment to cooperative marketing.
 - Maintain Tourism Cowichan's presence in the *Van Dop Arts & Cultural Guide*. Encourage stakeholders to participate in the related *Art of the Getaway* program.
 - Continue to utilize the regional media in the near-in markets. Work with stakeholders to develop special getaway packages and identify a call-to-action number that will be used to promote sales.
- Continue to develop and distribute the *Cowichan Travel Planner* and related Cowichan-focused publications. The Planner has been rewritten by a professional writer and has strong visual material and good maps that add substantially to the value of the publication as a travel planner.
 - It is critical that regional stakeholders recognize the value of these efforts and support the initiatives through cooperative marketing. Increased participation will assist in extending the distribution of the Planner.
- Maintain a presence at relevant consumer and lifestyle shows in the regional marketplace. Encourage a partnership approach with community stakeholders that will allow Tourism Cowichan to create a stronger presence and increase cost efficiencies.
 - Continue to evaluate relevancy of shows and provide feedback to stakeholders on perceived interest.
- Work with organizers of festivals and events to encourage the development of a marketing template that will generate awareness of both the region and the specific event. Use the template to cross-market forthcoming related events.
- Maintain an up-to-date media kit. A range of new 'stories' has been professionally written and this approach should be continued.
 - Continue to work with TVI media relations department to target relevant specialized media and travel writers with press releases.

Continue to work with TVI and local stakeholders to host familiarization tours for travel trade and travel media delegates. There have been a number of excellent articles written by various media chronicling the Slow Food movement, the Pacific Marine Circle Route, vineyards and lifestyle – this focus should be maintained and stakeholders should be kept informed of successes in attracting media attention.

1.19.2 ATTRACT NEW MARKETS

Section 5 has highlighted a range of product development initiatives. Progress in any of these areas will open up new market opportunities. Efforts to develop sport tourism, for example, will create the need for new collateral and specific marketing tactics designed to attract sport event planners, athletes and spectators.

Work with partners to develop new regional collateral for emerging products.

TACTICS:

- With the further development of market ready trails and the growing interest in activities such as off-road cycling and mountain biking, consideration should be given to developing a regional trails publication.
 - Provide trail descriptions, safety guidelines, rules of the trail (refer to the International Mountain Biking Association), distance and duration, activities, and degree of difficulty.
 - Consider working with CRD and Salt Spring Island to produce collateral for a circle route for cyclists.
- Explore opportunities to develop new theme-based regional trails for different types of users. Use the internet as the medium initially to test interest in the product. Include interpretive content.
- Develop new collateral for sport tourism. Start with producing flat-sheets with quality images and an overview of the facilities. Include information on supportive community sport organizations.

Encourage TVI to take the lead in working with BC Ferries to negotiate for competitive pricing that can be used in getaway packages.

Review the potential to utilize innovative packaging to create new interest in Cowichan and encourage increased visitor spend.

TACTICS:

- The planning discussions highlighted the need to work together to develop new packages.
 - Hold MTCA's Tourism Packaging and Product Distribution workshop from the Tourism Business Essentials program.
 - Encourage tourism operators to review the potential for adding value to existing experiences through packaging.
- Develop themed getaway packages for spring, fall and the winter seasons. Promote in the regional marketplace using local press and radio. Target specific market segments such as women or the leisure learning market.
 - Ensure that there is a 1-800 number call-to-action. Consider directing all enquiries to the new Duncan-Cowichan Visitor Centre and use the staff to promote 'sales'. Ensure that all Visitor Centre staff have a comprehensive level of knowledge regarding the various campaigns and alternative opportunities.
- Focus on encouraging the development of interactive / experiential product. Building a package around a learning or participatory experience associated with the region's key product sectors, will strengthen Cowichan's association with that particular product.

Developing new sectors such as off-road trail biking or horse-back trail riding will be facilitated through creating packages with appropriate accommodation.

1.19.3 INTERNET MARKETING

Develop a comprehensive regional internet marketing strategy that positions the Tourism Cowichan website as the recognized portal to the region, and ensures that the website has the capacity to drive new business to the region and to individual communities.

While progress has been made with the ongoing development of the Tourism Cowichan website and the Travel Planner can now be viewed on the website, this is an area of regional marketing that will need further investment. Given the significance of this medium in trip planning and the decision making cycle, it is imperative that this site showcases the region in a dynamic manner with timely and relevant information and in a way that reinforces the concept of a regional destination.

Ideally there should be one regional visitor website with all the various communities profiled on the site. At present the site links to the different community websites which creates an element of confusion for the visitor in navigating the sites. With one well-managed site there would be a comprehensive virtual visitor information service and a consistency in the look and feel of the messaging. Furthermore, working together in this manner would reduce costs and would allow for a more effective pooling of scarce resources. However, to do so effectively will require the development of a comprehensive internet strategy with input from the key stakeholders. This site should become a resource tool for a range of audiences, including local stakeholders and the travel trade, together with the prospective visitors.

TACTICS:

- As funding become available, use professional services to work with Tourism Cowichan in developing an internet marketing strategy for the region. Work with communities to ensure that any linked sites complement the regional message.
- Continue to keep the website high on internet searches. Utilize a search engine optimization program if necessary.
- As new collateral is developed, make it available to view on the website.
- Continue to maintain the event calendar and ensure that it is searchable by community. Resolve any issues concerning double entries.
- Continue to expand the image bank of visual material and B-roll for broadcast ensuring that it depicts all aspects of the visitor experience in Cowichan. These images should be used to add to the vitality of the existing website, highlight the diversity of regional product, and be available for travel writers and/or the travel trade. If a photographer is retained for this purpose, ensure that the images are available royalty-free for use in all media. High resolution images are required for all print purposes.
 - Develop partnership agreements with the communities to have shared use of visual material on a reciprocal basis.
- Work with MTCA to promote regional searches on www.HelloBC.com. Currently the site can only be searched by community.
- Continue to work with stakeholders to raise awareness regarding MTCA's Listings Program and encourage a high level of participation in the program. Stakeholders not participating will not be featured in HelloBC.com. Refer stakeholders to TourismBC.net for a comprehensive list of programs designed to assist stakeholders in connecting with consumers.

- Utilize travel blogging as a mechanism to generate new and ongoing interest in Cowichan and its range of experiences. The use of *Twitter* offers potential to attract attention to new products and special offers. Similarly mechanisms such as *Flickr* and *You Tube* provide opportunities for sharing visual material and unique moments, as does the Canadian Tourism Commission's LocalsKnow.ca website.
- There is Cowichan-related *You Tube* material available on the web but its quality does not always do justice to the nature of the experience and the type of image that should be projected – this issue can be countered through developing and posting material on the Tourism Cowichan website.
 - Encourage blog entries on HelloBC and use the Share the Excitement!™ widget to highlight the blog entries from HelloBC on the Tourism Cowichan website.
 - Engage the services of a local writer to assist with blogging.
 - Use social media to reinforce print media campaigns.
- Develop opportunities for building permission-based/opt-in e-mail marketing data-base. Use this for targeted e-mail campaigns in addition to social media.
- Develop a page for the travel trade and tour operators. Develop and post suggested itineraries.
- Develop a corporate page for regional stakeholders. This can be password protected and should be used to disseminate relevant information such as the annual marketing plan and news features. An on-line version of the product inventory data-base could be maintained in this section of the website.
- Consider developing a 'mobi' site to enable the delivery of real-time mapping and local information to smart phone users within the region.

Work with appropriate stakeholders to assess the issue of internet 'dead' zones in the Lake Cowichan area.

1.19.4 TRACKING AND MONITORING

Develop effective marketing feedback and control systems

Developing feedback and control mechanisms is essential to measuring the effectiveness of marketing and return on investment. These tracking mechanisms, together with an initiative to measure the value of tourism, will shape the ongoing planning process

TACTICS:

- Establish targets for the tourism plan and the marketing strategies that are measurable, and put systems in place to track and evaluate effectively.
- Use measuring devices and tracking systems for specific promotional campaigns and measure enquiries generated and actual sales.
 - Assist tourism businesses with developing similar tracking systems. Consider holding a training workshop on this subject.
- Develop procedures for assessing the effectiveness of public relations such as media space gained and number of feature articles in the press.
- Work with the website developer to ensure that there are analytics in place to measure use of the website.
- Use feedback measurements in the annual review of the tourism industry and in forward planning for marketing and product development.

Develop regular reports on performance and circulate to stakeholders.

Millar/Tourism/Community Tourism Plan/Goals and Tactics - working doc_14may10.docx

APPENDIX E: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COWICHAN COMMISSION BYLAW NO. 2497



COWICHAN VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT

ByLaw No. 2497

A BYLAW TO ESTABLISH AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION FOR THE COWICHAN VALLEY REGIONAL DISTRICT.

WHEREAS the Board of Directors of the Cowichan Valley Regional District has adopted a bylaw to establish and operate economic development as an extended service;

AND WHEREAS the Board wishes to establish a Regional Economic Development Commission to direct the function of economic development;

NOW THEREFORE the Board of Directors of the Cowichan Valley Regional District, in open meeting assembled, enacts as follows:

CITATION

1. This bylaw may be cited for all purposes as **“CVRD Bylaw No. 2497 - Economic Development Commission Establishment (2004) Bylaw”**.

DEFINITIONS

2. In this bylaw:
 - a) “Commission” means the Economic Development Commission established by this Bylaw.
 - b) “Board” means the Board of the Cowichan Valley Regional District.

MEMBERSHIP

3. The Commission shall consist of nine members, as follows:
 - a) Two Commission members shall be Directors of the Cowichan Valley Regional District.

- b) The remaining members shall be drawn from community groups, organizations or sectors concerned with economic development and growth within the Cowichan Valley Regional District.
- c) All members shall be confirmed by Regional Board resolution adopted at a regular Board Meeting.

TERM OF OFFICE

- 4. a) The term of office for Commission members shall be one year.
- b) In the event of vacancy of office, a replacement appointee shall hold office for the otherwise unexpired term of office.
- c) Commission members may be re-appointed for a further term or terms.
- d) The Regional Board may remove from membership any member appointed who has failed to attend three consecutive Commission meetings without good cause.

PROCEDURE

- a) The Board Chair shall appoint a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Commission who shall hold office until a successor is appointed.
- b) In the absence of the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson, the Commission shall elect from the members present a temporary Chairperson for the purpose of that meeting only.
- c) A quorum is five members, one of whom must be a Director of the Board.
- d) All decisions, resolutions and recommendations of the Commission shall be made by a majority of the members present at the meeting, with each member having one vote.
- e) Where not otherwise covered in this bylaw, the rules of procedure governing Commission meeting shall be those of the current Procedure Bylaw of the Cowichan Valley Regional District.
- f) Minutes shall be kept for all meetings of the Commission, and a copy of such minutes shall be forwarded to the office of the Cowichan Valley Regional District.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- 5. The responsibilities of the Commission shall be as follows:
 - a) Support, coordinate and promote economic development efforts within the Cowichan Valley Regional District
 - b) Develop and implement a community economic development strategy that facilitates managed growth, diversification, job creation and long-term economic stability for the Cowichan Valley Regional District.
 - c) Subject to the provisions otherwise contained in this bylaw, provide the Board with advice by way of:
 - (i) matters which may legally or financially bind or commit the Board.

- (ii) directing preparation of an annual business/financial plan including a detailed operating budget.
- (iii) monthly progress/status reports to the Board.

GENERAL

6. All members of the Commission shall serve without remuneration, except for such “out of pocket” expenditures as may have received prior authorization by the Regional Board.

No recommendation of the Commission, or other matter requiring ratification by the Regional Board shall be acted upon until it has been considered by the Regional Board.

REPEAL

- 7. CVRD Bylaw No. 2095 – Economic Development Commission Establishment Bylaw, and amendments thereto, is hereby repealed.**

READ A FIRST TIME this _____ day of _____, 2004.

READ A SECOND TIME this _____ day of _____, 2004.

READ A THIRD TIME this _____ day of _____, 2004.

ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2004.

Chairperson

Secretary

Economic Development Commission Workplan – 2011/2012

HIGH PRIORITY FOR 2011/2012

1. Enhance communication and education between economic development, local government, the business community, media and general public.
2. Develop a flow chart of the development process in each community within the CVRD.
3. Develop a Regional Community Profile with sub-profiles for each community within CVRD.
4. Expand Business Retention and Expansion Program.
5. Adopt and support the implementation of the Cowichan Region Tourism Plan.
6. Adopt and support the implementation of the Green Business Development Plan.
7. Support the implementation of the Area Agricultural Plan.

MEDIUM PRIORITY FOR 2011/2012

8. Create an environment that attracts and retains a diverse, talented pool of young professionals and meets the needs of recent graduates.
9. Create sustainability benchmarks.
10. Develop education programs for greening local business and Green Solutions.
11. Coordinate in-house environmental sustainability efforts with the CVRD Green team.
12. Focus marketing around the targeted industries.

LOW PRIORITY FOR 2011/2012

13. Define economic development governance structure.
14. Identify existing agriculture businesses utilizing renewable energy methods to understand what is currently being done and how it can be increased throughout the region.
15. Improve industry-academic links and expand entrepreneurship focused on the target sectors of Clean Technology, Agriculture and Tourism, along with other economic market segments.

Cowichan Economic Development Commission – Sustainable Economic Development Strategy Summary

CVRD Strategic Objective	EDC Sustainable Economic Development Strategy Goal	EDC Sustainable Economic Development Strategy Objective	2011 /2012 Priority	Year One Actions	Year Two Actions	Year Three Actions	Ongoing Actions
Develop long-range plans for sustainability	Community of Choice for Green Business	Adopt and support the implementation of the Green Business Development Plan	High 6	Adopt the Green Business Development Plan Review existing plan to prioritize recommendations for implementation			
		Develop education programs for greening local business and Green Solutions	Med10	Create education marketing piece on greening a business to provide to existing businesses during BR+E visits Assist existing businesses with implementation of green practices to help them save money	Investigate and create a Certified Green Program for local business Investigate creation of incentives for making energy efficiency upgrades in building facilities Utilize new website to display certified green businesses and promote their products and services available	Utilize new website to provide education and links to green programs or other programs that provide significant benefits Identify partners to conduct outreach to businesses through a series of educational seminars focused on short and long term operational strategies Investigate incentives for installing solar hot water systems on building that use a large amounts of hot water as part of operations	
		Partner with local farmers and agriculture landowners to explore the interrelationship of agriculture and the renewable energy industry	Low 14	Identify any existing agriculture business utilizing renewable energy methods to understand what is currently being done and how it can be increased throughout the region		Identify best practices for other communities that can be incorporated into the CVRD	Develop partnerships

CVRD Strategic Objective	EDC Sustainable Economic Development Strategy Goal	EDC Sustainable Economic Development Strategy Objective	2011 /2012 Priority	Year One Actions	Year Two Actions	Year Three Actions	Ongoing Actions
Develop long-range plans for sustainability (continued)	Lead by Example	Create sustainability benchmarks.	Med 9	Develop new "sustainability" benchmarks to mark progress of economic development Implement a "triple bottom line" (community, environment, economic) program to support projects that have the potential to create employment in the region Communicate new benchmarking principles to councils and general public			
		Work with local government and planning departments to influence that all new buildings be developed under LEED guidelines.	Prtnrshp				Take steps to understand LEED certification and requirements (Environment Comm)
		Strive to maintain and create a healthy environment with a dedication to environmental sustainability through encouraging renewable energy sources and green business practices through local government.	Med 11	Develop education programs for greening local business and Green Solutions Review existing environmental practices within EDC offices processes		Develop educational brochure highlighting distribution of money and how it protects the environment	Continue to work with and support the 12 Big Ideas with an economic development framework

CVRD Strategic Objective	EDC Sustainable Economic Development Strategy Goal	EDC Sustainable Economic Development Strategy Objective	2011 /2012 Priority	Year One Actions	Year Two Actions	Year Three Actions	Ongoing Actions
Support agriculture	Thriving and Diverse Agriculture Industry	Support the implementation of the Area Agricultural Plan.	High 7	Review existing plan to prioritize recommendations for implementation			Work underway by Ag Advisory Ccommittee
		Partner with local farmers and agricultural landowners to explore options for succession.			Build in an agriculture specific component to the BR+E to identify those farms lacking succession plans Identify other communities that have developed specific initiatives to assist farmers and their future		Work underway by Ag Advisory Ccommittee
Promote tourism	Support Tourism Cowichan	Adopt and support the implementation of the Cowichan Region Tourism Plan.	High 5	Adopt the Cowichan Region Tourism Plan Review plan to prioritize recommendations for implementation			
		Work with Tourism Cowichan to create and promote agri-tourism and eco-tourism initiatives meant to mutually benefit agriculture and tourism. Work with First Nations to identify opportunities and promote tourism initiatives meant to mutually benefit the Region and First Nation lands.			Continue to support the growth of the agri-tourism and eco-tourism industry Create a working group between First Nations, EDC and Tourism Cowichan to develop an inventory of existing tourism facilities, events, opportunities etc. on First Nations lands.		Assess existing tourism events focused on agriculture and eco-tourism for success Support the Cowichan Wine and Culinary Festival

CVRD Strategic Objective	EDC Sustainable Economic Development Strategy Goal	EDC Sustainable Economic Development Strategy Objective	2011 /2012 Priority	Year One Actions	Year Two Actions	Year Three Actions	Ongoing Actions
Focus on core regional priorities	Increase Cowichan Region's capacity as a place for business	Develop a Regional Community Profile with sub-profiles for each community within CVRD.	High 3	Create community profiles			Maintain and update community profile information
		Develop a land inventory.				Working with local and external real estate representatives, develop a comprehensive land and facility inventory, broken out by region and First Nation.	
		Define economic development governance structure.	Low 13	Research other organizations that have joint economic and environmental commissions. Hold joint meetings and debrief success, advantages and disadvantages.			
		Enhance communication and education among economic development, local government, the business community, media and general public.	High 1	Develop templates to update EDC Board members and other councils on active activities of the economic development office. Redefine objective, timing, distribution of electronic newsletter. Identify ways to promote economic development through speaking engagements.	Utilize BR+E results and Business visitation program to submit business success stories and increase public awareness.		Meet with all local government on an annual basis to update activities and to identify potential new partnerships / initiatives Host annual EDC Board meetings at local businesses or local government offices. Utilize social media to focus on economic development.

CVRD Strategic Objective	EDC Sustainable Economic Development Strategy Goal	EDC Sustainable Economic Development Strategy Objective	2011 /2012 Priority	Year One Actions	Year Two Actions	Year Three Actions	Ongoing Actions
Focus on core regional priorities (continued)	Increase Cowichan Region's capacity as a place for business (continued)	Develop a how to start business guide specific to each community within the CVRD.			Research other start-up guides Design and develop a guide	Promote and distribute guide to media and add to website	
		Work with First Nations on identifying economic development initiatives creating mutual benefits.			Establish regular meetings with First Nations Chief and Administration to identify potential joint projects.		
Support policies and initiatives that strengthen the local economy	Increase Competitiveness of the Cowichan Region	Expand Business Retention and Expansion Program.	High 4	Expand BR + E Program, including Business Visitation Program and Business Walk			
		Initiate a review of the development approvals process in the CVRD and all the communities within including the development of a Regional Growth Strategy.			Establish a real estate development committee		Continue discussions with CVRD regarding developing a Regional Growth Strategy Continue to monitor development process
		Develop a streamlined process dedicated to successful business expansion.	High 2	Develop a flow chart of the development process in each community within the CVRD.			Increase partnerships with businesses and developers
		Strengthen economic development website content.	High 1	Website design and site map	Expand and increase website content		Maintain and update website information

CVRD Strategic Objective	EDC Sustainable Economic Development Strategy Goal	EDC Sustainable Economic Development Strategy Objective	2011 /2012 Priority	Year One Actions	Year Two Actions	Year Three Actions	Ongoing Actions
Support policies and initiatives that strengthen the local economy (continued)	Increase Competitiveness of the Cowichan Region (continued)	Focus marketing around the targeted industries.	Med 12	Review past three years attendance at trade / expo shows to evaluate value	Meet with BC Asis Pacific Branch to identify potential areas of participation		Attend at least one trade show or industry conference per targeted sector Maintain and increase current relationships with site selectors, decision influences in target industries, government agencies Continue membership in LinxBC and their related activities
	Create a Unique Sense of Place	Support social enterprise through the creation of a social financing program.			Identify financial institutions for partnership Investigate establishing a local venture capital fund targeting social enterprise		
		Create an environment that attracts and retains a diverse, talented pool of young professionals and meets the needs of recent graduates.	Med 8	Create young professional steering committee Engage young professionals in economic development Investigate social media usage in the attraction of young professionals	Establish an annual forum for the region's workforce providers and the economic development to discuss needs, current programs, innovative practices and methods of collaboration Develop a workforce attraction strategy		

CVRD Strategic Objective	EDC Sustainable Economic Development Strategy Goal	EDC Sustainable Economic Development Strategy Objective	2011 /2012 Priority	Year One Actions	Year Two Actions	Year Three Actions	Ongoing Actions
Support policies and initiatives that strengthen the local economy (continued)	Create a Unique Sense of Place (continued)	Improve industry-academic links and expand entrepreneurship focused on the targets sectors of Clean Tech, Agriculture and Tourism, along with other sectors.	Low 15	Ensure education has a representative on the economic development commission	<p>Invite educational representatives on appropriate business retention visits where training is crucial and communicate business and labour force needs as appropriate</p> <p>Utilize website to provide a one-stop workforce development portal that lists the educational resources of the region</p> <p>Form Career & Entrepreneurship Advisory Board</p>		
Attract film productions	Cowichan – Creative and Cultural	Create a regional arts and culture committee.			Create a regional arts and culture committee.		
		Develop an inventory of arts and culture businesses and opportunities.				Work with CVRD Arts and Culture Division Manager to assist in inventorying existing businesses	
		Create an arts and culture plan.				Work with CVRD Arts and Culture Manager to develop steps for a cultural plan	



SR3

STAFF REPORT

REGIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
OF MAY 25, 2011

DATE: May 18, 2011

FILE NO:

FROM: J.E. Barry, Corporate Secretary

BYLAW NO:

SUBJECT: Question Period Procedure Policy

Recommendation/Action:

That it be recommended to the Board that the Question Period Procedure Policy attached to the Corporate Secretary's May 18, 2011 staff report be approved.

Relation to the Corporate Strategic Plan:

Not applicable.

Financial Impact:

Not applicable.

Background:

With the recent adoption of Board Committee and Commission Procedures Amendment Bylaw No. 3459, all regular meetings of the Board, standing Committees and Commissions are now required to have a public Question Period (the only exception being Committees or Commissions where membership consists primarily of non-elected volunteers).

The Communications Committee, at their meeting held on February 9, 2011 passed the following resolution: *"that guidelines be prepared that would apply to Question Period on Regional District agendas"*. The Committee reviewed conceptual guidelines on April 19th and provided the following direction for the attached draft policy:

- maximum time limit for the entire question period be set at 15 minutes;
- there be no time limit per speaker;
- one question and one follow-up question (relating to the answer) per speaker until all speakers have had an opportunity to speak, then if time remaining, one additional question and one follow-up question;
- eligible question topics must be related to agenda items and, once all speakers have had an opportunity in this regard, then speakers may ask questions relating to local government in general; and
- that there be no pre-registration of speakers.

Submitted by,

J.E. Barry
Corporate Secretary

Reviewed by:

Division Manager: N/A

Approved by:

General Manager:



DRAFT POLICIES & PROCEDURES

QUESTION PERIOD PROCEDURE

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Question Period is to provide public access to the Board / Committee / Commission regarding the business of the local government while recognizing the need for Question Period to proceed in a timely fashion.

POLICY:

The Question Period is subject to the following provisions:

1. There will be allotted a maximum of 15 minutes for questions.
2. The Question Period will be comprised of two parts. The first part is reserved for questions directly related to business discussed during the meeting. If there is time remaining, questions during the second part can be on a matter of public interest under the jurisdiction of the Regional District.
3. Each questioner will be allowed to ask one question plus a follow-up question related to the answer. If after all questioners have been heard and there is still time remaining, a questioner who has already spoken, can ask one additional question plus a follow-up question related to the answer.
4. Questions must be truly questions and not statements of opinions. Questioners are not permitted to make a speech.
5. Questioners must avoid personal references, insinuations, violent, offensive or disrespectful remarks about another person, or unparliamentary language.



SR4

STAFF REPORT

REGIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING OF MAY 25, 2011

DATE: May 12, 2011

FILE No:

FROM: Warren Jones, Chief Administrative Officer

BYLAW No:

SUBJECT: Chair and Directors Remuneration

Recommendation/Action:

That staff prepare a report on Director remuneration recommending, based on comparators, time commitments and other factors, whether any adjustments to Directors' compensation should be considered beginning in 2012.

Relation to the Corporate Strategic Plan:

Financial Impact: *(Reviewed by Finance Division: [Signature])*

Any changes that may arise from compensation decisions will be considered during the 2012 budget process. No changes are proposed to the 2011 budget.

Background:

Every few years it is important to review the Chair and Directors' remuneration. From staff's perspective, continued growth, senior government downloading, advancing technology and the changing and increasing regulatory environment are continuing to increase demand on local governments and locally elected officials.

Although for many being willing and elected to local office may be more of a call to service it is important to appropriately compensate those seeking and holding public office. Often, elected officials are required to take time away from work and family to perform their civic duties. If compensation is not at a respectful and appropriate level, people may be less inclined to seek public office and elected Directors may in fact risk losing money or earning potential.

If the Board were interested in reviewing Director remuneration it is proposed that the work be completed by the end of July 2011 and that any decisions would come into effect in 2012 after the November 2011 Local Government Election.

Submitted by: [Signature]

Warren Jones,
Chief Administrative Officer

WJ/ann