



CITY OF PORT ALBERNI ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Report to City Council, Regional Board and Port Authority Board
August 17, 2011

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

The following briefly summarizes the need and process proposed for an Economic Development Strategic Plan.

For the past four years, the Economic Development Manager (EDM) has been focused primarily on implementation of priorities and recommendations identified in the:

- City of Port Alberni's Strategic Plan (2005),
- Review of the Port Alberni Forest Industry (inspired by SOVA in 2007),
- Uptown and Waterfront Redevelopment Study (jointly sponsored by the Port Alberni Port Authority and the City in 2007),
- BC pilot Memorandum of Agreement on Community Economic Development with the Province of BC (2009),
- Integrated Resource Recovery Study (2010), and
- City of Port Alberni's 5 Year Financial Plans beginning in 2008.

Some work has also arisen out of opportunities created by funding programs.

Progress has been made on many of the resulting initiatives and the need for a new Strategic Plan is focusing on economic development has become evident.

The EDM is proposing the following process:

- Circulation of a 'situational analysis' to the community via media and community gathering points
- Survey of residents to gather input on issues, opportunities and potential 'game changers'
- Facilitated discussion at meetings in neighbourhoods throughout the region for the same purpose (as above) and to clarify most economically beneficial relationships between communities in region
- Formation of small sector 'specialist' committees to identify or confirm trends, most appropriate priorities and targets
- Request for input from former residents of the region
- Request for input from frequent visitors to the region
- If other communities in the region are willing, consideration of their current economic development plans
- Circulation of draft strategic plan for feedback at two points throughout the process
- Provision of opportunity to provide feedback on strategic plan via social media
- Contract for report preparation and information required by sector specialist committees
- Contract for 'constructive criticism' of penultimate draft of strategic plan

The work on the strategic plan will start in September and is expected to be completed in early 2012.

Though the budget is still being developed for the Strategic Plan, it is expected that most of the funding for this work is already in place from a grant provided by the Rural BC Secretariat.