

Bulkley Valley Economic Development Initiative

Report 2 of 2 – Strategic Plan

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in association with:

Westcoast CED Consulting Ltd.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Town of Smithers in conjunction with the Office of the Wet’suwet’en, Village of Telkwa and Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako, have agreed to a work collectively on establishing a Bulkley Valley Economic Development Office (BVEDO).

One of the key recommendations in the “Boomtown to Sustainable Town” study in 2007 was the creation of a sustainable economic development office for the Smithers area. In order to determine the community interest in such an initiative, a facilitated discussion in early 2009 was held with stakeholders and a Memorandum of Understanding signed to move forward with a Bulkley Valley Economic Development Initiative.

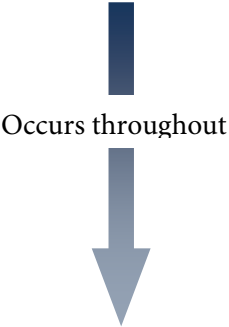
1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this study is to facilitate the start-up of an Economic Development Office for the Bulkley Valley. Specifically, it is to work with an interim working group consisting of representatives of the four (4) signatory organizations, to develop a strategy for the start-up of the office, research and collect all previous economic development reports prepared by the signatory organizations, determine core functions of the office, prioritize special projects, develop a budget and assist with the incorporation of the entity.

1.3 Report Structure

This report (Strategic Plan) is the second of two to be delivered as part of the project. It presents a set of strategic recommendations for establishing an economic development function in the Bulkley Valley. The report for this project can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1 Study Reporting Schedule

Project Component	Report	Stakeholder Consultation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Assessment of key driver ▶ Community asset mapping 	Report 1	 <p>Occurs throughout</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Economic development strategy ▶ Delivery model ▶ Funding options ▶ Monitoring plan ▶ Logistical support 	Report 2 (this report)	

2 Economic Development Plan

This section of the report outlines five economic development plan components, the vision statement, the mission statement, guiding principles, a set of goals for targeting economic development activities and finally the activities themselves.

2.1 Vision statement

The vision statement outlines what the organization wants to be and also how it wants the community to be. It focuses on the future and provides a sense of direction, inspiration and a starting-point for all planning. The following vision was distilled from feedback received during the two planning workshops.

The Bulkley Valley Economic Development Organization (BVEDO) will help build a resilient community with a shared vision of acceptable economic development amongst all three signatories and their constituents in the Bulkley Valley and the traditional territory of the Wet'suwet'en. It will do this by supporting wealth-creating activities that are consistent with local values and interests. Through its partnerships and positive working relationships, BVEDO will be recognized as an economic development leader by governments, non-government organizations, industries, businesses, community groups and residents. Programs and assistance will be available throughout the region and it is acknowledged that development in individual communities will benefit all. The agency will target gaps in services, avoid overlap with other local and regional agencies, and will have stable long-term operational funding.

BVEDO will operate as a legal entity governed by a board of directors appointed by and accountable to the signatories. The board's primary role will be to develop policy and oversight for the economic development function under the direction of a strategic plan. It will strive to minimize local political interference and will seek out larger regional initiatives.

Implementation of the plan will be through the agency's professional staff, which will be based in a stand-alone office.

2.2 Mission statement

A mission statement is a short statement of the purpose of the organization, which we have defined as the Bulkley Valley Economic Development Office (BVEDO). The mission statement is meant to provide an overall sense of direction and guide decision-making. The mission provides the framework or context within which the strategic plan is formulated. The following mission statement was reviewed at the two strategic planning workshops and has since been modified to account for the Village of Telkwa's decision not to participate further in BVEDO:

The BVEDO is owned and operated by three founding signatories, the Town of Smithers, Area A of the Regional District of Bulkley Nechako and the Office of the Wet'suwet'en. The BVEDO supports individuals and community groups in the Bulkley Valley, members of the Wet'suwet'en and those interested in locating to the Valley. The BVEDO will facilitate economic development wherever possible but will focus on the following core services:

- Create and distribute research and economic information to those engaged in or interested in engaging in business and economic development and the community at large;
- Report out on the economic health, opportunities and stability of the Bulkley Valley and Wet'suwet'en territory;
- Provide brokering services to businesses, community groups and government agencies;
- Market and promote the region and recruit new investment;
- Secure investment in desired economic development activities and infrastructure from senior levels of government and the private sector;
- Where appropriate, provide/channel direct equity investment into key business operations; and
- Encourage, facilitate and assist the development of major resource projects where they fit the values and expectations of the people of the region.

BVEDO will have professional and technical economic development staff based in the region funded by the three signatories. The staff will develop close working relationships with business owners and operators and with local, regional, provincial, First Nation and federal governments. The staff will proactively identify business and economic opportunities that will be shared with potential investors and entrepreneurs.

BVEDO will communicate, consult, inform and involve the broader community in its planning, implementation, and evaluation functions so that the organization becomes seen and valued as an economic leader.

2.3 Guiding Principles

The guiding principles outlined in Figure 1, express the conditions within which the actions of the BVEDO will be directed. They will influence decision-making and help determine which goals and strategies will ultimately be implemented. During the course of the two planning workshops, there were many examples given of where the interests and values among the signatories may not coincide and could potentially be in conflict. It is therefore important to establish some executive guidance at the beginning so that implementation tasks do not get bogged down.

Figure 1 Guiding Principles of the BVEDO



2.4 Goals

The goals for the BVEDO set in the planning workshop are show in Figure 2.

Figure 2 BVEDO Economic Development Goals



2.5 Strategies

The key strategy recommendations for achieving the larger community vision and goals stated in the previous sections of this report are summarized in Table 2. They cover a wide range of issues from improving the business climate to create more community dialogue and targeted sector initiatives. A set of core strategies emphasizing business retention and expansion are proposed, which are complemented by sector-specific projects. No priority is implied by the order the strategies are discussed—they should be viewed as inter-connected components that if implemented collectively will optimize the benefits to the people of the Bulkley Valley.

The Economic Development Officer (EDO) will play a lead role in implementation and while there are many initial tasks directed at building organization capacity, the EDO’s lead tasks will be in marketing, promoting and generating new economic activity.

Table 2 Summary of Economic Development Strategies

Strategy	Goals Achieved							
	RBV	Net	Conf	Div	Pop	Equ	QoL	WRT
Local Business Climate	+		+					+
Industrial Land			+	+				
Community Information Portal	+	+	+					+
Business Retention & Expansion	+		+	+				
Network and Dialogue		+	+			+		+
Resource Industry Cluster	+	+	+					
Supply and Service Cluster	+			+				
Training and Education				+			+	
Forest and Energy Products				+				
Agriculture			+	+				
Tourism				+				
Transportation				+				
Knowledge-based Economy	+			+	+		+	
Arts & Culture Infrastructure				+			+	

Note: RBV-recognition for the Bulkley Valley, Net-positive working relationships among stakeholders, Conf-business confidence, Div-economic diversification, Pop-population growth, Equ-equitable distribution of benefits to communities, QoL-quality of life, WRT-harmonization between Wet’suwet’en rights and title and economic development efforts.

A. Local Business Climate

Objectives:

- ▶ An improved, positive view of the Bulkley Valley’s “business friendliness”.

Rationale: The business climate consists of economic, political, legal and administrative conditions, such as taxation and trade policy, as well as the attitude of government (Crown agencies), First Nations and institutions toward businesses and business activity. Business climate is affected by major cost factors (e.g., land, labour, taxes, regulations, disputes over title) and non-cost factors (e.g., quality of life, attitudes toward business). Local business climate factors include the flexibility of the development approval process, construction costs, operating costs, access to infrastructure, availability of capital and the quality of the local labour force. The extent to which a community’s political and policy environment is seen to be supportive or troublesome to businesses is the measure of business climate. Business climate is important because it affects how companies inside and outside the community perceive business and financial risk and as such it will affect investment flows and job-creating activities. A service-first attitude would help set the stage for improvements.

Actions:

1. Improve the local development climate and business attraction potential.
 - ▶ Review precedents and best practices in other municipalities, sub-regional areas and First Nation economic development organizations. Select five or six recognized as having highly positive and customer-first attitudes. This could lead to case examples showing how key success factors and best practices might be adopted locally.
 - ▶ Consider developing a single point-of-entry and assigned personnel for helping new businesses navigate through local approval processes.
 - ▶ Establish reasonable benchmarks for the industrial and commercial development fees (permits, hook-ups, and improvements), development approval times and mill rates.
 - ▶ Promote streamlined and compatible policies amongst local and regional government.
 - ▶ Work with the provincial government through the Rural BC Secretariat to align and coordinate provincial permitting with local permitting.
 - ▶ Bring together stakeholders to identify areas for business climate improvement and to suggest resolutions to the constraints on economic growth and investment.
2. Create an “Investing in the Bulkley Valley” guide.
 - ▶ The guide would include all the necessary information an entrepreneur or investor would seek before establishing a business locally.
 - ▶ Content would include guide to government land use, subdivision process, land use plans, access to resources and infrastructure, use of parks, environmental guidelines, building permits and licences, backcountry recreation guidelines and access to utilities.
 - ▶ The guide could also include a primer on protocol for communicating with the Office of the Wet’suwet’en and basic policy on resource development projects in traditional territory.

Lead: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ BVEDO, local & regional governments, Office of the Wet'suwet'en	Constraints: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Councils' concerns that the public may see them as being too "business friendly"▶ Costs and administrative barriers to by-law changes
Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Moderate time commitment from EDO▶ Investment guide - \$20,000	

B. Industrial Land

Objective:

- ▶ Facilitate new business investment on currently underutilized industrial lands in the Valley. The focus will be on attracting new businesses and expanding existing business activities that will support economic growth and diversification.

Rationale: There is industrial land available in the Bulkley Valley, but some of it is underutilized and in some cases not well suited to market demand. These underutilized lands represent a diverse and valuable source of serviced industrial land. These lands could be used to attract new businesses or relocate existing businesses in the community that may be looking to expand locally. However, as a first step, the plans of the current landowners for these lands need to be determined. Many of these landowners are business operators already and they may have plans to eventually expand or relocate their current business onto these underutilized lands.

Once a portfolio of available industrial land is confirmed, then efforts can begin towards making these lands available for new businesses. Close collaboration between the landowners, realtors, and BVEDO is anticipated to ensure a cohesive and efficient use of existing resources for this initiative. BVEDO would establish a simple process for maintaining an inventory of well located, serviced and available land with the appropriate transportation linkages to accommodate a diversity of potential land users.

Actions:

1. Complete an inventory of industrial land.
2. Review the industrial land inventory and confirm the available industrial land with each landowner to identify their vision for the land and discuss the role that BVEDO could play in servicing the parcel if needed.
3. Evaluate ways and means for making properties more marketable.
4. Assess the costs to zone, service and develop strategic parcels.
5. Prepare a marketing plan for the industrial land linked to the industry attraction strategy.

<p>Lead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ BVEDO, Smithers, RDBN – much of the research on existing inventories can/is be done by municipal and regional staff with the direction and support of the BVEDO. ▶ Supported by: Commercial realtors, and partner agencies 	<p>Potential constraints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Gaining support from land owners to participate ▶ Ensuring that realtors are willing to participate with BVEDO ▶ Committing Town and Regional District staff resources from various departments on a forward looking planning exercise
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Inventory and marketing plan - \$20,000 ▶ Moderate time commitment ▶ Resources for implementing the Marketing Plan 	

C. Community Information Portal

Objective:

- ▶ Accurate and accessible community information that facilitates investment decisions.

Rationale: The practice of economic development is dependent on the availability of information that will positively influence investment decisions. A centralized and up-to-date depository of information is critical for understanding the community’s services, assets and shortfalls and is a foundation for carrying out public and business relations. The EDO then has the opportunity to become an information broker, creating a conduit between information providers (e.g. statistical agencies, government, institutions, NGOs) and clients. An information bank can also help the organization allocate resources, make program decisions and monitor plan progress.

According to the International Economic Development Council, the Internet is more important than conventional advertising and promotion in influencing investment decisions. Tourism BC research clearly shows that the Internet is now the dominant form of information for pre-trip planning by tourists. In the last two years alone, social networking and media have emerged as a major force in community marketing and economic development, taking the Internet from one of many competing mediums to the dominant form of electronic communication.

Actions:

1. Assemble statistical data and research.
 - ▶ Obtain International Economic Development Council community information data standards database, and then prepare a community profile using this format. See [Invest BC](#) website for Smithers’ current profile using this template.
 - ▶ Collect data for the profile. A summer student could be hired to assist.
2. Create a Bulkley Valley web portal as a single point of entry by the Internet to the community.
 - ▶ Prepare a business case for community web portal that can be used as a funding application and RFP. This will include a review of successful community websites, e.g. see [Village of Valemount](#).
 - ▶ Coordinate municipal, Chamber and other key sites, including Tourism Smithers. As noted in the Tourism Development Plan (2008), multiple websites serving visitors, business and residents can create confusion and work at cross purposes. The BVEDO should be the landing page for all things economic development targeting specific sectors and markets as appropriate.
 - ▶ Develop and maintain a properties inventory as a core service.
 - ▶ Other potential content would include a business advisory centre, real estate services (e.g. listings for commercial and industrial properties), links to real estate firms and on-line databases, news page, publications and links to partners.
 - ▶ Consideration should also be given to foreign language versions of the introductory web pages.

<p>Lead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ BVEDO 	<p>Constraints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Obtaining community buy-in to a Bulkley Valley web site. ▶ Ongoing data maintenance requires careful planning.
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Moderate time commitment ▶ Information assembly - \$10,000 ▶ Portal development - \$25,000 	

D. Business Retention and Expansion

Objective:

- ▶ Increase internal investment and business development.

Rationale: Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) is a popular tool for responding to local business needs and issues by explicitly recognizing the potential for growth from within, namely a community's existing businesses and entrepreneurs. BRE programs can help distressed firms adapt and survive as well as encourage successful companies to stay and expand. BRE programs consciously attempt to unlock the development potential of existing companies. The core of any BRE program is usually a visitation process that allows the EDO to measure the pulse of business, gain a greater awareness of trends, and compile information that could form the basis for an early indication of key events such as closures or relocations. The community is then better able to minimize the negative impacts and maximize opportunities by responding with appropriate assistance.

The benefits of a BRE program fall to the community, and not just business. A company or entrepreneur who expands or diversifies will generate jobs, expand the local supplier base, produce more community income and wealth (particularly if those businesses are trade-oriented) and encourage a more diversified tax base. A stable, health and growing business base also contributes to the community's social and cultural health.

Actions:

1. Establish a business visitation program for gathering industry, market and economic intelligence.
 - ▶ Compile an inventory of key businesses and organizations, including First Nations.
 - ▶ Create a regular meeting schedule with key businesses.
 - ▶ Circulate a retention feedback circular to partners for comment and follow-up.
 - ▶ Compile interview data in a database to be used for a local economic update, trends analysis and communications activities.
 - ▶ Establish a Welcome Committee for meeting and assisting new business/investment enquiries.
2. Evaluate the feasibility of purchasing the Synchronist Business Information System.
 - ▶ This program is used by many economic development offices (e.g. Mission, Maple Ridge, Comox Valley) in the province and may be suitable for the Bulkley Valley. The program organizes, analyses and reports company information, and provide insight into the dynamics of the local economy. Specifically the system is capable of identifying companies with the best growth potential and development opportunities.
3. In cooperation with Nadina Community Futures (NCF), explore the expansion of Business Care services in the Valley.
 - ▶ Research other Business Care programs in the province for best practices. The [National Business Incubator Association](#) (NBIA) has many resources for scoping and planning this opportunity. Depending on the type of services or sectors that might be targeted, there is also previous incubator research that documents the BC experience (e.g. shared-use facilities, commercial kitchens).
 - ▶ Work with Community Futures to identify where current programs could be expanded and identify a role for the BVEDO.

- ▶ One initiative that NCF has planned to investigate is the creation of a small business incubator. The BVEDO could partner with Community Futures to flesh out the viability of such a facility, including a research of best practices, potential target sectors and local market demand, with an ultimate goal of launching a pilot project sometime in 2011.
 - Scope out a development concept
 - Identify costs and physical needs
 - Identify services to be provided and whether those services could be delivered by NCF or would require additional expertise or support
 - Based on the foregoing, prepare a feasibility analysis and recommendations for a pilot program

<p>Lead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ BVEDO, NCF 	<p>Constraints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ A BRE can be time consuming and costly to maintain if not well planned ▶ NCF already provides business facilitation/care services and duplication of efforts should be avoided
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Major time commitment ▶ Feasibility/pilot program - \$8,500 	

E. Networking and Dialogue

Objectives:

- ▶ To have a common ‘across agency’ economic development strategic plan that all agencies are working towards that is built on genuine dialogue.

Rationale: There are many different economic development stakeholders in the Bulkley Valley, but they do not always communicate and in some cases may have different interests and viewpoints concerning projects and development initiatives. There is consistently, perceived and other wise, a shortage of public and private resources to advance key development projects that agencies compete over, often contributing to strained relations. The tendency amongst all organizations is to think and act independently. Maintaining some form of ongoing dialogue and common broad strategy would empower the economic development function and open up new opportunities for alliances and partnerships and advance broad initiatives much quicker.

Actions:

1. Encouraging a regional approach based on partnerships would have to be based on genuine dialogue, either through roundtables, forums or some other form of regular strategic communications/ involvement working from a common regional economic assessment.
2. There is the potential for linking this program back to membership of the executive (i.e. key partners may have roles in the executive, perhaps ex officio).
3. Developing an annual event attended by all key stakeholders to review progress on previous strategies, share regional economic forecasts, prepare new/revised strategies and select strategy/project champions.

<p>Lead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ BVEDO 	<p>Constraints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Practice of not participating openly. ▶ Limited experience with listening and joint problem solving.
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Moderate amount of time ▶ Minimum budget for refreshments 	

F. Resource Industry Cluster

Objectives:

- ▶ Increased size and diversity within the mineral and mining services sector.

Rationale: The concept behind Smithers' *Boomtown to Sustainable Town* strategy was the diversification of the economic base to enhance community stability and lessen the adverse effects of the boom-bust resource cycle, such as unemployment and out-migration of residents. The study was done at the peak of the commodity cycle when mineral exploration in Northwest BC was at record levels and numerous mine projects were proceeding through the environmental review process or in the early stages of development. One of the chief recommendations in the study was the development of a resource service cluster that was based in large part on serving the mineral exploration and mining sector. The commodity bust that coincided with the onset of the recession in late 2008 meant that the Bulkley Valley (and the provincial economy) was once again exposed to a resource down-cycle where few opportunities for economic development were on the horizon. The intervening 18 months have demonstrated the resiliency of commodity markets and once again mineral exploration and mining projects are moving ahead, as do the prospects for community benefits related to those projects.

In our view there are three main lessons to be learned from the last two years of resource industry activity that can help guide economic development programming:

- ▶ One of the distinctive advantages of the local economy continues to be access to and exploitation of natural resources within the Northwest;
- ▶ Resource industries will always be subject to commodity cycles and communities cannot avoid the underlying effects flowing from this, namely increases and decreases in production among some industries; and
- ▶ The community should be focused on providing infrastructure and services to industry such that it will invest throughout the commodity cycle and resist dis-investment during slowdowns.

This initiative focuses on key *Boomtown* recommendations and proposes additional initiatives for developing a more diversified support cluster in the Bulkley Valley.

Actions:

1. Monitor industry activity.
 - ▶ Review exploration projects ([BC Mineral Exploration and Mining](#));
 - ▶ Review BC's [Major Projects Inventory](#);
 - ▶ Review projects engaged in the Environmental Assessment process ([Project Information Centre](#));
 - ▶ Monitor key industry associations such as the Association of Mineral Exploration ([AMEBC](#)) and the Mining Association of BC ([MABC](#)); and
 - ▶ Review company websites and news departments.
2. Develop a community relations policy for communicating and building relationships with project proponents.
 - ▶ Build a data base of project contacts and include them in the business visitation program (see D.1);
 - ▶ In partnership with the Office of the Wet'suwet'en, establish a joint liaison that could be a single point of contact for major projects. Without limiting the rights and titles as asserted by the OW,

- the liaison would present a single point of contact for community input into development projects. The liaison could be tasked with initial contact, information dissemination and brokering contacts within the community as needed; and
- ▶ Use the BVEDO web portal (see C.2) as the main conduit for distributing community information and for initiating communications.
 - ▶ Carry out communications based on the opportunities and issues identified in the work steps below.
3. Identify and market business development opportunities related to resource projects.
 - ▶ Closely review all EA documentation, specifically socio-economic effects assessments for how proponents plan to maximize community benefits and mitigate potentially adverse effects. All mitigation strategies become obligations pursuant to the EA certificate and therefore represent a base case of future economic and business opportunities;
 - ▶ Obtain construction and operating pro formas either from EA documentation or directly from the proponent through its engineering and design studies. These are used to estimate socio-economic impacts and craft mitigation. The pro formas will break down employment by occupation and goods, equipment and services purchases into local versus out-of region components;
 - ▶ Identify local capacity for fulfilling project needs as identified in the previous work steps. This can be done through the creation of local business and contractor database;
 - ▶ In cooperation with proponents, promote opportunities to local suppliers and contractors and provide brokering assistance to further business relations through.
 - Distribution of opportunity lists;
 - Trade shows, including reverse shows;
 - Directory of supplies and services; and
 - Introductory meetings between the proponent and potential contractors/suppliers.
 4. Prioritize local infrastructure that would encourage cluster development. Research, studies and policy support for enhancing would focus on the following areas:
 - ▶ Industrial land;
 - ▶ Airport services;
 - ▶ Housing (temporary and permanent);
 - ▶ Health services; and
 - ▶ Community amenities, including recreation.
 5. Where appropriate and in partnership with the Office of the Wet’suwet’en and bands, develop economic development programs in support of benefits agreements that might be negotiated between First Nations and project proponents.

<p>Lead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ BVEDO 	<p>Constraints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The potential in this strategy depends on the growth of the Northwest mining sector. ▶ Development in this sector requires constant, long-term attention to networking. ▶ Public resistance to mining.
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Major time commitment 	

G. Training and Education

Objective:

- ▶ Increase the number students attending NWCC in Smithers with a particular focus on programs leading to abilities in local sectors where there is a skill shortage, e.g. mining, exploration, trades and healthcare.

Rationale: The North West Community College in Smithers is an economic generator by being a net receiver (and spender) of capital and operating funds from both the provincial and federal governments plus retaining tuition income from students that would have attended education institutions outside the Valley. The College is also a vital provider of adult basic education for those focused on upgrading their scholastic abilities to be able to better participate in society, obtaining certified training and being able to further their formal education. The Valley, similar to the rest of rural BC, has many of its skilled workers and owner/operators planning to retire over the next decade creating succession difficulties for many small- and medium-sized businesses without the personnel departments to actively recruit or train replacements.

Actions:

1. Assist the Smithers’ Exploration Group and NWCC with the School of Exploration and Mining including a collaborative relationship with the Association of Mineral Exploration.
2. Support SEG and SEM through networking activities.
3. In conjunction with NWCC and business owners, identify key anticipated skilled labour force gaps.
4. Using the identified gaps, promote local training strategies to those organizations, such as the Industry Training Authority and Northwest Community College, who are equipped to deliver training.
5. In conjunction with NWCC, and the Chamber identify business owners that plan to retire in the next decade and identify/clarify their individual succession planning and implementation needs.
6. Establish recruitment and training programs plus potential financing options to deal effectively the identified succession needs.

<p>Lead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ BVEDO ▶ Support from NWCC ▶ Chamber of Commerce 	<p>Constraints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Willingness of small and medium sized business owners to participate. ▶ Capacity to train and attract people that are the key labour supply.
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Medium time requirement ▶ Potential for contracting out the research components 	

H. Forest and Energy Products

Objective:

- ▶ Establish a viable, sustainable bio-energy operation in the Valley.

Rationale: The forest industry in the region, the province and the country is facing massive market challenges that are expected to take years, not months, to recover from. To maintain viability all operations need to maximize revenue from existing fibre baskets. Other communities (see Quesnel) are finding ways to turn waste heat from existing operations into additional value for the operating company, the community and the users of the waste heat. They also will be able to contribute to the BC Government’s Bio-energy strategy, released in 2008, as some of the high energy waste heat will be turned into electricity and contributed to the Provincial grid as BC Hydro has agreed to purchase the electricity at a higher rate. Other interior BC communities and producers are currently investigating this possibility as potential demand for alternative power exceeds 10% of current provincial use. Taking advantage of the bio-energy opportunities by BC Hydro may help diversify the forest sector base in the region.

It is important to note that current local wood fibre users have indicated in previous reports that there is a supply constraint for some low cost material for products like fibre board as most of their fibre needs are met from by-products from sawmills cutting construction materials.

Actions:

1. Review the government’s Bioenergy Strategy.
2. Review the Min. of Community and Rural Development’s guide “Resources from Waste: A Guide to Integrated Resource Recovery” and engage expertise to identify and assess the potential opportunities for the Bulkley Valley to an opportunity assessment stage. Follow-up key projects with feasibility assessments.
3. Monitor BC Hydro’s calls for green power.
4. Identify potential providers, build relationships and support them in efforts to assess the potential to generate power from low value wood fibre.
5. Research other opportunities for forest biomass.

<p>Lead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ BVEDO ▶ Support – Major Licensees 	<p>Potential Constraints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Availability of appropriate feed stock. ▶ Capital for higher risk capital intensive projects. ▶ Long-term viability of forestry operations that provide the waste wood feed stock.
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Staff time for initial reviews ▶ \$15,000 for initial assessment 	

I. Agriculture

Objectives:

- ▶ Increase revenue to agriculture producers, improve viability of existing operations, increase local food supply and expand production in new products in the Bulkley Valley.

Rationale: Agriculture, as pointed out in the “Boomtown to Sustainability Report”, and reflected consistently on all economic development strategies for the region for more than a century, has significant potential. These agriculture potentials have created a substantial agriculture industry in the Valley including financially viable operations like dairy, and, depending on market shifts and marketing channels, root crops, market gardens and beef. There is also a consistent local market support for locally produced products. The industry itself has supported various processing and marketing ventures to penetrate the local and regional market including a commercial dairy (came and went) and a local abattoir. Local production is consistently limited, in turns of viable crops, by a short growing season and by marketing/sales channels that severely limit access by local producers for products that can be produced locally. In addition, both local and regional markets have small populations. Retailers in general establish supply chains that are consistent week-in and week-out requiring supply 52 weeks of the year and mainly taking supplies from one or two wholesalers that package and deliver their total order in a single delivery spreading the substantial shipping costs across many different items.

To counteract these significant market barriers requires quality consistent supply, which often requires access to local cold storage, and success in reaching niche sales opportunities. The success of the local farmers market in Smithers and the consistent demand for meat from the new abattoir, even during teething difficulties, demonstrated the willingness of local consumers to purchase locally grown products.

Actions:

1. Support small-scale crop and livestock production by finding new distribution and sales mechanisms.
2. Support the expansion of local and regional farmers markets.
3. Assist with identifying means to capitalizing the new abattoir.

<p>Lead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Ministry of Agriculture - MIA ▶ BVEDO 	<p>Constraints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Absence of Agriculture extension services in the region ▶ Small local and regional market ▶ Existing food supply arrangements by retailers
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Either specific targeted funding or medium time commitment 	

J. Tourism

Objective:

- ▶ Increase visitation and spending to the region by expanding nature-based tourism products.

Rationale: The key recommendation in the 2008 TDP was the formation of an economic development function that would have responsibility for tourism development, and which could complement the marketing efforts of Tourism Smithers. Given the potential for the Bulkley Valley as a visitor destination, the recommendations made in the TDP should be adopted in whole by this economic development plan, with priority given to initiatives aimed at product, infrastructure and industry development. If, as recommended, Tourism Smithers is brought under the management of the BVEDO, then marketing activities would also be as outlined in the TDP.

Actions:

1. Re-establish Tourism Smithers as a contracted function of the BVEDO.
 - ▶ See section 5.12.
2. Continue to implement marketing programs as recommended in the TDP.
3. Explore the feasibility of becoming a Resort Municipality or similar municipal designation. (TDP p 17)
4. Encourage accommodation operators to renew their participation in Tourism BC’s accommodation tracking program so more effective local benchmarking can be undertaken. (TDP p 22)
5. Develop rail traveller packages to encourage more stopovers by VIA passengers. (TDP p 17)
 - ▶ Develop packaged local itineraries.
 - ▶ Join the Canadabyrail.ca product club to benefit from its research, initiatives and contacts in the rail industry.
6. Encourage tourism operators to become “export ready” in preparation for working with travel trade. (TDP p 25)
 - ▶ Export Ready criteria are available from Tourism BC.
 - ▶ This initiative would work closely with Tourism BC to offer introductory and advanced workshops and workbooks for Tourism Packaging and Product Distribution. See [Community Tourism Programs](#).
7. Expand product packaging and itinerary development. (TDP p 26)
 - ▶ Conduct research and promote packaged with the best potential for market appeal.
 - ▶ Use lessons from Ski & Ride Smithers to develop packages in related product areas.
 - ▶ Consider promotional guides and web marketing for multi-operator packaged products.
 - ▶ In cooperation with Tourism Smithers, research and set up a packaging and group sales system.

<p>Lead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ BVEDO 	<p>Constraints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Agreement with Smithers’ hoteliers is required if Tourism Smithers is to be incorporated into the BVEDO.
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Major time commitment 	

K. Transportation

Objectives: To increase the economic activity associated with transportation of goods and people.

Rationale: The Bulkley Valley and Town of Smithers particularly are located on the Canadian National rail line with additional sidings and rail yard services at their station in Smithers. There are also substantial trucking firms with warehouses and yards located in Smithers as well. Plus there is a substantial airport at Smithers that is often used as a jumping off point for visitors, commercial operators and industrial activities in the Northwest. The cross road of these three freight transportations modes and the quality of life in community gives the Valley a potential competitive advantage for transportation equipment servicing and intermodal transfers, e.g. heavy equipment, particularly if major mining and hydroelectric projects go ahead along Highway 37.

Currently, the rail link between Prince Rupert’s up-graded port and Prince George and all points east and south east does not created obvious break of bulk or load and reload opportunities. Those opportunities exist further east in large centers like Chicago, Edmonton, and Prince George (in that order). The Prince Rupert Port is expected to continue to grow with the resulting increase in rail traffic through the Valley – the operative phrase is “through the Valley” as very, very few trains are expected to make any changes to their loads as they pass through. A day standing by the main rail line in Kamloops provides a fast introduction to this reality.

The quality of life in the community, its relatively close access to a series of major potential mine projects and its quality airport makes it a high potential location for a fly-in, and fly-out or bus-in and bus-out location for those in camp based mining or major construction project situations.

Actions:

1. Solicit the interest from existing industry players in the potential for an enhanced inter-modal rail-truck and air-truck facility to service existing and potential new developments.
2. Investigate, with the assistance of the local long haul trucking and air freight firms, the feasibility of locating an inter-modal rail-truck and air-truck facility to service existing and new developments in the northwest.
3. Investigate the feasibility of the Valley as a fly-in fly-out or bus-in bus-out base for workers in future industrial locations in the Northwest .

<p>Lead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ BVEDO ▶ Support from existing industry players 	<p>Potential Constraints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Interest of existing transportation industry players. ▶ CN’s willingness to engage in business conversations for a “small” scale opportunity
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Minor time commitment 	

L. Knowledge-based Economy

Objectives:

- ▶ Expand business development and employment in knowledge-based and learning sectors.

Rationale: The Bulkley Valley is a service and logistics centre for the Northwest, attracts amenity migrants who value the area’s environmental assets and lifestyle, has an airport with scheduled commercial passenger services (three carriers), has compact town centres suitable for redevelopment and has ample, reasonable cost housing. These assets are all building blocks for the expansion of non-traditional sectors in the local economy, specifically those occupations or industries that are not highly sensitive to economic or work conditions in rural environments. These could be footloose industries that have spatially fixed costs (i.e. their costs would be much the same irrespective of their location), tele-commute businesses or professional and technology services that can be delivered from small communities. The promotion of this knowledge sector would be enabled by the same combination of characteristics that appeals to amenity migrants, but with a more conscious appeal to those still in the labour force and thereby capable of importing jobs to the Bulkley Valley.

Actions:

1. Prepare an evaluation brief of the Bulkley Valley’s telecommunications infrastructure, specifically high speed Internet services in Smithers and options for new public investments in a lit fibre-to-business program.
2. Prepare a business case for development. If having access to high bandwidth capabilities is adversely influencing business development (e.g. production using digital media, streaming video, and any other business applications requiring the transmission of large amounts of digital data) then a business case could be prepared for a program. Other communities such as Kamloops and Penticton could be contacted to learn from their experiences with such infrastructure.
3. Explore 3-P partnerships for investment and operation, including educational institutions and major industry.
4. Integrate business planning for high speed Internet services into Smart Growth or downtown development/densification programs that will increase the appeal of central cores for new office development and clustering. This could include a marketing plan to attract home-based businesses into downtown areas (e.g. to take advantage of bandwidth not available in their home offices).

<p>Lead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ BVEDO 	<p>Constraints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ This program would involve public investment or potentially 3-P partnerships and thus are potentially complex both administratively and operationally.
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ \$15,000 for business case/plan 	

M. Arts & Culture Infrastructure

Objectives:

- ▶ Increase the economic activity associated with both arts and culture through improving facilities.

Rationale: There is a vibrant arts and culture sector in the Valley that is a significant contributor to the quality of life in the area, and also to the local economy through increasing local circulation of local income, and adding to visitor attraction and expenditures. Activity in arts and culture is enabled and supported by a wide variety of individuals and sectors where contributions range from small scale suppliers to full time careers and operation of independent studios (e.g., the dance studio). The Valley has been able to establish itself as a rich centre for local production and enjoyment of visiting (physically and electronically) acts, performances and presentations. It also has some signature events including the summer music festival that draws visitors from outside the Valley. There are specific visitor niche markets, e.g., fall sport fishing, and winter skiing visitors, where there may be room for additional events that cater directly to their tastes and are established to match their scheduled.

The constraints of population size, income levels, and sheer distances limit the audience size and levels of support for all events, from those focused on niche audience (e.g. ballet, opera, hip-hop, etc.) to those with very broad appeal. These constraints directly impact on the financial viability of existing and any new proposed facilities. A few key strengths of this sector are the combination in terms of size and ownership (public and private) of facilities and venues that provides a diversity of options. Yet other communities have proven that improved facilities in appreciative markets, improve viability of those facilities and the sector in general.

Actions:

1. Draw together the organizations and businesses that currently operate existing facilities and their users, e.g. Museum, Della Herman Theatre, Dance Studio, Music Teachers Association, Cinema, BV Folk Music Festival, key small venues for music, the arena, and the Hudson Bay Lodge Banquet/Conference facility to explore the desire for a facilities use/demand assessment.
2. Obtain funding for the use/demand assessment.
3. Once the results of the assessment have been shared amongst user groups, facilitate a review of the findings and decide on a course of action.

<p>Lead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Arts Council ▶ Support - BVEDO 	<p>Constraints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Audience size ▶ Distance to population centres for increasing audience size ▶
<p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ \$15-25,000 for a facilities use/demand assessment 	

3 Monitoring and Evaluation

BVEDO goals should be monitored and used to evaluate the effectiveness of plan implementation and the achievement of expected outcomes. A set of indicators, indicators and data sources for each of the main goals are identified in Table 3.

Table 3 Performance Indicators

Goal	Indicators	Sources	Comments	
Recognition of Bulkley Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Press citations ▶ Info enquiries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Visitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ BVEDO tracking ▶ Visitor Centre attendance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Internal tracking program is required ▶ Annual Report topic
Inter-regional cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Participation in BVEDO ▶ Community perceptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Partnerships established ▶ Board and committee involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ BVEDO tracking ▶ Communications program feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Annual report
Business confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Perceptions of business climate 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Public meetings ▶ Open House 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Internal measures for tracking trends
Economic Diversity and Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Building permit and licensing ▶ Investor enquiries ▶ Hosted visits ▶ Per capita change in the assessment base ▶ Jobs created 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Projects assisted ▶ Partnerships created ▶ Companies attracted, retained or expanded ▶ Per capita change in tax burden ▶ Change in labour force 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ BVEDO ▶ Municipalities ▶ BVEDO ▶ Municipalities ▶ BC Assessment Authority ▶ Project information ▶ Statistics Canada 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Internal and external measures tracked against existing activity ▶ Benchmarking required ▶ Breakdown by municipality and regional district ▶ Annual estimates from Labour Force Survey, Census for 5 year benchmarks
Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Population age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ BC Stats ▶ Statistics Canada 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Annual populations ▶ Census population
Quality of Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Socio-economic well-being index 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ BC Stats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Composite of 6 measures available for Smithers LHA
Harmonization of Wet'suwet'en Rights and Title	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Incorporation into BVEDO policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Partnered activities where rights and title were acknowledged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Internal Tracking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Annual performance review and audit

4 Financial Plan

4.1 Start-Up Budget

The BVEDO will have to incur some initial start-up costs that could be experienced prior to March 31, 2010 if the agency gets underway quickly. These are shown in Table 4.

Table 4 Estimated Start-up Costs

	Cost	Description
Furniture		
Desks	\$2,600	... 2 @ \$1,000 & 1@ \$600
Chairs	\$1,050	... 3 @ \$350 ea.
Large table	\$1,500	... @ \$600 & chairs - 6 @ \$150 ea.
Small table	\$ 750	... @ \$300 and chairs - 3 @ \$150 ea.
Chairs for visitors	\$ 300	... 2 @ \$150 ea.
Filing Cabinets	\$1,000	... 1 large 4 drawer, 2 small 2 drawer
Book cases	\$1,400	... 4 large @ \$250 ea. & 2 small @ \$200 ea
Sub Total	\$8,600	
Equipment		
Lap Top Computer	\$2,000	
Desk Top Computer	\$1,500	... main
Desk Top Computer	\$1,000	... secondary
Printers	\$ 900	... 3 @ 300 ea.
Phone system	\$2,000	
Software	\$2,100	... 3 sets @ \$700 ea.
Misc. Equipment	\$1,000	
Sub Total	\$10,500	
Legal and Accounting	\$ 3,000	
Miscellaneous	\$ 1,000	... flip chart, white boards, calculators, etc.
Contingency	\$6,900	
Total	\$30,000	

4.2 Operating Budget

To operate a full time economic development office is expected to cost approximately \$150,000 annually plus up to \$100,000 annually in additional project related funding secured by the staff. The Additional Hotel Room Tax currently raised by the community in the amount of approximately \$60,000 would also be overseen by the BVEDO. A proposed annual budget for the operation of the economic development office is shown in Table 5.

There is very limited flexibility in the annual operating budget as the organization must have a full time EDO with solid administration assistance otherwise the EDO spends undue time on administration and research tasks that are best completed by a staff person with those specific skills. It might be possible to experience slightly lower staff costs in Year 1 (given respective probationary periods) but this is not expected in Years 2 and 3. Initial investigation into office operating costs indicated that there might be a small savings on rent but the remaining costs are all expected to be as estimated.

Table 5 Proposed Annual Operating Budget 2010-2014

	Annual	Description
Funding		
Core Funding	160,000	... core operating budget
Grants for Special Projects	100,000	... mainly federal programs
AHRT funds	60,000	... hotel tax funds currently raised
Total	\$320,000	
Expenditures		
Salaries & Admin.	120,000	
EDO	80,000	... full-time position
Administrative Asst.	35,000	... full-time position
Project assistance	5,000	... contingency administrative
Occupancy expenses	10,000	... store-front office in downtown
Utilities	2,000	
Telecomm	4,000	
Office supplies	4,000	
Travel	10,000	
Special projects	100,000	
Tourism marketing	60,000	
Training	10,000	... training for directors
Total	\$320,000	

4.3 Funding Sources

Most process-oriented initiatives in the strategy would be supported through the core budget. Table 6 itemizes special projects in the plan that would require additional funding support.

Table 6 Potential Funding Sources for Special Projects

Project	Ref.	Cost	Program
Investment guide	A.2	\$20,000	REDI-BC Program
Industrial Land Inventory and Marketing Plan	B.1-2	\$20,000	Real Estate Foundation of BC
Information Assembly	C.1	\$10,000	Northern Development Initiative
Web Portal	C.2	\$25,000	Community Tourism Opportunities (Tourism BC)
Business Care Pilot	D.3	\$8,500	Western Economic Diversification
Bio-energy Assessment	H.2	\$15,000	Community Energy Association Building Canada Fund Infrastructure Planning Grant Power Smart Sustainable Development Technology Canada Innovative Clean Energy Fund Community Action on Energy and Emissions LiveSmart BC Green Community Awards BC Clean Air Research Fund
High-speed Internet Business Plan	L.2	\$20,000	Building Canada Fund Towns for Tomorrow Community Access Program
Use/demand Assessment of a Cultural Centre	M.2	\$15,000 -\$25,000	Strategic Community Investment Fund Community Heritage programs BC Arts Council 2010 legacies Now
Rural Secretariat	Start-up	\$30,000	Community First Initiative
General			Omineca Beetle Action Coalition

5 Organizational Plan

5.1 Participation in the BVEDO

As stated in the introduction there were four signatories to the investigation of establishing a joint economic development agency for the Bulkley Valley. When the draft of this plan was being prepared, the signatories anticipated level of commitment in establishing this agency was as follows:

- ▶ The ***Town of Smithers*** indicated through its elected officials and senior administrators, throughout the research process that they wished to establish this function with others or independently if necessary. The Town was prepared to fund this function through a combination of general taxation and its NDI contribution in short run. The Town as prepared to make a 3 to 5 year commitment to the agency. A resolution of Town Council would be required to establish and spend money on this agency.
- ▶ The ***Regional District Bulkley Nechako (RDBN) Electoral Area A***, has indicated through its elected official, throughout the research process, that it wished to establish the function jointly with others and will join the Town of Smithers if other signatories are not interested in establishing and funding the agency. The RDBN Area A Director has some discretionary funds that can be committed immediately (up to \$20,000) plus potentially their share of the RDBN's NDI funding (approximately \$5,000) and can possibly add to the taxes for 2011 (calendar year) for any additional contributions.
- ▶ The ***Office of the Wet'suwet'en (Society)*** have indicated through their senior staff and Chiefs Executive, throughout the research process, that it wished to be part of establishing the function jointly with the other willing signatories. OW unfortunately, given its non-profit society structure, is not a recognized Band or First Nation Tribal Council and therefore is not able to access Indian and Northern Affairs Canada or NDI funding, other than grant writing support. They are prepared to continue to investigate other funding options and do not expect to have access to a significant level of funding that they could supplement BVEDO's operations.
- ▶ The ***Village of Telkwa*** indicated that their potential involvement and contribution to the establishment of this agency would need to be decided by Council after a comprehensive draft report was completed and submitted for their review. Mayor and council participated openly in the planning sessions, similar to all other signatories, but did not express open support for BVEDO. After reviewing the draft plan, Council decided on March 8, 2010 not to join the other signatories in the BVEDO.

It is therefore the recommendation of this plan that the three signatories, the Town of Smithers, RDBN Area A and OW, establish and fund the BVEDO and further, that allowance be given for future expansion of the organization should the Village of Telkwa or other potential partners opt to join in.

5.2 Tourism Smithers

Operations of Tourism Smithers are currently funded through the Additional Hotel Room Tax (AHRT), with management oversight provided by a Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC). The BVEDO will be providing economic development services to the region and will be engaged in many activities (including investment attraction and community marketing) that overlap with activities at Tourism Smithers. In order to simplify the organizational structure and increase both management and operating efficiencies, we recommended that Tourism Smithers be brought under the control of the BVEDO, on condition of a mutual agreement with the hoteliers who are remitting the AHRT monies.

Many communities in the province, especially smaller ones, have local Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) that are managed by the economic development office, and a similar setup in Smithers would appear to make sense given the size of the service area and opportunities for administrative cost savings. Osoyoos, Chilliwack, 100 Mile House and Prince George are communities that have combined tourism into the economic development function.

The current budget for Tourism Smithers is approximately \$80,000 annually—this funding would continue to support tourism marketing and general economic development initiatives that have the effect of generating more tourism activity in the region (and thus potential for more room revenues). The AHRT regulation approved for Smithers in 1990 ([Hotel Room Tax Act Additional Tax Regulation Town of Smithers](#)) states the following:

Purpose for tax expenditure

- 3 The purposes, for which the amount paid to the municipality out of the revenue collected from the tax may be expended, are tourism promotion, projects and programs.

[en. B.C. Reg. 169/93.]

While “promotion, projects and programs” may leave some room for interpretation in terms of acceptable spending projects, the regulation clearly defines tourism as the underlying purpose of the tax monies.

5.3 Potential Contributions

The three proposed partners would have to make contributions to the core budget using their allotments from NDI and supplemented with local support. Local contributions could be based on an agreed-to ability to pay or could be more objectively established by benchmarking property values and determining a fair assessment rate. Because the Office of the Wet'suwet'en has no taxing authority and limited internal funds, their contributions would be equivalent to \$5,000 plus the grant writing supplement from NDI. Given that there is very limited budget flexibility, the funding commitments need to match the expected \$150,000 budget. The two basic options are shown in Table 7.

Table 7 Potential Contributions by BVEDO Signatories

Option	Contributions				Total
	NDI	NDI Cooperation	NDI Grant Writing	Local Govt.	
A. Ability to pay					
Smithers	30,000	5,000	10,000	55,000	110,000
Area A				35,000	35,000
Office of Wet'suwet'en			10,000	5,000	15,000
AHRT (Tourism Smithers)					60,000
Total					220,000
B. Assessed values					
Smithers	30,000	5,000	10,000	50,000	100,000
Area A				40,000	45,000
Office of Wet'suwet'en			10,000	5,000	15,000
AHRT (Tourism Smithers)					60,000
Total					220,000

Note: Option B local government contributions are based on \$.10 per thousand of the converted value of improvement as at January 2010. The default method of apportioning local government costs is based on the converted value of land and improvements which result in a slightly different weighting of contributions.

5.4 Legal Structure

The partners have indicated that they want the economic development function, referred to as Bulkley Valley Economic Development Office (BVEDO) to be a stand-alone legal entity to keep it at arm’s length from local government. The stand-alone legal entity can be established as a *Society*, or as a corporation under the *Company Act*. An overview of pros and cons outlined in Table 8 suggest that the BVEDO be established as a society under the BC *Society Act*. Doing so is administratively simpler, less costly and more likely to obtain community buy-in and acceptance than when compared to incorporating as a for-profit enterprise. Importantly, a non-profit society has flexibility and scalability in retaining surpluses for future programming without risk of tax implications, as would be the case of a for-profit company.

A third alternative, a *Cooperative* established under the BC Cooperative Association Act, is a hybrid between a company and a society, but to our knowledge it has not been used by organizations in the economic development field.

Table 8 Comparison of Incorporation Options

	Society Act	Company Act
Administrative/legal requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • less rigid rules around articles of incorporation, reporting, annual filing and maintenance. • minimum legal assistance required. • does not issue stock. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strict rules around articles of incorporation, reporting, annual filing and maintenance. • potential for greater legal assistance to clarify or protect shareholder interests. • issues stock.
Liability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • members not responsible for society obligations or acts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shareholders not responsible for company obligations or acts.
Finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eligible for donations and if registered with Canada Revenue Agency, can issue tax receipts. • ability to retain earnings (surplus) for future programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • donations treated as taxable revenue. • earnings can be retained for future programs but they are taxable.
Community acceptance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • perceived as best suited for social and community programs. • earnings (surplus) cannot benefit members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a corporation may not be perceived as acting in the best community interest. • profit interest may exceed community interest.
Stakeholder involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opportunities for buy-in from non-business stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased credibility in the eyes of business and investors.

5.5 Governance

The organization will need a board no matter which legal option is selected. Given that three originating members will form the BVEDO, our recommendations are to keep the number of members on the Board within reason, not so small that quorums cannot be met but not so large as to be administratively cumbersome. Table 9 outlines the options for the BVEDO Board.

Table 9 Options for Board Composition

Option	A	B	C
Number of Signatories	3	3	3
Board Members			
Smithers	2	3	4
Area A	1	2	2
Office of Wet'suwet'en	1	1	1
Joint appointment	1	1	2
Total	5	7	9

- ▶ **A** – Two Board members for Smithers, one Board member for Area A and the Office of the Wet'suwet'en and one joint appointment, leading to a total Board size of five. Smithers would have the extra Board member in recognition of their majority share of the core budget.
- ▶ **B** – Smithers and Area A would each receive an additional Board membership, for a total of seven.
- ▶ **C** – The total Board membership is set at nine, with Smithers receiving four seats, Area A 2 and Office of the Wet'suwet'en one. Two positions would be jointly appointed. This option most closely aligns decision-making authority with budget contributions.

Variations on the above options are possible, but in total board membership should not exceed nine. If there were other potential partners or members that are unable to provide funding to the agency they could be invited to sit as ex-officio without voting capability, similar to the situation with the community forest society.

Establishing board member selection criteria that is consistently adhered to and applied usually creates a better performing board. Our suggested criteria are:

- ▶ No elected officials from local or regional government, or chiefs, are eligible for board appointment;
- ▶ Appointees must be resident in the Bulkley Valley;
- ▶ Appointees should have a track record in business or organization development;
- ▶ Appointees should have experience creating and vetting financial statements;
- ▶ Appointees should have well established links to key organizations and individuals in the region;
- ▶ Appointees should be well respected in the community and be perceived as a “leader”; and
- ▶ Appointees must have the proven ability to maintain confidentiality and trust.

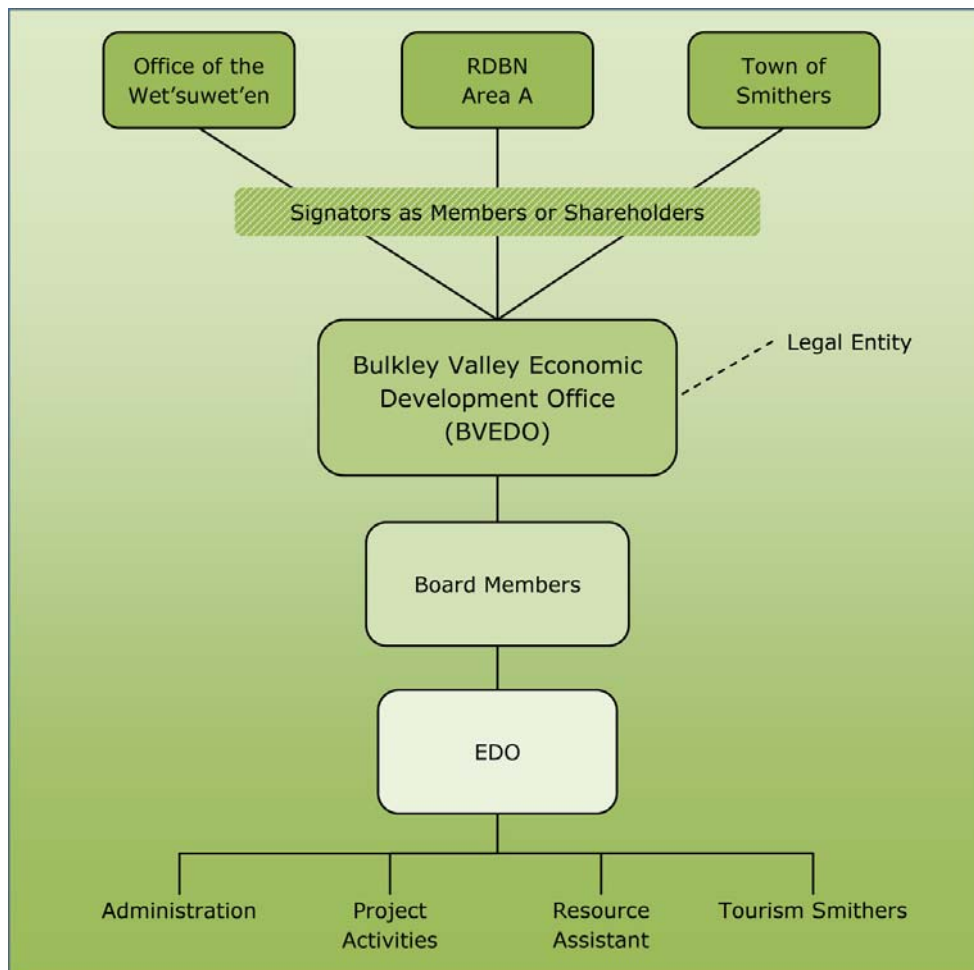
5.6 Organizational Structure

The organizational structure (see Figure 3) would be made up of members or shareholders, depending on the legal structure selected, a legal entity (BVEDO), a Board as laid out in the incorporation documents selected by the signatories, an EDO hired by the Board, and administration, project activities and research assistance guided by the EDO.

The members of the society or the shareholders of the corporation (depending on the legal structure selected) would be the three signatories. The Board members would be responsible for reporting to each of their respective signatories that has appointed them. The Board members would select and hire an economic development officer, who in-turn would hire administration and research assistance staff. All budget decisions would be made by the Board based on the funding provided by the members (signatories) and by project specific funding.

Note that under this structure the BVEDO Board would also function in the capacity of the Tourism Advisory Committee, which would be dissolved.

Figure 3 BVEDO Structure



5.7 Policies and Procedures

A Policies and Procedures manual should be prepared once the society has been established and the EDO recruitment process commenced. This would be one of the first orders of business of the Board. A proposed outline is given below with a more detailed sample provided in Appendix D.

- I. Introduction
 - Background
 - Purpose
 - Mission and Mandate
 - Vision
- II. Action Plan (summary of the Economic Development Strategy)
- III. Administration
 - Authorities
 - Election of the Executive
 - Duties of the Executive
 - Society Structure
 - Terms and Conditions of Membership
 - Selection Procedure
 - Sub-committees and Task Forces
 - Decision-making
 - Meetings
 - Agendas
 - Duties and Responsibilities
 - Budgeting
 - Planning
 - Reporting
 - Media Relations
- IV. Staff
 - Economic Development Officer Job Description
 - Compensation
 - Expenses
 - Employment
 - Staff Orientation
 - Training and Development
 - Salary Reviews
 - Performance Reviews
 - Department

5.8 Service Contract Guidelines

A service contract should be prepared that defines the fee-for-service arrangement between the signatories and the BVEDO. This will be necessary because even though the Board is appointed by the signatories, the Society would remain a separate legal entity with no obligations outside its articles of incorporation. The service contract, therefore, outlines the services and outcomes expected for the funding contributions of the signatories.

The following guidelines are for illustrative purposes only and do not constitute a recommendation by the consultant for contract language. Proper legal counsel should be sought in preparing the service contract.

Agreement Between

- ▶ <Signatories> and the Bulkley Valley Economic Development Office (BVEDO).

Whereas

- ▶ BVEDO, being duly a incorporated society under the Society’s Act of BC for the sole purpose of fostering economic development in the Bulkley Valley;
- ▶ The <Signatories> will be entitled to board appointments to the Society as follows:
 - *To be determined*
- ▶ The <Signatories> are of the opinion that the best way to deliver economic development services is to enter into a contract with BVEDO for that purpose.

The Agreement

- ▶ BVEDO shall:
 - promote the Bulkley Valley for economic purposes;
 - prepare and disseminate promotional material and economic data for the <Signatories> as deemed necessary by BVEDO;
 - function as the <Signatories> contact for business development enquiries;
 - provide assistance to businesses in dealing with all levels of government;
 - advocate, on behalf of the <Signatories>, to government, with regard to issues, policies, legislation and public projects that are deemed to impact the economy of the area;
 - provide current and relevant economic and business information to governments, business interests that may be considering investment in the area, and to existing businesses and individuals for the purposes of promoting economic growth and stability in the area;
 - initiate and coordinate such studies as may be identified as being essential to attain economic development in the Valley;
 - undertake any other tasks, projects, or initiatives that will enhance the economy of the valley, where these projects are assigned by the <Signatories> and approved by the Board; and,

- to implement the actions and initiatives identified in the Economic Development Strategy and Annual Plan as approved by the Board.
- ▶ The fiscal year will be the calendar year.
- ▶ For the term of the agreement, the BVEDO will prepare and deliver an Annual Budget by December 1st in a form required by the <Signatories>.
- ▶ The <Signatories> will, after receipt of the Annual Budget, consider and, if deemed advisable, approve it as submitted or with amendments.
- ▶ The <Signatories> will pay the amount of the Annual Budget as approved by quarterly instalments in advance.
- ▶ During the contract term, the BVEDO will maintain proper and up-to-date financial books and records pertaining to this agreement in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices and such other practices as required by the <Signatories>.
- ▶ BVEDO will furnish quarterly financial statements to the <Signatories> no later than the last day of the month following the reporting period.
- ▶ BVEDO will prepare and deliver an audited year-end financial statement to the <Signatories> no later than 90 days after the end of the fiscal year.
- ▶ BVEDO will prepare an Annual Budget request and an Annual Report which tracks strategy progress.
- ▶ BVEDO will provide quarterly progress reports to the <Signatories>.
- ▶ If, at the end of the contract term BVEDO has a surplus of funds relating to this agreement received from the <Signatories>, BVEDO shall repay any such surplus funds to the <Signatories> unless the <Signatories> approve the retention of funds for future programming.
- ▶ BVEDO agrees that it will not change its Memorandum, Articles or its name without the consent, in writing, of the <Signatories>.
- ▶ BVEDO agrees that it will maintain its status as a British Columbia company in good standing pursuant to the provisions of the Society Act.
- ▶ So long as the BVEDO receives funds pursuant to this agreement, it will not pay remuneration to any Director for services performed in his capacity as a Director, but may reimburse actual and reasonable expenses incurred in the execution of duties as a Director.
- ▶ BVEDO will be responsible for the hiring and firing of all employees and agrees to comply with all registration requirements of Revenue Canada, Canada Pension Plan, Workers' Compensation Board and other agencies as required by law.
- ▶ BVEDO shall not hold itself out as representing the <Signatories> for any purpose whatsoever but shall consider itself an independent contractor.
- ▶ The <Signatories>, having regard to the premises of this agreement, shall use their best efforts to ensure that economic development activities are promoted and encouraged in the area and shall render such encouragement to BVEDO as the <Signatories> deem necessary.

- ▶ The term of this agreement shall be the period commencing the 1st day of January 2010 and terminating the 31st day of December, 2014.
- ▶ In the event that the <Signatories> continue to advance funds to BVEDO after the term of this agreement without the execution of a new agreement between BVEDO and the <Signatories>, the terms of this agreement shall subsist and apply in like manner for as long as such funding continues.
- ▶ Any notice required or sought to be given by one party to the other shall be deemed to be sufficiently given by personally delivering it or mailing it to the other party by way of double registered prepaid post in an envelope addressed to the other party.
- ▶ The <Signatories> shall have the right to terminate this contract upon ninety (90) day written notice to BVEDO on the terms and conditions set out herein. BVEDO shall be entitled to fourteen (14) days written notice of any impending action by the <Signatories> on this contract and the said notice shall be accompanied by written reasons for the action. During that fourteen (14) day notice period, BVEDO shall be permitted to attempt to rectify the problem as expressed in the notice and to make submissions to Council with respect to the impending action. At the expiry of the fourteen (14) day notice period, a two-thirds majority of the full <Signatories> Council shall be required to exercise the ninety (90) day termination clause.

Signatories

- ▶ Signed and witnessed by the members and BVEDO.

5.9 Society Resource Guide

Once the Society has been established and the policies and procedures manual completed, a resource guide for the Board of Directors should be prepared. It would be a companion to the policies and procedures manual and contain the following information.

I. Legal

- Articles of Incorporation
- Constitution
- Legal Address
- Bylaws and Resolutions by Signatories
- Canada Revenue Agency Business Number
- Workers' Compensation Registration
- Insurance Coverages
- Lease agreements
- Name and Address of Legal Counsel
- Name and Address of Accountant
- Service contract

II. Organization

- List of directors members with addresses, telephone numbers and emails
- List of all staff members with addresses, telephone numbers and emails
- Annual calendar of all board meetings with dates and times
- All board meeting minutes.

III. Financial

- All registered financial statements
- Three-year operating budget
- Annual operating budget

5.10 Location

The BVEDO will require office, administration and meeting space to deliver its services to the community and assist clients who are interested in investing in the Valley. The consulting team evaluated a number of options for office space using a two-step process. The first part of the analysis focused on a general location and office type that would guide a more specific property search. From this perspective Smithers was a preferred location because of its inventory of available commercial office space, airport access and proximity to hospitality and support services.

A second-phase site search was therefore concentrated on the Smithers' commercial centre, where a number of properties were visited and evaluated (Table 10). Our main criteria for identifying candidate offices were cost, convenience (preference given to ground level, street access) and image (non-government buildings preferred). A quality, street level property close to other support services, reasonable rent and available parking was seen as the ideal option for an office. While space within a government building was seen as potentially problematic, it was also acknowledged that proximity to provincial and local government offices would be convenient for those clients needing to deal with regulatory, development and permitting issues. Relatively good proximity to the Office of the Wet'suwet'en was also an important consideration.

Our recommended best option is a ground floor space in the Bowlund Building directly opposite the provincial government building on Alfred Street. Our rationale for this recommendation is as follows:

- ▶ The monthly cost including heat and utilities is within the established budget;
- ▶ Access to Smithers' Town Hall, the provincial government offices and offices of the Wet'suwet'en are within walking distance;
- ▶ Business and hospitality services clustered on Main Street are also within walking distance;
- ▶ The office space is already configured to meet the requirements of a walk-in economic development office with a small reception, main office large enough to comfortably hold small meetings and a larger second office/room capable of holding a resource library. A third room, currently undeveloped could be used for storage or incorporated into the adjacent office for a large boardroom/resource library;
- ▶ Overall, the space is not too large as to have excess (i.e., unused) space yet would still allow some future expansion of services or staff if required.

Some lease hold improvements are needed prior to moving in but there are options for having those costs offset by the landlord in a multi-year lease agreement, either through direct improvements or through rent inducements.

Table 10 BVEDO Office Location – Options

Office Building	Contact	Location	Size	Price	Availability
Chamber Office					No space without major renovations
CF Office					No street level space
Gone Hollywood Video Store Building	Dana Corban 847-2285	Unit 2, 3835-1 st Avenue	558sqft	\$11/sq. ft. triple net plus \$69.99/m taxes + utilities	Yes-prefer to rent out with Unit 3 as a single unit (plumbing roughed in)
Gone Hollywood Store Video Building	Dana Corban 847-2282	Unit 3, 3835-1 st Avenue	873sqft	\$11/sq ft triple net plus \$104.81/m taxes + utilities	Yes-prefer to rent out with Unit 2 as a single unit (will have a bathroom)
*Calderwood Realty Building	John Butler 847-9222	1175 Main St., 2 nd Floor	818sqft	\$900 inclusive	Available March 1 st
*Calderwood Realty Building	John Butler 847-9222	1175 Main St., 2 nd Floor	632sqft	\$800 inclusive	Potential, would need to discuss with John Butler
College					Reviewed drawing – all office space has been allocated
Small store front next to 3752 Broadway	Len Maillot (owner) 847-4733	Unit 2A – 3752 Broadway	Approx. 500sqft	\$500/m with 1-yr lease \$550/m no lease Heating extra No AC	Yes—but have someone interested for March 1. He has not heard back from them yet with the damage deposit.
*Bowlund Bldg - across from Govt Bldg	Wayne Callison-Bldg Mgr. 847-3228	3790 Alfred St.	766 sq ft (10x10 room undev.) 2 offices plus a reception area	\$750/m Includes utilities (there is AC)	Yes

5.11 Staffing

The organization would have two permanent staff – the EDO and Research/Admin Assistant (30-35 hours/week) and budget allowances for a third staff person on call (300 hours/year). The organization is expected to have additional project specific staff and/or summer students based on project funding.

Overview of the Economic Development Officer Position

The following paragraphs provide an outline of the economic development function—a sample job description is provided in 1.1.1.1 Appendix C. It is important to note that the EDO’s job is mainly that of marketing, promoting and generating investments in new economic activities. It is not an administrative, research, planning or grant writing role, although each of these tasks will be required from time to time.

Basic Dimensions of Local Economic Development¹

- ▶ Articulation of goals and objectives by the community
- ▶ Local mobilization of resources to attain these goals
- ▶ Development and implementation of strategies compatible with the community’s vision, goals and objectives

Responsibilities of the Economic Development Officer

- ▶ Develop community economic welfare.
- ▶ Strive to develop, sell and implement a Strategic Plan.
- ▶ Continually adjust to a changing economy.
- ▶ Recognize that there may be controversial issues and projects that have a high profile possibly with political implications.
- ▶ Develop professional identity and establish mutually beneficial relations with other professionals and organizations.

Principle Types of Expertise in an EDO’s Job

- ▶ Technical expertise
- ▶ Administrative expertise
- ▶ Political expertise
- ▶ Education-public relations expertise
- ▶ Sales expertise
- ▶ Coordination and liaison expertise

EDO Functions

- ▶ Information development and transfer
- ▶ Developing community partnerships and networks in pursuit of economic development

¹ Adapted from: Faculty of Environmental Studies. 1988. *Economic Development Program*. Program description. University of Waterloo.

- ▶ Local business retention and expansion
- ▶ Attracting new investors and entrepreneurs
- ▶ Strategic planning
- ▶ Advocacy
- ▶ Encouraging foreign investment and entrepreneurial immigration
- ▶ Maintaining a public relations program
- ▶ Participating in revitalization efforts
- ▶ Enhancing trade opportunities for local entrepreneurs
- ▶ Supporting small business and investors
- ▶ Providing and forecasting infrastructure for development
- ▶ Developing a productive working relationship with member organizations

Reporting Relationships in the Economic Development Process

The organizational structure in which the EDO operates is important because it will determine the access to policy and decision-makers, for example, Board members and elected officials of member organizations. The EDO, through reports and presentations must gain their support because successful development requires local political commitment and sufficient levels of funding. With the more explicit incorporation of an economic development component to strategic planning, the EDO will be expected to take a lead on the Economic Development Strategy while at the same time integrating with planners, other local government professionals and the provincial government on the broader strategic issues for the Bulkley Valley.

Summary

Local economic development is taking place in a more complex economic environment than in the past. Coping thus requires both higher levels and more specialized education and professionalism. Twenty years ago, development officers worked with four basic tools, sites, services, public finance incentives and promotion. Today, EDOs must command or have access to skills and tools of venture capitalists, lending officers, import/export manager, brokers, advertising and marketing specialists and public administrators.

If member organizations wish to maintain and develop their role in the economic development process, they must empower the EDO's role, and understand that a continued commitment in an increasingly information-oriented society is an investment in the future of the communities of the Bulkley Valley.

EDO Salary Range

According to a 2007-08 survey of economic development offices in Canada, a typical EDO base salary range in BC would be \$45,000 to \$65,000, excluding benefits (Table 11). We have assumed that a highly qualified individual would be at the higher rather than lower end of this scale—including benefits (CPP, employment insurance, holiday pay, etc.) of 30%, a gross salary of \$80,000 would be appropriate.

Pay for the economic development researcher or administrative assistant position we have assumed would be aligned with the range experienced by small communities in Canada, again at the higher end of the scale at \$35,000.

Table 11 EDO Salary Range, 2007-08

	Director of Economic Development	Economic Development Officer	Business Development Officer	Tourism Development Officer	Economic Development Researcher
Canada					
Average Min. Salary	78,505.48	50,266.96	42,511.16	44,646.48	38,466.21
Average Max. Salary	97,688.72	66,531.67	59,241.91	58,022.70	50,634.33
Low Median Salary	75,000.00	50,000.00	40,000.00	41,300.00	39,000.00
High Median Salary	86,000.00	68,066.00	59,837.00	55,000.00	50,000.00
BC					
Average Min. Salary	72,050.00	50,812.50	41,250.00	38,500.00	42,667.67
Average Max. Salary	87,937.50	64,000.00	52,250.00	50,000.00	53,000.00
Low Median Salary	70,000.00	52,500.00	42,500.00	38,500.00	47,000.00
High Median Salary	84,750.00	70,000.00	52,500.00	50,000.00	53,000.00
Small Community*					
Average Min. Salary	58,169.35	43,464.70	38,529.59	39,995.94	27,500.00
Average Max. Salary	75,840.47	56,533.43	52,054.88	52,254.57	38,166.67
Low Median Salary	58,527.00	40,000.00	38,000.00	39,000.00	25,500.00
High Median Salary	75,000.00	52,536.22	52,000.00	51,000.00	34,000.00

Source: Millier Dickinson Blais. Sept. 14 2008. *2007- 2008 National Salary Survey of the Economic Development Profession.*

* Small Community is defined as having less than 50,000 population.

5.12 Implementation Steps

Table 12 Implementation Tasks

	Task	Lead	Start	Complete
1	Pass motions and enact by-laws (if required) and appropriate funding for the BVEDO.	Signatories	May	May
2	Form an Implementation Advisory Committee (IAC). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The IAC should be the interim Board of Directors of the Society. 	Signatories	May	May
3	Invite a rural community Economic Development Officer to Smithers to give a presentation on “organization and board options that work”. We suggest: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Alan Mason, Revelstoke, 250 837-2161 – Jim Savage, Quesnel, 250 992-6282 	IAC	June	June
4	Establish the Society. <p>The formation of the BVEDO as a non-profit society requires it to register under the <i>Society Act</i> and to elect a board of directors. The basic steps for set-up include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Select and verify availability of legal name. – Select a legal address—this should not be the proposed office location as that is subject to change from time to time. A more permanent address such as one of the signatory’s addresses should be used. – Prepare the constitution and bylaws. – Have the constitution and bylaws signed by the signatories. – Appoint the board of directors. 	IAC	May	June
5	Dissolve the Tourism Advisory Committee and transfer responsibility for 2% tourism funding to the BVEDO Board. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensure adequate consultation with the hotel sector. – The change is an administrative one and does not affect the expenditure of the 2% monies on tourism projects. The move will also increase efficiencies and bring tourism and economic development together. 	IAC Town of Smithers	May	June
6	Negotiate and sign an MOU amongst the signatories concerning the acknowledgement of OW interests and the expected areas of cooperation.	Signatories	May	May
7	Prepare policies and procedures manual (see section 5.7).	IAC	May	June
8	Secure office location (see section 5.10). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Final physical review of two best office options. – Confirm preferred option. – Confirm availability of less preferred option as a fallback. – Obtain standard lease agreement and confirm lease terms with the landlord. – Prepare an offer sheet with the following terms and requested inducements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rent ▪ Utilities 	Board	May	June

	Task	Lead	Start	Complete
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Carpet ▪ Paint ▪ Other leasehold improvements ▪ Request changes, if any, to Use Clause to ensure economic development activities are not unduly hindered. <p>– Meet with agent and/or landlord to negotiate and confirm terms.</p>			
9	Prepare and sign service agreement (see section 5.8).	Board	Jun	Jun
10	Prepare board resource guide (see section 5.9).	Board	Jun	Jun
11	<p>Hire staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Prepare a job description for the EDO. – Identify a base and gross salary range. – Prepare advertising copy. – Advertise for the position. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Economic Development Association of BC website ▪ Economic Developers Association of Canada website. ▪ UBCM website. ▪ Municipal World magazine. ▪ Vancouver and Calgary daily newspapers. – Short list, interview (Board selection committee), Board approval of selected candidate and conditions of employment, and provide a letter of offer to the best candidate. – After the EDO is hired prepare a job description for the Administration assistance. – Advertise for the position. – Short list, interview (joint Board/EDO selection panel) and provide a letter of offer to the best candidate. 	Board	May	Aug

Appendix A BC Economic Development Models

Case studies of six economic development functions in BC are presented on the following pages. The six communities are:

- ▶ Lakes Economic Development Association (LEDA)
- ▶ Southside Economic Development Association
- ▶ Golden and Area Community Economic Development Society
- ▶ Quesnel Community and Economic Development Corporation
- ▶ Revelstoke Economic Development Commission

An analysis of the Oliver & District Community Economic Development Society was also considered, but the District of Oliver disbanded the organization in late 2009.

I. Lakes Economic Development Association (LEDA)

Lakes Economic Development Association (LEDA) is a community-regional based society currently co-funded by The Corporation of the Village of Burns Lake and the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako. LEDA was developed as an expanded non-profit organization and a catalyst for strengthening and diversifying the local economy.

Mission and Mandate

LEDA's mission is to:

- ▶ To lead, facilitate and support community economic development practices and projects for the Governing Board;
- ▶ To act strategic by nature; promoting change with long-term sustainability; increasing community involvement, capacity and empowerment; and
- ▶ To strive for economic, environmental, social and cultural balance.

LEDA's mandate is to:

- ▶ promote and provide community economic development services in the Lakes Area;
- ▶ promote the stabilization, stimulation, and diversification of the economy in the Lakes Area;
- ▶ assist and support businesses and economic development organizations in Lakes Area;
- ▶ market, promote, coordinate and manage all services described in the Society's purposes; and
- ▶ do all other things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the mission.

Organization

Governing Board:

- Village of Burns Lake Mayor
- Electoral Area B Director
- Village of Burns Lake Chief Administration Officer
- Regional District of Bulkley Nechako Chief Financial Officer

Board of Directors:

- Electoral Area B Director
- College of New Caledonia
- Hampton Affiliates Babine Division
- Burns Lake Native Development Corporation
- Royal Bank
- Ministry of Forests
- Private citizens (three)

Staff:

- Economic Development Officer
- Proposal Writer
- Administration
- Office Administration

Activities

LEDA's staff provides assistance to local and area businesses, entrepreneurs, and economic sector groups (Forestry, Agriculture, Mining, Tourism, and Alternative Energy), with recruitment and initiatives that contribute to overall economic growth, diversification, and community sustainability. To date, LEDA has played a significant role in the economic development of Burns Lake through leadership and participation in the following positive initiatives:

- ▶ Liaison work and preliminary negotiations for a co-generation plant to be established in the Burns Lake area;
- ▶ Facilitation of monthly discussion group meetings and assistance with implementation of actionable items;
- ▶ Development, distribution and analysis of an Agriculture Survey encompassing the entire Lakes District;
- ▶ Investigation and promotion of value-added initiatives for all community economic sector groups;
- ▶ Development of downtown revitalization strategy building and action plans, marketing and trade show plans, as well as promotional packages for international investors;
- ▶ Funding research and proposal development for community projects, including the Spirit Square, Community Alternative Energy, replacement of Village Entrance signage and banners, and prescription development and fuel mitigation activities related to the Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic.

In addition to maintaining current services and projects, LEDA's goals for 2008 include supporting community initiatives such as foreign investment opportunities, marketing the Lakes District, and hosting public forums for all economic sector groups.

II. Southside Economic Development Association (SEDA)

SEDA was formed in 1998 to represent the interests of local residents (all those who live on the southside of Francois Lake) in creating, developing, and maintaining economic development opportunities in our area. SEDA is funded by the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako.

Mission and Mandate

- ▶ To create a forum for local residents to develop, market, and distribute goods and services in a cooperative manner;
- ▶ To act as a catalyst for economic development opportunities that support and enhance our community; and
- ▶ To encourage and develop tourism opportunities which would enhance the economic sustainability of our area.

Organization

- ▶ Non-profit society
- ▶ Five directors
- ▶ Approximately 50 members (may change from year to year)
- ▶ One part-time employee (12 hours/week)
- ▶ \$26,000 annually

Activities

- ▶ Inventory of the main historical trails on the Southside (1998)
- ▶ Southside Community Directory (1999 onward, published biannually)
- ▶ Southside Farmers Market (1999 onward)
- ▶ Tourism Opportunity Strategy (2000-2002)
- ▶ Website www.southsidebc.com (2001 onward)
- ▶ Community Signs (2002)
- ▶ Ferry Action (2002)
- ▶ Tourist Info Centre (2002 onward)
- ▶ Collection of Southside First Nation Oral History (2003)
- ▶ Takysie-Ootsa Hiking Trail (2003)
- ▶ Southside Visitor Survey. 2003 Report
- ▶ Southside Interpretive Centre (2004, postponed)
- ▶ Southside Carving Shed (approved funds transferred to Cheslatta Carrier Nation) 2004
- ▶ Event Tourism: Southside Homesteaders' Centennial (July 29 – Aug 1, 2005)
- ▶ Young Entrepreneur Program (2005)
- ▶ Community Networking Infrastructure project "High Speed Internet" (2005)
- ▶ Southside News (monthly Southside newspaper, started Dec. 2005, ongoing)
- ▶ Purchase and Renovation of SEDA Centre (2006)
- ▶ Grand Opening and full use of SEDA Centre (2007)
- ▶ Construction of Southside Nature Path (2009)

III. Golden and Area Community Economic Development Society

Golden Area Initiatives (GAI) is the business name for the legally incorporated Golden and Area Community Economic Development Society, registered under the Society Act of British Columbia in 2002.

Mission and Mandate

The Society has a broad mandate ranging from responsibilities as a first contact for investment and general community inquiries, to information and marketing, research, advocacy and lobbying activities, and community development projects. Priorities for initiatives are established through the results of community planning endeavours, gaps in information and leadership, infrastructure, and collaboration, and opportunities precipitated through political, environmental, social, and economic changes, incentives, and impacts.

Organization

The Society is a joint venture between the Town of Golden and Area "A" of the Columbia Shuswap Regional District. Both governments annually fund approximately 30% each of the operating costs of the Society. Remaining funding is provided through an Economic Opportunity fund managed by BC Hydro. In return GAI provides services to the town and the regional district through an Economic Services contract, effectively establishing GAI as an agent for the two local governments for the purposes of furthering community economic development initiatives. Being not fully funded by government, and as a non-profit society, allows it greater flexibility, independence and the ability to source outside funding for community projects.

Governing Board

The society is limited to four members only: The Administrator for the Columbia Shuswap Regional District; the elected Director for Area "A" of the Columbia Shuswap Regional District; the Administrator for the Town of Golden; and the (collective) Town Council for Golden.

Board of Directors

A Board of seven directors governs the Society; two of which must be the Mayor of the Town of Golden and the elected director of Area "A". These individuals may then each unilaterally appoint one director, while the remaining three directors are jointly appointed. Directors are obligated to a one-year term upon which they must retire and be either reappointed by acclamation, or replaced by a new appointment. Three full-time staff undertakes the day-to-day and planning operations of the organization, and are guided by a Policy Register, a three-year strategic plan, an annual work plan, and an approved yearly budget.

Budgeting

Grant and Budget Responsibilities to Date

Annual Budget: \$248,000

2003 Grants \$16,000 for the development of a new Community Profile (PEMD-I, WED)

 \$20,000 for development of a Skatepark in Golden (CBT Community Initiatives)

	\$10,000 for fish habitat study of Kicking Horse River (CBT Community Initiatives)
2004 Grants	\$10,000 for Inventory Enhancement of Community Festival Assets (CBT Comm. Init.)
	\$10,000 for Skatepark ramps and railings (CBT Mega Youth Grant)
	\$1,300,000 for development of Provincial Visitor Centre (Canada/BC Infrastructure Prg)
2005 Grants	\$25,000 for Economic Impact Assessments of Tourism Projects (WEPA)
	\$5,000 for the development of an Integrated Land Use Plan for site development (WED)
	\$10,000 for the development of a Cultural Scan of the Golden Area (LegaciesNow)
	\$2,500 for the acquisition of ISP Services for the Community of Parson (CSR Grant in Aid)

Activities

The Society is ultimately guided by the principles of Community Economic Development - a process by which communities can initiate and generate their own solutions to their common economic problems and thereby build long-term community capacity and foster the integration of economic, social and environmental objectives. This approach takes into account the four pillars (social, cultural, environmental and economic) of a healthy community, and involves consensus building, increased access to information and a willingness to create changes, leading, facilitating, and supporting community economic development in the area.

In this role, the office strives to be proactive and strategic by nature, promote change and long-term sustainability, increase community involvement, capacity and empowerment, and achieve economic, environmental, and social balance in all local initiatives.

IV. Quesnel Community and Economic Development Corporation (QCEDC)

QCEDC is a wholly owned subsidiary of the City of Quesnel and has been in operation since 2000.

Mission and Mandate

The Quesnel Community and Economic Development Corporation works to facilitate economic, social and environmental wealth for all residents. QCEDC has the following major goals:

- ▶ Retaining and attracting residents;
- ▶ Improving Highway 97;
- ▶ Bio-energy and other energy development;
- ▶ Land development;
- ▶ Diversification of agriculture;
- ▶ Expanded accommodation capacity;
- ▶ Community marketing; and
- ▶ Water metering at bulk stations.

Organization

Board of Directors

A nine to eleven-person board of directors has participation from a cross section of the business community. Representation includes industry, retail commercial and small business. Board members include:

- ▶ Business owners and managers (seven)

- ▶ Cariboo Regional District, Director Area "B" (liaison appointment)
- ▶ Chief Administrative Officer, City of Quesnel (ex-officio)
- ▶ Director, Quesnel and District Chamber of Commerce
- ▶ Mayor, City of Quesnel

Financing

Operating budget funding comes from the City of Quesnel and Cariboo Regional District. The City of Quesnel contributes 90% and the Cariboo Regional District contributes 10%. The funding agreement is made on an annual basis with the City of Quesnel. The Northern Development Initiative Trust has developed a new program providing economic development office with \$30,000 in funding support for incremental activities in economic development and an additional \$5,000 in funding to support regional/provincial partnership funding like memberships.

Project financing comes from numerous sources. Our funding partners have included: City of Quesnel, Northern Development Initiative Trust, Service Canada, Tree Canada, and Western Economic Diversification.

Activities

QCEDC has focused its services on:

- ▶ Sector-specific actions (e.g., agriculture, forestry, tourism);
- ▶ Government investment in facilities and infrastructure that meet local, provincial and national objectives;
- ▶ Community marketing;
- ▶ General business development;
- ▶ Community and worker adjustment; and
- ▶ Sustaining public services.

Major projects led by QCEDC include:

- ▶ Quesnel Community Heat and Electricity System, Innovative Clean Energy (ICE)
- ▶ Bio energy, funding partner *Western Economic Diversification*
- ▶ Quesnel Community Marketing, Community Investment Support Program/City of Quesnel
- ▶ Lava Rock/Calcine Shale Analysis, Community Investment Support Program
- ▶ Woodsmart City Project, Community Investment Support Program
- ▶ International Student Program, Community Investment Support Program/School District 28
- ▶ Tourism Industry Development, Community Investment Support Program
- ▶ Quesnel 2020 Project, Western Economic Diversification/City of Quesnel
- ▶ Summer Student Program, Service Canada
- ▶ Job Creation Partnership, Service Canada
- ▶ Co-op Student Program, University of Northern BC

V. Revelstoke Economic Development Commission (REDC)

Mission and Mandate

The REDC abides by the vision for the community first established in 1994:

Revelstoke will be a leader in achieving a sustainable community by balancing environmental, social and economic values within a local, regional and global context.

Building on its rich heritage and natural beauty, this historic mountain community will pursue quality and excellence. Revelstoke will be seen as vibrant, healthy, clean, hospitable, resilient and forward-thinking. It will be committed to exercising its rights with respect to decisions affecting the North Columbia Mountain Region.

Community priorities include: opportunities for youth; economic growth and stability; environmental citizenship; personal safety and security; a responsible and caring social support system; a first-class education system; local access to life-long learning; spiritual and cultural values; and diverse forms of recreation.

All residents and visitors shall have access to the opportunities afforded by this community.

REDC's current mandate bridges economic as well as community and social goals and programs. Current priorities include:

- ▶ Community infrastructure and services (water, transit, education);
- ▶ Social (health and wellness, recreation, seniors, children);
- ▶ Arts, culture and heritage;
- ▶ Environment (green space, noise and light pollution, urban forests, air quality, waste management); and
- ▶ Economic

Economic goals include:

- ▶ Maintain a diverse and strong economy;
- ▶ Build on the growing tourism sector by expanding marketing and promotion, improving infrastructure, developing new opportunities and increasing shoulder season visitation;
- ▶ Implement the 2006 retail strategy recommendations; and
- ▶ Retain a strong forest sector by continuing to implement safe, sustainable forest practices and explore opportunities to add value to products.

Organization

The REDC is a committee of council of the City of Revelstoke and Area B of the Columbia Shuswap Regional District. Participation is for equal shares. The organization and operating structure of REDC is unique in BC and has won awards for its innovation and ability to streamline services and partnerships within the community. Organizational features include:

- ▶ REDC has a 12 member board, one each from the City, Regional District and Chamber. The other nine are selected through public invitation of interest;

- ▶ All terms are for two years, and meetings are conducted quarterly;
- ▶ The REDC is managed by the City of Revelstoke, which employs a full time Director of Community Economic Development (i.e. the EDO);
- ▶ The REDC leases office space from the Community Futures Development Corporation of Revelstoke (CFDCR) and the two organizations provide a united economic development services;
- ▶ REDC contracts with CFDCR for a one half-time administrative position;
- ▶ The Chamber of Commerce, under contract to the City, is responsible for reception at REDC;
- ▶ As a Resort Municipality, Revelstoke collects the 5% additional hotel room tax—2% is remitted directly to the Revelstoke Accommodation Association for marketing. The other 3% is remitted to City for infrastructure investments. These monies are overseen by a nine-member Tourism Infrastructure Advisory Committee (a committee of council) that is distinct from the REDC. Additionally, the City pays the Chamber of Commerce \$80,000 annually for operation of the Visitor Centre and the hiring of a Tourism Coordinator. Again, this is separate from the REDC.

Activities

The Economic Development Commission promotes economic development for the purpose of diversifying the local economy and creating employment opportunities. Promotion of industry development, forest industry stabilization, and small business development are guided by a Community Development Action Plan. The EDC is responsible for the coordination of implementation of the economic sector of the strategic action plan, which is based upon partnerships and co-operative relationships with other community development organizations.

Appendix B SAMPLE BYLAW² – For Illustrative Purposes Only

Bylaw Number: _____

For The Region/City/Town/Other Organization.

This is a bylaw for the Town of _____ to establish an economic development organization, which shall be called the _____ Economic Development Committee.

Whereas: The Town of _____ has decided to establish and economic development committee for the purposes of (state objectives such as promote, expand and enhance the development of the economy of the community). To this end, the Town of _____ enacts the following.

PART I – DEFINITIONS (examples only)

1. “Committee”, this shall mean and include an economic development committee of the (Region/City/Town/Other).
2. “Region/City/Town/Other” is the official name of the sponsoring agency.
3. “Applicable laws and legal status” identifies under what law, statute or regulations the organization is set up.

PART II - LAWS AND LEGAL STATUS

The (name) Economic Development Committee is set up under the (name of law, statute or regulation, i.e. Society Act of BC).

PART III – APPOINTMENTS AND TERMS

1. A committee will be established and be known as the (name) Economic Development Committee.
2. The committee shall consist of (#) voting members who shall be appointed by resolution of council (or other legal means depending upon the originator of the organization). The members of the committee shall be constituted as follows:
 - # members of council.
 - # members nominated by (local business organizations).
 - # members at large.
 - Town manager as an ex-officio member (or other appropriate staff person).
 - The EDO as an ex-officio member.
 - Other ex-officio non-voting members.
3. The town shall identify eligibility criteria such as council members, residents of the community, local business owners, representatives of local business associations, etc.
4. Appointed members shall serve terms of office as follows:
 - Members of council shall be appointed annually.
 - Other members will be appointed (by council) for three-year terms with selection/appointments for half the members every three years.

² Adapted from RJ Bell Consulting. May 2006. *Structuring an Economic Development Organization*. Economic Development Association of BC.

- The town manager shall be appointed on a permanent basis, so long as he/she is employed by the town.
 - The EDO shall be appointed as an ex-officio member of the committee, so long as he/she is employed by the economic development organization.
 - Other ex-officio members may be appointed for specified terms.
5. All members shall remain in office, until their respective successors are appointed by council, unless appointed for specified terms.
 6. Any member of the committee who is absent for three consecutive regular meetings with no suitable reason shall, upon recommendation to council, be removed from office.
 7. A member may be removed from committee membership for misconduct in office, or other good and sufficient cause.
 8. Vacancies will be filled in the same manner as the initial committee membership.

Part IV - PROCEEDINGS

1. A general meeting shall be held once per year, at which time, a chairperson, vice-chair person(s) and treasurer shall be selected for the coming year. These positions shall be selected from non-council and non-staff membership. The town council will approve these appointments.
2. Meetings of the committee shall be held on a regular basis at times set by resolution of the committee. Meetings shall be held every (#) months, or at other times as deemed appropriate. Proxy voting will not be allowed.
3. Formal meetings shall require a quorum of (minimum number or % of voting members). A quorum shall include the presence of the chairperson or a delegated vice-chairperson.
4. The chairperson or vice-chairperson may call special meetings where necessary.
5. Meeting procedures shall follow “Robert’s Rule of Order”, and include good meeting practices and a dispute resolution mechanism.
6. Members of the committee may be provided remuneration as established by council.
7. No member of the committee shall have the power to make legal, monetary or other significant commitments in the name of the town unless such responsibility is clearly delegated or approved by the town.
8. The committee shall identify and recommend to the town council the establishment of sub-committees of the board to guide and direct activities related to specific sectors or specific tasks or projects.
9. Significant policy or legal issues shall be passed by majority vote.
10. The committee may identify and establish sub-committees and working groups as deemed necessary for its effective operations.
11. The committee will ensure that an effective record keeping and reporting system is in place.

PART V – DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMITTEE

1. The committee shall be responsible for the preparation of an economic development strategy and such amendments as may be required from time to time. The committee shall insure that the strategy is updated every 3 years. The town may require that the strategy and any subsequent amendments, be presented to council for review and/or approval.

2. The committee shall meet on a regular basis to deal with the important and policy matters of the organization.
3. On an annual basis, the committee shall submit to council, an operational and financial report for review and/or approval.
4. The committee is responsible for fulfilling the goals and objectives of the organization by Carrying out work that is identified in the economic development strategy, annual business and work-plan.

PART VI – THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

An executive committee comprised of a Chair, Vice-Chair(s) and Treasurer will be elected annually by a majority vote of the organization. Nominations from within the organization shall be sought one month prior to election time.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Executive

The Executive Committee

- Will meet as deemed necessary by the chair.
- Will discuss and make policy decisions.
- Will ensure that the budget and strategic plans, business plans and work plans are developed and updated as required.
- Will attend meetings of council, or other government organizations as required.
- Will develop and administer processes to keep town council, the organization and the community informed of the activities of the organization.
- Will work closely with, and provide operational direction to staff, contractors, volunteers and others.

The Chair

- Shall preside at all meetings of the organization.
- Is the chief executive officer and shall supervise the other officers in the execution of their duties.
- Conducts the correspondence of the organization.
- Is the designated spokesperson of the AGM and at Director's meetings.
- Shall have custody of all records and documents of the organization except those required be kept by the Treasurer.
- Completes and submits the organization's Annual Report to the town.
- May delegate some of these responsibilities to other Directors or members.

The Vice-Chair

- Shall carry out the duties of the chair during his/her absence.

The Treasurer

- Keeps financial records, including books of account, audit reports, insurance records and others as necessary to comply with the Society Act.
- Renders financial statements to the executive, town, members and others when required.

The Past Chair

- Is responsible for turning over past records to the current chair and shall serve in an advisory capacity.

PART VII – SUB-COMMITTEES

The organization may establish sub-committees for the purpose of supporting the main body of the organization. Committee members will be identified through an advertising process and will be selected and appointed by the executive committee on the basis of the purpose of the subcommittee and the skills and expertise of prospective members.

PART VIII - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICER (EDO)

1. An economic development officer will be hired by the town to assist and advise the economic development committee. The economic development officer shall be an employee of the town.

2. The economic development officer shall be guided by an economic development strategy, position description, and an annual budget, business and work-plan.
3. The economic development officer will report to the town administrator for administrative direction, but to the organization's chair for work direction.
4. The economic development officer will not have voting privileges on the committee.

PART IX – FINANCES AND CAPITAL REQUIREMENTS

1. The organization will receive core funding from the town. Additional funds may be attracted from other sources.
2. The town will provide facilities and office equipment for the EDO and meeting space for the committee.
3. An annual financial statement will be prepared and will be audited at that time.
4. Appropriate insurance will be arranged (Note: unless the town's insurance policy covers the organization).
5. A policy on fund raising and committee member remuneration will be developed.
6. The organization will not have borrowing powers.
7. The town shall arrange for an audit the organizations finances on an annual basis and at such other times as deemed necessary.
8. The organization shall keep and maintain records of it s activities and provide periodic reports to town council.

PART X – GENERAL

This bylaw shall come into force on the date of its final passing.

Read a first and second time and finally passed this ____ day of _____ _A.D. 20___, and will be in force for the period _____.

The town council shall have the power to make amendments to these bylaws and to dissolve the organization.

Appendix C Sample EDO Job Description³

The following job description for an EDO in a rural community. This assumes that:

- ▶ the budget for economic development is the minimum required;
- ▶ the community or communities will remain closely involved and in control of the economic development organization; and
- ▶ the economy is relatively stable and not in crisis mode—the latter might entail a re-focusing of the job description on more dedicated tasks and projects.

Summary of Duties

The Economic Development Officer (EDO) is engaged by the BVEDO to assist and work with the Economic Development Committee (EDC) to provide business attraction, retention and expansion services to meet the community's business and economic development interests. The EDO will be involved in such activities as economic planning, marketing, project management, information management and secretariat support to the EDC. The primary source of funding is from BVEDO's member organizations.

Scope and Authority

The member organizations have given BVEDO a three year mandate and funding commitment and direction to the Board for the delivery of economic development services. The EDO reports to the Board of Directors for staff direction and is responsible for implementing the Economic Development Strategy. To this end, the EDO will develop an annual work plan and budget and prepare regular reports as needed, all of which will be reviewed and approved by the Board. The Board retains final approval for all plans, activities and budget expenditures, but member organizations may also indicate specific strategic and high-level economic priorities from time to time. The EDO will work with the Board on hiring, development and management of staff.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Economic Development (30%)

The EDO is a resource person to the Board and as such, will:

- ▶ Assist the Board in the preparation, implementation and periodic updating of the Economic Development Strategy;
- ▶ Undertake analysis and evaluation of economic and business development opportunities and identify strategies to pursue and develop these opportunities;
- ▶ Provide technical and professional advice and support to the Board;
- ▶ Identify and access sources of additional funding;
- ▶ Work with the Board to encourage community support and involvement in economic and business development programs and projects; and
- ▶ Provide advice to member organizations through the Board on issues that might affect the business climate in the Bulkley Valley.

³ Adapted from: RJ Bell Consulting. April 2006. *EDO Job Descriptions*. Economic Development Association of BC.

2. Business Development (20%)

The EDO will develop and manage programs and services to improve the business environment in the community. The EDO will:

- ▶ Act as the primary point of contact for business and investor inquiries, providing information, assisting with site visits in the community and promoting local opportunities;
- ▶ Identify available commercial and industrial lands and assist business and investor prospects to view these properties;
- ▶ Assist existing businesses to promote their products and services; and
- ▶ Provide referrals to funding and training agencies or other agencies providing specific assistance to business.

3. Promotion, Marketing and Provision of Information (20%)

The EDO will identify the need for and develop a variety of promotional and marketing vehicles to attract businesses and new residents to the community. These might include:

- ▶ Community profile and promotional brochures;
- ▶ Web site and videos, including CD or on-line versions;
- ▶ Trade shows;
- ▶ Business and economic databases; and
- ▶ Business prospectuses.

4. Planning and Technical Support (15%)

The EDO will:

- ▶ Conduct research, analysis, planning and evaluation for the Board and the community;
- ▶ Manage projects and contractors engaged to complete projects;
- ▶ Identify local business opportunities;
- ▶ Develop mitigation strategies in the event of an economic downturn; and
- ▶ Facilitate strategic planning.

5. Liaison, Relationships and Partnerships (10%)

The EDO will:

- ▶ Develop and maintain active contact with other business and economic development organizations, and government agencies in order to stay abreast of current programs and services and ensure that the community's interests are served;
- ▶ Maintain an awareness of regional, provincial and federal economic planning programs and activities;
- ▶ Attend community meetings, often with Board and member organizations to provide information and updates to the public at large;
- ▶ Attend Board and member organization meetings to provide progress reports;
- ▶ Develop an effective working relationship with member organization staff in order to maximize economic development benefit to the community;
- ▶ Facilitate partnerships between businesses, government, financial and educational institutions, 1st nations organizations and the community; and

- ▶ Facilitate community meetings.

6. Administration (5%)

The EDO will:

- ▶ Attend all Board meetings as an ex-officio member;
- ▶ Provide secretariat support to the Board involving preparation of meeting agendas, minutes, reports, etc.;
- ▶ Organize and maintain an effective office administration;
- ▶ Prepare and administer the annual budget; and
- ▶ Identify and access additional funding from government, generally for special projects.

Qualifications and Requirements

This position requires an individual with a business diploma or degree plus 3 –5 years related experience or sufficient experience, knowledge and expertise to compensate for any educational shortfall. Other requisite attributes are:

- ▶ A sound background in community economic and business development;
- ▶ Ability to conduct economic and market research;
- ▶ Ability to effectively manage economic development and other related planning processes;
- ▶ Ability to deal with diverse groups of people and interests;
- ▶ Good analytical skills;
- ▶ Good report writing and verbal presentation skills;
- ▶ Good financial management skills;
- ▶ Experience in group facilitation, consensus building and mediation;
- ▶ Ability to organize multi-faceted activities and manage time effectively;
- ▶ Good knowledge of computers including word, power point, accounting and data base programs; and
- ▶ Where possible, training and/or experience in a field related to the economy of the area (forestry, mining, tourism, manufacturing, etc.).

Appendix D Sample Policies and Procedures Manual

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The **Bulkley Valley Economic Development Society** was established in 2010 by the <three signatories>. The purpose of this document is to describe the general objectives and philosophy of the Society, determine executive and administrative policies, and set forth basic procedures for governing operations.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE SOCIETY

The purpose of the Society is to:

Create and sustain an organization that is responsible for all aspects of community economic development, which pursues development that reflects the goals and values of the residents of the Bulkley Valley and members of the Wet'suwet'en First Nation and which acts in accordance with the policy and planning directives of the founding members.

1.3 VISION STATEMENT

The Bulkley Valley Economic Development Organization (BVEDO) will help build a resilient community with a shared vision of acceptable economic development amongst all three signatories and their constituents in the Bulkley Valley and the traditional territory of the Wet'suwet'en. It will do this by encouraging sustainable land use and resource development that supports wealth-creating activities that are consistent with local values and interests. Through its partnerships and positive working relationships, BVEDO will be recognized as an economic development leader by governments, non-government organizations, industries, businesses, community groups and residents. Programs and assistance will be available throughout the region and it is acknowledged that development in individual communities will benefit all. The agency will target gaps in services, avoid overlap with other local and regional agencies, and will have stable long-term operational funding.

BVEDO will operate as a legal entity governed by a board of directors appointed by and accountable to the signatories. The board's primary role will be to develop policy and oversight for the economic development function under the direction of a strategic plan. It will strive to minimize local political interference and will seek out larger regional initiatives.

Implementation of the plan will be through the agency's professional staff, which will be based in a stand-alone office.

1.4 MISSION

The BVEDO is owned and operated by three founding signatories, the Town of Smithers, Area A of the Regional District of Bulkley Nechako and the Office of the Wet'suwet'en. The BVEDO supports all individuals and community groups in the Bulkley Valley (with the exception of the Village of Telkwa), members of the Wet'suwet'en residing in their territory outside the Bulkley Valley and those interested in locating to the Valley. The BVEDO will facilitate economic development wherever possible but will focus on the following core services:

- Create and distribute research and economic information to those engaged in or interested in engaging in business and economic development and the community at large;
- Report out on the economic health, opportunities and stability of the Bulkley Valley and Wet'suwet'en territory;
- Provide brokering services to businesses, community groups and government agencies;
- Market and promote the region and recruit new investment;
- Secure investment in desired economic development activities and infrastructure from senior levels of government and the private sector;
- Where appropriate, provide/channel direct equity investment into key business operations; and
- Encourage, facilitate and assist the development of major resource projects where they fit the values and expectations of the people of the region.

BVEDO will have professional and technical economic development staff based in the region funded by the three signatories. The staff will develop close working relationships with business owners and operators and with local, regional, provincial, First Nation and federal governments. The staff will proactively identify business and economic opportunities that will be shared with potential investors and entrepreneurs.

BVEDO will communicate, consult, inform and involve the broader community in its planning, implementation, and evaluation functions so that the organization becomes seen and valued as an economic leader.

1.5 GOALS

The BVEDO's economic development goals are as follows:

- Global recognition of the Bulkley Valley as a preferred place to invest.
- Positive working relationships among stakeholders thinking and operating as a region.
- Confident investment/business community.
- A more diversified, stable, resilient, value adding economic base.
- Population exceeding the growth trend of regions in Northern BC.
- Shared economic success for all communities in the region.
- Enhanced quality of live based on positive environmental, social and economic benefits.
- Harmonization of Wet'suwet'en rights and title with local and regional authorities in support of acceptable economic growth.
- A self sustaining organization, recognized as a community leader.

2. STRATEGY SUMMARY

Strategy	Actions	Page#
Local Business Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Improve the local development climate. ▶ Create an “Investing in the Bulkley Valley” guide. 	7
Industrial Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Create an inventory of industrial land ▶ Review the industrial land inventory. ▶ Evaluate marketing of properties. ▶ Assess the costs to develop strategic parcels. ▶ Prepare a marketing plan for the industrial land. 	9
Community Information Portal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Assemble statistical data and research. ▶ Create a Bulkley Valley web portal. 	10
Business Retention & Expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Establish a business visitation program. ▶ Evaluate Synchronist Business Information System. ▶ Explore the expansion of Business Care. 	11
Network and Dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Encouraging a regional approach to dialogue. ▶ Linking back to membership of the executive. ▶ Develop an annual review of strategy progress. 	13
Resource Industry Cluster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Monitor industry activity. ▶ Develop a community relations policy. ▶ Identify and market business opportunities. ▶ Prioritize local infrastructure. ▶ Develop programs in support of benefit agreements 	14
Training and Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Assist the School of Exploration and Mining. ▶ Support SEG and SEM through networking activities. ▶ Identify key anticipated skilled labour force gaps. ▶ Create local training strategies. ▶ Identify succession planning and needs. ▶ Establish recruitment and training programs. 	16
Forest and Energy Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Review the government’s Bio-energy Strategy. ▶ Review the MCRD “Resources from Waste:” ▶ Monitor BC Hydro’s calls for green power. ▶ Identify opportunities for low value wood fibre use. ▶ Research other opportunities for forest biomass. 	17
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Support small-scale crop and livestock production. ▶ Support the expansion of local farmers markets. ▶ Assist with identifying means to capitalize abattoir. 	18
Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Explore feasibility of Resort Municipality. ▶ Renew TBC’s accommodation tracking program. ▶ Develop rail traveller packages ▶ Encourage “export ready” operators. ▶ Expand product packaging and itineraries. 	19
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Explore potential for inter-modal facility. ▶ Investigate feasibility of fly-in fly-out base. 	20
Knowledge-based Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Evaluate regional telecom infrastructure. ▶ Prepare a business case for development. ▶ Explore 3-P partnerships. ▶ Integrate Smart Growth principles. 	21
Arts & Culture Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Explore interest in a use/demand assessment. ▶ Obtain funding for the use/demand assessment. ▶ Facilitate a review of the findings. 	22

3. ADMINISTRATION

3.1 AUTHORITIES

The Society is accountable to its members and residents of the Bulkley Valley. In fulfilling this obligation, the Society will consult regularly through quarterly meetings and during the development of all plans, including the Annual Report and annual Action Plan. Such reports will be prepared in a manner that accurately reflects the roles and responsibilities of the Society.

The Society will act in accordance with the procedures set out in the Local Government Act, Municipal Act, Town and Regional District by-laws and policies.

Information used and generated by the Society is not subject to the guidelines of the Freedom of Information Act.

3.2 ELECTION OF THE EXECUTIVE

The Society will annually elect a Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary Treasurer. Elections must be held at the first meeting following annual appointments made by the members.

3.3 DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE

The Chair will:

- ▶ Consult with staff on items pertaining to the economic development function;
- ▶ Call special meetings as necessary; and
- ▶ Chair all Society meetings.

The Vice-Chair will:

- ▶ Assume the role of the Chair in the elected Chair's absence.

The Secretary Treasurer will:

- ▶ Assist the staff in the preparation of the annual budget;
- ▶ Assume the role of the Chair in the absence of both the Chair and the Vice-Chair; and,
- ▶ Oversee all matters of a financial nature with the staff.

The Board will:

- ▶ Meet before regular Society meetings or as deemed necessary by the Chairperson;
- ▶ Attend meetings with local, regional, provincial and federal government representatives as required or directed by the Society;
- ▶ Work closely with staff on economic development items;

- ▶ Along with staff, discuss matters concerning municipal jurisdiction with municipal and regional district representatives;
- ▶ Have signing authority on Society accounts;
- ▶ Review budgets and other related items and make recommendations to the Society;
- ▶ Be available to staff for advice on day-to-day matters; and
- ▶ Meet on a quarterly basis with members.

3.4 SOCIETY STRUCTURE

The Society will consist of nine (9) members, appointed as follows:

- Four (4) members appointed by the Council of the Town of Smithers.
- Two (2) members appointed by the Director for Electoral Area 'A', Bulkley-Nechako Regional District.
- One (1) member appointed by the Office of the Wet'suwet'en.
- Two (2) members appointed jointly by the three founding members.

No board members shall be elected officials of the Town, Regional District or Office of the Wet'suwet'en.

3.5 TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

Society members will be appointed for one-year terms. Society members who have completed their terms will be eligible for re-nomination to the Society. Society members who are nominated for a second or subsequent consecutive terms will be eligible for a two-year term. No person shall be appointed for more than five consecutive terms.

All members of the Society are expected to regularly attend Society meetings, accept a reasonable amount of committee work and represent, where required, the Society at public functions, presentations and at sessions with municipal councils, regional district Board of Directors and meetings of the Office of the Wet'suwet'en.

If a Board member misses three (3) consecutive regular meetings, or attends less than 60% of Society meetings in an appointment year, they will be considered to have resigned from the Board.

When a Board member, due to poor attendance, is in danger of losing their place on the Board, the Chair shall notify the member, in writing, of the jeopardy of their position. The Chair may also meet with that member to discuss actions to be taken to improve performance. Should this situation not be corrected, the Chair will notify the member, the Society and the appointing stakeholder, by letter, that the position on the Board is now vacant.

3.6 SELECTION PROCEDURE

Nominations to the Board will be solicited from the community. The nominees are expected to represent a cross-section of residents of the Bulkley Valley.

The following selection procedures will apply:

- ▶ Any member of the community may seek Board membership;
- ▶ Each nominee will submit a letter expressing their interest in sitting on the Board;
- ▶ Steps will be taken to ensure that as many economic sectors and community interests are represented, although this should not limit the Town, Regional District or Office of the Wet'suwet'en in making Board appointments;
- ▶ All nominations will be presented to members of the Society no later than the third quarterly meeting of each year.
- ▶ Regular terms of Board members will begin in January.

3.7 SUB-COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES

The Society may set up sub-committees to do specific tasks as the Society deems necessary. Membership on sub-committees is not restricted to Society members.

In order to obtain advice from the community on specific issues, the Society may appoint such task forces, as it deems necessary. Membership on task forces can be drawn from the community at large.

The Chair of a sub-committee or a task force will be a member of the Board.

Any reports, briefs, information or advice generated by sub-committees and working groups will be considered only advisory to the Society. The Society will discuss issues raised by sub-committees and task forces and adopt such items as it deems appropriate.

3.8 DECISION-MAKING

A quorum for regular special meetings of the Society will be those present.

The Chair, Vice-Chair or a majority of the voting members upon written request may call special meetings.

Meeting procedures will be conducted in accordance with good meeting practices and disputes resolved in accordance with Robert's Rule of Order, newly revised.

3.9 MEETINGS

Meetings of the Society will be held monthly at a time to be set by resolution of the Society.

At the inaugural meeting, beginning with the first meeting after each January 1st, the Board shall elect a Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary Treasurer from among its members.

Board members will strive to make consensus-based decisions.

Regular meetings of the Society will be open to the public. Any matter pertaining to confidential, personal or land issues will be placed on an “in-camera” agenda.

Any person or group wishing to appear before the Society may do so by contacting management staff and asking to be placed on the agenda. They must state purpose of their appearance and submit any written material they wish to present for inclusion with the agenda. The Chair will make the final decision of inclusion or exclusion on the agenda.

3.10 AGENDAS

Agendas for Society meetings will be finalized and made available to members not less than five (5) days prior to the meetings and will contain copies of correspondence, reports and such information as is necessary for Society members to make informed decisions.

Items not on the agenda may be brought to the attention of the Society but may not be discussed in any detail or decided upon until the following meeting unless decided otherwise by vote.

Society members wishing to have items placed on the agenda may do so by notifying the Chair at least two (2) days prior to the finalizing of the agenda and by submitting any pertinent documentation in support of the items to be discussed.

3.11 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The role of the Society and its Board is to act as a standard and/or trustee of the mission, vision and Economic Development Strategy or Annual Plan as approved by the Society. Specific responsibilities include:

Legal

- ▶ To govern and direct the BVEDO according to laws of Canada, BC and all appropriate local levels of government.
- ▶ To ensure that the terms and conditions of the service contract between the Society and the founding members are adhered to and fulfilled.
- ▶ To ensure that any other contracts which the BVEDO may from time to time enter into are adhered to and fulfilled.
- ▶ On issues relating to zoning, subdivision and official community planning, the Society is strictly an advisory body. This notwithstanding, applications for zoning and OCP changes will be referred to the Society for comments.

Values

- ▶ To establish, enforce, monitor and communicate fundamental principles of the organization’s behaviour, services and business.

Planning

- ▶ To formulate long-range goals, strategic plans and annual action plans.
- ▶ To ensure the maintenance of an effective planning process.
- ▶ To monitor and formulation and implementation of operational plans and ensure that they are consistent with the mission, vision and overall strategic direction of the organization.

Policy

- ▶ To develop where appropriate the necessary strategic policies for guiding the organization toward its strategic goals.
- ▶ To monitor economic development operations to ensure they are consistent with strategic policies.

Human Resources

- ▶ To approve and monitor sound human resource management policies, procedures and practices.
- ▶ To contract with the EDO to ensure that implementation of the Society's policies and strategic plans and the management of operations are carried out in a responsible and professional manner.
- ▶ To counsel, support and assist the BVEDO staff and appointed volunteers in the fulfillment of their operational responsibilities.

Financial

- ▶ To ensure the budget reflects the priorities and strategic direction of the organization.
- ▶ To monitor the budget and financial statements on a regular basis.
- ▶ To plan for and acquire sufficient financial resources to implement the plans of the organization in a prudent, financially-responsible way.
- ▶ To ensure that effective financial controls and management systems are in place to protect the organization and its assets.
- ▶ To ensure the auditing of the financial operation.

Advocacy

- ▶ To develop community awareness and support of the mission and vision of the BVEDO.
- ▶ To represent the BVEDO to the senior levels of government, crown corporations, business and industry associations, funding agencies, client groups and community stakeholders.
- ▶ To monitor government legislation and advise government officials on the impact of current or proposed policies where it is deemed to be part of the BVEDO's strategic focus.
- ▶ To report to the members of the BVEDO on strategic plans and policy, services and operations.

3.12 BUDGETING

A budget will be prepared for the Society on an annual basis and submitted to the Board for consideration. Once approved by the Board, the Annual Budget will be forwarded to Society members for consideration.

3.13 PLANNING

An Annual Plan outlining the goals, objectives, strategies and actions for the Society will be prepared and approved by the Society yearly. Source documentation for the Plan will be economic development strategies, feasibility studies, business plans, community consultation exercises or other data gathering processes as may be undertaken from time to time by the Society.

3.14 REPORTING

Quarterly progress reports and an Annual Report will be prepared and submitted to the Society for their consideration. Quarterly reports will be qualitative in nature and track progress of the Annual Plan in addition to economic development events with implications for the community. Quarterly financial statements will also be provided. The Annual Report will evaluate the implementation of the Annual Plan using identified measures and indicators. Further, the Society will prepare an audited, year-end financial statement for the City.

3.14 MEDIA RELATIONS

Society staff and the Society Chair will be the designated spokesperson and will be responsible for news releases and responding to media questions and interviews.

4. STAFF

4.1 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICER JOB DESCRIPTION

The EDO, using good judgement and an entrepreneurial approach, is responsible for all economic development activities. The position reports to the Society. The EDO acts as a technical adviser to the Society, is the Society's liaison between the various relevant regional, provincial and national agencies, manages staff, performs general clerical tasks where and when required, communicates directly with and serves clients, seeks alternative sources of financing for the economic development office, prepares reports and studies and generally carries out the Economic Development Strategy.

Administration

- ▶ Generates strategic plans and policy for Society approval. Implements and monitors strategic plans and policy;
- ▶ Attends Society meetings and assists in the formation of policies and procedures;
- ▶ Ensures that all accounting and financial records are maintained to a standard necessary to meet the requirements of external accountants, auditors or others engaged in preparing financial statements and monitoring financial performance;
- ▶ Prepares the required reports and keeps the Society informed regarding various operations and programs;
- ▶ Coordinates work of staff and Society members;
- ▶ Provides ongoing management consultation;
- ▶ Provides liaison between the Society and other community economic, employment, education and financial agencies;
- ▶ Maintains regional, provincial, and national contact with related federal and provincial departments; and,
- ▶ Plans and organizes special events.

Financial

- ▶ Plans, develops, and prepares budgets as instructed by the Society;
- ▶ Responds to annual audit inquiries;
- ▶ Reviews and authorizes administration and capital expenditures for related projects;
- ▶ Prepares annual requests for funding from relevant government agencies;
- ▶ Prepares applications for special project funding requests for the provincial government; and,
- ▶ Solicits funding for economic development activities from the private sector.

Service

- ▶ Attends and makes presentations to community, regional or national groups and agencies on the activities of the Society and community-based economic development;
- ▶ Handles telephone and walk-in enquiries and acts as a consultant to the community in their requests for economic development information;
- ▶ Identifies key economic development information and information sources;
- ▶ Maintains a regional business inventory;

- ▶ Maintains a database of government programs that could be of assistance to economic development initiatives;
- ▶ Assists clients contact the appropriate government agency;
- ▶ Assists investors and others not living in the region access information about business, investment, and relocation opportunities;
- ▶ Markets the community in markets in which it has development potential;
- ▶ Provides technical assistance to entrepreneurs and business people;
- ▶ Undertakes activities that would help lead to a diversification of the economic base;
- ▶ Communicates with other economic development stakeholders in the region;
- ▶ Receives and distributes incoming mail;
- ▶ Prepares correspondence and other data; and
- ▶ Works regularly with desktop computers and word processing, spreadsheet and database software.

Performance Measurement Factors

- ▶ Client feedback;
- ▶ Adherence to professional behaviour standards;
- ▶ Adherence to the Economic Development Plan and Annual Plan;
- ▶ Adherence to budgetary standards as established in the Budgetary Plan;
- ▶ Ability to minimize local contributions to the budget; and,
- ▶ Ability to access other government programs and resources.

4.2 COMPENSATION

Compensation for the EDO will consist of base pay, fringe benefits, and incentive pay.

- ▶ The base pay for the manager based on a semi-monthly payroll period is \$xx.
- ▶ Fringe benefits will include the required employer contributions to CPP and UIC. In addition, a standard health plan will be offered. This will consist of full payment of MSP premiums, as well as the provision of long-term disability, life, and dental insurance coverage.
- ▶ The Manager will be entitled to earn a xx% commission on all additional funding assistance obtained above and beyond the budgeted funding, up to a maximum of \$5,000 in total commissions.

All vacation, holiday pay and other employment policy not specifically discussed herein will be considered to be in accordance with the BC Employment Standards Act.

4.3 EXPENSES

The EDO will be reimbursed for those expenses itemized in the annual budget. Travel rates will be consistent with rates paid City employees and no expenses can be claimed without the submission of a voucher or receipt. Any extraordinary expense item not contained in the budget can only be remunerated upon approval of the Society.

4.4 EMPLOYMENT

Selection Criteria

The EDO should have some prior business background in an economic development or project management role. Preference should be given those who have had responsibility and accountability for staff, business development or similar market-oriented activities plus performance and achievement standards related to the measurement of success such as profit, cost controls, sales growth or other meaningful measurements. Preference should also be given to those with service-oriented backgrounds where the ability to communicate and network was important. Previous experience in an economic development capacity should be mandatory. Further, experience in working with government funding and assistance programs would be beneficial. Education requirements should be minimally two years of university training, or completion of a recognized technical school program (e.g., BCIT). Certificates, diplomas or degrees will enhance a person's attractiveness for this position.

Dedication to the community is an essential element of this position; therefore, a person who has roots in the region, or at least has strong plans to do so, would be an asset.

Performance Dimensions

The position requires someone who is articulate, persuasive, energetic, and analytical; can sell or learn to sell, and is highly organized, service-oriented and self-disciplined. Also required for success is someone who can exercise good judgement, make good decisions, build effective teams and be a good coach. These performance dimensions are not frequently found in one individual. Therefore, those responsible for hiring the manager should take this into account and use this list of performance dimensions as a guideline. They will have to balance off one skill against another.

4.5 STAFF ORIENTATION

All staff must be oriented as follows:

- ▶ Explanation of operating policies, including hours, overtime, attendance, deportment, security, and privacy;
- ▶ Explanation of pay and all benefits, including vacation entitlements, pay period, deductions from pay, sick leave, maternity and any other factors impacting on benefits and pay;
- ▶ Explanation of service standards and expectations; and,
- ▶ Review of the Economic Development Strategy and Annual Plan.

Part of this orientation may be included in letters of employment to new staff. All staff is to be allowed access to written policies covering pay and benefits.

4.6 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The EDO may apply to the Society for training and development subsidies. Only courses or workshops and other programs that are directly related to the needs of community economic development and will have the effect of improving management performance will be allowed a subsidy. The EDO will be required to pay for courses, workshops and other programs when the request is EDO-initiated. Upon successful completion, the Society will reimburse the manager for all fees and materials. Travel, meals and accommodations in these situations are not reimbursed. When the Society requests that the manager attend external training and development courses, all fees, travel, meals and accommodations will be paid for either by prepayment, pre-established allowance, expense claim, or by a combination of these.

4.7 SALARY REVIEWS

Annual Salary Reviews

The Society may undertake a salary review in accordance with direction given in the contract for services.

4.8 PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

General

The purpose of a performance review is to allow an opportunity for the EDO and the Society to meet and discuss aspects of the EDO's performance. The purpose of a performance review meeting is to assist the EDO in working toward meeting competence standards for the position. It should be conducted in a manner that is positive and just. The manager needs to know what tasks he/she is doing well and where improvements can be made in order to have the chance of meeting the standards of the job.

Timing of Performance Reviews

Performance reviews should take place not less than once per year during the Annual General Meeting of the Society. A performance review can also be proposed by the Chair and conducted when approved with two-thirds of Society members in such cases where the Society considers there is just cause.

Content of a Performance Review

Performance reviews should adhere to the defined standards and indicators established in the Service Contract, the Job Description and the Economic Development Strategy. The content of the review should be specifically related to these performance measurement factors. Those measurement factors should, where possible, have clear measures. If performance has fallen below the set standards then the Society should engage in helpful discussion as to how those performance measurement factors can be brought up to an acceptable standard. As part of the performance review, agreement should be reached by the parties as to what will be done and when it will be done. The EDO will agree to take certain actions to improve

performance by a set time and the Society will agree to assist the EDO wherever possible in achieving these goals. This might mean that the Society will take on a responsibility to give the manager further training or other support as may be required. The performance review is therefore a bi-directional process, the prime objective of which is to develop a team-work approach to improving performance.

The Disciplinary Performance Review

When a situation arises where it is felt that the EDO is not performing to standard and does not appear to be taking any reasonable step towards performance improvement (even after counselling or previous performance reviews) then a disciplinary review should take place. This review will deal with historical facts relating to the lack of performance. The EDO will be told that he/ she has a specific time in which to improve performance standards otherwise he/she will be terminated from the position. The disciplinary performance review must only take place when other attempts to solve problems have failed. All performance reviews, whether disciplinary or otherwise, must be fully documented and placed in the EDO's file.

4.9 DEPARTMENT

Dress and Behaviour

The EDO should be aware of the fact that this is a high profile operation within the community and subject to accepted standards of behaviour and professionalism. Every attempt should be made to give customers and clients the service and respect they deserve. Dress and grooming should meet the standards normally associated with a professional business enterprise of this nature.