ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2008, Council of the District of Hope created the Economic Development Strategy Steering Committee to oversee completion and execution of a new economic development plan for the District. Lions Gate consulting was engaged for this assignment, which resulted in the 2009 District of Hope Economic Development Plan.

Execution of the 2009 plan saw the formation of the Hope Business and Development Society, which rebranded as AdvantageHOPE in 2011. In 2014, AdvantageHOPE became the contractor for the operation of the Visitor Centre and incorporated tourism development under the umbrella of AdvantageHOPE. Creation of a single agency to oversee economic development and tourism initiatives was a strategic priority that had been identified in the 2009 plan.

In April 2015, Council identified new strategic priorities, envisioning Hope promoting a business friendly atmosphere, having a diverse economy, achieving Hope being a recognized tourism destination, and improving the image of the downtown core. Council identified an updated Economic Development Plan as one of its top five priorities and, as a result, Terms of Reference for the update were adopted in June 2015.

This Economic Development Strategy Update is the result of the update process, which included participation from AdvantageHOPE and the District of Hope. The update body held several committee meetings, reviewed public feedback garnered through the Official Community Plan update process, also currently underway, and held a Public Input Session, in order to come up with the updated strategy.

It is the intent that the updated Economic Development Strategy will provide the basis for annual workplans for the next 5-6 years as AdvantageHOPE and the District of Hope continue to work to improve the overall economic health of the community.
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of an economic development plan is to create a roadmap for the District and its partners (private, non-profit, public sector) illustrating how they can work together on initiatives that enhance investments in employment-generating activities.

In 2015, District of Hope Council asked for an update to the Economic Development Strategy, first put forward in 2009. As economic situations and conditions change the District intends to continue being proactive in shaping change to keep Hope relevant, economically viable, and a desirable place to live. Thus periodic reviews and updates are required to keep the plan and activities on track to achieve District economic development goals. In particular, the recent District Strategic Plan Update envisions Hope promoting a business friendly atmosphere, having a diverse economy, achieving Hope being a recognized tourism destination, and improving the image of the downtown core.

The purpose of this Economic Development Strategy Update is to:

- Review the 2009 strategy
- Confirm the roles of the District and AdvantageHope moving forward
- Identify changes in goals, approaches, and targets
- Determine resource levels required to achieve updated plan goals
- Clarify expectations
- Develop Return on Investment (ROI) measures

BACKGROUND

In June 2009, the District of Hope invited proposals to develop a comprehensive economic development strategic plan in consultation with Hope’s business and community groups. The overall objectives of the study included:

- Conducting a review of the local economy and its current economic base;
- Developing future economic scenarios one assuming no economic development and the other with economic development;
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- Identifying specific opportunities for economic development;
- Developing goals, objectives and competitive economic development strategies;
- Identifying resources, business assistance, partnerships and policy changes required to implement identified opportunities;
- Advising on options and providing a recommendation for a delivery model;
- Identifying funding or grant sources to support plan implementation;
- Developing measurement criteria to assess the future economic development function; and
- Conducting appropriate community consultation.

The selection of a consultant to prepare the plan was made by an Economic Development Strategy Steering Committee (EDSSC) appointed by the District. In August, 2009 a consulting team led by Lions Gate Consulting Inc. was selected as the successful bid. The EDSSC continued to provide oversight for the subsequent planning process and to approve this document as the plan recommended to council.

UPDATE BODY

The Update Body consisted of AdvantageHOPE Board representatives (Kent McKinnon – Chairperson, Steven Patterson – Director, Marg Millar – Director and Peter Robb – Director), District Council representatives (Mayor Wilfried Vicktor and Councillor Scott Medlock) and respective staff representatives (AdvantageHOPE Executive Director, Tammy Shields and District of Hope Chief Administrative Officer, John Fortoloczky).
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HOPE’S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The original economic development goals from 2009 have been reviewed and updated to reflect the current strategic priorities of Council. They include:

- Population growth that is able to sustain the service needs of residents and the labour market needs of the economy
- A base of sustainable jobs that will allow residents to earn a reasonable living within the community
- Protection of the quality of life attributes that have made Hope an attractive place to live
- A diversified economic base that is able to meet the local budget needs and improve District finances
- Promoting a business friendly atmosphere that fosters growth and development, helping to balance the municipal tax load
- Becoming recognized as a provincial tourism destination, increasing sources of sustainable revenue to the community
- Developing a vibrant downtown core that will attract residents and visitors and build a greater sense of community pride
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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOCUS

Economic Development initiatives and their corresponding metrics can be laid out along a spectrum ranging from macro to micro in focus. The objective, target, metrics, and core skills required for each of the focus areas is defined below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Area</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Metrics</th>
<th>Core Skills</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deal Focused</td>
<td>Jobs and wealth from outside; direct attraction</td>
<td>Site selectors and prospective companies</td>
<td>Deals closed; deal pipeline</td>
<td>Service, person to person communication, direct sales</td>
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<td>Promotion Focused</td>
<td>Awareness, inquiry, marketing impressions</td>
<td>External companies and prospects</td>
<td>Awareness, inquiries, analytics</td>
<td>Content creation, digital communications</td>
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<td>Retention &amp; Expansion Focused</td>
<td>Jobs and wealth from inside; organic growth</td>
<td>Local companies and entrepreneurs</td>
<td>Contacts, issues solved, policy</td>
<td>Service, consulting</td>
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<td>Infrastructure Focused</td>
<td>Improve the overall business environment</td>
<td>Internal and external prospects</td>
<td>Projects complete; legislation, policy</td>
<td>Lobbying, public affairs</td>
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The economic development strategies identified and discussed throughout the rest of this document are organized by their respective areas of focus.
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**SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES**

The following table summarizes the strategies identified in the following pages and how they support Hope’s Economic Development Goals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
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BUSINESS CLIMATE

The business climate consists of economic and administrative conditions, such as taxation and trade policy, as well as the attitude of government, First Nations, and institutions toward businesses and business activity. Business climate is affected by major cost factors (e.g., land, labour, taxes, regulations) and non-cost factors (e.g., quality of life, attitudes toward business). Components that can be controlled locally 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 are 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 positive business climate is fundamental for Hope. It is a necessary precondition not just for new business attraction, but for the expansion of existing businesses as well. Better attitudes and tools regarding development is also likely to result in an expansion of new investment from within the community.

A1. Easy access to up-to-date information on market and opportunities

A2. Establish reasonable benchmarks for the industrial and commercial development fees (permits, hook-ups, improvements), development approval times and mill rates

A3. Promote awareness of Revitalization Tax Exemption Program

A4. Supportive bylaws for new and emerging targeted sector opportunities (food trucks, Segways, microbrewery, light & green industry)
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FUTURE EMPLOYMENT LAND

In order to build diversity in the local economic base, it will be important to ensure a ready supply of serviced industrial land to meet the demand as it arrives. The current market for industrial land in Hope is not strong, however is expected to grow as it is being driven by demand in the Lower Fraser Valley and Metro Vancouver. Hope offers a major cost advantage over neighbouring communities to the west.

The *Agriculture and Business Land Use Analysis* (Arlington Group 2009) concluded that there is a large supply of land designated for industrial use in Hope, and that this supply far exceeds current demand. However, it was also acknowledged that there are constraints that affect much of the potential, specifically a lack of municipal services to Flood-Hope Road and suitably-sized properties in the Downtown.

Hope should be preparing now so conditions are optimal for getting supply (useable, industrial land) onto the market to meet demand when it arises. Many businesses will not investigate Hope if they believe the community cannot present a viable option as an industrial location.

In addition, new employment driven by industrial land development will also increase residential housing demand, so that workforce housing lands should also be identified and made available to satisfy anticipated demand growth.

B1. Monitor demand for developable industrial land in the Fraser Valley so that a market-ready supply of land can be ready to meet the demand when it arrives

B2. Flood Hope services

B3. Workforce housing lands – identification, servicing and zoning
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

INFRASTRUCTURE CAPACITY

Infrastructure capacity is closely related to future employment lands, as it recognizes the need for amenities on, and around, industrial and workforce housing lands.

It is recommended that Hope take a positive, proactive approach with respect to building infrastructure capacity in anticipation of future growth. For example, the recent acquisition of fibre-optic infrastructure and its availability throughout town means we are in a better position to attract virtual commuters and any business that relies primarily on fast and reliable internet access. Going forward, the community must identify other gaps in servicing to employment or residential lands and take action to fill the gaps if we are to compete in the Fraser Valley market.

Though Hope’s position at the junction of four major highways gives it a competitive advantage, access and roadways could be improved to drive more traffic into Hope, and into downtown. Ensuring easy access to Hope from the highways, and then into the downtown core from arterial routes (Water Avenue and Old Hope-Princeton Way) is paramount to the success of any economic development plan.

C1. Anticipate and plan for growth, ensuring availability of servicing to future employment and residential lands

C2. Work with the province re: access and roadways (i.e. lighted interchange at Hope Princeton Way & 6th Avenue)

C3. Improve Exit 170 so that the approach is backed up, exit lane twinned, and signage improved so that the exit is more prominent and identified as a service route for traffic continuing through

C4. Improve pedestrian-friendliness of key commercial areas, including improving sidewalks, lighting, traffic crossings, connectivity of walking routes, focusing on 6th Avenue, Hope-Princeton Way, and Water Avenue
ASSET DEVELOPMENT

Asset development is about building new assets, improving access to under-utilized assets, and raising awareness for existing assets. Hope’s assets – particularly in terms of outdoor experiences – are what make it an attractive place to live and are the foundation for new resident attraction and tourism marketing strategies.

By improving town assets, Hope can realistically look for more overnight stays and more quality (i.e. more money spent per person) stays from visitors. This would contribute greatly to economic growth through a longer travel season and more labour hours available during peak times. Asset development will help the community capitalize on user-groups who come to the community, but do not necessarily contribute to the local economy because of a lack of amenities (i.e. fishers and cyclists).

The importance of cultural assets has also been identified. The current cultural touch-points (art gallery, museum) are under-exposed and under-utilized. Community groups have also identified a lack of theatre space as problematic for building a viable arts program in Hope. By building a multi-user space, Hope will be able to capture a greater piece of the cultural tourists who travel across the province every year. It will also contribute positively to the quality of life for residents.

D1. Mountain bike tourism plan development
D2. Blueways Master Plan
D3. Continuing execution of Trail Development Plan, including trail maintenance, development and infrastructure; trails master plan
D4. Boat launch/river access improvements
D5. Experience the Fraser – support and participate
D6. Station House project
D7. Multi-purpose arts and culture centre
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D8. Information/promotion kiosk program development

D9. Explore a business incubation centre

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND INTEGRATION

Several organizations and stakeholders in the community are engaged in ways that have an impact on Hope’s economic development goals. The greatest opportunity for success in achieving economic development goals is through the community working together. To this end, it is recommended that organizations involved in any aspect of economic development – the District of Hope, AdvantageHOPE, and the Chamber of Commerce, among others – ensure some level of coordination of strategic initiatives between the different organizations in order to maximize overall effectiveness and reduce any duplication of efforts.

Planning documents including the Official Community Plan, the Brand Book, the Economic Development Strategy Update, the Zoning Bylaw, and the District’s Strategic Plan and AdvantageHOPE’s annual Work Plan should be integrated and aligned with each other.

As the community and its goals evolve, the structure and geographic area served by AdvantageHOPE may be reviewed and modified to meet changing community needs and goals.

E1. Evaluation and monitoring program with transparency and accountability to the District and citizens of Hope

E2. Explore opportunities for a regional service area

E3. Explore new organizational structures for AdvantageHOPE

E4. Initiate community wide annual Integrated Strategic Planning process

E5. OCP Process engagement – ensuring business zoning, service, infrastructure and permitting issues are considered, including more innovative and flexible zoning designations that would allow for more light industrial/flex live/work space development

E6. Integration and consistency across OCP, Economic Development Plan, Tourism Development Plan, Branding, annual Strategic Planning
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E7. Community Forest development in support of local economic development goals

COMMUNITY COMPETITIVENESS

Hope sits at the hub of a number of communities with which it is in competition for investment dollars. It is important for the community to understand exactly what strengths and weaknesses it has in relation to similar communities in terms of attracting new business, but also as it relates to retaining and providing good expansion opportunities for existing local businesses.

Community competitiveness includes more than just the business climate; it is the ability of the community as a whole to attract and retain business. It includes things like access to market, amenity availability, and support services in the community.

One of the great assets in Hope is the strength of the local volunteer base. Leveraging volunteers can make a big difference for a small community like Hope and can offer a distinct competitive advantage, meaning that local volunteer efforts should be well supported.

Hope has a long history of being a welcoming host community. Given its strong location and the local goals to become a recognized tourism destination, initiatives that bring awareness and training community-wide to help build the brand of being outstanding hosts and delivering exceptional customer service will set Hope apart from the competition.

F1. Benchmarking key indicators across competitive set of communities

F2. Support for significant local volunteer efforts

F3. Advocacy for quality of life initiatives

F4. Focus on being outstanding hosts and delivering exceptional customer service

F5. Take advantage of market changes or developments that create an unplanned competitive opportunity (e.g. fibre optic availability in Hope)

F6. Support lobbying efforts as they become available for regional transit
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WORKFORCE SKILLS AND AVAILABILITY

In order to experience organic growth in the existing business sector, employers need to be able to hire additional skilled employees, and employees need to be able to develop and enhance their existing skill sets.

Working with local partners and employers, skills training and workforce readiness initiatives can be identified and developed to encourage retention and expansion activities. Workforce skills training is also essential in helping to foster entrepreneurship.

G1. Facilitate bringing essential skills training to Hope

G2. Workforce readiness initiatives in support of provincial and municipal strategies
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SUPPLY/DEMAND CHAINS

Expansion and retention initiatives are important components to overall economic development strategy. While some strategies may focus on helping individual businesses grow, there is also an opportunity to look at existing business sectors and explore their supply and demand chains to investigate the opportunity for growth in this way.

For example, a burgeoning trades sector may mean more opportunities for companies that supply the trades: parts suppliers, equipment dealers, work clothing retailers, etc.

Through examining successful and growing businesses in Hope and mining the supply/demand chains, this will help support existing businesses and develop stronger sectors with more local vertical integration, which will help contribute to local sustainability.

H1. Investigate existing industries/businesses in Hope and determine if there is economic opportunity in the supply/demand chains that can be targeted

H2. Identify specific sectors with opportunities to develop ancillary and supporting businesses
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

A vibrant downtown core has been identified as a strategic priority by the District of Hope. Hope’s downtown has been reshaped over the past couple decades in response to highway redevelopment and easy access to shopping centres in Chilliwack/Abbotsford. The open grid layout, wide streets and sidewalks, and beautiful Memorial Park, all combine to create a strong potential for a renewed downtown that would be more attractive to businesses, shoppers, and visitors.

Millions of visitors each year use Hope as a short stop-over point when travelling between the interior and the coast. One of Hope’s challenges is that many of those travellers do not venture into the downtown core, despite the abundance of quality services (i.e. public washrooms, free wifi, safe playgrounds, and free parking). An integral part of downtown development will be improved community wayfinding signage.

Another challenge for downtown development is that the issues and the stakeholders are multi-dimensional and not easily bundled into a single program. For that reason, it is important for Hope to have strong leadership in building a realistic vision for downtown development. The District, the Chamber of Commerce, and AdvantageHOPE will need to work together to provide that leadership and ensure buy-in from local business owners.

1. Investigate the feasibility of a downtown shopping niche(s) in Hope and how this can be promoted and developed among existing landlords

2. Encourage the establishment of a Business Improvement Area for dealing with ongoing downtown issues and solutions

3. Encourage uptake on Revitalization Tax Exemption Program – façade improvement

4. Downtown concept plan as part of the next OCP, promoting more mixed use development

5. Establish quality visitor amenities in the downtown core including public washrooms (open late, 12 months of the year), and free wireless internet

6. Downtown visitor services and information

7. RV and overflow parking
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BRANDING AND COMMUNICATION

In order to generate local jobs, increase the availability of services to residents, and expand the tax base, Hope will have to attract new businesses and sources of capital from the private and public sectors. In order to do this, Hope needs to present a consistent marketing voice. The hard work of branding has already been done, but now the entire community needs to assist in executing on the promises made by the brand.

Stakeholder groups should participate in training programs aimed at helping all businesses in town adhere to the brand promises. By presenting a professional and unified front, Hope will become a more attractive community for potential investors.

Dealing within the limitations of budgets and resources, it is important to make sure communication is targeted and deliberate, conveying the appropriate brand messaging.

1. Implement a communications program to keep the community informed of socio-economic events and plan progress
2. Community wayfinding signage
3. Execute a real estate sector marketing and communications program
4. Pilot a direct recruitment campaign in the Lower Mainland to help generate more interest in Hope among investors and site selectors
5. Online reputation, web & social media platforms
6. “Proud to Live in Hope BC” campaign & training
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TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

One of the most important strategies for Hope is to work with its regional partners to form a local Destination Marketing Organization. The DMO would be financially supported through the introduction of the MRDT (2-3% hotel room tax) and would have broad geographic and sector representation in the governance structure. The function of tourism marketing would move to the DMO once established, with some kind of formal relationship to AdvantageHOPE. The adoption of MRDT will reduce the reliance on the AdvantageHOPE budget for tourism marketing dollars, allowing current resources to be reallocated to other initiatives that further economic diversity.

The DMO initiative is critical not just for tourism development, but for other aspects of development in Hope. Any form of marketing has spinoff effects beyond the primary intended audiences. Tourism marketing may be targeted at one-time visitors, but it can be extremely influential in attracting capital, investment, companies, and new residents.

Along with the DMO, stakeholders must also continue to work on tourism marketing, building partnerships with operators, and integrating technology into visitor services and attractions.

K1. Local Destination Marketing Organization formation, strategy development, and adoption of MRDT

K2. Work with Hope Mountain Centre to continue to produce Trails of Hope map and brochure, and to make the information available digitally as well

K3. Comprehensive tourism marketing program, including visitor guide, print, trade shows, digital, and other media

K4. Provincial strategic alignment

K5. Technology integration – enhanced reality app

K6. Maximize uptake of Destination BC and partnership funds

K7. Develop tourism partnerships & linkages (Scenic 7, Fraser Canyon, Fraser Valley, Sunshine Valley/Manning Park)

K8. Prepare a plan for improved highway signage and gateway signage
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ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

There are a number of provincial resources in which Hope is under-represented. By ensuring that potential opportunities in Hope are widely advertised and that stakeholders in Hope know where to gain information about opportunity, the community can improve its ability to attract quality business.

In the age of information, it is important that nothing hinders one’s access to business opportunities. An increasing number of surveys suggest that when information is difficult to find or is out-dated, people are less likely to spend the time seeking additional information.

Hope must look for economic growth from outside investors or the acquisition of new residents. As such, increasing access to industrial opportunities for out-of-towners is integral for the success of economic development.

L1. Update the industrial property database and prepare a site location assistance program to assist with all property enquiries.

L2. Create a development and marketing program to increase awareness of, and absorption of, Hope industrial and commercial properties.

L3. Encourage local businesses to work with Venture Connect (Community Futures)

L4. Participate in (populate and keep current) Opportunities BC and Invest BC websites

L5. Develop information materials and packages that can be used to respond to opportunities when they arise
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RESEARCH AND INFORMATION

Hope is overwhelmed by anecdotal information regarding the state of business in the community, but suffers from a lack of empirical data. A concerted effort must be made to gather data related to the habits of residents and potential investors.

Collecting, interpreting, and disseminating data and information is a vital economic development function. An up-to-date data repository is critical for understanding the community's services, assets, and shortfalls and is a foundation for carrying out public and business relations. The role of economic development is primarily that of information broker, creating a conduit between information providers and clients. Data and information designed as strategic intelligence can make the process of economic development more efficient and effective and can serve to attract new forms of business activity. It can be helpful in creating and expanding existing businesses and it can be invaluable in generating interest among outside companies who may be contemplating investing in Hope.

An up-to-date data repository can also be used as an internal resource for planning, decision-making, and monitoring progress. As data and information is researched and made available, additional metrics can be developed, helping to track community and organizational performance.

- M1. Establish a business visitation program (Business Walk) for gathering industry, market and economic intelligence.
- M2. Assemble statistical data and development resources
- M3. Develop a leads and enquiries prospects database that formally tracks all business and development enquiries.
TARGETED SECTOR ATTRACTION

Though not normally a direct investor, an economic development organization can contribute positively to moving opportunities forward by helping to create a positive business climate. The primary role is to improve the business climate, promote available opportunities, and ensure that the conditions for development are favourable should a company or entrepreneur decide to investigate further. There are few cases in which behind-the-scenes planning has not improved the likelihood of an opportunity being realized.

Since 2009, stakeholders have been looking for ways in which to improve the business climate for specific sectors in Hope. By targeting business attraction, Hope is in a position to play a role in its own future (rather than passively accept any industry). Stakeholders and survey respondents have identified a number of key industries that would a) have a positive influence on the economic climate in Hope; and b) be a realistic business opportunity given the land and resources available in the area.

1. High tech & Innovation – capitalize on the availability of high-speed fibre optic internet as a lure to small, high tech companies looking for a creative node accessible to Vancouver, but with better lifestyle offerings

2. Creative class (artisans, crafters, on-line proprietors, web developers, graphic designers, etc.) – entrepreneurs and home-based businesses

3. Clean water industries (craft beer, distillery, bottling/export) – taking advantage of our abundant clean water resource

4. Liquified Natural Gas – monitor provincial strategy and opportunities

5. Monitor key transportation trends – multi-modal transportation

6. Hospital, health care, respite care

7. Amenity Development – resort and tourism attraction development (i.e. Giant Nickel redevelopment)
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

The cost of living and quality of life in Hope are attractive to students, both domestic and international, making for an opportunity to increase and improve educational opportunities in Hope. By establishing strong partnerships with UFV and the School District – as well as targeted recruitment of vocational/trade training outfits to set up in Hope – the community could create a stronger educational climate. This would contribute to labour force readiness in the community, as well as attract students to the community.

The availability of most post-secondary training in Hope may also help to stem the ‘brain drain’ from the community as more local high school students are provided more opportunity to further their education without leaving Hope. In the long-term, access to a more highly-educated workforce may be seen by potential investors as a reason to re-locate their business to the community.

O1. Strengthen relationships with UFV and the School District – promote new education and training opportunities in Hope

O2. Targeted recruitment of vocational/trades training outfits to set up in Hope
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CURRENT AND POTENTIAL MARKETS

The skyrocketing housing prices and urban congestion in Metro Vancouver and the lower Fraser Valley make these prime target markets for new resident attraction.

Hope is a popular destination for Provincial Nominee Program applicants to explore, though there has been little effort from the community to capitalize on those opportunities. By moving from a passive to active role in attracting and retaining direct foreign investment, Hope can diversify its economy in a way that would be impossible if the community relied on internal investment.

As Canada and British Columbia are both actively involved in foreign direct investment initiatives, the best opportunity for Hope will be to work with these different levels of government to seek and identify specific opportunities for Hope in these larger strategies.

P1. Develop new resident attraction program, including inviting people to come and stay for a short visit to experience the community
P2. Build relationships with potential foreign investors
P3. Monitor, engage, and participate in the Provincial Nominee Program to assist applicants under this program find opportunities in Hope
P4. Explore ‘lead generation’ incentive/recognition/encouragement program that would leverage individual resident connections and networks
# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN – ACTION PLAN

### FOCUS: INFRASTRUCTURE

#### BUSINESS CLIMATE

A1. Easy access to up-to-date information on market and opportunities

A2. Establish reasonable benchmarks for the industrial and commercial development fees (permits, hook-ups, improvements), development approval times and mill rates

A3. Promote awareness of Revitalization Tax Exemption Program

A4. Supportive bylaws for new and emerging targeted sector opportunities (food trucks, Segways, microbrewery)

### FUTURE EMPLOYMENT LAND

B1. Monitor demand for developable industrial land in the Fraser Valley so that a market-ready supply of land can be ready to meet the demand when it arrives

B2. Flood Hope services

B3. Workforce housing lands – servicing and zoning

### INFRASTRUCTURE CAPACITY

C1. Anticipate and plan for growth, ensuring availability of servicing to future employment and residential lands

C2. Work with the province re: access and roadways (i.e. lighted interchange at Hope Princeton Way & 6th Avenue)

C3. Improve Exit 170 so that the approach is backed up, exit lane twinned, and signage improved so that the exit is more prominent and identified as a service route for traffic continuing through

C4. Improve pedestrian-friendliness of key commercial areas, including improving sidewalks, lighting, traffic crossings, connectivity of walking routes, focusing on 6th Avenue, Hope-Princeton Way, and Water Avenue
## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

### ASSET DEVELOPMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D1. Mountain bike tourism plan development</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D2. Blueways Master Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D3. Continuing execution of Trail Development Plan, including trail maintenance, development and infrastructure; trails master plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>D4. Boat launch/river access</td>
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<tr>
<td>D5. Experience the Fraser – support and participate</td>
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<tr>
<td>D6. Station House project</td>
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<td>D7. Multi-purpose arts and culture centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D8. Information/promotion kiosk program development</td>
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<tr>
<td>D9. Explore a business incubation centre</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### STRATEGIC PLANNING & INTEGRATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E1. Evaluation and monitoring program with transparency and accountability to the District and citizens of Hope</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E2. Explore opportunities for a regional service area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E3. Explore new organizational structures for AdvantageHOPE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E4. Initiate community wide annual Integrated Strategic Planning process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E5. OCP Process engagement – ensuring business zoning, service, infrastructure and permitting issues are considered, including more innovative and flexible zoning designations that would allow for more light industrial/flex live/work space development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E6. Integration and consistency across OCP, Economic Development Plan, Tourism Development Plan, Branding, annual Strategic Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E7. Community Forest development in support of local economic development goals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

## FOCUS: RETENTION & EXPANSION

### COMMUNITY COMPETITIVENESS

1. Benchmarking key indicators across competitive set of communities
2. Support for significant local volunteer efforts
3. Advocacy for quality of life initiatives
4. Focus on being outstanding hosts and delivering exceptional customer service
5. Take advantage of market changes or developments that create an unplanned competitive opportunity (e.g. fibre optic availability in Hope)
6. Support lobbying efforts as they become available for regional transit

## WORKFORCE SKILLS & AVAILABILITY

1. Facilitate bringing essential skills training to Hope
2. Workforce readiness initiatives in support of provincial and municipal strategies

## SUPPLY/DEMAND CHAINS

1. Investigate existing industries/businesses in Hope and determine if there is economic opportunity in the supply/demand chains that can be targeted
2. Identify specific sectors with opportunities to develop ancillary and supporting businesses

## DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

1. Investigate the feasibility of a downtown shopping niche(s) in Hope and how this can be promoted and developed among existing landlords
2. Encourage the establishment of a Business Improvement Area for dealing with ongoing downtown issues and solutions
3. Encourage uptake on Revitalization Tax Exemption Program – façade improvement
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

I4. Downtown concept plan as part of the next OCP, promoting more mixed use development

I5. Establish quality visitor amenities in the downtown core including public washrooms (open late, 12 months of the year), and free wireless internet

I6. Downtown visitor services and information

I7. RV and overflow parking

FOCUS: PROMOTION

BRANDING AND COMMUNICATION

J1. Implement a communications program to keep the community informed of socio-economic events and plan progress

J2. Community wayfinding signage

J3. Execute a real estate sector marketing and communications program

J4. Pilot a direct recruitment campaign in the Lower Mainland to help generate more interest in Hope among investors and site selectors

J5. Online reputation, web & social media platforms

J6. “Proud to Live in Hope BC” campaign & training

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

K1. Local Destination Marketing Organization formation, strategy development and adoption of MRDT

K2. Work with Hope Mountain Centre to continue to produce Trails of Hope map and brochure, and to make the information available digitally as well

K3. Comprehensive tourism marketing program, including visitor guide, print, trade shows, digital and other media

K4. Provincial strategic alignment
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

K5. Technology integration – enhanced reality app

K6. Maximize uptake of Destination BC and partnership funds

K7. Develop tourism partnerships & linkages (Scenic 7, Fraser Canyon, Fraser Valley, Sunshine Valley/Manning Park)

K8. Prepare a plan for improved highway signage

**ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY**

L1. Update the industrial property database and prepare a site location assistance program to assist with all property enquiries.

L2. Create a development and marketing program to increase awareness of, and absorption of, Hope industrial and commercial properties.

L3. Encourage local businesses to work with Venture Connect (Community Futures)

L4. Participate in (populate and keep current) Opportunities BC and Invest BC websites

L5. Develop information materials and packages that can be used to respond to opportunities when they arise

**RESEARCH AND INFORMATION**

M1. Establish a business visitation program (Business Walk) for gathering industry, market and economic intelligence.

M2. Assemble statistical data and development resources

M3. Develop a leads and enquiries prospects database that formally tracks all business and development enquiries.

**FOCUS: ATTRACTION**

**TARGETED SECTOR ATTRACTION**

N1. High tech & Innovation – capitalize on the availability of high-speed fibre optic internet as a lure to small, high tech companies looking for a creative node accessible to
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

Vancouver, but with better lifestyle offerings

N2. Creative class (artisans, crafters, on-line proprietors, web developers, graphic designers, etc.) – entrepreneurs and home-based businesses

N3. Clean water industries (craft beer, distillery, bottling/export) – taking advantage of our abundant clean water resource

N4. Liquified Natural Gas – monitor provincial strategy and opportunities

N5. Monitor key transportation trends – multi-modal transportation

N6. Hospital, health care, respite care

N7. Amenity Development – resort and tourism attraction development (i.e. Giant Nickel redevelopment)

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

O1. Strengthen relationships with UFV and the School District – promote new education and training opportunities in Hope

O2. Targeted recruitment of vocational/trades training outfits to set up in Hope

CURRENT AND POTENTIAL MARKETS

P1. Develop new resident attraction program, including inviting people to come and stay for a short visit to experience the community

P2. Build relationship with potential foreign investors

P3. Monitor, engage and participate in the Provincial Nominee Program to assist applicants under this program find opportunities in Hope

P4. Explore ‘lead generation’ incentive/recognition/encouragement program that would leverage individual resident connections and networks
# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

## ROLE CLARIFICATION

AdvantageHOPE has the primary role for moving the economic development strategy forward, however, everyone has a role to play. This chart summarizes the primary roles/involvement of AdvantageHOPE and the District of Hope as they relate to the economic development strategy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>AdvantageHOPE</th>
<th>District of Hope</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>Business Climate</td>
<td>☰</td>
<td>☰</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Future Employment</td>
<td></td>
<td>☰</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Land</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>☰</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Asset Development</td>
<td>☰</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategic Planning &amp;</td>
<td>Integration</td>
<td>☰</td>
<td>☰</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention &amp; Expansion</td>
<td>Community Competitiveness</td>
<td>☰</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Workforce Skills &amp; Availability</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Supply/Demand Chains</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Downtown Development</td>
<td>☰</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>Branding &amp; Marketing</td>
<td>☰</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tourism Development</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Access to Opportunity</td>
<td>☰</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research &amp; Information</td>
<td>☰</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attraction</td>
<td>Targeted Sector Attraction</td>
<td>☰</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Educational Institution</td>
<td>☰</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Current &amp; Potential Markets</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

METRICS

One of the most challenging aspects of executing on the Economic Development Strategy is being able to quantify and measure the impact of the efforts. It is a question that is contemplated so often and so broadly that in 2011 the Economic Development Association of Canada produced a report titled “Performance Measurement in Economic Development.” The original intent of the report was to produce a standardized template that could be used across Canada, however, the study found that the profession was too disparate for that to become a reality.

Developing metrics is itself part of the ongoing strategy of AdvantageHOPE and this Economic Development Strategy Update. Reporting on the metrics is the responsibility of AdvantageHOPE, as part of the quarterly and annual reporting processes.

In Hope, the questions we want to answer are tied to our economic development goals. The following chart sets out the framework for measurement to be adopted as a base.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Δ Prev Year</th>
<th>Compared to others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population Growth</td>
<td>Population data</td>
<td>Federal, provincial or municipal census data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Jobs</td>
<td>Employment data</td>
<td>Stats Canada, Canada Revenue Agency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Life</td>
<td>Resident surveys</td>
<td>Ongoing feedback through public contact</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversified Economic Base</td>
<td>Property Tax data</td>
<td>BC Assessment; District of Hope</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Friendly</td>
<td>Business surveys; analytics</td>
<td>Contractor reporting; Business Walks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>Net Promoter</td>
<td>Available through DBC; DestinationNEXT evaluation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown Core</td>
<td>Tangible beautification and development</td>
<td>Communities in Bloom; social media ratings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The top recommendation for improving metrics in Hope is to implement an annual Business Walks program, with the participation of the District of Hope, AdvantageHOPE, the Hope & District
Chamber of Commerce, the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, and Community Futures. Other partners may be included. The purpose of the business walks would be to:

- Provide for a personal contact between business owner and community leadership
- Gather valuable data on business performance, as well as garner feedback on the performance of local government and agencies
- Establish a basis for measurement between communities


The recommendations presented will guide the development of new metrics and reporting mechanisms.
Recommendations for EDOs

It is clear from the research that no single performance measurement system can be applied to all economic development organizations. They are simply too diverse in their priorities, mandates and resources. However to assist Economic Development organizations in creating their own performance metrics, we offer the following recommendations:

1. **Select a handful of metrics rather than measuring everything**

   Outcomes should be the main focus of the performance measurement system. Did the efforts of the economic development office result in the creation of additional jobs? How many and of what quality? Is there a measurable increase in taxable assessment and tax revenue?

2. **The metrics selected should reflect the goals of the organization**

   The metrics you select should come directly from the priorities of your strategic plan. Consider carefully whether your objectives are the creation of new ventures (with the potential for future growth) or new jobs or are they oriented toward diversification to reduce dependence on a single industry? Each of these would have a different set of metrics. “Jobs for jobs sake” is no longer acceptable as a metric if the new service sector jobs are not of the same “quality” as high paying manufacturing jobs lost to outsourcing.

   If you run a small business incubator, you could be targeting the successful transition of your graduates once they leave the incubator. If you are a tourism office and your objective is to build your sports tourism numbers you will want to count the number of tournaments attracted to your community and the room nights generated by the participants and their families.

3. **Include a few metrics to show Activity and Outputs**

   Some metrics should be included to demonstrate the level of activity and the output of the economic development office (such as inquiries responded to, corporate calls made, project files opened). This shows how busy the office is. This can be particularly useful when trying to get budget approval for more resources.

   Also, the narrative form of reporting described earlier in this report is one means of reporting on “files in progress” in confidential reports to the CAO or Board Chair without compromising client confidentiality. As previously noted, many economic development projects take time to mature, so it is difficult to report work done today when the results may not be public for another year or more.

4. **All metrics must have an identified data source**
In all cases the source of the data used in the metric needs to be identified when the metric is established. Some metrics such as inquiries responded to, files opened or building permits issued are easy to get because they are internal. Others such as changes in overall employment or population levels are only available at the community level every five years through the census.

5. Survey your clients

Hatry and other experts recommend customer surveys to determine such things as the number jobs created, capital investment and very significantly, the level of customer satisfaction. This necessitates the EDO developing the tools to survey their clients on an annual basis.

There is a second and very powerful benefit of doing this. It allows the Economic Development organization to track previous clients to measure their subsequent growth and be able to report the cumulative impact of the economic development program over time.

6. Claim only what your organization played a role in

Many economic development organizations produce an annual report on the health of the local economy which includes such metrics as employment and unemployment statistics, non-residential building permits issued, and other generic measures. In many case these reports feature expanding local businesses. The reports should also cover the downside, plant closings and layoffs to establish that you operate in a cyclical economy.

However when reporting the outcomes of the economic development program, you should only report those outcomes for which your organization can legitimately claim credit. Count only the companies you worked with, only the jobs they report having created, the capital investment they reportedly have made, etc. Some Economic Development organizations assign a weight to the level of involvement they had with each project to achieve greater transparency. If the local economy grew by 2,500 jobs, but the companies you served created 400, it is much more credible if you say so. It is even more credible when the businesses you have assisted also provide testimonials.

7. Report outcomes over time

Knowing that the gestation period for many economic development projects can be measured in years, it is also important to report on your outcomes over a period of time. The cumulative impact of the addition of 200 jobs each year over a five year period is very impressive. Not only does the time based reporting show that “Rome was not built in a day”, it helps build an understanding that expenditures for economic development are a good long-term investment for the community.
Closing Observations – Insights into Best Practices in Performance Measurement

Although desirable, a single set of metrics for economic development performance would be too simplistic. The nature of the organization (e.g. size, structure, partnerships, governance etc.), its specific areas of focus (e.g. tourism, small business, specific sectors etc.) and the environmental context (economic climate, competitive forces etc.) must be considered in the development of specific and suitable metrics for each organization. The recommendations of this report have focused on best practices for developing these specific organizational metrics, and are based on three key insights from the literature review, which are summarized again below:

1. Focus on Outcomes
The first is to adopt the principles espoused by Harry Hatry, focusing on Outcomes to measure the impact of the economic development program:

   “Efficiency is doing things right – Effectiveness is doing the right things”

Only by focusing on the outcomes of the economic development program; the investments made, the number of businesses started, the number of jobs created/maintained, will you be able to determine the effectiveness of your program. Have you been focusing on the right things in the design of your economic development program? Are you making a difference?

Even in an economic downturn with layoff announcements every few weeks and a rising unemployment rate, if you are able to confidently state that your organization contributed to the start of “x” number of new small businesses, or that with your help “y” number of companies were able to preserve “z” number of jobs through
new contracts or by investing in technology, you are able to demonstrate that the economic development program has been effective in reducing the negative impact of the falling economy. This will require reaching out and surveying your clients, which is something few EDOs do.

2. Select SMART Metrics

The second insight gained through this review is that all organizations would be wise to select metrics that are SMART:

*Specific – Measurable – Achievable – Relevant - Time-based*

The metrics you apply to your economic development program should flow directly from your strategic plan. If for example one of your objectives is to stimulate the growth of entrepreneurship in your jurisdiction, you need to identify the metric that will be used to measure that. It must be specific and it must be measurable. This forces a new discipline on your strategic planning because you (or your consultants) can’t throw in obtuse recommendations that can’t be supported by specific and measurable indicators. For this reason the verbs “foster”, “encourage” and “support” should never be used in strategic plans because they can’t be measured.

If on the other hand your objective is to match up “x” number of entrepreneurs with angel investors through a “Dragon’s Den” type program you can be very specific about the number of matches you would like the program to achieve while taking care to ensure your target is achievable.

A business incubator or small business advisory service should keep records of their graduates over time to measure the long term impact of the service. For example, how many of the graduates of the program are still in business 3 or 5 years later and how many people are they employing.

3. “Metrics that Matter”

Finally, in the face of a rapidly changing economy, it is increasingly important that we collect information on the quality of the new jobs being created by focusing on the “Metrics that Matter” such as those developed by the Regional Innovation Accelerator Network in the US:
Many people believe that employment base is shifting from high paid manufacturing or resource industry jobs to low paying service sector jobs in call centres, tourism, retail and other services. While some of this is true, not all service sector jobs are low paying.

One of the fastest growing NAICS categories in recent years has been the “Professional, Scientific & Technical Services” category which grew 17% between 2006 and 2010 (see the table on page 14). In most cases companies in this sector employ highly qualified professionals. The problem with this sector is that the companies are not as obvious as a manufacturing plant or a mill and they can get overlooked in a quick scan of the local economy.

There has been rapid growth of digital media, consulting engineering in virtually every field, computer systems developers, marketing and design companies, social media applications and many others that could not have been imagined a decade ago. Economic Developers need to develop better methods of monitoring the growth of these “high quality” jobs and consider programs to support new employers, particularly those with exportable services.
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

RESOURCE ALLOCATION

The update body has not made any recommendation with respect to changing the resource allocation mechanism, where currently AdvantageHOPE submits an annual budget request to the District of Hope. However, no matter how good the planning, there will always be unforeseen opportunities that arise. In this event, we recommend that additional resources may be allocated, at the discretion of Council, to maximize effect when unanticipated opportunities or changing conditions arise.

LOOKING AHEAD

This Economic Development Strategy Update is intended to be a planning guide for the next few years. Through the process of completing this update, there were several suggestions and ideas considered that did not make it into the current action plan because they were considered beyond the current 5-6 year outlook of this update for various reasons. Some of these ideas, which would conceivably come about in a future update to the strategy, notably include:

- Light industrial/business park development
- Additional Business Improvement Area (BIA) nodes (e.g. Hope-Princeton Way, Water Avenue, Sixth Avenue)
- Development incentives re: rental accommodations

CONCLUSION

The District of Hope, through creation and support to AdvantageHOPE, has been successful in implementing many of the strategies outlined in the original 2009 Economic Development Plan. Some of the biggest accomplishments over the past 6 years include forming AdvantageHOPE and creating all of the organizational structure, policy and governance that goes with it, developing a compelling and magnetic brand that is strongly aligned with the provincial brand, aligning the functions of economic development and tourism development, building strong relationships with community partners and neighbours, championing the Station House project, developing a strong tourism marketing strategy, and building a strong and multi-faceted web and social media platform. Positive momentum in Hope is building, and the solid foundation that has already been built provides an excellent framework from which to continue to execute on this new updated strategy, leading to an even stronger and more vibrant community in future.