

# Texada Economic Development Action Plan



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# Texada Economic Development Action Plan

## Introduction

Once a thriving community with a strong economy, for close to 30 years now Texada Island has been experiencing a slow erosion of its economic base and population. Once boasting a peak population of roughly 3,500 people in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, as of 2006 the Island's population stood at 1,107 people according to Statistics Canada, and it is believed to have reduced further.

Traditional industries such as Mining and Forestry have faced tough times with constant fluctuations in demand and pricing, which has resulted in a significant reduction in primary sector jobs. As a result of a downturn in resource extraction industries, small businesses on Texada have suffered as well, with many closing their doors and others reducing hours of operation and the range of products being offered.

Compounding all of this is a continued rise in the cost of travelling on BC Ferries. All of these factors have led to a reduction of services (e.g. Medical, Protective, Education, etc...) and of course the migration of families to Powell River, thus leading to an increase in the average age of residents (Region's average age is 48. Texada is expected to be higher).

There have been a few bright spots in Texada's economy as agriculture has seen resurgence, tourism has been increasing, and some retirees are choosing to settle on the Island. Unfortunately the growth in these areas has been too small to counteract the job and revenue losses that have been experienced in other sectors.

In early spring of 2011, the Texada Chamber of Commerce, Powell River Regional District and the Powell River Regional Economic Development Society identified the need to develop and action plan/strategy to address the downturn in economic activity and continued reduction in population. The three organizations partnered to produce the strategy contained in this document, but first developed the following Mission Statement as a guiding principle:

***"To identify opportunities to create a sustainable community on Texada by creating jobs, increasing services and increasing population."***

It was decided that the next step would be to perform an analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) of the Texada Island's economic sectors to identify the issues and obstacles being experienced and opportunities to develop solutions and foster growth. The main sectors identified by the steering committee were:

- Forestry
- Mining
- Agriculture
- Recreation/Tourism
- Seniors – Retirement Market
- Arts, Culture and Education
- Retail/Commercial
- Trades & Construction
- Green Economy

- First Nations

Representatives were then selected from each of the sectors who would best be able to bring together other people from their sector to participate in focus group sessions. The focus groups sessions were held in late May, and input was gathered for the SWOT analysis. The first draft of the strategy was formulated from the information that was gathered from the focus group sessions, and after being reviewed by the sector representatives, suggested changes were incorporated.

The second draft of the strategy was then circulated as widely as possible to Texada Island residents, and input was gathered at two open house sessions held on October 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> in Van Anda and Gillies Bay. A final draft of the document was then produced after changes and additions were incorporated from the feedback generated at the open houses (Appendix A).

It is important to note that this action plan is not written in stone. It reflects the input provided by the residents of Texada Island in 2011. This plan will evolve and surely new ideas for improving the economy of the Island will come forward. It is a living document and is expected to be revised to fit the needs and desires of the community as time goes on.

## **Sector Consultation Sessions**

The following is a summary of the consultation sessions that were held with representatives from the nine sectors of the Island's economy that were identified by the Steering Committee. The comments contained in each synopsis are not a transcript of the session, but represent the major points made by the attendees. **It is important to note that the comments summarized in this section are raw input, and right or wrong represent the views of the people attending the consultation sessions.**

It is important to note that discussions were held with representatives of the Tla'Amin First Nation about the 700 acres of land at Pochontas Bay that will be acquired through a signed Treaty with the Province of British Columbia and the Government of Canada. The input received by the Tla'Amin representatives is that the nation has not fully discussed or analyzed development opportunities for the property and probably won't do so until the Treaty is ratified. Thus a full SWOT analysis has not been completed for the First Nations sector.

## **Tourism and Recreation**

Strengths:

- Natural beauty
- Access to Ocean
- Affordable accommodation and services
- Low crime rate
- Temperate climate
- Abundance of Festivals:
  - Sand Castle Weekend
  - Diversity Festival
  - Annual Fly Inn
  - Aerospace Camp

- Excellent air strip
- Air access from Vancouver and Vancouver Island (KD Air)
- Ample amount of sailings from Powell River through BC Ferries
- 9 hole golf course
- Texada Boating Club and moorage at Marble Bay
- Museums (Blubber Bay and Van Anda)
- Potential for year round tourism (Visitations are up in the off season)
- Parks and trails
- Amenities:
  - Retail/Commercial
  - Medical and Emergency Services
  - Protective Services
  - Artisans and Open Markets
- Strong spirit of volunteerism among residents
- Rich History and Heritage
- Outdoor recreation
- At a geographical crossroads in relation to available markets for visitors
- Unique flora and fauna
- Rich mineral resources – Rock Hounding
- Good local government support
- Good support from the local and regional Destination Marketing Organizations
- Good telecommunication services

Weaknesses:

- Cost of access through BC Ferries
- Amount of time it takes to travel to the Island
- Lack of Branding/Product Awareness
- Lack of medical coverage on weekends
- Aging population has affected the number of volunteers available for events and festivals
- No maps of trails, activities and recreation infrastructure
- Lack of professional marketing tools:
  - Rack card
  - Website
  - Imagery
  - Video
- Lack of charters, equipment rental and guiding companies/businesses
- Lack of business plan/case to attract investment in tourism industry on Island
- Lack of signage for trails and recreation infrastructure
- The wheelchair accessible trail at Shelter Point is in disrepair
- Most trails and recreation areas are on or cross private lands and some are in disrepair
- The high road is in poor condition and does not receive maintenance on a regular basis
- Lack of off season activities
- Lack of recognition or knowledge that Marble Bay is available to transient boaters
- Lack of services for transient boaters (e.g. fuel and pump out)
- Lack of high end accommodation (Destination Resorts)

- Lack of labour pool for tourism industry
- Fuel costs (Cost of Travel)

Opportunities:

- Development of Off Season Events and Attractions:
  - Caving
    - Guiding
    - Identify what caves are permissible
  - Equestrian activities
  - Diving
  - Ocean Kayaking
  - Sailing
  - Meetings and Retreats
    - Development of appropriate accommodation, infrastructure and services
  - Education
    - Survival Camps
    - Outdoor Recreation Training
  - Rock Hounding
- Geo Caching
- Airport
  - Flight training schools
  - Flight Seeing excursions
- Heschelt Lake
  - Establish Public Access
  - Development of Commercial Attractions
- Mountain Biking
  - Development of trails and maps
  - Development of packages and tours
- Development of ATV tours and trails
- Establishment of Water Taxi service between Powell River and Van Anda
- Develop better mapping of the Island and its attractions
  - Birding
  - Biking trails
  - Hiking trails
  - Flora and Fauna
  - ATV
  - Parks and Conservation Areas
  - Sight Seeing Attractions
- Attract investment in a Destination Resort
- Brand Development program – establish an identity for the Island
- Development of Professional Marketing Materials and Tools
- Work with BC Ferries on developing fare packages for the Island
- First Nations attractions
  - Annual Potlatch at Shelter Point in partnership with Tla'Amin First Nation

#### Threats:

- Isolationism – Some people like the Island the way it is and don't want it to change
- Declining Population
- Becoming increasingly hard to maintain infrastructure:
  - Roads
  - Water
  - Telecommunications
  - Trails
  - Parks
- The cost of accessing the Island through BC Ferries
- Fuel Costs prohibit people from travelling to the Island by any means
- Further Industrialization and Mining activities will make the Island unattractive to some visitors. A downturn in this sector also decreases the amount of business travel to the Island.

#### **Construction and Trades**

#### Strengths:

- Good pool of equipment (e.g. Excavators, Sawmills, etc...)
- Good access to raw materials such as wood and rock
- No building permits are required for Single Family Residential and Commercial structures (electrical and septic permits and inspections are required)
- Regulatory Environment is affordable and easy
- Cost of Labour is affordable
- Site prep for construction on the Island is lower
- Good transportation links and costs
- Good access to general labour
- Good range of trades on the Island
- Building lots are affordable (\$50,000 to \$200,000)
- Wide range of lots and properties available

#### Weaknesses:

- The real estate market is in a downturn
- Discretionary spending is down due to uncertainty
- A number of households have migrated to Powell River
  - Loss of income
  - Quality of Education
  - Early ferry allows for commuting
- Aging demographic
- Quality of Life for families is eroding:
  - Services and infrastructure for families
  - Community services
- Nobody is doing large subdivision developments
- Low awareness of Texada as a place to live
- Lack of infrastructure and services for housing developments
  - Water and sewer are an issue (and sometimes power)

- Emergency and Protective services are minimal
- Texada residents are generally loyal except when personal politics are involved
  - 'Shopping local' needs to be emphasized
- Larger contracts with BC Hydro and others are not offered locally

#### Opportunities:

- Develop a Shop/Hire local program
- Improve services on the Island to make it a more attractive place to live and raise a family
  - Water & Sewer
  - Health/Medical
  - Emergency and Protective
  - Telecommunications
- Develop and Implement a business succession/retention program
- Develop a better business relationship between local contractors and larger businesses
- Create better transportation access
  - Reduce fare costs on BC Ferries and improve scheduling

#### Threats:

- The possibility of tighter/tougher regulations on the construction industry in the regional district areas
- Further migration of families to Powell River and other areas
  - Will result in a loss of business and community services
- Further increases in ferry fares will drive people away from the Island

### **Arts and Culture**

#### Strengths:

- The Island has a wide variety of people involved in cultural activities
- The Island has an abundance of artists and writers, but there seems to be a problem in the area of marketing. Could this be a possible strength?
- Arts, writing, and visual art (theatre) are strengths.
- Texada has many events happening each year from the Legion special dinners; baseball events; and the Rock Island Players.
- The TACT website is good, and there is some exposure through the PR Tourism Story Website. We have a good summer slate of events coming up – 100 off-island visiting rock hounds in August for a week triggered by Amanda Martinson's book on Texada Geology; the Fly-In in July; Sandcastle Week-end – July; and a recent visit by 48 Heritage Museum Society members from across BC who toured our museums and the island.
- Texada has safety, and beauty.
- Texada has a safe environment and a boat harbour with inexpensive moorage
- The Boat Harbour and Airport are both affordable, and should be considered a major strength
- Texada's a wonderful place for study, music and for not being distracted. You are not at the crossroads of the world.

#### Weaknesses:

- Youthful volunteers are hard to find participating in the different social activities, and even those who are younger are aware of the finite opportunities here and few if any are showing up to help with even recreational events save for the “Diversity” and “Sandcastle” festivals. Parents in their thirties and early forties are too busy with work and their kids having to go off-island for sports and recreation activities.
- A weakness is that we are not on a major tourist route. We are not even included on BC Ferries Circle Tour for example.
- Another weakness is our reputation as an industrial island. Nothing to go and see!
- Transportation is another major problem in getting people here.
- Our worldwide reputation as a major marijuana growing area hurts us.
- There is some belief that there are many people on Texada who are not in favour of Arts, Culture, and Tourism.
- Quality of performance space (e.g. acoustics, sound, lighting, etc...)

#### Opportunities:

- Investment in cultural and academic/instructional development is increasingly viewed as profitable opportunity. Non-academic, recreational learning institutions, for various recreational subjects are marketable and profitable. Both in the intellectual, cultural and recreational senses, learning practical methods for income or recreation are both big business.
- An isolated, tranquil island environment with huge tracts of space as available here on Texada is ideal. It could well become a base for any number of disciplines and recreational course developments, with dormitory and utility areas and living spaces. Again, the key is to create a larger population of participating people
- Small art and craft industry is also a known factor for a fair amount of revenue, and an increased population of artists can add to tourism based traffic. A program to encourage the growth of an artisan population can be fairly easily accomplished by advertising in art magazines and presentations at college and university art departments. Certain incentives and infrastructure such as available residence and work and sales spaces should be developed and made available.
- A festival incorporating nature, astrology, reiki, and yoga. Name the festival ‘Prometheus’ – a god who myth says got fire from the sun and gave it to mankind. The goal would be to give people a chance to learn something about these disciplines at no cost.
- A non-diploma type program for educating people in the various arts, as opposed to things that are just about making money. It might attract a more youthful, vibrant community.
- The need to rebrand was discussed at the Tourism meeting yesterday. There is the ‘Run on the Rock’ this summer. Why not ‘Art on the Rock’, or ‘Festival on the Rock’? How do we grow the Rock?
- We have the use of a wonderful airport as a pilot training facility for people from other parts of the world
- We need to attract healthy young early retired baby boomers with financial resources that are mindful of the island’s beauty and privacy. But, these young retirees require services. We could do more in cultivating this atmosphere so that these people will add their talents to this islands diversity. What about a ‘rock concert’? This would appeal to baby boomers and older. The very target market we have talked about.
- Increased Promotion: CBC does free spots. We take advantage of this advertising of the island. Advertising is most necessary

Threats:

- None were identified or discussed

**Agriculture**

Strengths:

- Strong heritage in farming
- Rich mineral based soil
- Drier climate which works well for vegetables , hay, fruit, berries, etc.
- Good local markets on Island and in Powell River (most product is sold on the mainland) and great appreciation of the quality of what is being produced
- The amount of hay being produced is meeting demand and there is an opportunity to expand production
- There is a well established Farmers market
- There is a good supply of meat production on the island
- Lack of predators
- Can export to other markets such as Powell River, Sechelt and the Comox Valley
- Strong local government support for farming (Official Community Plan)
- Ability to start agricultural operations on the Island is affordable
- There is good support from the Texada Island Forest Reserve (TIFR) for farming through the affordable land leases
- There is good opportunity for investment in Land Based aquaculture in some of the defunct pits at the quarries
- There are 19 lakes with fish on the Island
  - Possibilities for crown land lease for fresh water aquaculture
- Local interest in food production is high and there is good opportunity to use the momentum to get other residents involved
- There is a good inventory of wild foods on Texada which could be harvested at a sustainable rate – needs more study and investigation
- Opportunity for berry wine production
- Lack of pollution

Weaknesses:

- The cost of transportation
  - Affects the cost of inputs such as: Feeds, Fertilizers, Seeds, and Equipment
  - Affects the cost of exports
- Reliance on BC Ferries to get product to other markets
- Energy in parts of the Island is derived from fossil based fuels
- Affordability and Access to equipment
- Large populations of Deer which can put crops in danger
- Varied water quality on Texada can affect slaughtering process
- Lack of capacity to butcher meat on Texada – having to use butchers in Powell River is more expensive
- There is a high cost to clear land and improve it for agricultural purposes

Opportunities:

- Increase Value Added production
  - Establish a community kitchen on the Island (e.g. Legion Kitchen?)
  - Production of medicinal remedies from wild craft
  - Production of dried/dehydrated products
  - Establishment of wineries/vineyards
- Develop and implement a 'Strata Farm' program to allow easier access to land
  - Crown Land may be an option
- Develop a Mentor program so those new to farming have a peer network to rely upon for advice and assistance
- Improve access to surplus lands not being used by existing quarries to be repurposed for food production
- Attract investment in Land Based Aquaculture
- Develop programs to promote Texada as a destination for visitors for Agri-Tourism activities
- Develop programs to allow for Co-op/Intern opportunities for students on small scale farms on the Island
- Develop a Community Farming Program where locals buy in to assure access to locally grown product
  - Co-operative format?

Threats:

- None were identified or discussed

## **Mining**

Strengths:

- Metal Prices are good
  - Gold – India and China
  - Possibility of 200,000 tonnes of production on Copper/Silver and Gold on Island
- The Island is Geologically favoured because of the Marble Bay Fault, as a result there is a wide range of product.
- Good transportation access:
  - Deep water access
  - Cost
  - Trans-shipping already in practice
  - Close to the Port of Vancouver and other markets
- Other than cost of access – cost of living on the Island is low (e.g. housing)
- Excellent access to Entry Level/General Labourers
- Asian markets are strong
- All of the infrastructure is in place to support Value Added industries (e.g. Lime Plant/Cement Refinery)

Weaknesses:

- Skilled Labour (Trades) can sometimes be difficult to access

- Some new residents on the Island view the mining industry in a negative light and do not support any further development or expansion in the sector
- Mining Industry on the Island has done a poor job of promoting itself and educating the public
- Industry needs to find a balance between environmental sustainability and resource extraction
- Market downturns in relation to construction materials
- Environmental Lobby is doing its best to cast the industry in a bad light
- Accessing capital/investment for new mine development is difficult
- Access to training programs for staff is difficult
- The regulatory process for developing a new mine is difficult and expensive
  - Two separate Environmental Assessment processes must be followed (Federal and Provincial)

#### Opportunities:

- Develop a promotion/advocacy program to educate the public about mining on Texada
  - Signage
  - Website
  - Media/Editorial
  - Open Houses
  - Tours
- Improve access to investment capital for the development of new mines
- Mining Industry has to change its mentality and improve education on how technology can revive old mines rather than focussing purely on new mine development
- BC Ministry of Energy and Mines has to get rid of its computer staking program

#### Threats:

- NIMBYISM (Not In My Back Yard)
  - If public opinion of the industry continues to decline it could affect future development of new mines
  - A vocal minority is making it very hard to start up on the island
  - The environmental lobby is creating an external view that mining is destroying the Island's ecosystem

### **Seniors – Retirement Market**

#### Strengths:

- Texada is a very safe place to live
- Retirees are drawn to Island through family connections
- Texada offers a much slower pace of life
- Texada is very affordable
  - Low value of real estate
  - Low tax rates
- Quality of Life is high
  - Quiet
  - Good access to the ocean and lakes
  - Very friendly community

- Low crime rate
- Texada has medical and protective services available (fire, police and ambulance)
- Island has a very moderate climate which is good for gardening
- Island is family oriented
- Lots of Clubs and Organizations to get involved with
- There are good opportunities to volunteer in the community
- The Airport offers scheduled flights to Vancouver and provides good service for small plane owners
- Lots of outdoor recreation opportunities of all types
- The island does not have dangerous predators
- There is good access to locally grown food

#### Weaknesses:

- Quality of water and access
- The condition of roads and the amount of maintenance done by Capilano Highways
- Lack of assisted living and long term care services
- Reduction in the amount of coverage provided by Home Care services for seniors
- Lack of a Meals on Wheels program
- Reduction of medical services on the Island (after hours/weekend service) and length of time it takes to get to the hospital
- Poor quality of telecommunication services provided on the island (Internet/Phone/Cable)
- Hydro infrastructure and service can be poor at times as power seems to go out easily and it is difficult to get service back up and running quickly
- The cost of travelling on BC Ferries continues to increase
- Lack of public transportation on the island (only one bus to Powell River per week)

#### Opportunities:

- The need for Assisted Living and Home Care services is increasing as the Island's population ages
  - Keeps people on the Island
  - Will create jobs
  - Use existing buildings rather than bare land development
- There needs to be a survey done of the Seniors population to assess needs
- Make improvements to Hydro and Telecommunications services
- Petition for more public transportation on the Island
- Attract a taxi service to the Island or develop a volunteer ride program for Seniors
- Develop a Branding Program and Marketing Strategy promoting the Island as a place to retire
- Develop a program to encourage residents to buy local to support Island Businesses

#### Threats:

- A continued reduction of services as a result of a decreasing population
- Continued increases in the cost of travelling on BC Ferries

#### **Forestry**

#### Strengths:

- Good supply of timber
  - 10,000 AAC
  - 7,500 AAC
  - Private Lands – 2000 ha (10,000 AAC)
- Wide range of species
  - Hemlock
  - Cedar
  - Fir
  - Alder
- Fibre supply is of good quality
- Labour Pool is good for 3 contracting companies
- Wood does not have to be transported far for shipping
- Well established logging roads on the Island
- Fibre is at a low elevation and the climate is moderate
- Transportation costs of timber are reasonable
- Public perception of forest industry has been generally good on the Island
- There is good potential to develop value added forest production on the Island

#### Weaknesses:

- Timber markets are very cyclical ( a lot of ups and downs in prices)
- Seasonal industry and very susceptible to market forces (very inconsistent)
- Log brokers are from off Island
- Costs can be higher to access higher volumes of timber
- Silviculture (replanting):
  - can be more expensive than other parts of the province
  - protecting young trees from deer can raise costs
  - New BC Government contracts are going to push costs higher

#### Opportunities:

- Better coordination of timber sales between Island contractors could help to increase revenues
- Better control of the Deer population to lower impacts on replanting
- Competition in the Silviculture industry could produce some jobs
- Pulp tree (decadent wood):
  - Solve the issue of access
  - Potential to feed the chip market
  - Clearing pulp wood and replanting will create an opportunity for high quality second growth
  - Government subsidy of the program could help to create a more productive forest
- Explore whether Birch could be a good alternative to Alder
- Work with Island contractors on succession planning
- Form a sector committee to work on issues of common interest
- Investigate the possibility of other streams of revenue for waste materials from the harvesting process

#### Threats:

- Further increases in the cost of silviculture practices (Government Regulation/ Deer overpopulation/Lack of competition for replanting contracts)
- Fluctuations in the price of timber
- Lack of succession planning could lead to other companies from off Island gaining control of Crown Forest Tenures, thereby exporting jobs

## **Green Economy**

### Strengths:

- Ability to harvest food from the wild (seafood, berries, root vegetables, etc...)
- Wide variety of edible flora
- There is a great ability to live off of the land on the Island
- The Island has no predators
- The uniqueness of the Island's natural environment could be a major attraction to visitors
- Large variety of bird species
- Large population of deer on the Island
- Parks and outdoor recreation opportunities are numerous
- Research on Sticklebacks (Unique pre-historic fish) has resulted in a significant amount of money spent on the Island by Universities and Academics
  - The Island's biodiversity could produce other streams of revenue through other research opportunities
- Cave systems could be of interest to researchers and tourists alike
- There is a sustainable forest industry on the Island and there could be a good opportunity for value added wood manufacturing
- Strong water transportation links (Ships, Barges & Ferries)
- Wealth of mineral resources which could attract value added manufacturing
- Texada provides a good quality of life which could attract retirees and professional who work from home
- Affordable real estate
- The Island has good infrastructure and services (Fire, Medical, Police)
- Texada has more amenities than any other Gulf Island
- There is a large amount of Crown Land on Texada which could be used for other things such as agriculture
- Texada has a strong sense of community

### Weaknesses:

- Some Island residents have limited vision about new industries and ways to create employment
- The Island is geographically isolated (public perception that it is one ferry too far)
- Long Term residents don't want things to change on the Island
- There is a split in opinion on what direction the economy should go (lack of unity among residents)
- There are old views or attitudes on the Island about natural resource extraction
- The Island's labour force is shrinking
- The population is aging

- Access to capital or financing is poor as is good land for development
- Initial impression of the Island is sometimes poor
  - Quarry at the gateway to the Island in Blubber Bay
  - Visible logging activities on quarry lands along the highway
- There is a lack of exposure or knowledge about Texada

#### Opportunities:

- Tourism:
  - Public trail system
  - Waterfront/Ocean activities
  - There should be mapping done of trails and other activities and sites
- Development of a marketing program to attract people to live on the Island and Visit
- The development of cluster living (shared kitchen and living space) might be attractive to people living on a fixed income
- Further develop the food production industry (Large and Small scale)
- Further development of the medicinal marijuana industry
- Development of value added manufacturing using Island resources (minerals, foods, timber)
- Develop a shop local program to support Island businesses
- Attract investment in the Bio Energy industry
- Attract interest in Green Energy projects
  - Geothermal
  - Solar
  - Tidal
- Look at the possibilities of developing the island as a transportation/shipping hub for the west coast of North America
- Improve Van Anda to be a quaint tourist friendly village (themed?)
- Further develop services for seniors (Home Support/Assisted Living facility)

#### Threats:

- There must be a sense of unity amongst residents if any change is going to happen. New avenues of development must be pursued
- Continued reliance on resource extraction as a means of creating jobs and investment
- Unsustainable industries which degrade the Island's environment

### **Commercial/Retail**

#### Strengths:

- New Island residents are trying to shop local
- Established customers are very loyal
- The Island has a strong sense of community
- Lack of competition

#### Weaknesses:

- Texada is becoming a bedroom community to Powell River
- Larger businesses are not buying local
- Younger people and families don't have the income to shop local
- The cost of travelling on BC Ferries is making it difficult for people to live on the Island
- The amount of sailings to the Island through BC Ferries has made it easy for people to work on the Island and live in Powell River
- Families are moving away from the Island because the enrolment at the elementary school has dropped considerably and want their children in a school that offers a classroom environment and more activities
- The shipping of product to the Island increases costs and shipments are not as frequent as they used to be
- The cost of equipment servicing and maintenance is higher because specialty trades are not available on the Island
- It is becoming increasingly difficult to hire and retain reliable staff

#### Opportunities:

- Work with local contractors to pick up a an extra trade ticket to help lower the cost of servicing equipment
- Meeting with the Island's larger businesses to see if they can be convinced to by their supplies locally
- Amend Ferry schedule to make it not as easy for people to commute to the Island for work
- Support development of Primary Sector Industries such as:
  - Deep Water Port and Distribution Centre
  - Food Production
  - Secondary Manufacturing
- Develop better coordination between businesses on the shipping and ordering of product (Possibly do further analysis of supply lines to streamline shipping to reduce costs)
- Explore the possibilities of a local currency system (Texada Bucks) that would act as a customer reward system
- Conduct a survey of Island residents to identify gaps in product and services in the marketplace
- Develop better promotions of products and services
- Develop a Shop Local Campaign

#### Threats:

- A continued decrease in population
- No new development and further shrinking of existing industries

## **Projects**

The following section presents the projects that were identified though the SWOT analysis that was performed with each of the sector groups. A number of projects or action items identified in the sector group sessions applied to other sectors or represented a new economic sector. These projects have been listed separately.

The projects or action items that have been identified as the highest priority or easiest to achieve results from sooner include suggestions for implementation, champions and in some cases possible funding sources.

### **Non Specific Sector Projects**

#### **BC Ferries – Fares & Service**

The largest issue facing the sustainability of Texada Island is the cost of travelling on BC Ferries. The Ferry is the only means of leaving the Island on four wheels. The cost of service has risen dramatically since 2003 (at least 70%) with the introduction of the Coastal Ferry Act and the privatization of the Corporation. A review of the impact on minor routes is currently underway with the hopes that solutions will be implemented that will hold cost in line and service at a reasonable level. However, residents must ensure that the right solutions are developed. This issue is critical to the future economic survival of the Island as community. Every resident on Texada must be engaged to put pressure on the government to fix the problems that have been created by Coastal Ferry Act.

Champions: Powell River Regional District, Every Texada Association, Society and Business

#### **Branding Program and Marketing Tools**

Through the consultation process it was readily apparent that the one of the biggest issues facing Texada Island is that there is a significant lack of awareness about it. Texada needs to promote itself better and the best way to start that process is to create an identity that is relevant in today's marketplace. Without a strong identity and message it will be extremely difficult to attract any new investment, residents or visitors to the Island. Developing a new brand or identity could also serve as a rallying point to improve morale and foster unity amongst current residents of the Island.

Once a Brand has been established, corresponding marketing tools (Website, brochures, etc...) and campaigns can be developed for each of the sectors that have been identified as priorities for attraction activities (e.g. Tourism, Food Production, Retirement Market, etc...).

Champions: Texada Island Chamber of Commerce, Powell River Regional District, Tourism Powell River and Powell River Regional Economic Development Society

Cost: \$50,000 (Marketing Tools included)

Funding Sources: Powell River Regional District, Invest Canada Communities Initiative, Island Coastal Economic Trust

#### **Distribution Centre and Free Trade Zone Concept**

After conversations with provincial government representatives, port officials and site selection specialists, the Powell River Regional Economic Development Society (PRREDS) believes there is good potential to develop port and distribution centre facilities on Texada Island and possibly establish an 'Economic Free Trade Zone'. Texada has very good potential for this type of development due to its excellent deep water capacity, affordable lands, and close proximity to the Port of Vancouver and International Shipping lanes. In light of this information, PRREDS is proposing to gather the appropriate

information to develop a business case/prospectus that can be marketed to the Provincial and Federal governments, west coast ports and operators as an investment opportunity.

Preliminary Investigation of this opportunity reveals:

- With the exception of Prince Rupert, West Coast ports are reaching a point where further expansion will be almost impossible
- Lands currently being used for the storage and distribution of product into the North American marketplace are often worth more for other development opportunities and are believed to be cost prohibitive for operators
- The Powell River region (including Texada) is close to international shipping lanes and west coast ports such as Vancouver and Seattle.
- The Provincial and Federal Governments are very interested in establishing 'Free Trade Zones' to attract foreign investment in secondary manufacturing

Champions: Powell River Regional District, Powell River Regional Economic Development Society

Cost: The hiring of a transportation specialist to research and formulate the business case for development of deep water port and distribution centre facilities is approximately \$40 to \$50,000

Funding Sources: BC Ministry of Jobs, Innovation and Tourism, Invest Canada Communities Initiative

### **Shop Local Campaign**

In several sessions with sector representatives it was identified that there is a need to develop programs to encourage Texada Island Residents to purchase products and services from local contractors and retailers. The program could take two forms:

- Promotional campaign educating people on how every dollar spent outside of the community affects a job.
- Customer Appreciation Program (Texada Bucks). Local businesses can coordinate to create a system whereby every time a customer purchases local goods or services they are rewarded with a chit or points that can be spent at participating businesses.

Champion: Texada Chamber of Commerce

Cost: \$1500 to \$2500 per year (Very rough estimate)

Funding: Cost to be shared by participating businesses

### **Business Succession and Retention Program**

It was identified in several input sessions that a number of businesses owners are considering retirement or moving on to something else. The loss of these businesses means the loss of services and jobs on the Island, which are not easily replaced. It is important to work with owners now to ensure they are able to transfer or sell their business to another individual or company. It is recommended that Powell River Community Futures be engaged to take advantage of the succession programs they have developed.

Champions: Powell River Community Futures, Powell River Regional Economic Development Society, Texada Chamber of Commerce

Cost: TBD

Funding: Community Futures and nominal fees to Business Owners

### **Tourism and Recreation**

#### **Mapping**

It was identified that there needed to be better mapping of the attractions on Texada Island to not only promote everything there is to do, but to help ensure the tourists make the most of their trip. The following are attractions that were felt should be included in the maps that could be created:

- Birding
- Biking trails
- Hiking trails
- Flora and Fauna
- ATV
- Parks and Conservation Areas
- Restaurants, Accommodations and Businesses
- Farms
- Sight Seeing Attractions
- Cave Systems (?)

Champion: Texada Arts Culture and Tourism Society, Tourism Powell River, Sunshine Coast Tourism Association

Cost: \$8,000-\$10,000

Funding: Costs can be offset by selling advertising. Community Tourism Opportunities Fund. Powell River Regional District

#### **Destination Resort**

There are many advantages to establishing a Destination Resort on Texada Island. Not only does it create jobs and new tax revenues, but it also identifies the Island as a place of value or interest in a larger marketplace. Texada has many features that would make it attractive to companies in the Destination Resort business. Its natural beauty and relative geographic isolation or seclusion are the two main factors. The Island has a well established airport that guests can be chartered in and out of, many attractions, and moorage for sailboat rentals and charters. Texada also is centrally located and can act as a jumping off point for other areas of interest along the Malaspina Strait.

A marketing program would be developed to market specific pieces of land that would make the most sense for the development of a resort property.

Champions: PRREDS and Tourism Powell River

Cost: \$2000 to develop proper marketing materials. (Marketing would be handled under existing programs)

Funding: Property owners, PRREDS, Tourism Powell River, Powell River Regional District

### **Texada Island (Gillies Bay) Airport**

The Texada Island Airport provides 3000 feet (914 m) of runway surface, which is just slightly smaller than Powell River's airstrip. KD Air provides passenger service to Vancouver from the airport and it also plays host to an annual fly in. There are two improvements that could be made at the airport that would lead to increased tourism on the Island.

One is the attraction of a charter company to offer flight seeing tours of the region. The low cost of operation at the Texada Airport, relatively low amount of air traffic in the region and the Island's central location might make it attractive to a company interested in providing this service. The one obstacle to it happening is providing enough customers to make the venture profitable.

The second option, which more than likely has the best chance of success, is establishing a flight training school for small plane operators. Again, the low cost of operations, relatively low amount of air traffic and closeness to the lower mainland and Vancouver Island, make it a good location to provide flight training services. This service would generate room nights and spending revenue in the community.

Champion: Texada Island Airport Society, Texada Arts Culture and Tourism Society (TACT), Powell River Regional Economic Development Society

Cost: \$1000

Funding: PRREDS

### **Other Projects/Action Items:**

- Continued Development of Events and Attractions:
  - Caving
    - Guiding
    - Identify what caves are permissible
  - Equestrian activities
  - Ocean Kayaking
  - Sailing
  - Meetings and Retreats
    - Development of appropriate accommodation, infrastructure and services
  - Education
    - Survival Camps
    - Outdoor Recreation Training
  - Rock Hounding
  - Geo Caching
  - Work with BC Ferries on developing fare packages for the Island
  - Heschelt Lake
    - Establish Public Access

- Development of Commercial Attractions attached to the Mineral properties of the water
- Mountain Biking
  - Development of trails and maps
  - Development of packages and tours
- Development of ATV tours and trails
- Establishment of Water Taxi service between Powell River and Van Anda
- Annual Potlatch at Shelter Point in partnership with Tla'Amin First Nation. Shelter Point was a traditional meeting place of a number of Coast Salish nations for the means of trading

## **Arts, Culture and Education**

### **Prometheus Festival**

Playing on the themes of knowledge based tourism, it has been suggested that a unique festival worth developing is one that showcases new age disciplines such as astrology, reiki, crystal therapy, yoga and meditation in a natural setting. The goal would be to give people a chance to learn something about these disciplines at no cost. Practitioners of these types of disciplines would be invited to attend the festival as demonstrators as an opportunity to showcase their businesses. The festival, like any other, would generate room nights and spending in the community. It would also help to develop and promote a different identity for the Island.

Champions: Texada Arts Culture and Tourism Society, Tourism Powell River

Cost: \$10,000 to \$15,000

Funding: Costs could be covered through sponsorship packages, Vancouver Foundation, Community Tourism Opportunities Fund (First Year)

### **School of Mining**

Knowledge based or educational tourism is a new way of developing streams of revenue from outside of the community. Texada has a long history as a mining community, and is in a good position to train the next generation of workers for the industry. Working with School District #47 and a Post Secondary Institution (BCIT/VIU?) training programs can be developed with the local quarries to provide students with hands on certified experience in a trade or operations position.

Champions: School District #47, Powell River Education Services Society, Vancouver Island University, BCIT

Cost: To Be Determined

Funding: Industry Trade Authorities, BC Ministry of Advanced Education

### **Fringe Theatre Festival**

Fringe Theatre Festivals are very popular events that attract audiences from all over North America. There is a loop of Fringe Festivals that are held in British Columbia and Alberta throughout the spring and summer that people travel to. Texada has a well established group of theatre enthusiasts in the Rock Island Players. Noting that the next closest Fringe Festival is held in Nanaimo in early August, it

might be possible to organize a festival prior to it on Texada in order for people to make a pilgrimage up the coast to and then over to Vancouver Island for the next event. If marketed as Fringe held in a unique outdoor environment it would be considered a draw. Fringe Theatre groups performing at other festivals in the province could be invited to participate in the festival charging 10% of gate receipts to cover the costs of organizing.

Champions: Texada Arts, Culture and Tourism Society, Rock Island Players, Tourism Powell River

Cost: To Be Determined

Funding: Vancouver Foundation (First Year – Infrastructure), Arts Now

**Other Projects or Action Items:**

- A program to encourage the growth of an artisan population by advertising in art magazines and presentations at college and university art departments. Certain incentives and infrastructure such as available residence and work and sales spaces could be developed
- A non-diploma type program for educating people in the various arts, as opposed to things that are just about making money. It might attract a more youthful, vibrant community
- A ‘rock concert’ that appeals to attract healthy young early retired baby boomers with financial resources that are introduced to and would appreciate the island’s beauty and privacy and possibly consider Texada as a place to settle.

**Agriculture/Food Production**

**Texada Farmers Institute /Society**

It has been indicated that Texada does not have an organization to represent the interest of Farmers and work towards bettering the industry. For many years the Powell River Farmers Institute has been the lead organization on the mainland that has served the purpose of expanding food production in the region and it is recommended that stakeholders on Texada Island form an organization to do the same. The Farmers Institute/Society would be the main champion for expanding the industry and would work with its members to implement projects and programs.

Champion: Texada Island Farmers and Food Producers

Cost: Nominal Fees for establishing a non-profit society

**Agricultural Land Inventory**

In order to increase the amount of food production on Texada it is important to get a grasp on how much land is available for agricultural purposes. It is recommended that an inventory of agricultural lands be completed and a map showing their location and size be drafted. It is recommended that Vancouver Island University be engaged to do the research and draft the map through its community mapping program.

It would be good to get an accurate idea of soil and farming capacity as well, but it may prove difficult due to the costs involved. To achieve the latter goal, pressure must be put on the Provincial Government

to provide funding to redo the soil mapping in the region as the ones currently in place are at too large of a ratio to be useful.

Once a land inventory has been completed other projects such as a Strata Farm program and investment attraction program can follow.

Champions: Texada Island Farmers Institute, Powell River Regional District, Vancouver Island, Powell River Regional Economic Development Society

Cost: \$1000 to \$1500

Funding: Agricultural Foundation of BC, Powell River Regional District

### **Strata Farm Program**

In order to allow easier access to lands for new farmers, it is suggested that a business plan be drafted to develop a Strata Farm. A Strata Farm would allow for smaller lots of 5 to 10 acres to be leased at a reasonable rate in order to lessen the financial burden of starting a new agricultural operation. This would allow for new entries into the marketplace for what are essentially small businesses.

In regards to available land for this venture, although it would be prudent to wait for the results of the Agricultural Land Inventory, it has been suggested that Texada Island Forest Reserve might be an entity to approach about the possibilities of developing a program like this as it is already leasing land to two other farms in the area.

Champions: Texada Island Farmers Institute, Powell River Regional District, PRREDS

Cost: \$8,000 to \$10,000 (If an agricultural specialist is used). Nominal if it is developed at a grass roots level.

Funding Sources: Farm Credit Canada, Agricultural Foundation of BC, Island Coastal Economic Trust

### **Land Based Aquaculture**

The technology for land based aquaculture has come a long way since its inception and it is now less costly to establish and run. Depending on the product, all that is needed is access to affordable power, sources of fresh or salt water, reasonably priced feed and shipping. It is even now possible to farm fin fish on land in an organic manner. Being on the ocean, having access to affordable power, and being close to markets in the lower mainland, Texada is in a good position to attract investment in this industry.

Texada has one other advantage in land based aquaculture that other communities do not, and that is former open mining pits. Open pit mines can be converted into a natural environment to raise fish in, thereby reducing the need to invest in the construction of tanks. Discussions should be held with quarry owners and operators about the possibilities of leasing or subdividing and purchasing defunct pits for the purposes of attracting investment in this industry.

Once suitable lands are identified a marketing strategy should be developed for investment attraction activities.

Champions: Powell River Regional Economic Development Society, Texada Chamber of Commerce

Cost: To be determined. (Can be blended into established food production marketing initiatives)

**Other Projects or Action Items:**

- Increase Value Added production
  - Establish a community kitchen on the Island (e.g. Legion Kitchen?)
  - Production of medicinal remedies from wild craft
  - Production of dried/dehydrated products
  - Establishment of wineries/vineyards
- Develop a Mentor program so those new to farming have a peer network to rely upon for advice and assistance
- Improve access to surplus lands not being used by existing quarries to be repurposed for food production (Will be tackled under the Land Inventory Process)
- Develop programs to promote Texada as a destination for visitors for Agri-Tourism activities
- Develop programs to allow for Co-op/Intern opportunities for students on small scale farms on the Island
- Develop a Community Farming Program where locals buy in to assure access to locally grown product

**Mining**

**Public Awareness and Education Campaign**

It was identified in the session with representatives of Texada’s mining sector that public perception of the industry has become largely negative over time. The sector as a whole has not done a very good job of promoting itself and educating the general public on how it operates and the positive impacts it creates on the Island’s economy. In light of this, it is recommended that the companies involved in mineral extraction on Texada form a sector committee to develop and implement a promotional campaign to improve public perception and establish stronger ties with residents. The communications activities could include:

- Signage
- Website
- News and Feature Stories
- Open Houses
- Tours of Operations

Champions: Texada Mining Companies

Cost: Relatively nominal (\$500 to \$1000/year)

Funding: Cost shared by members of the committee

**Other Projects and Action Items:**

- Improve access to investment capital for the development of new mines (PRREDS, BC Government)

- Mining Industry has to change its mentality and improve education on how technology can revive old mines rather than focussing purely on new mine development
- Lobby the Provincial and Federal Governments on improving the regulatory process

## **Seniors – Retirement Living**

### **Retirement Market Attraction Program**

With the second wave of Baby Boomers soon to retire it is important that Texada Island promote itself as a quiet, safe and affordable community to settle in. Texada has many attributes that would be attractive to retirees considering selling their homes and moving away from an urban environment. Texada has good infrastructure and services in comparison to a majority of the Gulf Islands, as well as the most affordable homes and properties.

After a new branding program and marketing tools are developed, creating a promotional campaign to attract retirees should be one of the top three priorities in regards to attracting new investment. The campaign can take a number of forms, but it is suggested that the best way of attracting interest is generating feature stories and articles about Island life. Concentrating on media familiarization tours and highlighting the experience of seniors who have recently settled on Texada should produce the best results.

Champions: Texada Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Powell River, Powell River Regional Economic Development Society

Cost: \$10,000 (Marketing Materials development and Media Attraction)

Funding: Powell River Regional District, Invest Canada Communities Initiative

### **Expanded Assisted Living/Home Care Services**

Through the consultation process it was made clear that there is growing need amongst seniors for expanded assisted living/home care services on Texada Island. Currently those needing to move to assisted living facilities have to move off of the Island and away from their family and friends to access it, further depleting the population. In addition to this there are a number of seniors who require help with housekeeping and shopping, which are services not provided through the current Home Care program. It is recommended that an initiative be spearheaded to pursue the development of expanded assisted living/home care services on Texada in order to allow seniors to stay on the island and be close to their families. If successful, the establishment of expanded services will create new jobs to Texada, new streams of revenue and make the Island more attractive to retirees as a place to settle for the long term.

Champions: Powell River Regional District, Regional Hospital Board, Texada Seniors Association

Costs: To Be Determined

Funding: ???

### **Other Projects and Action Items:**

- There needs to be a survey done of the Seniors population to assess needs

- Petition for more public transportation on the Island
- Attract a taxi service to the Island or develop a volunteer ride program for Seniors

## **Forest Industry**

### **Forest Industry Sector Council**

Similar to Mining Sector on Texada, the Forest sector has a number of issues which could be settled by combining efforts and better coordinating activities to make the industry more sustainable. Issues identified by the forestry representatives at the sector consultation session could be better resolved by forming a sector council to develop solutions. Some of the opportunities or issues identified through consultation include:

- Better coordination of timber sales between Island contractors could help to increase revenues
- Controlling/Reducing costs of silviculture
- Investigate the possibility of other streams of revenue for waste materials from the harvesting process
- Attracting investment in Value Added Manufacturing (Milling)
- Explore the possibilities of logging large swaths of decadent (pulp quality) timber and replanting to produce good second growth fibre

Champions: Texada Logging Companies, Tenure Holders, Forest District Officers

## **Green Economy**

### **Value Added Manufacturing**

Over the past century or more, the main economic driver for many rural BC communities has been the extraction and exporting of natural resources. Too often resources such as minerals, timber and seafood are sold into the marketplace in a raw form. Texada has not been an exception to this trend. In a new green economy there is an emphasis on not only lessening the negative impact of resource extraction and making it more sustainable, but also finding ways to add value through the manufacturing of commodities into finished products.

Texada has an abundance of natural resources that are manufactured elsewhere. It is recommended that a study be done of the Island's commodities and link them to products that have the highest and best opportunity of being manufactured locally. Taking into account, Texada Island's closeness to external markets and international shipping, its affordable land base, labour pool, and access to power, it could be very attractive to companies seeking a lower cost environment to operate in.

After the highest and best chances for the attraction or development of value added manufacturing are identified a marketing strategy should be developed and implemented.

Champions: Texada Chamber of Commerce, Forest, Mining and Food sector representatives, Powell River Regional Economic Development Society

Cost: To be determined (In the \$5,000 to \$15,000 range)

Funding: Labour Market Partnership (BC Government), Western Economic Diversification, Invest Canada Community Initiative

### **Green/Bio Energy Attraction Program**

Green and Bio energy production has been expanding vigorously over the past decade. The BC Government has put an emphasis on increasing green energy and alternative fuel production and has created an investment environment that is attractive to private sector endeavours in this sector. Because of its moderate climate and abundant natural resources Texada is in a position to attract investment in green energy projects such as Wind, Solar, Geothermal, and Tidal. It is recommended that a study be done to identify the best opportunities for development of clean energy production and market them to well established companies operating in the sector.

Champions: Powell River Regional Economic Development Society, Texada Chamber of Commerce, Powell River Regional District

Cost: To be determined, but minimal as work can be done at a grass roots level.

### **Other Green Economy Projects or Action Items:**

- The development of cluster living (shared kitchen and living space) might be attractive to people living on a fixed income
- Further develop the food production industry (Large and Small scale)
- Further development of the medicinal marijuana industry
- Develop a shop local program to support Island businesses
- Attract investment in the Bio Energy industry
- Look at the possibilities of developing the island as a transportation/shipping hub for the west coast of North America
- Improve Van Anda to be a quaint tourist friendly village (themed?)
- Further develop services for seniors (Home Support/Assisted Living facility)

### **Commercial/Retail Business**

#### **Gap Analysis of Market Needs**

It has already identified that programs need to be developed to encourage residents of Texada Island to shop local as much as possible. Besides promotional campaigns and customer reward programs, another method of keeping spending local is to identify what products and services people aren't able to access on the Island. To accomplish this it is recommended that a survey be conducted of households to better understand where the gaps are in the marketplace to provide local businesses with the information needed to attempt to meet the needs of consumers.

Champions: Texada Chamber of Commerce

Cost: \$200 (printing)

Funding: Internal

### **Other Projects and Action Items:**

- Work with local contractors to pick up a an extra trade ticket to help lower the cost of servicing equipment
- Meeting with the Island's larger businesses to see if they can be convinced to by their supplies locally
- Support development of Primary Sector Industries such as:
  - Deep Water Port and Distribution Centre
  - Food Production
  - Secondary Manufacturing
- Develop better coordination between businesses on the shipping and ordering of product (Possibly do further analysis of supply lines to streamline shipping to reduce costs)
- Conduct a survey of Island residents to identify gaps in product and services in the marketplace
- Develop better promotions of products and services

### **Conclusion and Implementation**

A majority of the projects recommended in this Strategy/Action Plan are derived from consultation with a cross section of Texada Island residents. It was clear in all of the consultation sessions that everyone is deeply concerned about the future of Texada. They've watched as people have left due to downturns in the economy, reductions in services for families and soaring transportation costs. However, one other issue became clear as well, and that is despite the strong sense of community on the Island there is a '*perception*' that there is a growing divide in opinion on how or if Texada should be developed. It is important to keep in mind that if any of the projects listed in this document or any others for that matter are to be successful, it will be as a result of everyone working together to achieve them. That is not to say that everyone has to agree about every action that is taken, but there must be some sense of unity.

As for implementation of the projects listed in this strategy, it is important that some sort of control mechanism be put in place to ensure that progress is being made. It is suggested that the original steering committee for the strategy be kept in place and be expanded to include representation from other stakeholder groups and the economic sectors. The steering committee could meet quarterly to review the progress of projects that have been undertaken, identify obstacles, and suggest or generate solutions. As stated, the main goal of the committee will be to maintain momentum. Too often strategies are written and end up collecting dust on a shelf, it is important that a process is put in place to achieve implementation. To undertake projects in each of the sectors, it is recommended that each sector will form a committee composed of interested individuals. The chair of each of the sector committees will sit on the steering committee.

**APPENDIX A:**  
**ADDITIONAL INPUT RECEIVED AT OPEN HOUSES AND WRITTEN**  
**SUBMISSIONS**

**TEXADA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TRANSCRIPTS**  
**FROM OCTOBER 12<sup>TH</sup> AND 13<sup>TH</sup> TOWN HALL MEETINGS**

**HELD IN TWO LOCATIONS:**

**VAN ANDA LEGION AND GILLIES BAY HALL**

Transcribed by Gary Grieco – Only the most unintelligible comments were parsed or translated to the best of my ability. The majority of comments by the participants were recorded verbatim.

**AGRICULTURE & FOOD COMMENTS:**

- Change Texada OCP so that minimal parcel size for agriculture is reduced from 20 acres to (5) five acres.
- Why: Intensive growing on small plots is economically viable, and should not be excluded in favour of large parcels.
- Texada Community Garden – Interest has been repeatedly expressed by younger people without access to land. Labour could be exchanged for a percentage of the harvest. There could be coordination with our Food Bank, “earn your meal”; can also coordinate with group canning/drying workshops; community kitchens are possible at Legion, Community Hall, school.
- Commercial food processing.
- Aquaculture – plankton production in tanks or land based fish farms.
- Develop a Winery specializing in Black Berry wine.
- Hiking trails – there are 12 trails listed on Texada.

**ARTS , CULTURE & EDUCATION:**

- Blasting School
- Getting a section regarding artists on Texada in the publication “Zoom”
- Develop a Wellness Centre on the Island. An alternate retreat centre for the healing arts. Developer to develop Marble Bay property and use it for regular tourist accommodation plus centre for healing arts.
- Establish an Art Academy and living quarters for seasonal and year round for teaching sculpture, painting, pottery, drawing, film, and computer art. Not necessarily a lot of theory, but recreational.
- Sales course for artisans and musicians.

- Dance school that would be advertised to bring people from off Island.
- Archery Range
- Equestrian Centre
- Land Reclamation – Pioneer mining uses of a land as a growing resource in this province.
- Drama in the Community – Puppet show; stickleback story; heritage; legion, etc.
- Agro-forestry initiatives
- Public Awareness – Return trip on the Texada ferry could be made interpretive; advertise in Westview terminal.
- Our school is under-used. It would be great to coordinate with Vancouver Island University on some courses.
- Expand ‘Acorn Club’ and forge better relations with Texada Island Forest Reserve.
- Emphasis on teens.
- Fishing and hunting guides

### **MINING:**

- Get out of mining industry and promote a diversity of other economic vehicles.
- Mining school won’t work – too small, too remote. Only functions well as part of an active mining operation. More general heavy equipment training program might work if space available at Blubber Bay.
- School of Mining – excellent idea. Certification (Red Seal) requirements. At a minimum, start first class with our Texada residents before being displaced by off-island workers who are certified.
- Environmental interests are working to achieve responsible development. This should not be seen as a weakness.
- The world would be a better place if everyone looked after their own backyard.
- “A vocal minority is making it very hard to start up on the island.” If a survey was conducted, this might be a majority.
- Davie Bay is an extensive network of Karst and caves including its alkaline aquifer, a rock fish conservation area and fir forest that is being threatened by another mine.
- Action that will demonstrate environmental responsibility.

### **SENIORS – RETIREMENT MARKET:**

- Develop an on call taxi service/small bus/van service for transportation on Texada. Include a ferry connection.
- Retirees help sustain the economy with their stable income.
- Develop the golf course to attract new retirees.
- Care for our elderly in the community at an affordable cost. Educate health workers in the community.
- Not enough commercial infrastructures to appeal to retirees from the city.
- We need residents, not more seasonal cottage owners which a marketing program would produce.
- Multi-level care facility/housing.
- Unsuitable development will negate many of the strengths.

### **TOURISM AND RECREATION:**

- Heather Tours could do a historical tour of the island, as well as a tour of mining sites on island.
- A mural painting program aimed at tourists. Murals in Van Anda and Gillies Bay on commercial buildings.
- Electrically assisted bicycles located at the boat club and airport for visitors.
- Art studios directions need to be enhanced, e.g. Main highways on Sunshine Coast.
- Mining tours for tourists.
- Make peace with anti-mining activists by working together on a project.
- Ash Grove to clean up its closed site at Blubber Bay to beautify Texada's 'front door' at the ferry terminal.
- The largest single employer for the foreseeable future is the mining industry. Island social improvements are driven by employment. Unfortunately, many see what they want to see – rape and pillage. The mines helped provide for many of the amenities we take for granted. Mining should be encouraged!
- Map all Texada trails.
- Mapping suggestion an excellent idea, but how do we go about mapping trails on private or crown lands? Many islanders leave Texada and take 'eco' holidays. The more we can promote our own island, the more we can provide in this area.
- We need an accessible park on the northern (southern?) end of Texada. Most other Gulf Islands have parks that are tourist destinations for camping, hiking, and kayaking.

- Destination Resort for a retreat centre or alternate health/wellness centre. Programs for weight loss; food addictions; reiki, a system of touching with the hands based on belief that such touching by an experienced practitioner produces beneficial effects by strengthening and normalizing certain vital energy fields held to exist within the body. Dictionary definition GG).
- Establish Action Parks: 1. Zip Line; 2. Climbing Wall; 3. Boat accident survival course; 4. Surviving as a castaway; 5. Building emergency shelters; 6. Survival team contest day.
- Re-branding 'Industrial'. Hard to market except to 'piston heads'.
- More events like 'Run on the Rock' marathon to expose people to the island.
- Texada's kayaking potential is limited by restricted access to the shoreline in areas that are good for day trips. Better foreshore access in areas like Davie Bay would help.
- Improve road access to Anderson Bay.
- Strength – no predators.
- Do not develop commercial infrastructure at Heisholt Lake.
- Weakness – no jogging or cycling path
- Ugliness of 'front door' around ferry terminal. Tourists don't want to see anything reminding them of work when on vacation.
- We need marked and labelled hiking trails. Yes!
- How about a walking/hiking trail around the whole island? Long Beach on Vancouver Island has the 'Wild Pacific Trail. They have multiple sources of public funding and the trail is gorgeous – attracts many tourists and has been beneficial for the community. There are spin offs for B&B's, coffee houses, art galleries, etc.
- Full time residents should get a break on ferry fares.
- KD Air is a charter carrier that does flight seeing tours. Contact them to put Texada on their 'map'.
- Re a flight training school: one is already located in Qualicum Beach with an illuminated runway.
- Hiking trails –PRRD owns a trail behind the Gillies Bay ball field to behind the old CIBC building. It's surveyed, but not cleared. Let's open it up.
- Make trail maps available to tourists.
- Encourage tourism instead of discouraging it.
- Map for Biking; Quads; Hiking
- Isolationism is not a threat, but a lifestyle choice.
- Protect the natural environment.

### **FORESTRY:**

- White Pine log utilization locally. E.g. Door jambs, tables, etc. A shaper/planer and drying kiln required.

### **GREEN ECONOMY:**

- Green pet burial – plant a pet and a tree.
- Deer overpopulation problem – sustainable solutions.
- Land based fisheries
- Mining reclamation.
- Program to reduce all the ‘dead-heads’ in transport to and from the island at all levels: personal; small business; large.
- “No” to marijuana ‘industry’.
- Trail mapping; walking/hiking/quads.
- Texada does ‘not’ have more amenities than any other Gulf Island!
- Many long term residents don’t want things to change on the island in order to preserve our strengths.

### **RETAIL/COMMERCIAL:**

- The Canada-European Trade Agreement scheduled to be signed by 2012 by the Harper government will affect our ability to buy local, and corporations will have greater powers to take local jobs and our water. We need to become a ‘CETA FREE’ municipality. There is a movement across Canada to claim CETA-Free status. Council of Canadians has a CETA kit on their website.
- I am willing to help establish an organizational/management course that could help people work out a business plan or salvage strategy. Darcy Guillemaud.
- There seems to be a move afoot to create industrial jobs or jobs at any cost.
- A healthy, robust “classroom” environment is not dependent on numbers.
- A progressive, innovative community school with a local curriculum will attract parents and students.

## **CONSTRUCTION TRADES:**

- Ensure the PR Regional District only hires Texada Contractors for work on Texada, unless the specific required skills are not available.

## **GENERAL COMMENTS:**

- It may be difficult to get individuals to risk capital to start businesses until the population stabilizes or increases and demand is visible.
- Isolationism: that is, people who like the island the way it is and do not want it change. The answer is that the island is changing. If we do not do something we will lose more residents and many amenities. We cannot, must not take what we have for granted. We must act now to keep what we value here.
- Question – who develops action items from this report? Who prioritizes them? Who finds the funding and does the work? Please address this in your final report?
- I am very suspicious about “Free Trade Zone Concept”!
- A shop local campaign can only work if local businesses deserve our business. The Gillies Bay store is driving customers away by price gouging, not carrying requested items, and by treating potentially good customers badly. Last summer, Shelter Point concession stand placed a large order for hamburger buns, but before concession staff could pick them up, the buns were sold to someone else. Consequently, the concession bought all subsequent buns Powell River. GB Store needs to smarten up if they want local residents support.
- Branding – An affordable Gulf Island, rather than an Industrial Gulf Island.
- If going free-trade, don’t neglect drug-tourism. (???)
- Shop Local: Is there any room for successful mainland businesses operating from island distribution points?
- The Branding program is not properly focussed. Problem isn’t that people don’t know Texada, it’s that they think it’s just an industrial island with big holes ripped in it.
- The Free-Trade zone and Port idea is a pipe dream. We don’t have transportation infrastructure to make it happen it!
- Is there open land and dock area in Anderson Bay? It’s a shorter distance to the lower Mainland.
- A deep water port is a pipe dream.
- Although we do not agree with all the content in this ‘plan’ and have concern with negative tone and language; we do appreciate the volunteer time and effort of many

local people. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into this Draft document.  
Dale and Mary Leopkey.

- The 'mission statement will not be seen as progressive by many on the island.
- Another sector could be 'self - sufficient lifestyle'.
- Industrial Development affects the aesthetics of the natural environment.
- In today's world a 'Brand' that does not include environmental responsibility will not succeed.
- Develop more waterfront residential sites.
- This plan does not fully consider the legitimate aspirations of those islanders with neither environmental concerns nor those who wish to live a self-reliant and independent life style. The draft document simply dismisses these groups as threats. This is not a conciliatory document! Working together means no dismissing others opinions as neither threats nor using negative terms to describe them as: weakness; isolationism; lobby; Nimbyism.

## **Written Submissions on Economic Development Action Plan**

### **Review of the draft Texada Economic Development Action Plan, Sept 23, 2011.**

Prepared by Richard Fletcher. Gillies Bay. BC  
October 10, 2011.

### **Comment on the Mission Statement, Methodology and Process**

The project should have been directed at examining the optimal conditions where the level of economic activity on Texada would be expected to rise through time.

To be all inclusive, in the development of a plan for Texada, a public information letter should have been mailed via the post office and/or in the Express Lines, and posted for all to see. This would show not only the intent but also transparency and a democratic respect for the whole community. Instead, we've had a secretive process controlled through self-selecting groups championed by the Chamber of Commerce and PRREDS. At the moment the projects stemming from the SWOT analysis seem to be in the main a series of ways of capturing funding to advance various consultant studies and initiatives, with an underlying promotion of the Deep Water Port and Distribution Centre.. PRREDS have a long history of fostering unwanted industrial "silver bullet" projects on Texada, including Westpac LNG..

The draft plan contains no statistical data; it is purely observational, or anecdotal. For a business plan, a SWOT analysis is normally done just as a first step. It is then overlaid with an analysis of competitive advantages and disadvantages versus the competition. Finally a positioning statement is produced leading to a clear set of actions and strategies so that weaknesses are defended and opportunities enhanced. Benefits ensuing from proposed actions are then quantified.

There follows an analysis and suggestions for future strategies and policies.

**A Who is Texada competing with?/ what is our competition?**

**B-1 What are the main threats to Texada**

**B-2 Meeting threats. Defensive Strategies.**

**C-1 What are our competitive disadvantages?**

**C-2 Meeting competitive disadvantages**

**D-1 What are Texada's Competitive Advantages ?**

**D-2 Building on Competitive Advantages**

**E Transport. Moving to sustainability. A public transport agenda for Texada**

**F SUMMARY**

**A Who is Texada competing with?/ what is our competition?**

1. Powell River?,
2. the Lower Mainland?
3. other Gulf Islands?
4. Alberta?

**B-1 What are the main threats to Texada**

(not in order of significance)

1. A continuing loss of services as a result of a decreasing number of people living full time on Texada ( p 12). In other words, loss of critical mass.
2. Low pool of trained trades and professionals
3. High cost of maintaining the infrastructure ( p 5)
4. Fear of the parachuted mega project, thus deterring individual investment.
5. Suburbia. Texada is becoming a bedroom community to Powell River ( p 15)
6. Failure to support local suppliers. Larger businesses are not buying locally (p 15)
7. Loss of families. Families are moving away from Texada as the school on Texada offers less development opportunity than schools in Powell River, and when bussed to PR parents do not want their children to be subject to long travel times each day ( p 15, in part)
8. Job commuting. The amount of sailings to Texada has made it easier for people to work on Texada and live in Powell River and elsewhere.
9. Wrong development strategy. Going in the wrong direction which will make things worse

**B-2 Meeting threats. Defensive Strategies.**

(not in order of significance)

1. Capture Texada resources and services into jobs for people who live on Texada. The pay cheque stays here. This means the mining jobs, forestry, and the school..
2. Drop the number of sailings to and from Powell River. The PRRD to subsidise deliveries to Texada under GHG policies. Foster self-sufficiency.
3. Re-invent the Texada School. The principal should live on Texada, with a policy of educating Texada children on Texada, via internet if necessary. Drop the bussing of intermediate kids to Powell River.
4. Defend our existing infrastructure. For example: retain our flat community

owned-land for sports (ie don't give over part of the ball-park in Gillies bay to a doggy park).

5. Award scholarships to train local people for specialty trades. Develop a list of local tradespeople "Tradespeople You Can Trust".

6. Say, "no thank you" to PRREDS. We can do without your parachuted mega projects conceived without transparency and a democratic respect for the whole community.

7. Don't make mistakes in planning policy. Don't make things worse. Get independent professionals on board if necessary who can develop a consensus on what we need to do.

3

### **C-1 What are our competitive disadvantages?**

(not in order of significance)

1. Relatively poor transportation links
2. Relatively poor communication, mainly lack of high speed internet.
3. No public transport
4. No rail links
5. Relatively poor access to the shoreline
6. The quarries are aesthetically offputting
7. Lack of a diverse business hub with a deep pool of skilled and diverse labour
8. No natural gas.
9. No planning controls. Industry and individuals can build and do what they like. Risk adverse investors are put off by uncertainty.
10. History of mega project scares creating uncertainty and deters investment
11. Historical divisions on Texada with little consensus of how to proceed. Result: it foster uncertainty and deters the risk-adverse.

### **C-2 Meeting competitive disadvantages**

(not in order of significance)

1. Persuade Victoria that the BC ferry service is part of the highway infrastructure and be funded accordingly (p16)
2. Encourage, promote and fund high speed, low-cost internet infrastructure on Texada with a band-width comparable to large commercial centres in Canada.
3. Develop public transport (see the paragraph H below on GHG emission strategy)
4. Develop our own road network. Pave the High Road, and some part of Bell Road. Pave the road to Shingle Beach.
5. Develop much better access to Texada's shoreline for community use. Adopt the PRRD Parks and Greenspace Plan and have an active strategy to develop those areas identified on Texada as potential public parkland.
6. Create jobs with environmental programs to reclaim the old disused quarries.
7. Adopt new guidelines in the OCP defining "industry purposes". PRREDS to give notice to Texada residents if it is considering sponsoring or supporting any "industrial" project on Texada, so we have no more surprises. Texada representation on PRREDS to be via election
8. Historical division on Texada. Get independent professionals on board if

necessary who can develop a consensus on what we need to do.

9. Texada to lobby BC Hydro so that BC communities with no natural gas pay no more for space heating using electricity, than those communities using natural gas. An off-the gas grid BC Hydro space heating rate.

4

### **D-1 What are Texada's Competitive Advantages ?**

(not in order of significance)

1. a wonderful wild and safe environment close to large population centres
2. a large body of limestone
3. forestry reserves
4. one of the best climates in Canada
5. 2 reasonably sized communities in Gillies Bay and Van Anda with services.
6. an airport
7. regular ferry connections
8. access to a provincial natural gas pipeline
9. access to BC's major high transmission network

### **D-2 Building on Competitive Advantages**

(Much has been addressed above so there may be some repetition. Not in order of significance)

1. Protect Texada's wild and safe environment and promote it. Improve accessibility.
2. Promotion of tourism through organised programs. Run the Rock was a great idea. If we pave the High Road we could host a road cycle race too.
3. Mining developments only permitted after a BC Environmental Assessment and this to be documented in the OCP
4. Forestry to be harvested using sustainable means
5. Reclaim the old, disused quarries.
6. Adopt the PRRD Parks and Greenspace Plan. Develop much better access to Texada's shoreline for community use. Have an active strategy to develop those areas identified on Texada in the Parks and Greenspace Plan as potential public parkland.
7. Improve access to the south of Texada. Pave the road to Shingle Beach. Depending on the outcome of Lehigh's application at Davie Bay, actively seek to develop a public park at Davie Bay, with a campground and resource centre.
8. Fund a mapping project for Texada showing contours, trails etc to 1:50,000., or 1:25,000
9. Try to get better use of our airport at Gillies Bay. (see sustainability below).

### **E Transport. Moving to sustainability**

Under instruction from Victoria, the PRRD is briefing local communities, to get them thinking about GHG reductions, and for those communities to set targets. If you set a target you might get funding to achieve those targets. In any event the OCP must have words to address GHG reductions. Electricity use is zero rated for GHG purposes, and wood is a renewable so that doesn't count. Industry is ignored. On this basis data shows that most of Texada's GHG emissions comes from transportation.

Transport on Texada is by private vehicle as there is no public transport --other than the weekly bus to Powell River. Also the ferry terminal is at the north of Texada, well away from the population centres. ( 20 km from Gillies Bay, 9 Km from Van Anda)

A regular scheduled bus service on Texada would help, however to have any hope of success the regional planners and BC must think in terms of an integrated transport system, covering start-to-end of journey, so there are links to elsewhere. One could envisage a scheduled bus on Texada linking to the ferry at Blubber Bay, and a bus at West View at the ferry terminal taking passengers to amenities in Power River, and also links to the Malaspina Coach down the Sunshine Coast. Currently there are no public transport links to Blubber Bay and it is impossible to get from Vancouver to Texada in one day using the Malaspina Bus service. Fares are high and the baggage limit is the same as Pacific Coastal Airlines, and they charge to carry bicycles!!.

If the BC government is serious about its GHG emission strategy then we have to see some joined-up thinking in the policy domain. We have to see much more funding given over to public transport subsidies or public transport infrastructure investment. High ferry fares actually discourage driving so increasing the subsidies there would be a retrograde step in the reduction of GHG from transportation. So long as we have a confused policy direction, communities will find it virtually impossible to reduced GHG emissions from transportation.

Texada must use and build on its existing infrastructure though. The PRRD should pave the High Road. This would give economic benefits, tourism etc and allow a bus service to run on a circular route, plus for use by road cyclists. Piston-driven aircraft are GHG efficient, but there is a virtual non-use of our airport at Gillies Bay by the public while the taxpayer pays about \$30,000 a year for its upkeep. KD Air pays no airport fees and yet it charges 50% more than the comparable fares to Vancouver using Pacific Coastal from Powell River.

The policy agenda from a BC perspective must be to invest in public transport links and at the same time foster self-sufficiency in communities so the need for travel is reduced. It's no good just changing the OCP, some hard policy decisions have to be made and be funded.

### **A public transport agenda for Texada**

1. Implement a scheduled bus service linking Gillies Bay, Van Anda and outer Texada. Pave the High Road to make a circular route and larger catchment area.
2. Have bus links meeting the ferries at West View taking passengers to Powell River amenities
3. Have links at the Comox ferry terminal
4. Have links to the Malaspina Coach and subsidise its operations.
5. Subsidise food deliveries to our local stores to encourage local self sufficiency
6. Move the ferry terminal to the population centre ( Van Anda) or start a water taxi service from Van Anda.
7. Walking. Build a sidewalk linking Gillies Bay and the park at Shelter Point.
8. Gillies Bay airport. Try to get a much more competitive operator.

### **F SUMMARY**

Texada is advised to adopt sustainability and self-sufficiency to maximise the level of economic activity in the future, meeting threats and building on its natural competitive

advantages. This is likely to pay dividends in terms of economic activity over the next 10-20 year time horizon. This means some hard policy decisions; Texada jobs in the resource sector to be done by Texada residents; less reliance on the ferries to import and export workers and goods to and from Powell River. ; education of our own on Texada. We must build on our existing infrastructure, paving roads and making better use of our airport. And agriculture. It means development of high band-width internet connectivity. And focus on our own stores, hotels and restaurants giving employment to local people. At the same time we must make our island more attractive to prospective residents, employers and employees, for tourism and other recreational activities. And the PRRD must fund a realistic public transport network in accordance with the provincial goals of reducing GHG emissions.

If through policy, we can do those things, the private sector will come through with investment.

One of our biggest threats is the ill-conceived mega project pushed through in the hunt for jobs at any price. Just the threat itself is destabilising holding back economic activity. We must insist that any proposed industrial project be subject to a “net social benefit test” where benefits and costs are defined to include both environmental and natural resource values as well as social and human resource values. And the whole process must be open and transparent. This should be documented in the upcoming “industrial zoning bye law” and enshrined in the OCP.

Richard Fletcher  
October 10, 2011.

*Richard Fletcher is a resident of Texada. He is a former Director of the BC Utilities Commission(1980-88). He subsequently held analytical roles in the global investment industry based in London. He is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales, has an MBA from the Cass Business School, London and a post-graduate diploma in marketing.*

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Three suggestions regarding the Texada Economic Development Action Plan (EDAP)

Nov 12, 2011

Submitted by Tom Read, PO Box 78, Van Anda, BC

tel: 604 483-1471

Hello Scott,

I'd like to add the following suggestions to your file on the Texada EDAP -- thanks!

--Tom

1) Consider adding language about the "Public Sector" and its impact on local economic development (jobs, policies, etc.).

2) Consider using a matrix showing linkages between sectors as part of the process of looking at which initiatives would have the most impact. This isn't necessarily something to do all at once at the beginning, but it could be looked at from time to time as initiatives get further developed.

The content below, which compares the Forestry sector to all the others, is only intended as an example to prime discussion.

Linkage Matrix (sample)

| Sector:  | Forestry | Mining   | Agriculture   | Recreation/<br>Tourism   | Seniors - Retirement Market  | Arts, Culture and Education   | Retail/ Commercial  | Trades & Construction                | Green Economy                 | First Nations   | Public Sector  |
|----------|----------|--|---|--|--|---|---|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|--|
| Forestry |          | - service provider (i.e. land clearing) ; wood processing site ; land multiuse planning ; land | - service provider (i.e. land clearing ; bridge building , fence posts) ; agro-forestry ; farmland leases ; wildfoo | - recreation trails, destinations ; joint land use planning (i.e. agreement on protected areas and rules for | - local wood source for building , space-heating , etc. ; recreation trails, destinations ; sustainable forestry | - local forestry as museum focus ; forestry support for local culture (venues, financial , etc.) ; sustainable forestry education | - local wood product manufacturing and sale (i.e. lumber, furniture, firewood, etc.) ; local logging and silviculture ; contractors spend part of their | - source of local building materials | - wood products manufacturing | - sustainable forestry practices on treaty lands ; hiring of Texada contractors | - support for sustainable forestry practice ; respect for local land use agreements ; hire |

|                             |  |   |   |  |                     |   |  |  |  |  |                    |
|-----------------------------|--|---|---|--|---------------------|---|--|--|--|--|--------------------|
|                             |  | restoral<br>- joint tourism & education | ds<br>- water supply<br>- erosion control<br>- wildlife conservation<br>- joint tourism & education | managing<br>multitude)<br>- tree poacher reporting<br>- sustainable forestry tourism & education | tourism & education | n opportunities for all ages (local and visitor), including with School Dist 47 | incomes with local businesses year-round, whereas non-local contractors do not |  |  |  | Texada contractors |
| Mining                      |  |   |   |  |                     |   |  |  |  |  |                    |
| Agriculture                 |  |   |   |  |                     |   |  |  |  |  |                    |
| Recreation/Tourism          |  |   |   |  |                     |   |  |  |  |  |                    |
| Seniors - Retirement Market |  |   |   |  |                     |   |  |  |  |  |                    |
| Arts, Culture and Education |  |   |   |  |                     |   |  |  |  |  |                    |
| Retail/Commercial           |  |   |   |  |                     |   |  |  |  |  |                    |
| Trades & Construction       |  |   |   |  |                     |   |  |  |  |  |                    |
| Green Economy               |  |   |   |  |                     |   |  |  |  |  |                    |
| First Nations               |  |   |   |  |                     |   |  |  |  |  |                    |
| Public Sector               |  |   |   |  |                     |   |  |  |  |  |                    |

3) Consider quoting the Texada Official Community Plan (OCP), especially its emphasis on small-scale commercial and industrial development (see below) and its implications for the current economic development effort. Unless we propose to amend the OCP, large-scale development projects would appear inappropriate, and the EDAP should thus support new small-scale businesses and incremental expansion of existing Texada businesses. This raises an obvious (and possibly difficult) discussion question for the next phase of developing the EDAP: “On Texada Island, what do we mean by the terms “small-scale” and “large-scale?”

Here’s only one applicable quote from the OCP (page 29, Industry and Commerce Policies):

*B.5.a. PERMIT the development of commercial or small scale industrial uses throughout the planning area, except in those areas designated as “Community Watersheds” or “Agriculture” on Map A.*

*B.5.b. FAVOUR environmentally friendly and sustainable small scale industrial and commercial enterprises as being most compatible with available servicing and the community’s rural character.*