

ECONOMIC RENEWAL PROJECT

2004

This paper combines key documents from the Economic Renewal Project conducted for HICEEC by its then Executive Director, Darlene Gage, with assistance from consultant Sandra Mark.

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A. OVERVIEW OF ECONOMIC RENEWAL PROJECT

Vision of the Hornby Island Economy in 2020

(from Hornby Island Vision Statements - 2003)

“In the future, Hornby Island’s economy reflects and helps sustain the unique nature of Hornby’s people and natural environment. We recognize that a healthy community is what creates a healthy economy and visa versa. Our thriving and diverse economy is comprised of small-scale, locally and/or communally owned businesses, services and value-added industries as well as low-impact tourism.

Many community groups are working to create and finance the infrastructure necessary for the prosperity and common good of all. Local taxes are retained in the community to support local initiatives. The community encourages activities that promote local and individual self-sufficiency, and barter and trade are integral parts of the economy. We re-circulate resources and currency within the community and patronize local businesses and services.

There are plenty of skill-building and educational opportunities, co-operative and support mechanisms to assist the creation and success of small businesses. Employment opportunities and apprenticeships for youth are widely available. Everyone is able to support themselves doing what they love. We also value the contribution of volunteer and unpaid labour to our community.

The arts, agriculture, education, high tech, health care, trades and small-scale production are the major sources of income. Additionally, we are successfully marketing our products and services off-island. Our connections to the broader economic structures are based in just and fair trade practices and do not contribute to the exploitation of people or the planet.”

Why does Hornby Island need To address economic renewal ?

Many Changes Are Taking Place Without Community Input or Control:

- # of kids in the School is dropping
- Families are moving away
- Lack of year-round housing
- Price of land is increasing

- Many people are living below the poverty line
- Current dependence on one industry leaves us vulnerable
- Current practices & trends are having a negative impact on the environment
- Existing businesses are struggling to survive

Community Diversity Affects Us All:

- A healthy community requires a diversity of people.
- This community is fun, creative and engaging because of its incredible natural and human diversity. It's probably one of the reasons most of us moved here in the first place.
- Services for elders are generally provided by young people.

The Economy is a Neglected Subject:

- Other groups are working on healthcare, education, environment, etc, but the economy also requires some community support.
- Change is happening quickly, and the sooner we act to create the future we want, the more successful we can be.

What is “economic renewal”?

Economic renewal is a different approach to economic development. It involves “Sustainable Development” which is based on the following principles:

- Redefines prosperity, weighing quality of life (leisure time, personal health, relationships, participation in the community, etc), community character (traditions, history, unique qualities) and the environment alongside economic considerations.
- Seeks true development, in the sense of getting better, not bigger.
- Ensures that present actions don't harm future generations.
- Prioritizes self-reliance and a more democratic approach to decision-making.
- Starts with the idea that many small efforts work better than a one-size-fits-all solution

Sound Economic Development is based on Four Principles:

1. Plug the Leaks

- Keep money circulating on the Island for as long as possible.
- Replace items which are purchased off-island with those produced on-island.
- Encourage people to shop locally and trade/barter resources and skills.
- Use resources more efficiently.

~ Possible Projects to help Plug the Leaks:

“Hornby Dollars Program”, retrofit our homes to be more energy efficient, start a local insurance company, lobby to have more tax dollars stay on Hornby, research products that people buy in town and encourage local people to produce them, create affordable housing, etc

2. Support Existing Businesses

- Help them become more efficient and successful.

~ Possible Projects to Support Existing Businesses:

Provide “Business Training” programs, create new markets, promote Hornby as place to visit in the “off-season” for

educational purposes (arts, agriculture, healing workshops), create a permanent arts gallery, start a “buy-local” campaign, build an Agricultural Association, create a “Community Land Trust”, create a “business network”, etc.

3. Encourage New Local Enterprise

- Help local entrepreneurs to get a new business organized.
- Create value-added opportunities for current businesses.

~ Possible Projects that would Encourage New Local Enterprise:

Start a “Micro-Loan Fund”, build an “elder care” facility, plan a “village centre” concept, encourage High Speed Internet, build a “Commercial Kitchen” as a place to create specialty food products, “Hornby Island Blackberry Jam, Wine, Vinegar, Chutney”, etc.

4. Recruit Compatible New Business

- Recruit businesses that fit with community values.
- May not even be necessary if first 3 steps are pursued intensively.

Nine Steps to Economic Renewal

Step 1 - Mobilize the Community

Step 2 - Envision the Community’s Future

Step 3 - Identify What We Have to Work With

Step 4 - Discover New Opportunities

Step 5 - Generate Project Idea

Step 6 - Evaluate Project Ideas

Step 7 – Select Project Ideas

Step 8 – Develop Project Action Plans

Step 9 – Implement Project Action Plans

B. SWOT ANALYSIS

Weaknesses

- Limited energy
- Are there enough good people who want to work on this stuff?
- Changing demographics – not everyone coming here cares about keeping diversity in the community and working on the economy
- Are the right people here?
- It’s an expensive place to do business
- Erratic winter transportation (ferry goes down, phones, etc)
- There are negative attitudes in the community about “poor people” and also “business people”
- Expectation that people should volunteer and not make money from working for the community.
- Over-committed volunteer activity
- Some have an “anti-work ethic” – came here to get away from 9-5 jobs. Not a dependable workforce.

- Gap between those who are doing okay and those who aren't –building resentment
- Grumps
- Where are the rich people in this work?
- There is no viable commercial space on the island
- We have no communication strategy
- Still lots of people who are not participating in this
- Isolation

Strengths

- Our desperation
- High degree of individuality, creativity, thinking outside the box, co-operativeness and commitment to the bigger community well-being.
- We can give direct feedback and criticism to each other
- Lots of communal effort and support
- Lots of experience here – retirees can offer much
- The “Hornby mystique” is a strong asset
- We care about the larger world (and they care about us) and have connections in it –people know us.
- Our small size means we can access each other easily
- High degree of talent to draw from.
- Many visitors here really care about this place and the community
- We are attractive to others
- We are developing a good “process culture” – better ways to talk together.
- We are willing to talk about these big issues.

Threats

- Internal attitude and resentment
- Outside money and power
- Gentrification
- Purist mentality
- Drug addictions
- Bylaw resistance to development
- Tree harvesting
- Values of a materialistic culture
- “Progress”, logging, development – outside ethics
- Poverty on a wide-spread level
- High turn-over of key people
- Globalization (economy of the world is moving faster than that of Hornby)
- Addiction
- Globalization
- Poverty
- Mean spiritedness
- Drugs
- Globalization
- Economic oppression from political agendas
- Drugs
- Globalization
- Demographic shifts
- Financial limits
- Internal polarizations
- Sky rocketing land prices
- Lack of community support
- Loss of people and housing
- Rarity – everyone wants what we have
- Fear of tech and business tools and willingness to use them.
- Fear of change
- Conflicting attitudes towards “off islanders”

Opportunities

- Sandra
- People want to hear our story
- Share our stuff in an integrated way
- The pub is for sale
- We have an “earth home builder” here
- Crown land acquisition
- New radio station – opportunity for building connections and generating interest.
- The web
- To make the process more inclusive, ie: bridge class gaps and bring youth on board.
- Public funding not being utilized

Fears

- Diminishing momentum
- Nay-sayers
- The “outcomes’ will not offer a place for me to better myself and my situation
- That it will remain “all talk”
- Get my hopes up and they will be dashed
- Resistance to commercial designation and affordability
- No response
- Disappearance of energy
- Lack of caring for the needs of people
- Trees will die
- We will become just another resort
- No results...waste of time...not positive
- Personality conflicts might jettison the projects
- My own shyness
- Energy level might not be sustainable
- Too few trying to do too much
- Darlene will burnout
- Process will lose its openness

Hopes

- Fruition of ER vision to approximate my formerly hopeless utopian dreams
- Something that actually moves from talk into being
- For everyone to have an adequate income
- Relatively stable, diverse community who are as independent as possible
- Direct financial impact for the greatest # of islanders
- Collective prosperity
- Year-round economic sustainability for all residents
- Vital artistic education opportunities and venue that supports that for all ages.
- Success
- Openness
- Energy
- Sustainable economic opportunities, year-round , a decent living – done lovingly and creatively.
- To create more economic diversity through agriculture and food production
- Good business, ethical food products, teach others to create employment
- Support for preserved food production
- Buying a co-op?
- Revival of energies
- Co-operative work spaces, services, talents/skills
- Financial independence for Hornby’s poor and working class.
- Revitalize the community and support a vibrant and diverse economy.
- Create educational support for all ages.

Next Steps

- Early Adopters T-shirts
- Develop a communications strategy
- Develop engagement skills and strategies (spokesperson role)
- Intensive working days to start each group working on feasibility

C. LONG LIST OF PROJECT IDEAS

1. Economic Infrastructure

These projects coordinate or support economic activity for the community

Access to Capital/ Financial Working Group

- Research access to capital (credit union, coop's assets, community corporation)
- Create lending circle, micro loan and mortgage fund

Business and employment support

- Open Business info/ training centre (financial guidance, marketing, support)
- Build central office space (perhaps in old clinic)
- Start business "incubator" (network for sharing resources and expertise)
- Start business mentorship program
- Create a jobs/needs billboard (maybe computer based)
- Create a database/ directory/ index of skills, services, resources
- Start youth entrepreneur program
- Zone more land commercial
- Build a workshop complex (with commercial spray room for toxic chemical applications)

Marketing and off-island sales

- Start marketing board to promote off-island sales of products
- Develop a Hornby Brand both for products and for community (market what we stand for)
- Create an off-island Hornby store

2. Raising Funds for Community Projects

These projects make money available for the community's use

Tax \$ for community use

- Investigate incorporation as a municipality (for more control of tax \$)
- Tax shelter/ escrow account (for local control & to raise funds for community)
- Initiate a pillow tax (visitor accommodation tax)
- Collect seed fund money from businesses that profit from Crown or common land

Raising funds for community use

- Print our own Hornby Dollars
- Start a Hornby insurance company (house and car)
- Start HELP (Hornby Employment Labor Pool) and sell visitor guide/ active member pass __ money towards winter employment ("Hornby passport")
- Pool gold resources as a borrowing block
- Sell "Hornby Works" shirts
- Build Hornby Wishing Wells

3. Plugging Leaks and Alternatives to Cash Economy

These projects increase our effective incomes either by reducing our dependence on cash or by stemming the flow of cash out of the community

- Start a formal barter and trade program

- Hold a Barter and Trade fair (with open stage at Heron Rocks)
- Set up barter system for health care services
- Set up trade exchange system for elderly and workers (car/housing for labour)
- Have a bartering game night/dickering workshop
- Collect Canadian Tire money for Hope kitchen
- Encourage gleaning in community gardens
- Hold a self-reliance fair
- Assess potential replacement of off-island products with local ones
- Promote localist as opposed to globalist views (“Think globally, shop locally,” campaign)

4. New small business and cooperative opportunities

Recycled Materials

- Start a rag weaving coop
- Start a paper making coop
- Make clothes from recycled materials
- Make new products from recycled materials
- Start a repair shop selling recycled appliances
- Start a women’s collective for recycling materials
- Design/ build caravans from recycled materials and acquire land for a caravan park
- Develop localized urban-ore metals smelting
- Open a glass-blowing/ slumping facility

Natural resources

- Collect and sell wood from Crown lands as lumber and firewood (Admin. by HIRRA)
- Explore ways of making better use of local natural resources (value added products)

Services

- Rickshaw taxi service
- Web portal umbrella (search engine, geographically based, marketing and info.)

5. Agriculture, value added products

- Start a commercial kitchen
- Create a dried produce/ canning/ food processing coop
- Coordinate marketing of herbs and food products
- Start a purchasing coop/ feed store
- Encourage use of ALR (Chinese medicinal herbs and bees)
- Start a community slaughterhouse/chicken butchering facility
- Harvest sea salt
- Hold a “Feast of the Fields” dinner (as a fundraiser)
- Hornby bud festival (hemp products – an annual event)
- Look into sheep raising/ value-added sheep products
- Study feasibility of local dairy
- Start an apple tree museum

6. The Arts

- Create a permanent commercial gallery (HARG)
- Create a permanent public presentation arts center/gallery
- Start an arts circle (lending circle, marketing, support)
- Start an arts marketing board
- Create a film commission
- “Art on the beach” event

7. Education/ Workshops/ Tourism

- Start an International high school
- Start an off-season school of arts (program or building with art gallery and classrooms)
- Organize “Hollyhock-like” retreats
- Organize “whole life” workshops – sharing philosophy and ideas
- Organize workshops on environmental studies, alternative building, zero waste, etc.
- Promote off-season island activities to the elder hostelling association

Tourism

- Open a Youth Hostel
- Open a community-owned campsite

8. Alternative Transportation

- Start an alternative transportation working group
- Build hitchhiking shelters
- Start a car/truck coop
- Create a ride board
- Start a delivery service
- Have registered “safe cars” to pick up hitchhiking kids
- Start a community bikes project
- Start a shuttle bus

9. Science, Ecology, Energy

- Promote use of alternative energy (research engineering testing)
- Start ecology program at school (energy, resources, climate change)
- Start a Science council
- Coordinate efforts to keep track of ecological changes
- Start a sea life education/interpretive center

10. Recreation and Entertainment

- Create more physical activity spaces
- Build a swimming pool, coop swimming pool/health facility
- Advance youth programming
- Have outrageous coffee houses in the Hall during the off-season
- Philosophers’ café event (for youth)

11. Community Identity, Community Vision

- Revise the Hornby Island visitors’ guide/manual (possible fundraiser)
- Create a visitor/ new resident information/interpretation center (including a job center)
- Create a welcome basket/wagon with info for visitors and/or new residents
- Swap jobs to increase social awareness
- Non-profit fair and community conference
- Write a book about creating the Hornby Vision
- Festival of local films (Hornby cultural experiences i.e. fall fair)
- Write a book on local history (i.e. agricultural practices, elders’ stories)
- Interview local long-time residents to create an audio archive
- Become a “Model Community” (environment, social change, etc.)
- Broadcast HIRRA meetings over Cable TV/ radio network (channel 27)
- Community TV station using the cable system
- Computer network to give elders access to meetings

12. Creating a Healthy Community

- Start a childcare coop
- Start an “Adopt a grandparent” program
- Hold closeness workshops and hugging lessons

13. Miscellaneous Ideas

- Blues cruise music on fish boats (fish aid concert)
- Build a stone walkway down Ford Cove hill with tea house
- Build shelter between teen trailer and hope kitchen for trading
- Jan Bevan teach self-reliance at school (or be Principal)
- Elder hostelling (wild craft training, wilderness survival classes) to raise funds for Park Management
- Encourage youth tree climbing/monkey shows
- Form a support group for people who run out of water
- Use rainwater off clinic to water new vegie garden for Hope kitchen

14. Activities already underway

Seniors Assisted Living

Hornby Denman Health Care Society & Elder Housing Society have applied for a grant to build an Assisted Living Center. Please speak to Sheila or Katherine if you would like to get involved.

- Build an assisted living centre for seniors

Village Centre

If you would like to participate in planning the 10 acres near the Hall please contact HIRRA executive or Janet LeBlancq

- Plan a Village Centre

Housing

There is a Housing Committee working on exploring possible options for creating affordable housing. If you would like to be involved please speak to Maria Bonita or Katherine.

- Create an eco-living cluster
- Create mini storage units with camping and garden space
- Build coop housing
- Organize community land trust

Community Garden

Tina Wai is looking into starting a community garden in the field behind the school. If you could help with this project please call her at the school.

- Start a community garden

Water

Please contact Water Stewardship committee (Doug Christie) or GHOSTS (Giff La Rose)

- Water catchment, storage and distribution

Agricultural Association

There will be a meeting towards the end of January to get moving on starting an Agricultural Association. Please see Katherine for info.

D. SHORT LIST OF PROJECT IDEAS

1. Car Co-op

– A Hornby version of a car/truck-sharing group. Share expense of owning a vehicle. Voluntary participation.

What would it achieve/ What problems would it solve?:

Locals need easier access to mobility for off-island trips, hauling things locally, moving, etc; Members have use of a vehicle without the hassles and costs of individual ownership; Car owners could have someone to share the expenses of a car; Less cars on the road, lowers pollution and creates cheaper transportation; Could make life easier for the elderly (trade a car for driving) and lower-income who cannot afford their own car; Provides greater mobility, independence and freedom.

Questions/Potential Problems:

How would the vehicle be accessed by members? Is there a central spot for drop-off and pick-up? Would car-owners buy in? Insurance liability is an issue. Would members need to have a safe-driving check first? Would it really benefit people outside the Co-op itself?

2. Self-Credit/Lending Circle

- A group of folks pooling and sharing resources to help each other get their venture off the ground. Could be a micro-lending institution (mini-credit union) or a self-funded lending group (Grameen model) for self-employment. May grow to allow for donations to be made to the fund, and once established as a stable group, may have the ability to provide mortgages and/or renovation loans.

What would it achieve/What problems would it solve?:

Would allow those who are not eligible for traditional loans to access a loan for their personal ventures; would provide personal support and accountability for those starting a new venture, helping them to succeed; the “mortgage fund” could enable people to purchase their own homes and/or renovate a sub-standard home who would not be eligible for a traditional loan; could provide an “ethical investment” opportunity for people wishing to invest in the community;

Questions/Possible Problems:

Would people actually pay the money back?; where would the initial financing come from?; could “Hornby Dollars” be used to provide a starting financial base?; could start small and get bigger as success is proven.

3. Youth Hostel

- A non-profit community-run Hostel (possibly with a Café, campground). Low cost accommodations for visitors which may also be able to provide low-cost year-round housing for island residents.

What would it achieve/What problems would it solve?:

Provides a low-cost accommodation option; brings interesting, international, ecologically sensitive people to the island; would get people off the beaches and forests and provide them with safe accommodation; would attract more young people to come here.

Questions/Potential Problems:

Might bring more people here in summer; high cost to build it; might bring “yahoos” to the island; would it actually be a place that locals would want to live in year-round?

4. Off-Season Institute of the Arts

- The GroundWater Institute for Arts and Culture is an arts and culture organization that embraces contemporary cultural production in diverse disciplines and media. The Institute would provide the structure necessary to organize the “Off Season Institute of the Arts”. Involved in the production, presentation, dissemination, documentation and consideration of contemporary culture, the GWICA also supports related research. And, importantly, it contributes to and participates in associated critical discourses. Its programmes and events for the most part take place during the off-season. The GWICA's mandated activities include, for example, the presentation of lectures, conferences, symposia, forums, residencies, seminars, workshops, screenings, performances, concerts, exhibitions, and publications. Registered as a non-profit society, the GroundWater ICA operates as a public service organization.

What would it achieve/ What problems would it solve?:

Like groundwater, art and culture nourish and sustain us. Like groundwater, they are precious resources crucial to the local

and the larger community's well-being, resources whose presence or absence effects us all. The GroundWater Institute's activities will provide a forum for discussion of ideas and issues of interest to the community. They will also provide research, production, presentation, education and training opportunities, and direct employment in programming, administration, technical assistance, and preparatory positions. Secondary and tertiary benefits will accrue to existing service providers. The critical mass of population and interest it produces will be occasion for the development of new ventures in cultural production and in the service sector of the local economy. GWICA activities will engage and utilize existing resources during the off-season. Hornby Island's cultural producers and the community at large, including youth, will benefit significantly from the GWICA by being employed in its operations and programmes, attending its events, using its facilities, and engaging with its visitors for workshopping, network building and information exchange.

Questions/Possible Problems:

The Institute needs both financing and volunteer support to get it off the ground and so requires community support to proceed; it does not sound like it would provide work for local artists in teaching positions?;

5. Gold Project

- Finding ways to collect and recycle into community funds unwanted gemstones, silver, and gold. Gold objects such as single earrings, wedding bands, cufflinks, crucifixes, and chains, whatever their carat value, could be refined and smelted it into bullion or coins which would then fund community projects.

What would it achieve/what problems would it solve?:

Could finance many good community projects; galvanizes people around an innovative idea; makes us less dependent on government grants; could be the basis for creating our own credit union or self-credit circle; is potentially a model for other communities; is potentially a model for a global development initiative for which Hornby could be an administrative centre providing employment.

Questions/Possible Problems:

Would it actually work on a small community level? ;Would people give over their old gold etc.?; Would it amass sufficient gold in order to refine and sell it?; What security measures would be necessary?; Where would it be stored?; How would the fund be administered?

6.Hornby Island Renaissance (Life-Long Learning Co-op)

– Organizing and marketing off-season workshops and retreats that would bring people here to learn about the arts, agriculture, health, personal growth, groundwater issues, etc. Start small (workshops for 25 people or so) and use current facilities. Would require a central organizer/co-ordinator to market, co-ordinate logistics, etc.

What would it achieve/What problems would it solve?:

Would provide jobs for anyone wanting to teach a workshop; would allow B&B's, restaurants to potentially stay open longer (or even year-round) to service the participants; would help to diversity Hornby's reputation as people would be coming here to learn about "how we do things" rather than just summer fun; would offer city folks an experience of a natural, rural lifestyle and a strong sense of community; would build on assets and infrastructure that we already have in place; would bring more money into the local economy; would help to diversify the economy.

Questions/Possible Problems:

Would it inadvertently bring more people here in the summer? How would we attract people to actually come to the workshops – what makes us different than all the other workshops out there? How would we maintain quality control on the teaching aspect?

7. Community Commercial Kitchen

– Creating a well-equipped kitchen where residents could create specialty food products for sale both on and off-island. Suitable for grocery store sales.

What would it achieve/What problems would it solve?:

Locals without access to a commercial kitchen would have an approved way to create their products and market them more

widely. Catering businesses could access it for their business. People without year-round housing would have a safe place to do their own canning, food prep. Creates new potential markets and businesses. Similar to the Farmer's Market – could encourage new businesses to start up.

Questions/Potential Problems:

Would need a permanent paid staff person to supervise, clean up, and ensure compliance with health regulations. Do we have the money for this? Might be a high-cost project depending on what kind of building was created, cost of land, etc. (current cost estimated at \$30,000) How would waste water be dealt with? Where would water come from? Needs more research to find out how other communities have set up a similar kitchen. Could be a Co-op kitchen instead of a commercial one, which helps get around crown land limitations.

8. Hornby Dollars

– Designed after the successful “Salt Spring Dollars”, this project would create an actual currency (valued at par with Canadian dollars) which could only be spent at local businesses for goods, services or exchanged for national currency. The currency would “expire” 2 years after purchase, which means that all unredeemed dollars would create a profit available to finance local community projects.

What would it achieve/What problems would it solve?:

The benefit is that many dollars leave the island as souvenirs and the money collected from its sale would be used to fund other community projects. Could increase spending at local businesses, plug leaks. Salt Spring Island already has a successful working example of this project.

Questions/Possible Problems:

There are many currency models in use around the world (such as LETS Dollars, Ithaca Hours, etc) – is this really the model that we want to use? More research should be done on these other models before we decide to go with the Salt Spring model; perhaps local businesses could offer a 10% discount for using Hornby Dollars, which creates more incentive to use them; what kind of organizational structure would need to be in place to make sure this is done correctly? Would our population size actually create enough return on the investment of starting it? Do we actually have the resources to develop and market this project?

9. Marketing Co-op

– Bring together various producers (arts, food, crafts, etc) to create a Co-op designed to help everyone market their products off-island more effectively. Share transport costs, identify retail opportunities, create a “Hornby Brand”, etc. Would require reliable mass production of items and a financial commitment from members.

What would it achieve/What problems would it solve?:

Could expand many markets, enables products/services to be sold without purchaser coming to the island; increases year-round sales potential (not just summer months); decreases costs for producers; reduces commissions from “middle man”; helps to access the Internet market for those technologically fearful. Could be useful to many people, and could increase local incomes.

Questions/Potential Problems:

Would people actually join this Co-op? Would people be able to work co-operatively and reliably? How would it be financed? Would it need a paid organizer/co-ordinator? Could it incorporate a website and catalogue? Would we create an off-island store? Would it inadvertently “promote” Hornby Island (by using a “Hornby Brand”) and thus encourage more people to come here?

10. Business Training Centre

– A central place where businesses can obtain office services, information and advice; a co-ordination point for mobilizing and training labour for local employment; a means to link businesses with service providers, advisors and labour resources.

What would it achieve?:

Provides physical services and support to local businesses that assist them in their daily operations and administration to become more efficient and effective; provide information and research services to local businesses to help enhance their scope

and productivity; provide counseling and service to local businesses in finance, taxation, marketing and accounting; promote the employment and training of local labour resources to meet the needs of local businesses.

What problems would it solve?:

“Plugging leaks” by providing services locally to businesses thereby saving them from the cost of off-shore services and/or time and travel to obtain services; “securing the plugs” by assisting businesses to become efficient in their own activities; “strengthening the bucket” by promoting the use of services of other local businesses and to utilize local advisors and employees.

Questions/Possible Problems:

Could it also set up mentoring structures? Could it provide legal advice on matters relating to business? Could it actually be financially self-sufficient? How would it pay for itself? Do we really know the extent of need for business support? Where would it be located? Do we have the mentors available and how would we find them?

11. Hornby Information/Resource Centre

– A central year-round information centre where both visitors and locals could access information about services, events, businesses, etc, exchange information about needs (jobs, rentals, etc) and visitors find information about environmental protection (water, septic, recycling), where to go for help and many other resources.

What would it achieve/What problems would it solve?:

It would help to solve various problems such as: accommodation information, ride sharing, business hours, jobs available, local books for sale, interpretive centre, resource lists, Internet connection, etc. Might also act as the “Business Resource Centre”.

Questions/Potential Problems:

Who would it actually be serving? Where would it be located? Currently no funds available to create such a service? How would it be financially sustainable? How could we afford to staff it?

E. SELECTED PROJECTS IDEAS AND THEIR FEASIBILITY

(From the report of consultant Sandra Mark)

Three concepts had been developed through the economic renewal” process sponsored by HICEEC:

~ **Value-added food production**

~ **Arts Marketing**

~ **Workshops/retreats program delivery**

Project Feasibility

It was felt that there was potential for 3 businesses to be created. In each case, the groups were brought together and considered the market realities of the businesses under review. In general, I reported to them that there is evidence of strong demand in the market place for value-added food products particularly when these products are examples of authentic local cuisine. The Arts market is very specialized but there is room in the Design, Craft and Clothing specialty markets for high-end products. There are several ‘retreat’ and ‘workshop’ programs available in BC to interested customers. Hornby could attract a shoulder season group that was particularly interested in the lifestyle experiments that are a hallmark of life on Hornby Island. A well-prepared and packaged events schedule would find a niche in the marketplace. All of these ideas depend upon a strong marketing program.

I met with all the participants in a large group and with each sub-group separately to consider the issues and test motivation. Specific interest from individuals was tapped. After several meetings, it became very clear to me that there were several issues that stood in the way of any efforts to create specific viable businesses given the ideas on the table.

Leadership:

Each group was made up of individuals wishing to pursue their own agenda and wishing for supportive services to be made available to them. Leadership to devote towards developing a collaborative business model just did not emerge. As a result, I met with the board of HICEEC and suggested that in their role as facilitator of community economic development on Hornby Island, that they might take the necessary leadership. This was agreed. I assisted the board to develop a draft strategic plan that articulated this role.

Recommendation: That HICEEC take a proactive role in building a supportive business infrastructure for residents of Hornby Island.

Marketing:

The common thread between the business ideas was a huge gap in the ability of Hornby residents to market their goods and services. On island markets (such as the Hornby Island Arts Group and private galleries, the Farmer's Market and shops in the Ringside Market) in general did not provide enough exposure to high-end purchasers that most participants would need to target with their specialty products and services. As a result, I recommended that all three groups work together to develop a Community Branding Strategy and a community marketing service that would be of value to all businesses on Hornby Island. I recommended this to the Board of Directors of HICEEC. They showed willingness to take on building and maintaining the community brand. The purpose of this exercise is to ensure that Hornby Island residents are preparing their products and services to meet a quality standard and that they are being presented in the market-place with the cachet that the name Hornby Island evokes.

Recommendation: That HICEEC propose to amenable funders a project to develop a community brand and brand management process that would be housed within HICEEC on an ongoing basis.

Recommendation: That HICEEC develop a business plan for a marketing service. This service would actively link Hornby Island producers with appropriate market opportunities on an ongoing basis. This could include participation in BC trade shows on behalf of groups of Island producers for example.

Recommendation: That HICEEC work with The Hornby Island Co-op and the Farmer's Market Society to develop an approach that incubates island businesses and showcases them to residents and visitors alike. In particular, pricing strategies are needed that ensure that producers of Hornby products and services are able to receive fair prices for goods and services they produce.

Business acumen:

Most of the participants in this process indicated that they did not have business plans and that they did not really know how to price their products or market their products off-island. I introduced some producers to existing marketing venues such as Circle Craft and The Wood Co-op, but, the notion of marketing together under the Hornby Brand was appealing to the group. The idea of creating Hornby Island gift boxes was also discussed. In my view, access to business planning support services is a major need for Hornby Islanders. Because many don't travel off island, the level of awareness of market forces is very low.

Recommendation: That HICEEC seek out funding to provide regular business planning workshops for Hornby islanders

Recommendation: That Circle Craft and The Wood Co-op be invited to present to meetings on Hornby Island to 'put a face' on their services for islanders.

Recommendation: That a Hornby Island Gift basket program be developed—this would assist producers to focus production on high-end specialty products.

Considering the three business ideas in more depth:

1. Value added food production:

There are several Hornby Island residents who have ideas for excellent food products. The need for access to a manufacturing commercial kitchen was identified early in the process. However, this is a very costly piece of infrastructure. A representative from the Small Scale Food Processor Association (SSFPA) met with a group of potential processors and it

was agreed that membership in the SSFPA and the Local Flavours Co-op that is being developed by the SSFPA would be excellent resources for Hornby Island food producers who wish to commercialize their food products. The potential of the 'Thatch' kitchen to accommodate shared use production is being investigated.

Recommendation: That HICEEC link anyone interested in developing a food product to the SSFPA and in particular encourage them to participate in the 'Recipe for Success' program that assists people to develop business plans.

Recommendation: That HICEEC negotiate with the HI Co-op to provide 'back haul' services for food producers to reduce their costs of doing business.

Recommendation: That HICEEC participate in the Comox Valley Economic Development planning process for the creation of a regional food production facility.

Recommendation: That growers on Hornby Island meet with potential processors to discuss scaling up agricultural production for products needed by those wishing to develop a processing business.

2. Arts Marketing:

Off-island marketing was discussed since there are several venues for on-island marketing and winter season markets are badly needed.

Recommendation: A market agent to organize off-island sales would make sense. This position could be developed by a Hornby Island person interested in the arts who was willing to work on commission to represent Hornby artists in trade shows and other market placements. Someone with these interests did not emerge during this project's time frame. This agent would best be situated as a link between HICEEC and HIARG.

Recommendation: Wood producers are encouraged to join the BC Wood Co-op whose venue on Granville Island is top rate.

Recommendation: Craft producers are encouraged to apply to Circle Craft.

Recommendation: The need for production workshop space became quite clear as the project developed. For example, there is potential for a sewing workshop to support the fabric designers who have difficulty producing enough product to reach commercial viability. The major barrier is access to affordable private workshop space. It is recommended that HICEEC work with partners to develop the concept of work/live accommodation and create an artists' precinct on the island as a long-term project.

Hornby Island is one of many islands that prove to be havens for artists, craftspeople and designers. During this project, several other groups were in contact with me and other economic development agencies have indicated interest in a Vancouver Island/Small Islands approach to arts marketing. (Recent Statistics Canada reports show that there is a very high percentage of artists in BC and that their mean income is the lowest in Canada—this fact alone cries out for a concerted effort to be made to help organize artists and craftspeople from a market perspective.

Recommendation: That HICEEC and HARG consider inviting representatives from other small islands and from Vancouver Island to a meeting to discuss market issues and develop a common strategy.

3. Workshop/Retreat Program Delivery:

The group working on this project decided to name the initiative the 'Hornby Alternative Living Experience' (HALE). Some leadership emerged to plan a workshop weekend in the fall 2005. There is a lot of potential for this idea but those residents who already are giving workshops did not participate in the planning sessions—those that wish to begin to provide workshops were not in a position to finance a business effort at this time.

Recommendation: That HICEEC seek funding to develop a business plan and co-ordinate creation of a workshop business. There is a lot of potential but little resource amongst the group to finance hiring a co-ordinator/organizer at this point.

Final comments:

Visitor phobia:

A lot of effort during this project went on working with participants to come to terms with the visitor phenomenon. Because many Hornby Island residents are displaced over the summer, and because there is such a huge influx of visitors to the Island over the summer period, there is evidence of a very dysfunctional relationship with many Hornby residents feeling exploited and angry but nevertheless beholden to the visitors. To mitigate this process somewhat, we developed a 'Customer Code' that not only could provide a message to visitors about the Hornby values but could also encourage Hornby Islanders to claim more positive relationships with their customers over the summer.

Recommendation: That HICEEC consider the Customer Code and once approved, to incorporate this in communications plans targeted at summer visitors as well as to on-Island producers.

On island price competition:

Islanders cannot afford to sell goods and services for less than the price of production but on-island competition can put pressure on producers to reduce prices. Whereas 'price fixing' is not legal, Hornby Islanders should be encouraged to not sell below their production costs. This can only be clear when people have done detailed business planning and have learned how to price their products appropriately.

Community Branding:

Several communities in BC are recognizing the benefits of community branding, not only to ensure that localities can be celebrated for their unique characteristics, but also to support high quality production and marketing of goods and services. Hornby Island already 'has a brand' but it is not named clearly nor is it managed. This contributes to frustration of Hornby Islanders in their efforts to create sustainable incomes for themselves and their families. In my opinion, HICEEC is well placed not only to develop a formal community brand, but also to provide the ongoing brand management services bundled with business support services to encourage increased business acumen and increased marketplace penetration. Such a service could be planned as a demonstration project of value for learning purposes to other Island communities and other small rural areas.

F. IMPLEMENTATION AND AFTER-WORDS

(appended by current Executive Director Tony Law)

Implementation

HICEEC established a six month community marketing project with the objective of pursuing these business ideas. The key outcome was the creation of HICEEC's marketing function, *RealHornby*, which continues to serve the community. There was not sufficient energy/interest/opportunity to pursue the concepts of valued added food production or workshop/retreat program delivery in a sustainable way, although support was provided to individual entrepreneurs.

Afterwords

The Economic Renewal process indicates that the community is good at generating creative ideas for projects. However, there was not the critical mass of energy to move these forward on the scale conceptualized for these ideas..

The project list remains a valuable inventory to draw upon as needs, interests and opportunities arise and informs HICEEC's on-going activities.

January 2009