

What are we going to be doing in Gibsons?

Exploring changing work trends and action for community planning.

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*For the community:
A selection of useful
websites offering statistical
and community
development information
have been included on page
21 of the report.*

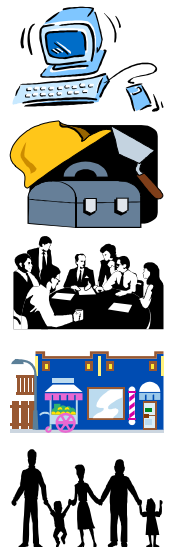
1. INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2000 a group of planning, architecture and landscape architecture students from the University of British Columbia visited to Gibsons to present their visions for the community. The town's Mayor, upon receiving our ideas for community development, design, and environmental and land use management strategies, posed "Yes, we can imagine these things but...what are we going to be doing?" This paper is an effort to respond to that question. It is an exploration into the future and into what the working people of Gibsons might be doing. It is also a proposal that suggests steps that can be taken to realize these goals and some actions for planning.

In order to approach the Mayor's question, I have chosen to first look at the facts and trends of the labour market in B.C. and Canada, within Gibsons and across the Sunshine Coast region. I also turn to theorists in the broader literature for thoughts on what Canadians are wanting and what direction global forces are taking them in terms of work and economic activity.

The facts, however, do not determine the direction communities will take in their transition. Communities can choose their activities or philosophy of managing change. Choices can be the result of available senior agency and government programs, local grass roots initiatives or both. I have looked into the community development policies and initiatives of BC's government ministries, which may suggest the path some West Coast communities will be following over the upcoming decades. Adding to this is a brief look into grassroots initiatives that offer some ideas on ways locals can be more proactive about shaping their own work future. Gibsons and the Sunshine Coast have already done some work in their economic development strategies and I have included a summary of those efforts as well.

Exploration into the facts and strategies noted above has helped inform one vision for Gibsons' economic activity and employment future. This particular vision is based on a diversity of employers, jobs, work space arrangements and market activities in order to offer opportunities to a broad working population. These efforts should also making the town more resilient to the greater global economic forces and more self-directed. It is based on careful growth in tourism, expansion of the knowledge sector, promotion of cottage industries and changes in community service and retail. I have followed up this vision with steps toward realization, particularly



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some suggestions for community design, land use planning and policy. I have chosen to focus on one particular issue in each of the four sectors of the vision.

To show what this reality may be for a resident of Gibsons, I have drafted a story “A Day in a Life” for the Merryweather family. You may call them ‘old-timers’ or ‘new-comers’; the Montserats, the Madamis or the Mins. This story may be in a few years or a few decades depending on the choices made in Gibsons.

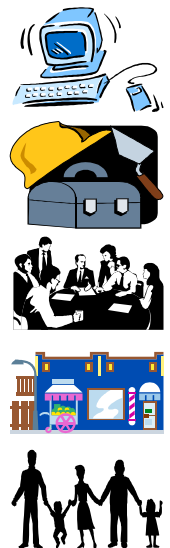
This paper, and the vision suggested here, is not conclusive, nor comprehensive. It can be best viewed as a starting point for discussions the community will need to have regarding opportunities for work in the upcoming decades.

2. GIBSONS’ “WORKFUTURE”: A THUMBNAIL SKETCH

The workers of Gibsons will have more choice in their type of work and workplace. Far more people will employ themselves. A number of people will be working from home on a full or part-time basis, others will be telecommuting, others will be working in local cooperative work centres and others will be in the more traditional work places of forestry, service provision, retail, hospitality and goods manufacturing. The numbers of resource labourers will fall and resource workers will require increased levels of education and skill.

The industrial sector will grow and transform to accommodate the need for flexible space and room for smaller enterprises. Live and work arrangements will evolve considerably, especially in residential environments. The community will promote itself as a tourism and recreation destination and perhaps put health care or education into the tourism mix. Arts cooperatives will thrive offering education and training, places to show, studio spaces and niche retail for tourism, local and broader markets.

The population will grow, including the proportion of retirees, as the current population ages and as urban baby boomers seek a quiet place to retreat. This vision is in line with the proposals of the Gibsons Economic Development Partnership and the Sunshine Coast Economic Development Society. Following is a deeper investigation into the trends that will lead this change, and some suggestions for action the community might take to realize it..



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3. TRENDS IN THE ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT ACROSS BRITISH COLUMBIA AND CANADA.

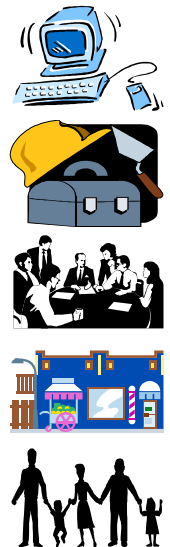
The future promises to be different yet again. The BC economy of the future will still have a strong (and likely stronger) resource sector, but one that is better differentiated, more productive and more competitive. The province will also enjoy the benefits of a broad array of new and emerging economic activities, which will be built on human capital, not physical and natural capital. Tourism and knowledge-based industries will be the forest and mining sectors of tomorrow. Knowledge intensive services and knowledge-based manufacturing will all have large and central roles to play in the BC economy of the next century (Goldberg, 1998).

In the above excerpt, Michael Goldberg provides a synopsis of BC's future economy that demonstrates its reliance on a diversity of sectors and on increased human capacity in a variety of knowledge-based areas. His paper, "The British Columbia Economy into the Millennium: Perspectives and Possibilities" details the growth and significance of tourism and new knowledge-based sectors and the continual role of the BC resource sector.

The goods sector, loosely defined as resource and manufacturing industries, is not expected to offer any job growth, although its productivity is predicted to remain constant. Goldberg suggests that the resource sector will play an increasing role as a knowledge-based industry, rather than a resource-based one. Value-added and niche goods will prevail over raw commodities and export of BC knowledge in resource extraction will keep the sector active in the future economy. High quality value-added wood and food products are expected to provide BC with a growth sector that thrives outside of the lower mainland.

Transportation and communication have shown great potential as deregulated industries, providing the province with excellent transportation and communication potential. Numerous workers are supported in their ability to work at home by the use of information technology and the Internet. Other strong developments in the software, engineering and advanced technologies industries have shown that they will have a strong role in BC's economy. While it is a growing area, the high technology sector is expected to offer well paid jobs to a few and insecure jobs laden with competition for many (Menzies, 1996).

Tourism (vacation travel, business travel and conventions) will be a significant growth area in BC. Not surprisingly, the dominance of the service sector in providing employment will continue. The service sector includes tourism and essential services such as health care and education, consumer services such as hairstyling



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and finance, and support and business services that assist in the operations of other sectors, such as printing and graphics for building contractors. With the rise in the service sector, part-time employment is also increasing (Swift, 1995). Cross-marketing services to international visitors, as part of tourism and education or tourism and health care packages is expected to lead growth in the export of Canadian services (Goldberg, 1998).

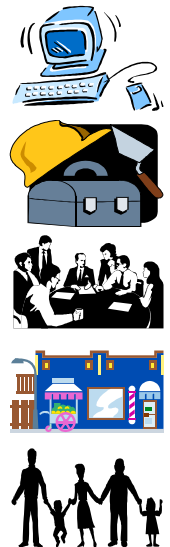
The outlook for Canada is similar to that of BC. Daniel Glenday, in his paper “Lost Horizons, Leisure Shock: Good Jobs, Bad Jobs, Uncertain Future” (1997) describes the 50 year decline in manufacturing jobs and concurrent rise in the service employment across the nation. Good jobs in the future will not be found in the typically unionized environments of resource extraction and goods manufacturing, but instead in the managerial and professional realm where an advanced education or specific training will be necessary. Unfortunately, the numbers of good jobs will be declining on the whole, replaced by more bad jobs with fewer prospects, lower wages and therefore, economic security for fewer Canadians (ibid.).

The increasing role of small business and self-employment in all sectors cannot be overemphasized. The small business sector is transforming; more businesses are incorporated, and fewer have unpaid family staff working regularly. Small businesses in BC, those with fewer than 20 employees, employ a significantly larger proportion of workers, 19%, than the Canadian average, 16% (BC Stats, March 2000). Industry Canada data shows that self-employment has increased dramatically over the past few decades, with accelerated growth through the 1990s. Interestingly, British Columbia also leads the nation in growth in the self-employed sector (Industry Canada, April 2000). Yet, while these enterprises are providing jobs for more Canadians, the small size carries with it increased prevalence of part-time work and sudden job loss.

Appreciating these trends at the broader level can assist in understanding the nature of job change in our communities. Following is an investigation in how these trends are acting on the Gibsons and area local economy.

4. TRENDS IN THE ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT IN GIBSONS AND ACROSS THE SUNSHINE COAST.

Continuing population growth in BC and particularly the lower mainland will result in sustained population growth on the Sunshine Coast. However, this migration will primarily be of persons who are commuters or telecommuters to the “job rich” lower mainland, self employed entrepreneurs and semi-retired or retired persons. Job creation opportunity on the Sunshine Coast will remain strong, however, job growth will continue to lag behind population growth (Sunshine Coast Economic Development Commission, 1992).



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The above quote was fairly accurate for the decade that has passed since it was prophesied. Employment statistics for Gibsons over the last 10 years show trends similar to those BC-wide (BC Stats, 2000). While major sectors have historically been forestry, milling and fishing (SCEDC, 1992), the numbers of jobs provided in primary industry, manufacturing and construction have steadily declined. Employment in transportation and communication industries have dropped, even with the area's reliance on ferries and the increasing use of computers and information technology at home and on the job.

Employment in the service industries, such as wholesale and retail trade, financial and business services, health care and social service has increased in Gibsons. The greatest growth over the last 10 years has occurred in the tourism-related sector of food, beverage and accommodation, with an increase significantly greater than the BC average and even greater than the whole of the Sunshine Coast.

The number of labourers has been growing in Gibsons and the region and will continue to do so as the population grows. Comparing the town's employment status to that across the region and the province shows Gibsons unemployment rate higher, its average employment income lower, and the incidence of low-income households higher. It is important to note that BC Stats data does not differentiate those people willingly out of work or working less from those who would prefer to work more.

5. VISIONS FOR CANADA'S WORK FUTURE: FROM THE LITERATURE.

No longer can prosperity come straight from the ground. Increasingly it must come from the minds of the Canadian people. (The Economic Council of Canada, as quoted in Swift, 1995.)

Books such as "Work in Canada" (Lowe and Krahn, 1993), "Wheel of Fortune" (Swift, 1995), "The End of Work" (Rifkin, 1995), "Whose Brave New World?" (Menzies, 1996) describe the transition in employment and the economy across the country and further abroad. There are frequent references to the continual decline in the number of "good jobs", formerly found in unionized sectors, being replaced by an increasing number of "bad jobs" in the service sector. This transition fuels the trends of lower annual incomes and increasing job insecurity (Glenday, 1997; Goldberg, 1998; Swift, 1995).

The future's "good jobs" offering a good wage, security and prospects for advancement will be found among the managerial and professional sectors, requiring a considerable background of education and/or experience and of which there are fewer to go around (Glenday, 1997; Rifkin, 1995). The greatest employment growth across the



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country is expected to be of “bad jobs” in the low paying sectors such as tourism, accommodation, retail and recreational service with poor or no benefits and little or no opportunity for advancement.

Writers suggest that the manufacturing industries will continue to play a role in a strong economic foundation, but they will be transformed into state-of-the-art, high-tech enterprises (Goldberg, 1998), with one unit taking the place of a former many, not unlike what has occurred at the Howe Sound Pulp and Paper Mill. This change has made a number of smaller producers obsolete and has concentrated work into fewer areas. The technological transformation often means a loss of jobs to mechanization, which is exacerbated by the fact that increased production does not usually carry with it increased need for workers (Swift, 1995).

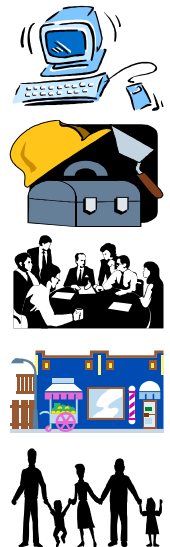
6. WORKING WITH THE TRENDS: COMMUNITY STRATEGIES TO NAVIGATE EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION

Only by building strong, self-sustaining local communities will people in every country be able to withstand the forces of technological displacement and market globalization that are threatening the livelihoods and survival of much of the human family. (Rifkin, 1995, 250)

6. I. PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS AND DIRECTION.

How are small communities successfully navigating the changing employment times? Communities transition in a variety of ways- unplanned, planned with the assistance of outside agencies, or as a result of grassroots community development initiatives. In order to get an idea of the efforts of BC’s small communities, I have turned first to the provincial government and looked into the community assistance programs offered under the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture; Ministry of Community Development, Cooperatives and Volunteers; and Ministry of Forestry with the Forest Renewal BC initiative.

The BC government programs have been designed to help small communities navigate their economic transition and move away from dependency on forest resources. The government is supporting bottom-up initiatives, focussing on capacity building, rather than relying on top-down defined programs and funding inputs. The “Community Resiliency Manual: A Resource for Rural Recovery and Renewal” funded by the Ministry of Forests ‘Forest Renewal BC’ program offers some direction. It defines a resilient community as “one that takes



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intentional action to enhance the personal and collective capacity of its citizens and institutions to respond to, and influence, the course of social and economic change” (Centre for Community Enterprise, 1999, 2).

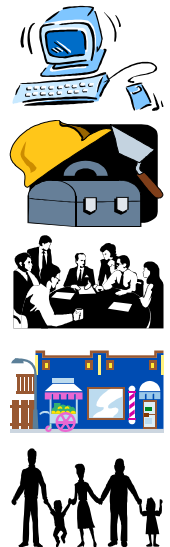
The “Creating Jobs” section of the manual focuses on strategies the community can take to increase its own enterprises, such as entrepreneur support services, self-employment strategies and venture formation. It promotes the extensive use of research, planning and advocacy in all steps of the process and, with respect to jobs, doing feasibility studies, business mentoring and monitoring in order to assist in enterprise success. This “bottom-up” philosophy is reflected in similar programs such as small business support in the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture and funding for cooperative start-ups and community driven development projects in the Ministry of Community Development, Cooperatives and Volunteers.

The Community Resiliency Manual is a tool kit for communities taking action themselves, taking stock of their own resilience capability and then moving into strategic planning based on visions and values established out of intensive community process. It becomes clear then, using this community-based approach, that no two communities will have the same future vision or strategy due to the differing skills sets, needs, infrastructure, ability to secure funds, networks established, partnerships or resources inherent there. This is not unlike the strategy of grassroots community economic development that has been getting plenty of attention over the last decade (Boothroyd and Davis, 1993; Lauer, 1993; Bryant and Preston, N.D.).

6. II. THE “THIRD SECTOR” AND GRASSROOTS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES.

Some communities are willingly heading down alternative paths in order to increase their community’s self-reliance. Melany, a small town in Australia, has been working for the last ten years to remove itself from the greater economic grid (Douthwaite, 1996). Using cooperative business enterprises to provide their choice of goods and services at reasonable prices, a credit union offering small loans and an alternative money system, Bunyas, that are traded for local goods and labour, the residents have tried to reduce the impacts of global market changes.

A small business incubator was set up in Melany with the help of the Queensland government, offering technical and advisory support to businesses. A tele-cottage was also established to provide businesses with access to marketing and technical information. Successful start-ups there include a variety of niche market food producers and a book publisher. Some of those have moved on to bigger spaces in the community. The community knows the system is not perfect, and realizes that even local support is not always certain, but it does provide a model of



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citizens doing things differently to achieve a similar quality of life. Douthwaite argues that communities “have no alternative but to work from the bottom up (1996, 32).

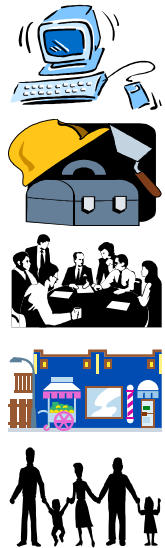
Rifkin proposes that the North American environment is ripe for the resurrection of the third sector, where exchanges occur outside of the commonly known public and private realms of the market (Rifkin, 1995). He looks forward to a time when “the giving of one’s time to others takes the place of the artificially imposed market relationships” (ibid., 239) based on the sale of goods and services to others. This is the realm of not-for-profit societies, cooperatives and volunteer organizations, a sector that is growing rapidly and what the French have termed the ‘social economy’. While Rifkin acknowledges that many workers will have to continue to rely on market

employment for livelihoods, the third sector will grow in importance and will strengthen communities in their economic sustainability.

7. FROM THE GROUND UP: THE GIBSONS AND REGION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Gibsons Economic Development Partnership and, earlier, the Sunshine Coast Economic Development Committee have made a number of proposals for employment generation in the region that to varying degrees take advantage of local skills and resources. Here I will summarize those proposals. These, along with the inputs from statistical trends and the noted community development philosophies, will be used to inform the vision for economic diversity shaped for Gibsons, found in the upcoming section.

Gibsons Economic Development Partnership (GEDP), in a submission to the 1999 Premier’s Summit, targets five key areas for development, thereby broadening the traditional resource base of the local economy. The GEDP considers the promotion of tourism a transition strategy as well as a long-term strategy. While the community recognizes the quality of jobs in hospitality is not ideal, the community can find early revenues there to support other initiatives. The Partnership has also indicated promotion of value-added wood manufacturing, educational services, high-tech businesses, and arts and culture. The GEDP argues that successfully building new enterprises in these areas is dependent on availability of appropriate transportation, communication and financial services (GEDP, 1999).



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Looking at the direction the GEDP is proposing for the town, the kind of partnerships at the community and government level that it proposes and the level of infrastructure it acknowledges will be required, the town is emulating the kind of strategy for community resilience proposed in the FRBC manual. One apparent departure from the community development doctrine is the focus on securing external investment and market growth. While these aspects are important to support new infrastructure and provide needed revenues, the development of a local reliance is necessary (Douthwaite 1996; Glenday, 1997; Rifkin, 1995).

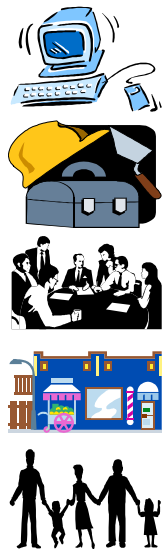
In 1992, in an insert titled “Futurescan”, the Sunshine Coast Economic Development Commission made some predictions toward the work future in the region. The Commission proposed that most job growth would come from commuters and self-employed entrepreneurs. The future for forestry included a new emphasis on silviculture, new uses for alternative fibers, increased recreation and also increased pressure for environmental protection and public access. Manufacturing and processing would grow on a new site at the Hillside Industrial Park, an environmentally planned, value added production area. Marine aquaculture and salmon fisheries were expected to stabilize as a result of salmon enhancement.

Tourism was expected to grow, boosting the Sunshine Coast’s status as a regional recreation and destination area, supporting wilderness recreation, cruise ship excursions and leisure sports such as golf, cycling, scuba diving and fresh water fishing. Promotion of the arts through increased artist profile and improved programming of its existing arts organizations along with increased marketing of television and motion picture production was expected to increase the role of arts in the economy. Expansion in retail, commercial and professional services was proposed to occur with the predicted increase in the population.

In tune with the changes occurring across the nation, over the last decade the SCEDC has been promoting the area as ideal for small business and telework. They have touted the fields of small-scale enterprise and value-added manufacturing showing how the area has demonstrated the potential for cottage industries in horticulture and goods production.

8. ENVISIONING GIBSONS’ “WORKFUTURE”

What do these local economic development suggestions, combined with the broader trends in employment and work theory suggest for future work in Gibsons? Ultimately, the future job offerings will depend on choices made and leadership taken. Here, I chose a vision of employment and economic diversity, and have focussed on the development of four sectors, with unique initiatives in each. The tourism sector will develop



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around multi-experience overnight excursions involving joint programming of a number of businesses. The knowledge industry will be accommodated by increased ability to live and work at home or within the neighbourhood in cooperative work centres. The cottage industries will be housed in flexible industrial live/work areas. Introducing cooperative retail and shared studio and showroom space at subsidized rates for new businesses will enhance community services and retail.

8. I. THE TOURISM SECTOR

Imagine people from Vancouver, across Canada and abroad coming to Gibsons for two-three night packages, not only to enjoy Gibsons' remarkable natural landscape, but to participate in a conference, an art or computer course, enjoy a spa, or visit their Canadian doctor. Promoting multi-experience tourism in Gibsons will encourage a broader range of visitors, year round tourism and offer a better variety of jobs to the residents.

Joint programming of educational courses, arts and entertainment events, recreation, food and beverage service and accommodation will allow the community to offer easy vacation experiences for people who prefer planned excursions. Additional accommodation in bed and breakfasts and small boutique hotels will promote the small town charm that draws visitors to the town. Leadership in marketing, which looks promising using the skills of the GEDP, will be necessary.

Marketing services to tourists that are also necessary to the community will help this industry remove itself from brief seasonal cycles. Retailers finding niche goods and selling locally and beyond will increase the kinds of retail available to tourists while broadening the market base. Increasing knowledge in electronic commerce and web-based marketing will help this sector reach a broader public.

8. II. THE KNOWLEDGE SECTOR

This sector is broad and includes the areas of software and information technology, engineering, architecture and design, finance and real estate, investment management, insurance, education and health care, transportation and communication, and cultural industries (Goldberg, 1998). In Gibsons, imagine people working as freelance consultants, contractors, small business operators and home-based workers in any of these fields.

I imagine workers telecommuting to jobs not only in Vancouver, but farther afield using their skills in information technology and computer applications. Some will prefer to work at home and others will rent space in the cooperative work facilities offered in a few neighbourhoods. Others will be travelling between the Sunshine Coast and lower mainland offering freelance health care and related services, especially serving the aging citizens of the



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area, newcomer retirees and others who are looking for a healthy lifestyle. A school of alternative medicine will enhance the activities at the wellness centre and medical clinic opened in the community.

Growth in educational services will occur. The community has indicated its desire to promote education as a marketable commodity in the area. Arts training, broadcasting, a satellite college campus, specialty schools such as a hospitality training centre, a fine arts highschool or the suggested marine research station will be part of the new offerings.

The profile of arts and culture will continue to grow in the region and abroad. Artists will have high profile spaces, keeping costs down by sharing expenses and resources in cooperative galleries and studios. A fine arts highschool and evening art course program will increase the profile of this sector and add to the continuity of the art industry in the community. Business skills training for artist entrepreneurs will assist in this growth.

8. III. COTTAGE INDUSTRIES

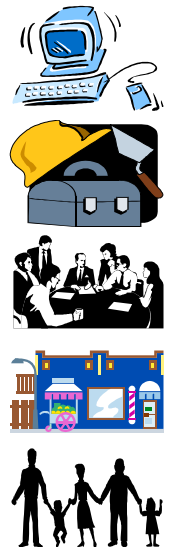
Cottage industries will form a large part of the small business employers in the area. Use of web marketing and collective promotion will put products that service the local people into markets beyond the region. Craftsman, horticulture producers, food manufacturers and niche marketers will be looking for space on private or industrial lands to operate their enterprises and expand. Forestry will play a role as a community-managed resource, providing supplies for local value-added business.

Small-scale manufacturers, such as fence crafters, cabinetmakers, specialty furniture builders, software programmers, bakers and caterers will find space in small-scale industrial live/work units. Hybrid residential/industrial units will help industrial areas to remain secure at night, will offset costs for new entrepreneurs and will assist in incorporating workspace into the community. Shared office administration, bookkeeping and equipment will enable new entrepreneurs to operate businesses effectively.

8. IV. COMMUNITY SERVICES AND RETAIL

Challenging the current market control over the price and variety of goods available in small communities, the community retail cooperative will provide affordable food, household goods and other essentials to residents. Cooperative retail and showroom space for local artists, craftsman and value-added manufacturers will enable these producers to promote their goods in high profile, affordable venues.

The SCEDC 1992 report promoted the region as ideal for home-based business and telecommuting, relying on the convenience of the Internet. Growth in this kind of work will require the support of additional services. These



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services include copy centres, business services and advising, equipment sales and rentals or “share-sheds” (users pay a low monthly fee to share infrequently used but essential equipment, from fax machines to edge trimmers), cooperative work spaces, internet phone or cable service. A community credit union will offer small business start up loans using community-generated funds.

Services such as childcare and elder care, landscaping and community maintenance will become a part of volunteerism, including youths and children in the schools and among those able people in the community. Volunteer hours will contribute to a barter account where goods and time can be used outside of the regular market.

9. SUGGESTIONS FOR LAND USE PLANNING AND POLICY.

The realization of the vision described above could be assisted by a number of planning initiatives. Here I focus particularly on the physical parameters of planning and the public involvement process.

9.1. TOURISM EFFORTS

Excellence in tourism provision will require considerable inputs. Some of these the community has already defined; such as increased control of transportation to the lower mainland supplemented by frequent pedestrian only ferries to Vancouver. Other planned changes may include maintenance and enhancement of Gibsons vernacular or “look”, including special improvements at Gibsons Landing to provide an improved waterside frontage. This will offer the best first impression for visitors arriving directly into downtown on a pedestrian ferry.

Easy transportation between points on land using privatized, unique local commuting vans will help tourists get around and will also benefit local residents. Walking, cycling and other forms of transportation should be encouraged on specially designated routes for both recreation and commuting.

Accommodation will have to be provided to serve a wide variety of visitors. Zoning that offers flexibility in residential use for bed and breakfasts and makes provision for small-scale boutique hotels will assist in this. As will zoning for mixed-use structures along the waterfront, with commercial on the ground floor and accommodation above in order to increase the density and vibrancy of the Landing.

Cross-marketing tourism services into pre-planned tourism packages for short vacations will assist the industry. A variety of retail and service offerings in a revitalized Landing will be an anchor.



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School facilities planning should take into account the opportunity for space utilization during the after school hours. Night courses should share this space. Some rooms should be particularly well appointed to service the needs of groups hosting conferences and weekend workshops.

Most importantly, the community will have to work together to choose its best tourism strategy. Full public support and an awareness of the implications of the town's tourism development choice will be essential; otherwise, the community may be adversely affected by the impacts of increased tourism (Weaver, 1997). Starting with a development strategy, moving into implementation and having the community evaluate and monitor quality of life interests will help in alleviating some of the ills of tourism before they become unmanageable (ibid.). Using indicators defined by the community, Banff monitors the impacts of tourism annually in its "State of the Town Report Card" and makes adjustments to planning policy as necessary (McKay, 2000).

9. II. KNOWLEDGE SECTOR EFFORTS

Supporting the growth of knowledge industries involves providing adequate and low cost space for small businesses and entrepreneurs who run low-impact, knowledge-based services. Many of these workers will utilize their homes for workspace. In order to assist home-based workers in maintaining a reasonable quality of life, certain design guidelines for home offices can be suggested, such as requiring an outside access for home offices thereby preventing clients from moving through workers home upon visits.

Protecting the residential character of the neighbourhood and reducing impact on other homes will be necessary. Nevertheless, many home based business operators find the current zoning too restrictive and suggest that it better recognize the low impact of many types of at-home business (Gurstein, in press). Licensing by categorization of home based activity based on indicators such as intensity of activity; type of product produced or need for client traffic could help in regulating impacts to neighbourhoods. Performance requirements for home enterprises and zoning that can assess and encourage compatible uses in a systematic and inclusive way has also been suggested (Ibid.).

An alternative to working in the home, yet allowing people to work near their homes, can be found in neighbourhood cooperative workspace. Gibsons could experiment with providing work centres in residential neighbourhoods. Such centres could offer flexible, secure workspace and shared office services at reasonable rents. This strategy helps alleviate the stress of home based work that some workers experience, such as social isolation, work overwhelming their time and physical space, and inability to separate home life from work life (Ibid.).

Enabling work at home will include careful consideration of the amount of space in the home that can be dedicated to home based enterprise. A ranking system of different allowable work uses based on impacts to the home and neighbourhood should be considered in licensing and performance regulations.



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Companies that currently operate in Vancouver and have workers looking for a small town lifestyle could be encouraged to set up satellite offices similar to these work centres. Attracting business from the higher priced urban centres will require the provision of excellent recreation and leisure amenities in order to attract newcomer home-based workers to Gibsons. Such amenities may be walking and cycling paths, a full-service recreation centre, a book store/community gathering post, quality local shopping, high quality local entertainment and a unique community aesthetic. Interestingly, Gurstein's research on home-based workers' use of community amenities found that while workers are at home more, their use of community services generally did not increase except for essentials such as the post office, the copy center, and banks (in press).

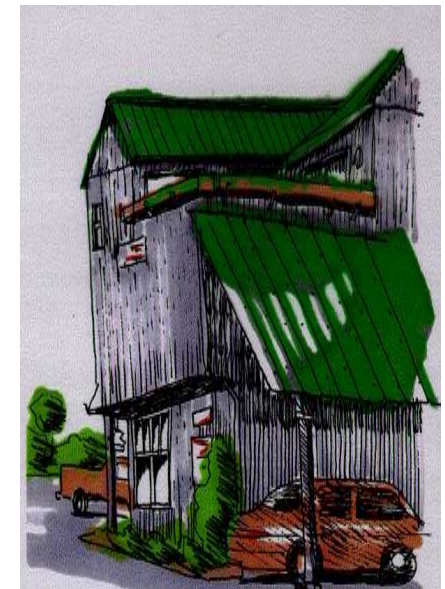
9. III. COTTAGE INDUSTRIES EFFORTS

Small-scale value added operations can be supported by offering affordable, flexible industrial space that accommodates the changing needs of growing enterprises as they work to respond quickly to changes in their markets.

Industrial/commercial live/work units have been successful in other communities and would be an appropriate addition to Gibsons' working space. These units offer a variety of flexible workspaces, with more or less space dedicated to residential accommodation, depending on the intended use. Courtenay, BC's "Rosewall Crescent", also known as 'tin-city', is a prototype industrial live/work development. Shop owners share office equipment in some buildings, live in or rent their residential units to offset lease costs, and enjoy a quiet community once the workday is over.

Zoning for this flexibility will involve a number of considerations. Gurstein suggests using performance standards that govern acceptable uses by restricting the negative impact of undesirable externalities (in press). Providing areas of differing intensities from "ultra-light" to "heavy" industry will enable easy location of compatible uses. Moreover, to ensure a quality of life for live/work residents, it is suggested that each unit be recognized as comprised of three zones, public, private and crossover. The nature of the activity occurring there, the household size and income of the family and type of structure will be used to determine the required degree of separation between uses (ibid.).

Providing flexible industrial space in live/work units has been successful in other communities. Design that takes into account the type of enterprise when planning the separation between live and work space will make units more liveable. Tenants could organize Share Sheds for tool use and office equipment.



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9. IV. COMMUNITY SERVICE AND RETAIL EFFORTS

The coming decades will bring considerable change in the world of retail and community service. Much of this will be accommodated in traditional commercial space; much will be located in homes and live/work spaces as described above.

Some special consideration will be necessary to provide low cost commercial and ultra-light industrial space for start-up businesses and cooperatives. The community could consider securing affordable space by allowing a developer increased density or buildable area and, in return, the increased revenues will subsidize commercial lease rates. Small business users will also require smaller, flexible retail spaces.

Community services such as childcare or elder day-care can be offered in homes. Residential areas will need special zoning consideration for these functions.

9. V. PARTICIPATORY PLANNING

In order to see the realization of any of the above suggestions toward a diverse employment sphere in Gibsons, community support for planning and community development will be necessary. A mobilization of public involvement that moves beyond traditional planning practice and into public education and awareness in everyday life can start this discourse. Community leadership outside of the municipal offices will be required.

First, in order to participate in community life, the general population will need to be highly informed on planning and community economic development issues and opportunities. Establishing a planning curriculum in schools, such as having students participate in design charrettes with volunteer assistance from community members, will build capacity to participate in planning processes and broaden the awareness of everyone involved. This has been successfully achieved in American schools and has led to better cross-generational understanding of people's needs in their communities. It has also increased general awareness of the technical and philosophical questions in planning and improved citizen's capacity to get involved (Kaplan, 1993).

Launching timely issues campaigns on certain planning and community development topics, such as the tourism strategy, the provision of space for home occupations, live/work units, cooperative enterprise will help educated the public. Following these campaigns with community workshops around these issues will involve the community to help shape goals and policy. Workshops could include working with the community to create an evaluation and monitoring system in order to measure the progress and impacts of planning initiatives.



A variety of retail spaces, including cooperatives for goods and services will assist small enterprises. Subsidizing retail rents with upper space residential or accommodation revenues will help keep fees manageable.



Public participation can be about more than land use, what are the building blocks your community can manipulate?

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10. VISION IN SUMMARY. A DAY IN GIBSONS FOR MRS. MERRYWEATHER

Mrs. Merryweather looks out the window at the view she has grown to love. She is waiting for her son Dave to pick her up from her careminium and take her up the hill to the wellness centre. She could take the local shuttle that Mr. Harris runs, but enjoys this favour Dave does for her every Tuesday- now that he works in town most days. She loves to go to the wellness centre; it has the seniors drop-in program, her regular doctor, and the eye specialist whenever he comes to town and also the pharmacist. She loves and hates her regular exercise class but the effort is rewarded by the cup of tea she usually has with the out of towners who come to Gibsons for health care and the spa. Mrs. Merryweather loves to hear people's stories about far away places.

At the centre, she sometimes walks down to the other wing and says hello to her niece, a massage therapist who works in the wellness centre and has stayed in Gibsons after coming to town for her training at the Gibsons School of Alternative Health Care.

Because she is already at the top of the hill, she usually takes the bus over to the shopping centre. She loves the weekend organic market, whenever she can get there, and otherwise she shops at the co-op or at the mall, whichever place has what she needs. The local school children will come by her careminium after lunch to help rake leaves and take out the trash for the residents. She enjoys this help and usually invites one or two for a cold drink, sometimes they come in and sometimes they are too shy, but she is getting to know many of them well. She likes to watch the older kids work with the younger ones, they are getting better at working out their disagreements.

Mrs. Merryweather's son Dave works in the city one or two days a week at his marine insurance office and when he stays in town he works at the neighbourhood work centre. The office assistant there is a tremendously well skilled young man who helps everyone with his or her computer applications and hardware problems. The tenants are not sure what they would do without him and are pleased the community college is offering night courses in computer skills so that they can help themselves if they ever need to. Dave is happy he doesn't have to work out of home anymore, because work was taking up his life. Now he can keep a regular schedule at the work centre and share the office equipment. It costs a bit but he has rented the room he had been using for his home office to a student and this helps with his costs.

Mrs. Merryweather's daughter-in-law Anna is a blown glass artist with a small live/work studio in 'tin-town' since she and Dave have separated. Anna provides glassware for some of the local restaurants and exports to the United States. It seems she has had good success in the southern states, especially once she learned more about marketing on the web.



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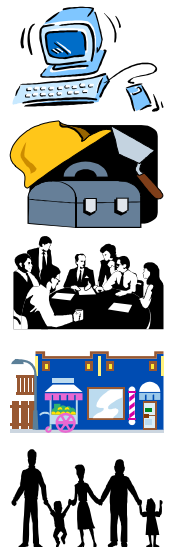
Mrs. Merryweather isn't sure how her daughter-in-law can stand living in 'tin-town', what with so much industrial stuff around there. Anna says the canoe manufacturer and the cabinetmaker are not too noisy for her and that they shut down early in the evening, but how can that be? The nearby bakery sure smells good though, and the software engineering guys are quiet. Anna doesn't have the beautiful ocean view she had at her and Dave's house, but the rent is affordable and she likes the Share Shed in the building. It has tools that she could never afford herself and the \$20/month fee is cheap for tool use.

Mrs. Merryweather was not so happy to see her grandson Zach take a job with the logging company. She was really hoping he would study for a couple of years at the community college and then transfer over for his university degree at the Marine Station. He was always so interested in the salmon streamkeeping he did in school. He says there is plenty of wood and he would rather learn about sustainable forest management on the job. She's happy that at least he will be able to support himself. Forestry work used to be much more irregular. It seems to have evened out over the last few years.

She often stops in to see her daughter-in-law on Tuesdays when she volunteers at the Landing in the Gibsons Art Collective. Anna is a great people person and likes to mentor the young artists working in the studio. She is also great with customers and with the website. Anna teaches a few art classes in the evenings and is planning a three-day glass art seminar as part of the October tourism campaign. It will be a great time for people to make a few gifts for Christmas. Last year they had as many visitors as they did locals. Keeping prices down by offering billeting helped attract visitors and this year not so many people are asking about billets. Hopefully next year they won't need any billets at all.

Mrs. Merryweather would like to volunteer too, and has looked into helping with the book keeping at the childcare cooperative, apparently they were looking for someone. There was also a position at the "WorkFutures" business-training centre. Those volunteer hours would be nice, by entering them into the barter bank she can have someone winterize her windows and maybe even earn enough hours to get some assistance with painting her cottage in the spring. She could use the hours to take one of Anna's classes, but she doesn't think she has the eyes for that!

After a busy afternoon on the town Mrs. Merryweather returns home to prepare some dinner. The local mushrooms will be really nice with the chicken from Juniper Farm in Roberts Creek. She should have bought some of that great bakery bread from the mobile baker, tomorrow's shipment will head to Vancouver and there won't be any for the locals until Thursday. Good thing she picked up more Bisquick at the IGA. As she does up the dishes she thinks about the things she has to remember for the Gibsons Seniors' Association meeting tomorrow. Their "Shop Local" awareness campaign is wrapping up for this year and they'll have to move on to fundraising for next year. There is never a shortage of things to do!



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11. A FEW CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

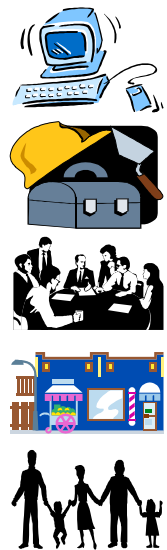
I began this exploration with no reasonable idea of where I might end up. I simply knew that knowing the facts and trends around work in Canada and Gibsons was important, but that this knowledge would not create a future. Instead, I knew that the community would have to create its future itself, and to do this they would need to shape a vision.

I did not know that I would encounter, time and again, literature that describes the need for and promotes strong community self-reliance and self-direction. This seems utopian and difficult to imagine for Canadian towns today, given the nature of our market-driven choices and progress/growth orientation. Yet I decided to promote this perspective in this paper as one that points to an achievable strategy for BC's small towns. Most importantly, the development philosophy and strategy chosen in Gibsons should be the result of a thoughtful and inclusive decision process.

Jack Lessinger, in "Penturbia" (1991), describes people looking for utopia in the small towns beyond the suburbs. They are looking for small town lifestyles and are willing to make changes toward "socially responsible lifestyles" (Ibid., 234). These migrants often bring their jobs to Penturbia with them. They arrive seeking a higher quality of community life. They are looking for sustainable social, economic and environmental practices and opportunities to be involved in shaping their communities. As envisioned by Lessinger, Penturbanites necessarily belong to a group called P.L.A.N., Penturbia League for Active Neighbours. Perhaps this vision is not too far off for Canada's small communities; perhaps it will be a vision for Gibsons which, in the future, will be formed of groups of long-timers and new-comers all seeking a secure and high quality of life.

Gibsons residents will not know what the future holds until they start talking about it, and in order to inspire this discussion, I conclude with this quote from Heather Menzies book, "Whose Brave New World? The Information Highway and the New Economy":

The postindustrial society can and should be inclusive and participatory, just and democratic-truly an information and knowledge society. And it might turn out that way.... It all depends on our willingness (and daring) to find our voices as people (instead of as experts or bystanders or inert victims) and to put people back at the centre of the discussion. (1996, xv)



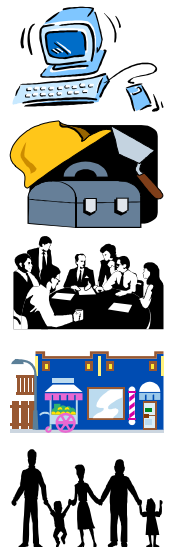
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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES ON THE WEB

While the provincial government is not the only place to seek excellent community development information, its website does offer a number of educational tools to help communities assess their resources and capacity and move into strategy development. I have included some sites here for easy reference.

- BC employment trends: <http://www.workfutures.bc.ca>
- BC Stats: <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/>
- Canadian employment trends: <http://www11.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/doc/jf/emerging/emerging.shtml>.
- Community Fact Sheets: <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/dd/facsheet/CF032.pdf>
- Inventory of Community Economic and Social Development Serving B.C. (June, 2000): <http://www.cdev.gov.bc.ca/Publicinfo/publications/ICFP.pdf>
- Learning Communities: a new approach to creating resilient and sustainable communities. (Sept. 2000): <http://www.cdev.gov.bc.ca/Publicinfo/publications/Learning%20Communities.pdf>
- Community economic development in BC: <http://www.cedworks.org>



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