1 Introduction & Background

In 2012, City of Powell River Mayor Dave Formosa stated the intention to form a Task Force on Economic Revitalization and requested staff to bring forward a report to Council to formalize it. The Mayor’s intention was that the Task Force be mandated to create an economic revitalization plan for the City for Council consideration. The membership of the select committee consisted of Mayor Formosa, Councillors Chris McNaughton and Debbie Dee, members of the Powell River Regional Economic Development Society’s Board, and other residents selected through a call for applications.

The formation of the task force was in line with the corporate strategic priorities set by Council, which had identified Economic Development as one of the six goals of the municipality.

From 2001 to early 2014 the Powell River Regional Economic Development Society (PRREDS) was responsible for delivering Economic Development programs and services in the region with core operating funding provided by the City of Powell River. After the submission of the final report of the Mayor’s Task Force for Economic Revitalization in November 2013, the PRREDS Board recommended to the City that the Economic Development function be made part of City Services. In January 2014, City Council approved a recommendation to establish an Economic Development Advisory Committee as well as transfer the Manager of PRREDS to the City of Powell River as Manager of Economic Development.

This document will give a history on the work that has been done in the past year and half to build a plan to revitalize Powell River’s Economy. Although the final report of the Mayor’s Task Force proposes projects that can be undertaken in the immediate future, City staff recommends that a proper Economic Development Strategy be built based on the information provided in this report.

1.1 Method

Members of the Mayor’s Task Force for Economic Revitalization were asked to provide input on economic development projects and initiatives in twelve sectors and areas of activity and decide through consensus what level of action City Council should take. The following coding system was used when recommending a course of action:

- Participate (Operate)
- Support (Legislate or Finance)
- Research (Investigate further)
- Advocate (Lobby Government)
- Facilitate (Convene)
- Encourage (Motivate)

Throughout the process of considering projects and initiatives that could lead to economic revitalization of the City of Powell River, the Task Force members debated what types of development would be acceptable in the community. In the end the Task Force reached the consensus that Council should use the Sustainability Charter it developed and signed in partnership with the Tla’Amin First Nation, Powell River Regional District, and School District 47 to guide the decisions it makes in the future.
1.2 Official Community Plan

The primary plan that sets the long term vision and direction for a community is the Official Community Plan. When undertaking a review of the Official Community Plan (OCP) in late 2012 it was decided to develop a Sustainable Official Community Plan (SOCP) instead. An SOCP addresses the same scope as an OCP, but integrates the 3 pillars of sustainability: environment, society & culture, and economy.

Based on extensive consultation with individuals, neighbourhood associations, community groups and organizations, businesses and industry representatives, the following vision statement was developed for the City of Powell River for the SOCP:

*Powell River is a coastal city with a proud heritage, diverse local economy and a sustainable future - environmentally, socially and economically. With a superb natural setting, vast recreational opportunities, and vibrant arts & cultural services, we are a community for all ages. ‘The Pearl on the Sunshine Coast’, Powell River continues to work cooperatively with the Regional District and our Tla’Amin Nation neighbours to foster a respectful community, inclusive for all.*

The Sustainable Official Community Plan is designed to help realize the community’s vision by describing objectives and policies that can be used to direct growth and community initiatives. The Plan is based on the principles of sustainability and ‘Smart Growth’, which seek to lessen human impact on the earth and to manage natural, economic and social systems and resources in a fashion that enhances quality of life, yet does not diminish the ability of future generations to also meet their needs.

1.3 Sustainability Charter

The Sustainability Charter is the product of citizens, community leaders, and local agencies, including the Tla’Amin First Nation, the City of Powell River, the Powell River Regional District, Vancouver Island University, School District 47 (Powell River), and Catalyst Paper. It sets out a clear statement of the region’s intention to become more sustainable over time and to work closely together to achieve that vision.

Its creation began with a Community Forum of approximately 300 residents early in 2008, followed by volunteer work and focused discussions with youth. A transition was then made from these volunteer efforts to a Steering Committee of agency Partners and community representatives who were charged with leading development of a focused Charter document.

The Charter’s Principles are foundational statements that encapsulate the essence of sustainability. They are expected to be used to guide local agencies when deciding on priorities and actions. Higher priority principles are listed first:

1. Recognize and respect Tla’Amin Aboriginal rights, title and cultural history, and existing agreements among governments.
2. Recognize ecological limits. We begin with an understanding of the earth’s limited capacity to support us, so we will design social and economic systems to recognize and respect indicators of ecological stress.
3. Take the long view. Sustainability is both a journey and a destination. We will address urgent issues while also setting long-term goals, adjusting our approach along the way.
1. Promote self-reliance. Sustainability recognizes that we are all part of a global community. In the context of continued trade and links between communities, however, we will embrace self-reliance as an important facet of long-term community health.

2. Integrate. To maintain quality of life with limited resources, we will create efficient strategies that meet environmental, social, and economic goals at the same time.

3. Work together. We will collaborate and coordinate with one another, recognizing the value of diversity and bringing diverse perspectives to bear on problems, maximizing creativity, generating solutions, and minimizing duplication.

4. Learn continuously. The natural world is highly complex; to live within its limits and those of our own society – we will pay attention to how it works, and learn to thrive in harmony with it.

5. Strive for equity. We will recognize the inherent value of every human being, and work to support economic and social systems that strengthen equity.

6. Manage uncertainty. Exercise caution: when in doubt about the impacts of a project or initiative, we will take action to safeguard the environment and society.

7. Consider local and global sustainability. While the sustainability of our local community is important, we will not forget that our actions and choices have impacts elsewhere, and act accordingly.

1.4 Economic Development Structure

Staff
The City of Powell River’s Economic Development Program is part of the Planning Services Department. The Program consists of the Manager of Economic Development who reports to the Director of Planning Services.

There are several roles that Economic Development takes on within the City of Powell River, including:

- Business investment and resident attraction initiatives
- Working with partner agencies to maintain a positive investment environment
- Business retention and expansion activities
- Promotion of commercial, industrial and institutional Lands
- Administrative support for the two Limited Partnerships City owned corporations are shareholders in (PRSC Limited Partnership; Freda Creek Community Hydro Partnership)

Economic Development Advisory Committee
The City of Powell River created an Economic Development Advisory Committee in early 2014. The committee’s role is to meaningfully advance the economic development of the City of Powell River through recommending strategies, initiatives and programs for consideration by the Council and by advising the Council of opportunities and threats related to the local economy. The Committee will give consideration to existing Council policies such as the regional Sustainability Charter and relevant municipal policies and plans to include the Official Community Plan, the Strategic Plan, the Corporate Plan, the Economic Revitalization Plan and the Arts and Cultural initiative.

EDAC Members
- Mayor Dave Formosa
- Councillor Chris McNaughton (Chair)
- Councillor Debbie Dee
- Lyn Adamson – Career Link/Work BC Centre
2 Context

Located 135 kilometres north of Vancouver on the BC Coast, Powell River is only accessible by water or air. The population in the city is just over 13,000 residents, making the overall regional population approximately 20,000. It is interesting to note that despite a decrease in employment in traditional resource based industries, the region’s population has not changed in the last 15 years, with very slight increases over the last five to ten years. Like a majority of BC Communities, Powell River’s population is getting older with an average age of 50 according to the 2011 Census. This particular statistic is worrisome, as a younger population is needed in order to maintain a strong labour pool, making the attraction of younger people to the community a priority.

The Powell River region’s chief exports are paper, lumber, crushed limestone, coal, clean energy, seafood and agricultural products. Approximately 6 million tonnes of product (mainly minerals and wood fibre) are shipped out of the region on an annual basis bound for markets in the United States, South America and Asia, but supporting approximately 8000 jobs at home. The region has been the recipient of a substantial amount of investment (approximately $1 billion) in the green energy sector with the construction of Alterra Power’s first two run-of-the-river hydro generating stations at Toba Inlet, and the company is preparing to build two additional sites starting in 2014. Although struggling due to a change in spending patterns and a reduction in household wealth, Powell River’s commercial and retail sector is a significant employer and has seen the addition of numerous national and provincial retailers over the past number of years.

For most of its history, Powell River relied upon its paper mill for a majority of its employment and property taxes. At one point in time, the Powell River Company (now a part of Catalyst Paper Corporation) was one of the largest pulp and paper mills in the world, employing approximately 2600 people at its peak. For more than 25 years the mill has been downsizing and currently employs around 420 people. Catalyst Paper recently emerged from bankruptcy protection and managed to restructure its financing and shed the lion’s share of its debt load making it much more competitive in global markets. The company has taken an aggressive approach to product diversification and specialized niche markets. For the past two years Catalyst has been hiring locally about 20 to 30 new employees a year and will be doing so for the next 5 – 10 years as the baby boomers retire.

The Powell River Region has a strong history of creating innovative partnerships to move projects forward for the betterment of the community. The City took a bold approach to reducing major industrial tax rates for Catalyst Paper Corporation ($18-million in savings) and in turn made a deal to take ownership of needed lands and assets. School District 47 and Vancouver Island University have partnered to create dual credit trades programs that have become a model for the rest of BC. Using the
ground-breaking Community Accord that was founded between the two in 2003, the City and Tla’Amin First Nation have partnered a number of times on projects with the goal of creating new jobs and streams of revenue. Examples of the ventures undertaken by the two local governments include the formation of a Limited Partnership Company to sell lands for redevelopment and the establishment of a community power generation project at Freda Creek. These partnerships are just a few examples of how the community works together to make things happen.

Sustaining local businesses already invested in the community has been an important economic initiative for the past two years. The Powell River Regional Economic Development Society (PRREDS) in partnership with Community Futures Development Corporation and the Chamber of Commerce have concentrated on a Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) program and support for businesses needing succession planning. Approximately eighty percent of all new investment in a community comes from existing businesses. The goal of BR&E program is to ensure that businesses operating in the region have the support necessary to be successful and hopefully grow.

Increasingly the community has been asked by some residents to focus its economic development discussion on sustainable development with a greater emphasis on quality of life. The community is well served in terms of infrastructure, having a new hospital, excellent recreation, arts and culture, and education venues. Food security, clean energy and clean economy industries are increasingly important to many residents. Some measure of democratization of the local economy is being discussed in order to generate wealth and create local jobs through cooperatives, social enterprise, and local investment corporations.

Key Items to Consider:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Powell River’s population is stable and slowly growing</th>
<th>Powell River’s Population has remained stable with slight increases over the past decade. The 2011 Census reports the City’s population to be 13,165 (12,957 in 2006). The regional population was 19,906 (19,544 in 2006).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building activity has been slower than pre 2008</td>
<td>Other than two large institutional buildings (2011 and 2013), new construction in the City has been slow averaging 15 to 25 housing starts per year since 2009 (31 in 2008, 41 in 2007).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population is aging</td>
<td>In 2011 the median age in Powell River reached 49.6, which is up from 48 in 2006. This trend is worrisome in regards to maintaining a young labour force.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Powell River has a good inventory of developable lands identified as employment centres in the SOCP</td>
<td>Powell River has an inventory of developable industrial, light industrial lands beside the Catalyst Paper mill and at its airport.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Life</td>
<td>Powell River has a wealth of cultural and recreational assets that are well beyond a majority of communities of a similar size. The region has excellent health and social service programs and infrastructure. Top notch educational programming through School District 47 and Vancouver Island University. It has also developed cultural assets (academies, festivals) that are internationally recognized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment is key</td>
<td>Creating additional employment opportunities is</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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6
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Development is a priority</th>
<th>Council has identified Economic Development as one of its priorities in its Corporate Strategic Plan.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Waterfront Development</td>
<td>The City has invested in improving its waterfront with the building of the sea walk and the refurbishment of its harbours. The City recognizes that further development of its waterfront is important to its economic diversification efforts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Education and Trades Training</td>
<td>Good work has been done to develop educational programs to attract students and families to the community. With the new partnerships that have been formed with international agencies, and large energy projects moving forward in the province, the community has the opportunity to establish itself as a centre for education in BC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Transportation Linkages</td>
<td>Being only accessible by water and air, the community and region has struggled with maintaining reliable and affordable access. Pacific Coastal Airlines provides excellent service to Vancouver International Airport, but it is not affordable to all. BC Ferry fares have continued to rise over the past decade and have reached a point where regular travel is not affordable to a good portion of the population. The level of Ferry service was reduced in 2014 as a cost saving measure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments in new public infrastructure should be a priority</td>
<td>Infrastructure, specifically industrial land, transportation networks, housing and amenities will be needed to attract young families and ensure a vibrant economy.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### 3 Plan Direction

#### 3.1 Vision
A vision identifies the community’s expectations for itself and its surrounding environment. In economic development, the vision provides high level direction and is the starting point for all planning.

*The City of Powell River will become one of the province’s most resilient rural communities, with a diversified economy, attractive quality of life, and a healthy population.*

#### 3.2 Mission
A mission states the purpose of the organization and provides an overall sense of direction to guide programming and decision making.

*To achieve economic diversity by capitalizing on the strengths of the traditional economy while creating new opportunities based on the community’s inventory of developable lands, affordability, cultural and recreational assets, infrastructure, amenities, and spirit of partnership. A positive investment climate will be developed and maintained to create quality job opportunities, good family incomes and innovation.*
3.3 Goals
The goals for Economic Development

1. A diversified economy focussed on supporting new and existing business and entrepreneurs in a multitude of sectors
2. A community with amenities that attracts young families and a workforce
3. Increased commercial and industrial tax base
4. A positive investment environment
5. A cultural community with a strong sense of place
6. A learning environment that values creativity and innovation

4 Economic Development Strategy

Although the Final Report of the Mayor’s Task Force identifies projects that can be undertaken in the immediate future (section 5), it is recommended that The City of Powell River develop a long term Economic Development Strategy that addresses the following key items:

1. **Community Assets and Advantages** – Powell River has many advantages that make an attractive place to live, work and invest. Analysis should be done to identify clearly what makes Powell River unique and gives it a distinct advantage over other communities as a place to invest and live.
2. **Employment Lands** – The SOCP has identified a large amount of land (approximately 1200 acres) within City Boundaries that can be developed for the purposes of generating new jobs and tax revenue. An analysis of the lands should be done to identify the highest and best use based on their attributes and the unique advantages that Powell River can provide to certain sectors. It is important to identify what types of activities and industries make the most sense in order to target efforts and make the best use of time and resources.
3. **Labour Force** – The province of British Columbia will be facing significant labour shortages in the next 5 to 10 years due to retiring baby boomers and large energy projects moving forward (e.g. LNG, Northern Gateway, Site C, etc...). The community is going to have to develop a strategy to ensure it has a strong resident labour force to fill labour needs in its traditional industries as well as new ones. The community could be in serious jeopardy if this issue is not addressed.
4. **Tourism Assets and Infrastructure** – A great amount of work has been done to develop tourism infrastructure and assets in the region. Redeveloped harbours, hiking and biking trails, parks, heritage sites, water based activities, and a plethora of festivals are attracting people to the region. To build upon the good work that has been done, a gap analysis of Tourism assets should be completed to identify opportunities for future development in this sector.
5. **Cultural Assets** – Powell River has made culture an economic driver that creates jobs, new revenues and attracts new residents and investment. Home to world renowned music events such as the International Choral Kathaumixw and the Pacific Region International Summer Music Academy, the community has put an emphasis on developing itself as a centre of the arts. The community has an inventory of other cultural disciplines as well including dance, theatre, sculpture, luthiers, and painters. Strategic thinking needs to be applied to this sector seeking to maximize its impact as an economic driver for the community.
6. **Entrepreneurship and Innovation** – Powell River has attracted residents that bring new skill sets, experiences and ideas which could lead to the development of business opportunities and development projects that haven’t been considered or pursued in the past. It is recommended that work be done to reach out to new residents and gather information on their experience
and ideas to identify new opportunities for business development and investment attraction that haven’t previously been considered.

7. **Natural Port Assets and Location** – Powell River has an extensive protected waterfront with significant depths. There may be potential to attract deep water port users, as well as enterprises that may benefit from the City being in close proximity to the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island. This opportunity requires analysis to evaluate the potential opportunities for the City.

## 5 Projects and Actions

Although this report is suggesting the development of a long term Economic Development Strategy, work must continue to diversify Powell River’s economy. As referenced earlier in this document, the final report of the Mayor’s Task Force for Economic Revitalization proposed projects across a number of sectors that could be undertaken to revitalize and grow the local economy. After reviewing the final report, the Economic Development Advisory Committee and City Staff have identified a selection of projects that should be implemented as they will provide the most immediate impact on the community.

### 5.1 Transportation Sector

**Airport Development Strategy (Participate)**

Due to its close proximity to Vancouver International Airport and affordable surplus lands, it is believed that Powell River’s airport has the potential to be developed further and could be a destination for aerospace maintenance and repair businesses as well as other companies seeking to find more affordable locations than YVR. Although interest has already been expressed by two companies in locating operations at the airport, the Mayor’s Task Force recommends that the City complete an Airport Development Strategy in order to properly address the opportunities for further growth at the facility. The Task Force members believe the following issues should be addressed by the strategy:

- Identification of the highest and best opportunities for business attraction
- Identification of the best lands for business subdivision/strata development
- Technological improvements to improve year-round flight conditions (arrivals and departures)
- Further extension of runway. Is there potential to lengthen the runway to accommodate larger aircraft?
- Review airport location. Is the airport properly sited? Are there better options for location?
- Review of service options. Is there an opportunity to establish flights to other destinations?

**Recommendation:** That the City of Powell River investigate building a Development Strategy for its Airport, for the purpose of creating new jobs and tax revenue.

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Staff have developed a scope of work for undertaking the development of an Airport Development Strategy</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Staff have researched what has been done in</td>
<td>Completed</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
other communities of a similar size and what it cost
- Identification of funding sources
- Tender Contract
- Work completed

| Fall 2014 | January 2015 | Summer 2015 |

Outcome:
- Attraction of new businesses to airport
- Improved infrastructure
- New sources of airport revenues and jobs

5.2 Knowledge Based Industries Sector

Boutique College / University / Music Academy - Already in progress (Support)
Powell River has increasingly become a centre for learning and education on a number of different fronts. Examples of this are the Pacific Region International Summer Music Academy, School District 47’s Outdoor Adventure Training Program, and the Powell River Academy of Music. The City of Powell River, School District 47, and Vancouver Island University are working on a development that will see the addition of another centre of learning within the community.

Recommendation: The Task Force recommends that the City continue to work with School District 47 and Vancouver Island University on the establishment of a new centre of learning that would attract students from outside of the community. The City should also do what it can to work with other stakeholders on similar types of development.

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<th>Actions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify suitable lands for the development of an International School in the community</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish an agreement to purchase land</td>
<td>August 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work to remove subjects to deal</td>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Permit process</td>
<td>January 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development completion</td>
<td>2016 (Depends on length of construction)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Outcome:
- 300 students in community
- New tax revenues and jobs
- Investment in community and possible new residents

5.3 Arts and Culture Sector

Implementation of Phase 2 of the Powell River Arts and Culture Initiative Report presented to Council (Participate)
In 2012 the City of Powell River established funding to undertake a study of the Arts and Culture sector and how to increase its economic impact on the community. Phase 1 of the initiative was completed in
2012 and Phase 2 in 2013. The Task Force received a presentation on the Phase 2 report and was positive about the recommendations it provides. (*The Phase 2 report can be downloaded at www.powellriver.ca*).

**Recommendation:** The Task Force recommends that the City support the implementation of the recommendations and projects presented in the Phase 2 report of the Arts and Culture Initiative.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Establish working committee with relevant stakeholders to undertake implementation</td>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Working committee identifies the highest priority items and establishes project champions and budgets</td>
<td>December 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Begin implementation of projects</td>
<td>January 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Outcome:**
- New jobs and revenues
- Higher quality of life

### 5.4 Food Production Sector

#### Land Based Aquaculture (Support, Advocate)

The City of Powell River and Sliammon First Nation, through their joint venture PRSC Limited Partnership, have been working to secure interest from private sector companies, post-secondary institutions and others involved in the aquaculture field, in the development of land based Aquaculture operations on marine industrial lands adjacent to Catalyst Paper’s operations in Powell River. The site has many advantages for the development of land based aquaculture utilizing flow through or Re-circulating Aquaculture Systems (RAS). The site has good access to both salt and fresh water, as well as competitively priced sources of electricity, thermal energy (e.g. steam), oxygen and waste treatment services from Catalyst. Cost competitive deep water and land transportation freight to Vancouver and Vancouver Island are adjacent to the property as well.

As of August 2013, a number of aquaculture companies producing a wide range of sea life (salmon, shellfish, black cod, sturgeon, algae, sea cucumber, etc...) have expressed an interest in establishing operations on the lands.

According to the Canadian Aquaculture Industry Alliance (CAIA), Global demand for fish and seafood will reach 150-160 million tonnes by 2030. Yet capture fisheries can only provide 80-100 million tonnes per year on a sustainable basis. Without aquaculture, a global shortfall of approximately 50-80 million tonnes of fish and seafood is projected.

CAIA also notes that since 1970, global aquaculture production, including aquatic plants, has grown at an annual rate of 9% to reach 66.7 million tonnes (valued at US$ 85.9 billion) in 2006. This growth rate is greater than any other food producing system. Yet aquaculture production must expand at an even greater rate to meet the growing demand for fish. Aquaculture now represents 36% of the volume and 50% of the value of global fish landings, including non-food sources; in terms of food production, aquaculture accounted for 47% of the aquatic food produced from our oceans and lakes in 2006 and
likely exceeds 50% in the present day. By 2030, more than 50% of all fish and seafood products will originate from aquaculture.

According to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), Aquaculture represents 34% of Canada’s total marine value and 14% of total seafood production. The value of aquaculture production has increased by 52% over the last ten years, to $927 million in 2010 from $609 million in 2000. In fact, Canadian production has increased four-fold over the past 20 years. However, in a 2012 report on Aquaculture Sustainability the DFO says Canada is lagging behind other countries in terms of production. Southeast Asia accounts for 80 percent of global production with China, India, Japan, Korea, Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand being the leading aquaculture producers in the region. Despite its extensive marine and freshwater resources, Canada is a relatively small producer, ranking 22nd and accounting for less than 0.3 percent of global aquaculture production. However, Canada accounts for 8 percent of global farmed-salmon production and ranks fourth behind Norway, the United Kingdom and Chile. In light of this information, it is obvious that there is ample opportunity to take advantage of worldwide demands for seafood products.

It is estimated that the Powell River Aquaculture Park development could create 200 to 400 well-paying technical jobs in the community as well as significantly increase tax revenues to the municipality.

**Recommendation: That the City continue to pursue the development of a Land Based Aquaculture Park on the PRSC Limited Partnership marine industrial lands adjacent to the Catalyst Paper millsite.**

**Update:** Since the Final Report of the Task Force was submitted to Council, the project has evolved. A shared services model is no longer being pursued, because there were not enough companies interested to make it viable. However, work is being done with companies that have an interest in buying land and establishing land based aquaculture operations on PRSC’s Marine Industrial Lands so the project is moving forward in a different form.

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<th>Actions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continue to work with interested parties</td>
<td>Summer 2014 On Going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to promote properties to industry</td>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish deals with companies to purchase land</td>
<td>Fall/Winter 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remove subjects begin development process</td>
<td>Spring 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Outcome:** New jobs (40 to 100) and tax revenues

### 5.5 Community Asset Development

**Waterfront Development (Participate, Support, Facilitate, Encourage)**

In 2005, the Powell River Regional Economic Development Society and Powell River Community Futures produced a Waterfront Development Plan for the City of Powell River. Since that time the City has been working to implement parts of the plan with the largest project being the redevelopment of the Westview Harbours and the land in between the two (Wharf at Westview). The former Westview Waterfront Project Committee recently tabled a report to Council recommending the next steps to be taken in developing the City’s waterfront. The areas of interest covered in the report included:
- Willingdon Avenue Corridor
- Marine Avenue Corridor
- Lands across from Willingdon Beach
- Waterfront Development Plan implementation
- Willingdon South property

**Recommendation:** The Task Force endorses the recommendations made by the Westview Waterfront Project Committee and recommends that the City moves to implement them when appropriate.

**Update:** Currently the City’s Planning Services Department is working to secure the former barge terminal property in South Harbour from the Province’s crown lands division. Although the proposal to the province is for the development of green space (with the possibility of a small commercial concern) there is still an opportunity to consider commercial development on the property if it makes financial sense.

The rest of the items from the Waterfront Development plan are not currently being worked on.

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<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Acquire former barge terminal lands from Crown Lands Division</td>
<td>In Progress (2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- If it is concluded that a new library will not be built on the Willingdon South Property, further investigation should be done on developing the site for other purposes that meet with community values</td>
<td>Begin in 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Investigate redevelopment of Willingdon and Marine Avenue Corridors</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Acquire lands across from Willingdon Beach from Crown Lands Division</td>
<td>Discussions underway (Completion ???)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Outcome:**
- Former Barge Terminal Lands – New Green space and more attractive entrance to community from ocean
- Willingdon South – more attractive green space with better functionality/ possible commercial, institutional or recreational asset development

**Former Mill Administration Building and Property (Participate)**
As part of the agreement with Catalyst Paper to lower Major Industrial Tax Rates, the City will be taking ownership of the company’s former administration building and the property surrounding it. The 30,000 square foot structure has great potential to be used in a number of different ways.

**Recommendation:** The Task Force recommends that the City consider redeveloping the property to generate new streams of revenue.
**Update:** The City currently has an MOU in place with a company to lease and possibly purchase the property in the future. However, it would be prudent for the City to develop a secondary plan for the redevelopment of the building if the deal to lease the building does not happen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Timing</th>
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| • Continue to work with current party and move development forward  
• Work on secondary plan to redevelop building | Fall 2014  
Late Fall 2014 |

**Outcome:**

• New jobs (50 to 70 jobs) and tax revenues

**Municipal Land Inventory (Participate)**

The City owns or has control of a number of properties within its borders. The Task Force believes it would be wise for the City to complete an inventory of all properties that it has control of and identify which have the highest value for development purposes.

**Recommendation:** The Task Force recommends that the City complete an inventory of all land it owns or has control of and identify which have the highest value for development purposes.

**Update:** The Planning Services department has completed an inventory of all municipally owned properties. Work now needs to be done to evaluate and identify properties that are of value for development purposes.

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<th>Timing</th>
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</table>
| • Develop plan for properties with development value  
• Implement plan | January 2015  
Summer 2015 |

**Outcome:**

• New jobs and tax revenues  
• Revenue from sale of properties

**Community Power Projects (Participate, Support, Advocate)**

Community generated power (electricity) projects have been employed by a number of districts to generate new streams of revenue to pay for infrastructure and operating costs, and in some cases lower electricity costs for residents. The City of Powell River has been investigating a number of green energy opportunities such as the Freda Creek Run-of-the River Hydro project and placing turbines in its water and storm systems. If successful, the projects could generate dividends for the City similar to those provided by the Powell River Community Forest Corporation.

**Recommendation:** The Task Force recommends that the City continue to investigate community power opportunities.

**Update:** The Freda Creek Community Hydro Partnership continues to lobby the province for consideration as a ‘Pilot Project’, but other projects using City infrastructure still require further investigation.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Continue to lobby Provincial Government to designate Freda Creek CHP as a Pilot Project</td>
<td>On Going</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
• Investigate other power generation opportunities using City infrastructure  
  
  | Outcome: | TBD |
  | Own source revenues. If successful Freda Creek CHP could provide the City with over $1 million per year in revenues once the operation is paid for. |

**PRSC Lands (Support)**

In late 2006, the City of Powell River, Sliammon First Nation and Catalyst Paper, through wholly owned corporations, formed PRSC Limited Partnership. The Limited Partnership took ownership of approximately 800 acres of lands that were surplus to Catalyst's operations in return for a secured mortgage of $4.5 million. The goal of PRSC was to sell the properties for redevelopment for the purposes of creation of new jobs and tax revenue. Since its formation, PRSC has sold 5 of its original 12 properties and subdivided a portion of one.

In 2012, the City and Sliammon First Nation made a deal with Catalyst Paper to buy out its shares in PRSC and pay out the mortgage at a much reduced rate as part of the company's creditor protection process. When the buyout is completed, the lands will be wholly owned by the two remaining partners, making the LP a public-public partnership rather than a public-private partnership. Removing the mortgage and transforming to a public-public partnership will open the door to more funding and financing options to develop some of the properties to a state that will be more attractive to investors.

*Recommendation: The Task Force recommends that the City continue to support its investment in PRSC Limited Partnership and the buyout of Catalyst Paper’s shares in the company.*

*Update: The purchase of Catalyst’s shares in the Limited Partnership and the retirement of the mortgage will be completed soon. Once complete, the remaining shareholders will work on a business plan for the redevelopment of the remaining lands.*

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<tr>
<td>• The purchase of Catalyst’s shares in PRSC Limited Partnership and the retirement of the mortgage</td>
<td>Summer 2014</td>
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| Outcome: |  
  | The sale and redevelopment of the PRSC portfolio of lands could create a significant amount of jobs (200+) and new streams of tax revenue. |

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**5.6 Investment Attraction and Business Development**

**Sister City Relationships (Participate, Support)**

After conversations with former Cumberland, BC Mayor Fred Bates, and a subsequent presentation to Council, Mayor Dave Formosa started working with a group of elected officials from the Comox Valley and Campbell River on establishing a Sister City relationship with the City of Putian of the Fujian Province of China. The intention is to build a cultural relationship with the City of Putian for the purposes of exploring investment and trade opportunities.
Since work began on the Putian Sister City initiative, other opportunities for Sister City or Twinning relationships have arisen as well.

**Recommendation:** The Task Force recommends that the City continue to work on the Sister City initiative with the City of Putian, while also exploring other opportunities for similar relationships with Asian communities where circumstances allow or present themselves.

**Update:** Currently the Regional effort to pursue a Sister City relationship with the City of Putian, China is in Limbo, but there may be an opportunity to revive it in the future. In the meantime, the City has been working with Sino Bright Schools on having an office promoting Powell River in the company’s campuses in mainland China.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Revisit regional partnership to twin with the City of Putian, China</td>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Explore trade and investment relationships in China through Sino Bright Schools</td>
<td>Summer 2014</td>
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**Outcome:**

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<th>Outcome:</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Chinese companies and citizens have expressed significant interest in British Columbia and Powell River. With changes to the BC Provincial Nominee Business Succession program, at least 7 local businesses are under consideration for purchase as of June 2014. Increasing interest in the community could lead to further investment.</td>
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**Recommendation:** The Task Force recommends that the City use the incentives it has at its disposal, or make legislative changes to support the attraction or development of the following investment opportunities in the community. In some cases the City should encourage local stakeholders to champion specific projects.

**Data Centres (Support, Encourage, Advocate)**

Data Centers are facilities used to house computer systems and associated components, such as telecommunications and storage systems. It generally includes redundant or backup power supplies, redundant data communications connections, environmental controls (e.g., cooling systems, fire suppression) and stringent security systems. Powell River has a majority of the resources need to host Data Centers. It has good sources of cold water for cooling purposes, an abundance of industrial power and bare land located away from potential man-made and natural disasters, but is well connected to urban centres with four twenty five minute flights daily to Vancouver. It has also been recently discovered that there is the potential for excellent telecommunications connections, as there is a line of dark fibre which runs close to the community.

**Update:** The City is promoting this opportunity through the BC Ministry of Investment and Trade and BCEDA’s LinxBC program.

**Value Added Manufacturing (Encourage, Advocate)**
A significant amount of natural or raw resources are extracted from the Powell River region and are manufactured into goods outside of the community, thereby supporting jobs elsewhere. Powell River has the bare land, infrastructure and work force that could support value added manufacturing. Every effort should be made to attract investment in this sector.

*Update: The City is promoting this opportunity though the BC Ministry of Investment and Trade and BCEDA’s LinxBC program.*

**Medical Cannabis/Hemp**
The change in how the Federal Government regulates the Medical Marijuana industry has created an opportunity to attract new investment in the community. A number of companies have already expressed an interest in establishing federally licensed facilities in Powell River, noting that the isolation of community, available properties, good infrastructure and Council’s openness to the industry as reasons why it is a preferable location. Many well-paying jobs could be created in this new sector and every effort should be made to accommodate interested investors who have been licensed to operate growing facilities.

*Update: The City is working with a company that is seeking a license under Health Canada’s new program for Medical Marijuana production.*

**Water Intensive Industries (Encourage, Advocate)**
Powell River has access to an abundance of fresh and salt water resources. Research should be done to identify industries that require large amounts of water to operate and marketing strategies should be developed to attract investment.

*Update: The City is promoting this opportunity through the BC Ministry of Trade and Investment and BCEDA’s LinxBC program.*

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<tr>
<td>• Promotion of investment opportunities noted above through the BC Ministry of International Investment and Trade, BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, and the BC Economic Development Association’s Link BC program.</td>
<td>On going</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Promotion of investment opportunities directly to target companies as well as through site selector contacts</td>
<td>On going</td>
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<tr>
<td>• NOTE: Medical Marijuana Company continues to wait for license approval, but work is still continuing on making sure its development is shovel ready when one is granted.</td>
<td>On going</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The Medical Marijuana Operation represents 40 to 70 jobs initially and approximately $25,000 per year in new taxes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• The other development opportunities could create the following job numbers</td>
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Outcome:
One Data Centre = 10 to 20 jobs  
Sawmill = 30 to 50 jobs (More if larger)  
Food processing = 25+ jobs  
Water Bottling = 10 to 20 jobs

5.7 Resident Attraction/Human Capital

Resident Attraction Campaign (Support, Facilitate, Encourage)
Although Powell River’s population has virtually stayed the same over the last 15 years (with small increases) it currently has an average age of 50, according to the latest Census statistics. The City’s economic future is reliant upon attracting more residents to its shores to not only ensure it maintains a viable workforce, but also to bolster housing starts and entrepreneurship. Currently work is being done to develop a multi-stakeholder supported campaign to attract residents utilizing several forms of media and professional networks. Some of the sectors currently being considered for attraction efforts include:
- Filling labour shortages (e.g. Catalyst Paper, Logging Industry, etc...)
- Doctor Recruitment and other Health Professionals
- Young Families
- Telecommuters and self employed
- Active Retirees
- Persons with disabilities and their families
- Workers from Fort McMurray and Fort St. John (Establishment of Direct Flights?)

Recommendation: The Task Force recommends that the City support and participate in the development and implementation of a Resident Attraction campaign.

Update: The City and Tourism Powell River have begun building a Resident Attraction campaign based on research conducted by Nicole Vaugeois PhD on amenity based attraction. Simply put, her research shows that when deciding on a place to settle and live, young professionals will select a community with the activities, services, infrastructure and quality of life they prefer ahead of a job or career. In light of this, the campaign will highlight the quality of life in the region, cultural assets, services and infrastructure and affordability.

Although the key demographic being targeted is working families (25-55), the campaign will also reach out to other markets such as telecommuters, skilled labour, entrepreneurs, retirees and the LGBT community. Initially the key regions the campaign will cover includes Vancouver, Victoria, Calgary, Fort McMurray, Saskatchewan, Montreal and Toronto, but due to recent successes under the business immigration program, it will likely be stretching well beyond those locations using strategic partnerships with companies and consultants the City and other stakeholders have been working with.

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<tr>
<td>• High Quality resident attraction publication (16-20 pages) inserted into major newspapers or distributed by postal code</td>
<td>September 2014</td>
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- Social Media – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Vine, etc.../10 unique posts per week
- Web Portal – linking to all Social Media tools, community orgs and information
- Testimonial Video Vignettes – Profiles of people from key demographics on why they chose Powell River. Each video will be about 90 secs in length and available on a YouTube channel

| August 2014 | August 2014 | August 2014 |

Outcome:

- New young professionals and families moving to the community
- Attracting retirees to the community
- Increasing housing starts
- Filling labour shortages in industries that are struggling to find skilled workers
- Fostering investment in new businesses by young entrepreneurs