

Economic Action Plan for Salmon Arm 2004 to 2009

Prepared by:

The Salmon Arm Economic Development Corporation with significant input from community partners, agencies, organizations and other stakeholders in our community and region.

Vision

“Working together, we will make the Shuswap a world class natural destination – a great place to create, live, work, play and grow; with the cultural, educational, health care and technology infrastructure to ensure a stimulated, vibrant and healthy citizenry.

Salmon Arm, as the hub of the Shuswap, will attract, develop and retain businesses that build on our human and physical assets and result in a healthy, sustainable economy.”

Our hope is that this Action Plan will form a part of a greater Shuswap Regional Growth Strategy

Supported and funded by:

Salmon Arm Economic Development Corporation



Thank you to the following:

Organizations and Individuals

District of Salmon Arm –	Mayor Colin Mayes, Doug Lagore – Administrator, Carl Bannister – Director of Community Development Members of Council - Nancy Cooper, Marty Bootsma, Wayne Matthews, Kevin Flynn, Rene Verwey, Marg Kentel
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Boudreau and the agencies/organizations as stated above

Disclaimer: This Plan is for the purpose of creating a strategic vision for Salmon Arm whereby its initiatives and actions will create investment and employment. It is not intended to be a legally enforceable document. When a contradiction with various Official Community Plans or zoning bylaws occurs, the OCP and zoning bylaws are deemed binding over this Strategic Plan.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1

Purpose of the Plan

This Plan is a framework for future action that lays out the rationale and approach to our economic strategies for the community and provides a framework for action for those organizations engaged in Economic Development activities to avoid duplication and maximize our resources. This augments the existing Salmon Arm Community Development Strategy 1999.

This Action Plan proposes directions to focus the attention and energies of all stakeholders in a common direction, suggests priorities which should be the first focus of this effort, and challenges all of us to jointly develop and implement specific action plans. Groups will be asked to identify portions of the plan they can tackle and attach timeframes for implementation for a five-year period.

The Salmon Arm Economic Development Corporation assumes responsibility for acting as the coordinating body to encourage the implementation of these directions by the community.

1.2

Community Involvement

The Mayor and Growth Strategy Chair sent out a joint invitation to the business community and associations to attend a community meeting outlining the process and requesting volunteers to play a part in developing this Strategy. A team of 35 individuals from a broad spectrum of industry attended two Economic Background sessions, received packages with comprehensive statistics, reports and power point presentations in addition to attending a full day facilitated session creating a vision and some directional strategies.

The strongest focus has been given to those initiatives which have the greatest economic impact on the community at particular points in time. Resources and skills to accomplish more than four major tasks are most likely not available in the short term, and the remaining initiatives will be worked on in a continuous manner or some years out. The focuses and priorities have been determined in consultation with various community organizations, agencies, steering committees, and the District of Salmon Arm.

To be effective, this strategy requires a greater community commitment to implementation. To date, some of these strategic initiatives are well underway by various volunteers, economic development agencies, organizations and surrounding communities.

This document is a foundation document from which ongoing strategic developments should be encouraged to evolve.

1.3

Roles and Responsibilities

To ensure alignment and synergy as Salmon Arm moves forward, and to eliminate duplication, misunderstanding and overlap, it is crucial to identify the parties and their mandates. As important, it is necessary to understand the reporting process and the respective roles each party will undertake. To better provide clarification on the roles and responsibilities of the parties involved in the economic development function, the following will summarize what is expected of each party to ensure successful achievement of the goals and mandate as outlined in this strategy.

Municipal Council: to develop and approve policy and outcomes that support the priorities outlined here; to measure, facilitate and support economic development efforts; to promote Salmon Arm as a Centre of Excellence.

Chief Administrative Officer/Development Services Manager: to develop and implement processes and procedures that facilitate ease of doing business in Salmon Arm; to work with the community groups to achieve the objectives outlined here. To promote Salmon Arm as a Centre of Excellence for a developing community.

Salmon Arm Economic Development Corporation: to influence the policy implementation process by facilitating partnerships and access to resources, for the benefit of the community through expanding job opportunities, increased resident/non-resident spending and a diversified tax base.

Economic Development Partners: to represent the interests of a wide range of stakeholders in providing advice to Council and the Economic Development Corporation; to indicate policy areas that need to be addressed; to recommend policy and offer consultative support to the office of the EDC.

1.4

Our Envisioned Future

This is the result of a facilitated group process with the individuals listed on the preceding page and reflects our shared vision for 10 years in the future.

Working Together

Leaders from business, government and community groups in Salmon Arm and the Shuswap are united by a shared Vision, a remarkable spirit of cooperation, and a process for working together to make their Vision a reality while remaining true to the mandates of their groups. This was made possible by the determination of all participants to remain focused on shared goals.

To Create A World-Class Natural Destination

The way in which the Shuswap has balanced economic growth with protection of the natural environment shows why sustainable resource management became a centre of excellence for the Shuswap.

Businesses know the advantages they gain from the Shuswap's natural ability to attract skilled employees, and they exercise care in sustaining its attraction. Business leaders appreciate the business-friendly climate and their location near centres of excellence. Success in attracting sustainable businesses to the region has provided well-paid employment for people of all ages. As a result, the Salmon Arm region has a diversified economy that has become a net exporter, with a favourable balance of payments.

With Success Supported by a Thriving Business Community

The economic success of the Shuswap was driven by all economic development groups, a deliberate strategy to develop and retain existing businesses, and to attract the right new businesses to the region.

Special, low-cost training was provided to equip business people at all levels with the knowledge and skills required for business success. The superior customer orientation and service that resulted from this training became a recognized strength of the regional business community.

Business leaders were welcomed into community decision-making, and the community actively promoted and recognized businesses that contributed leadership and sustainable economic benefits to the community.

Supported by the leadership of a well-funded business development office, business leaders were instrumental in attracting new business to the Region.

And Strengthening and Supporting our Human Capital

No community is stronger or more vibrant than the foundation of its people, and the Region placed special emphasis on developing and supporting a strong, vibrant, diverse, knowledgeable and healthy population.

Okanagan University College has become a world-class educational destination that develops knowledgeable people and life-long learners to complement our successful businesses and to provide intellectual stimulation. The education and business community are a model of collaboration on continuing professional development.

By Building on Our Economic Assets

Progress towards the Vision was aided by a well-planned program to strengthen the infrastructure that supports quality of life and business success. It began with an inventory of community assets, identified the kinds of businesses that would benefit most from access to these assets and advantages of co-location with other successful local businesses, and a included gap analysis to identify priorities for upgrading the infrastructure.

Priority was given to strengthening infrastructure and amenities needed by businesses in the areas of serviced commercial and industrial land and buildings, municipal services, technology infrastructure, power quality, and access to transportation. The community also engaged senior government (ALR, Highways, etc.) to influence their priorities in decision making to accommodate the community's needs.

1.5

Primary Focus Areas

1.) Business Retention & Expansion

- **Manufacturing**
- **Retail/Tourism**

The continued economic success of our community is largely dependent on our ability to support the SMEs (Small medium enterprises) that comprise the majority of our business mix. Expansion of existing companies is the acknowledged source of the majority of new job creation followed by new business owned by people currently residing in the area. This practice also fits within our current resources and we have multiple partners funding and supporting the Business Development Program.

2.) Attraction

- **Education**
- **Tourism**

Some of our greatest business attraction tools are the means of introducing people to our area. Tourism and the Salmon Arm Campus of the Okanagan University Campus are great examples. As well articulate websites and an attractive community appearance lend interest. Our current resources have precluded us from pursuing Targeted Industry Attraction campaigns but real opportunities exist in working with OUC in student and faculty attraction, improved skill sets for workers and building on tourism and conference/event assets.

3.) Infrastructure

- **Health**
- **Aesthetics**
- **Industrial & Commercial Lands**

A key in attracting individuals to our area is full service health care, a priority of our Council has been working with Interior Health to ensure the retention of our regional Hospital and residential care facilities. Council has also taken large steps to support the beautification of the city core. A priority must be to ensure sufficient lands for future commercial and industrial land base to provide the tax base to maintain the impressive number of community facilities.

1.) Business Retention & Expansion

Support the Business Development Program as the prime initiative to work one on one with existing enterprises and create no less than 35 jobs annually while retaining 125. Initiatives developed around building skill levels will lead to improved customer service and reduce business turnover by 10% in five years.

2.) Attraction

Work with community groups to improve linkages, identify barriers to attraction and build on existing industry clusters. Within five years identify one or two industry clusters to target for attraction, see three tourism infrastructure or major initiatives underway to improve off shoulder extended stays. Improve linkages with training and industry to strengthen skilled work force.

3.) Infrastructure

Establish a five-year plan for ensuring the acquisition by the District and/or private sector of market ready, large parcels of land for industrial and commercial property. Have in place plans and governance to improve the aesthetics of approaches to our community. The results of Council's initiatives will be the establishment of no less than four substantial structures housing retail and industrial businesses.