

Revelstoke Development News

Spring 2015



**COMMUNITY
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**



The Community Economic Development (CED) Department is funded by the City of Revelstoke and the CSRD Area B. The purpose of the Department is to implement the goals and objectives identified by the community in the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP). The Department has been working on the following initiatives over the past few months.

TOURISM

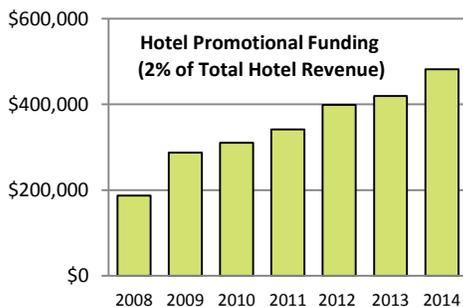
Staff continue to work with local groups and agencies to develop tourism infrastructure projects to enhance the tourism product in Revelstoke. During the past winter, funds from the Resort Municipality Initiative (RMI) were allocated to:

- Revelstoke Ski Club to purchase equipment to allow the club to host a series of regional and provincial ski races at Revelstoke Mountain Resort.
- Revelstoke Nordic Ski Club to purchase a new ATV to assist with trail grooming.
- Revelstoke Railway Museum to help upgrade exhibits.
- Revelstoke Arts Council to assist with the planning of two annual music festivals beginning in September 2015.
- Funds were also allocated to purchase and install Christmas lighting in the downtown area.



City Council recently approved RMI funding to the Visual Arts Centre to develop a park area between the Centre and Victoria Road, and to the Revelstoke Cycling Association to develop additional mountain bike trails. These projects will again help to improve the quality of the attractions and amenities available to visitors to the community, and increase the economic impact of tourism to local businesses.

These and other RMI projects helped Revelstoke to attract more tourists during 2014 than the previous year. We continue to see solid growth in hotel room revenues over the past 7 years.



LABOUR MARKET STRATEGY

The CED Department, in partnership with the local WorkBC Labour Market Network, will complete the Labour Market Strategy this May. Over the past few months, consultants interviewed over 150 Revelstoke businesses to find out any issues and challenges the companies are facing or expect to face with respect to labour market issues. This project has provided a great deal of valuable information about local business issues, labour market needs and projected labour demands. Businesses indicated they were optimistic about the future of their companies, with 45% forecasting growth and 49% projecting they would remain stable over the next few years. Many businesses also noted that they have been operating successfully in Revelstoke for a long period of time. One of the significant findings of the survey was that, in general, Revelstoke companies do not appear to have a major issue with an older workforce. Companies did not indicate they would be losing a significant amount of workers to retirement over the next few years, which is contrary to Provincial and National labour market projections. Several businesses involved in the tourism and retail sector noted they had challenges attracting and retaining seasonal workers. The agencies in the Business Information Centre will be working together with staff at the WorkBC Centre to develop strategies to help business address their workforce challenges. The majority of the funding for this project was secured through a grant from the Province of BC.

BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION

The CED Department, in partnership with Community Futures Revelstoke and the Revelstoke Chamber of Commerce, is nearing completion of a Business Retention and Expansion Initiative. With support from the Columbia Basin Trust and the Rural Development Institute at Selkirk College, the partners hired a Coop student from UBC-Okanagan, to undertake a survey of businesses to determine what challenges they were facing in Revelstoke. Early results from the survey indicate a positive outlook among local businesses, with 82% of businesses surveyed indicating the health of their business to be good to excellent, and 74% indicating that Revelstoke is a good to excellent community to do business. The project will continue to the end of May 2015. The survey has identified several areas which could be improved to help the development of local business, and the partners in the Business Information Centre will be working to address these concerns in the next few months.

For information on CED initiatives contact Alan Mason, Director of Community Economic Development at 250-827-5345 or e-mail amason@revelstoke.ca.

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REVELSTOKE COMMUNITY SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Supporting Social Planning and Action in Revelstoke since July 2008

STRENGTHENING SOCIAL CAPACITY

The goals of the new *Safe Spaces Revelstoke Society* include support for LGBTQ residents and increased awareness of LGBTQ issues in our community. 'Safe Spaces' is about acceptance of people for who they are, diversity, and living without fear of discrimination. Support for the fledgling group has been rewarding as we see them grow. See www.safespacesrevelstoke.org for more info. A natural extension is a new project to develop a *coordinated community response to hate crimes* in Revelstoke. Supported by a CBT Social Grant, project completion is slated for early July.

Time has been spent bringing service providers and emergency personnel together to brainstorm how we can best support residents who are most *isolated and vulnerable* in our community.

Funding was acquired to support Revelstoke OPT and other community partners to deliver training for service providers and parents on how to *talk to children and youth about sexuality and sexual health*.

POVERTY REDUCTION

A '*living wage*' reflects what earners in a family need to bring home to meet basic needs and no longer live in poverty. Last fall, the Revelstoke Credit Union led the way to update our living wage calculation, now at \$18.87/hr. A new UBCO Community-University research project will explore the barriers and benefits of paying a living wage and potential economic implications for our community.

On March 10th, City Council made a commitment to poverty reduction, endorsing the national *Cities Reducing Poverty – Poverty Reduction Charter*. Supported by CBT, Jill Zacharias will be attending a national Poverty Reduction Summit in Ottawa. As part of Revelstoke's contribution to the summit, *Revy Vibes* – a video was produced about what makes our community vibrant (see www.revelstokecurrent.com). Jill will be presenting on rural issues at the summit.

The *financial literacy* project is in full swing with Lisa Nguyen coordinating the delivery of 11 money skills workshops for community members.

The *Youth Access Fund* was launched last fall. This program aims to decrease financial barriers to youth participation in arts, cultural and recreation programs and events in our community.



The Social Development Committee is an Advisory Committee to Revelstoke City Council. The Committee provides input to the work plan of the Social Development Coordinator, Jill Zacharias, who is contracted to the City of Revelstoke and reports to the Director of Community Economic Development.

Jill works to address community-wide social issues through planning and bringing together community partners to work on related strategies and projects. Jill also supports social sector organizations and non-profits in Revelstoke by bringing in training opportunities, helping out with grant writing, and connecting groups with potential resources. Since 2008, \$383,000 has been brought in to support 27 different social projects in the community.

For more information about Social Development check out www.revelstokesocialdevelopment.org

Want to get involved?

Contact Jill Zacharias, Social Development Coordinator
e.jill.zacharias@gmail.com

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The provision of affordable housing in Revelstoke has been identified as a high community priority for several years.



The City of Revelstoke created the Revelstoke Community Housing Society to help the city to develop affordable housing. The Society was successful in obtaining grant funding from BC Housing and CBT to help with the construction costs of affordable housing in Revelstoke. For the past 18 months, the Society has been working closely with BC Housing and CBT to develop 12 rental townhouse units on city land along Oscar Street.

CED staff has been working closely with the Society on this initiative, and is hopeful of beginning construction of the new housing units late May, 2015. The units will be rented to Revelstoke residents who qualify for affordable housing, i.e. their income is below a certain threshold, they are Revelstoke residents, and they demonstrate a need for affordable housing. Application packages for the new units will be made available later this year. These units will be a valuable addition to the stock of affordable housing units in the community.

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Community Futures Revelstoke provides a number of business services to both new and existing Revelstoke Entrepreneurs. These services include one-on-one business counselling and advice, business planning assistance, business training, the Self-Employment Program, and business financing for start-up and existing business. For more information phone 250 837-5345 or visit www.revelstokecf.com.

Business Lending and Advisory Services – If you have a business idea and don't know where to get started, or have an existing business and want to expand, come in to Community Futures to get pointed in the right direction. Staff will sit down with you and help you explore and plan your business. Community Futures can even lend up to \$150,000 to help you start your business. Contact Cindy Maloney at 250 837-5345 or email cmaloney@revelstokecf.com.

Business Retention and Expansion Survey (BRE) – Community Futures, in partnership with the Revelstoke Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Commission has hired a UBC Okanagan Coop Student to conduct a Business Retention and Expansion Survey in Revelstoke. The survey will find out more about what would help local businesses to prosper and remain in the community. The project will identify specific issues facing local businesses, gain insights related to company and industry trends and reveal opportunities to deliver targeted supports to strengthen and expand Revelstoke's business community.

Junior Achievement – is a national organization dedicated to building business skills to young people. Over the past few months, Community Futures has partnered with Junior Achievement of BC to deliver a Business Basics Program to local grade 6 and 7 students. The participating students learn many business topics including marketing, manufacturing, management, financing and corporate structure.

Have you ever wondered about becoming an Entrepreneur?

FREE Me Inc. Workshops are designed to answer your questions.

Find out more at: www.bbaprogram.ca

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ADMINISTERED & MANAGED BY
Community
Futures



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More revenues for your Non Profit?!

If your non-profit is interested in how to make money through business activities to support their cause or is currently generating revenues – you are a Social Enterprise. 20 hours of support is FREE to any Social Enterprise in the Columbia Basin region.

Why Non Profits may choose to make money through a Social Enterprise to support their cause?

- potentially improved financial stability for the organization to carry out it's important work without relying solely on grants and donations;
- meet mandates while generating revenues – example: a café that provides work training to its target clients.

Common issues experienced by Social Enterprises:

- lack of business skills;
- lack of expertise;
- cultural disconnect when it comes to “making money” or how to do it effectively; AND more.

How the BBA program supports Social Enterprise:

- if your organization is considering ways to make revenues we can help determine if ideas are feasible;
- we can connect you to additional resources such as the Enterprising non profit grants and workshops;
- considerations that are specific to non profits regarding protecting your status as you make revenues to reinvest into your operations and cause;
- basic business – our advisors can work with you in all business aspects of your organization such as marketing, human resources, operations, financial systems and much more.

Free Social Enterprise / ENP Workshop
Wednesday, 13 May 2015 from 9:00 AM – 2:00PM
Revelstoke Business Information Boardroom
Suite D 301 Victoria Road, Revelstoke, BC
Register at www.bbaprogram.ca or call 1.855.510.2227

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Revelstoke Chamber of Commerce

Our 2015 Revelstoke Experience guide is here at the Visitor Centre and ready for distribution! This year, the guide is filled with passionate writers and local recommendations. Please come pick up a box (or two) at the Revelstoke Visitor Centre to give out at your establishment.

Revelstoke Business and Visitor Information Centre Statistics

Total Visitors	January	February	March	April
2015	586	903	1108	1011
% change 2015-2014	25.5%	189.3%	250.3%	265.5%
2014	261	1131	1121	1060

Glacier Challenge 2015

Preparations for the 28th Annual Slo Pitch challenge are underway! The Chamber, Rotary and Ski Club are ready for this year's event. We welcome back Alan Chell as part of our team and our new committee members, Rob Bett, Coopers Foods, Sherry Bogle, Canyon Motor Inn; Keri Trinder, Revelstoke Family Services; and Mark Baron, SomeWon. We would like to send a huge shout out to Amy Flexman for her amazing work over the last 2 years and her ongoing support and assistance. Flexpeditions! Anyone interested in volunteering, please call the Chamber at 250.837.5345 or come in and see us!

Promo Code: YIPU35!

The Chamber is excited to work with the Revelstoke Mountaineer to highlight a few of our amazing Young Inspiring Professionals! Our YIP celebration includes local professionals that are under 35 (U35) featured in a series of weekly articles in our communities new on-line publication, Revelstoke Mountaineer. The profiles will be published from May 14 to June 23. On June 23rd starting in the afternoon the Chamber is excited to host a day of technology innovations for small business followed by an after work celebration of local entrepreneurship, young professionals and our chamber members.

Chamber Spring 2015 Calendar

May 28 - Business after Business at the Royal Canadian Legion! Drop in 5 PM to 7 PM.

June 2 - Roger Brooks Int'l webinar Series Part 1: Property Owners, 12-1 pm in the City Council Chambers.

June 15 - Chamber Member luncheon with the Honorable Todd Stone Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, location TBA.

Chamber of Commerce Vision: "We represent our member's interests in promoting the progress and development of Revelstoke in order to make it a better place in which to do business, live, work and play."



Tourism Revelstoke has been busy over the past few months, despite some tough weather conditions this winter! We attended the Vancouver and Calgary Outdoor Adventures Shows in March, which both received attendances of over 20,000 people. We are currently working on new brochures for the upcoming busy summer tourist season. A brand new hiking, ATV, and Wedding brochure are all planned for 2015, along with updates to our Mountain Biking, Dirt Biking Maps, and Museum & Galleries guide. We are working with highway initiatives for a TV installation program this spring, where all participating highway businesses will receive a large screen TV installed in their establishment, playing a variety of Revelstoke videos and still photography to highlight the downtown experience and our different activity offerings.

A Social Media Workshop was hosted on May 1st, with 15 participating members. A Roger Brooks webinar was shown, and Tourism Revelstoke highlighted our 2015 Social Media Strategy. If anyone is interested in the workshop, or would like a copy of the presentation, please email meghan.tabor@seerevelstoke.com

Finding our Way



The Chamber has been working with Tourism Infrastructure to update our City's sign and way finding system. Most of our gateway signs, on the highways and entrances to town, have been updated.

We have installed a new map on the brick wall by the Gazebo in Grizzly Plaza and have updated some of our kiosks around town as well. We will be working with local contractors and suppliers to continue this upgrade throughout the City, including the Industrial Park and The Big Eddy.

Highway Update

We continue to lobby the Provincial and Federal representatives to bring upgrades to the TransCanada highway. The Honourable Todd Stone, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure will be the guest speaker at our June 15th Chamber luncheon. We encourage our members to come out and participate in the conversation!