



**CENTRAL
OKANAGAN**

ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION

2009 Strategic Plan

Economic Development Commission
Regional District of Central Okanagan

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION Regional District of Central Okanagan

VISION

“A prosperous region, where smart growth complements its natural resources and amenities embracing new global economic and social change.”

MISSION

“Working in partnership to facilitate a healthy, dynamic and sustainable community economy by supporting existing businesses and encouraging appropriate new business investment.”

VALUES

The CO EDC takes an objective and informed approach to research and evaluation while recognizing the relationship between economy, society, culture and environment. The Commission strives to work in the public interest and with all levels of government regardless of political affiliation.

The Advisory Board of Directors and the Staff of the CO EDC are committed to the following values:

- Integrity
- Fairness
- Co-Operation
- Leadership by Example
- Dignity
- Professionalism

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2009 Strategic Plan outlines the Commission's activities within three primary focus areas – ***Business Enhancement (70% of the Commission's work)***, ***Business Attraction (20%)*** and ***Economic Development Facilitation (10%)***.

The CO EDC's Advisory Board consists of appointees from local government, collaborative organizations, and representatives from a cross section of business sectors. Board members provide a valuable linkage between the business community and the organization or industry sector they represent. The Advisory Board provides valuable input as to the state of their industries and advisement to the staff of the Economic Development Commission.

Through the strategic planning process, the industry leaders and regional representatives who comprise the Advisory Board have recognized how the Commission's emphasis on Business Enhancement, Business Attraction and Facilitation are the most strategic approach to facilitate economic prosperity in the Central Okanagan Region.

The 2009 strategic planning process took place during a rapidly changing economic environment, with global economic events having significant impact down to the regional level. The general environment in which the Commission is operating has also been affected by the steadily increasing demands for its services due to tremendous growth in the Region. These factors have contributed to a "Back to Basics" approach to planning for 2009 which focuses on fundamental ways of assisting businesses that are challenged by the current economy as well as those that are starting up and those that are continuing to grow.

ROLE OF THE CO EDC ADVISORY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission is an agency of the Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO). The CO EDC is funded by and accountable to the elected board of the RDCO.

In creating the 2009 Strategic Plan, market research was conducted into eight industry sectors considered to have the most potential for growth in the Central Okanagan. This research consisted of one-on-one interviews with leaders in each sector, information provided by the CO EDC's specialized contractors and industry specific research and statistics. On presentation of these industry sector reports to the Advisory Board of Directors, strategies and areas where the CO EDC will concentrate its time and resources in the coming year were identified. Specific Objectives, Strategies and Action Items are described within the

Business Enhancement, Business Attraction and Facilitation sections of the 2009 Strategic Plan.

2009 CO EDC ADVISORY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Executive:

David Webb, Chair	Everest Recruitment Solutions
Scot Speiser, Vice-Chair	Business Development Bank
Laurel Douglas	Women's Enterprise Centre
Bob Monaghan	Kelowna Flightcraft Group of Companies
Mike Gilmore	Grant Thornton LLP Chartered Accountants
Renee Wasyluk	Troika Development Inc.

Directors appointed from local government and organizations:

Lindsay Bell	District of Peachland
Andre Blanleil	City of Kelowna
Broc Braconnier	Westbank & District Chamber of Commerce
Kelly Hayes	Regional District of Central Okanagan
Jayne Fosbery	Westbank First Nations
Penny Gambell	District of Lake Country
Shirley Geiger	Peachland Chamber of Commerce
Jim Hamilton	Okanagan College
Douglas MacLeod	Okanagan Science & Technology Council (OSTEC)
Rosalind Neis	District of West Kelowna
Doug Owram	UBC-Okanagan
Larry Widmer	Community Futures Development Corporation
Peter Withers	Lake Country Chamber of Commerce

Directors representing the local business community:

Gilles Dufort	Harvest Golf Club
Bradley Field	Trilogy Design Works Inc.
Guy Gaiser	WearAir Oxygen & WearAir Industrial
Doug Gallagher	Peller Estates
Ron Labossiere	Labossiere & Company
Paul Maarschalk	Solomon Resources Limited
Geoff Millar	Postnet
Barrie Pachenski	Royal Bank of Canada
Bill Redmond	Okanagan Innovation Fund
Sam Samaddar	Kelowna International Airport
Roger Sellick	Consultant
Larry Smith	Next Stage Consulting
Alison Yesilcimen	The Okanagan Valley Newspaper Group

MEASURING OUR PERFORMANCE

The importance of key performance measures to monitor the work of the Economic Development Commission is reflected in the identification of specific activities, budget implications and timelines for the implementation of projects. Monthly Activity Reports are submitted to the Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission Advisory Board, The Regional District of Central Okanagan Directors & City Councils within the Central Okanagan Region. During the Assessment periods of June and December 2009, the outcomes will be reviewed to measure the value of these activities.

2008 CORE ACTIVITIES OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

- **Respond to public inquiries daily by phone, e-mail & walk-in traffic**
(16,712 in 2008)
- **Clearing house for information** *(one-on-one site visits with approximately 463 Central Okanagan businesses in 2008)*
- **Valley-wide initiatives** *(Okanagan Partnership, Okanagan Valley Economic Development Society (OVEDS);*
- **Work with companies seeking to locate in the Central Okanagan;** *(site selection, commercial/industrial space location);*
- **Work with groups of companies within specific industry sectors to ensure new markets developed** *(i.e. assist with market diversification strategy development; participation in trade shows and other initiatives);*
- **Website Updating** *(regular updating of links and downloads to the CO EDC website; 2.5 million hits in 2008);*
- **Ongoing communication with various agencies and organizations** *(Okanagan Science and Technology Council, Chambers of Commerce, Community Futures, Women's Enterprise Centre, etc.)*
- **Newsletter development** *(distributed weekly to up to 2,000 businesses)*

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The Agrifutures program provided support to 89 farms impacted by poultry processing & facilitated over 40 farm direct marketing operations in the Region in 2008

Approximately 145 companies attended CO EDC educational programs during 2008 including programs on Succession Planning, Franchising, Export opportunities & Labour related issues

16% increase in renewals of Business Licenses in the Central Okanagan since 2005

BUSINESS ENHANCEMENT

Research in the field of economic development shows that the majority of wealth in a community is generated by its existing business base; A strong and viable business retention and enhancement focus is fundamental to a successful economic development strategy. The CO EDC has made business enhancement activities the mainstay of its programs and services for the past six years.

“Now more than ever we need to focus on the sectors that have the great potential to contribute to the growth of the Region’s economy and provide a solid foundation we can build on.”

OBJECTIVE	RATIONALE	ACTION ITEMS	TIMELINE	POTENTIAL PARTNER(S)	
1. Implement the Business Enhancement Site Visitation Program through one-on-one site visits, educational programs that meet specific needs expressed by local businesses.	Building the economy of a community where an existing strong business base is proven to be a viable economic development strategy. This strategy has been employed in the Central Okanagan where 97% of businesses have 50 or fewer employees. Continued emphasis on business enhancement / retention reflects “ Back to Basics ” programming determined by the Advisory Board of Directors for 2009, building upon the relationship & assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct 100 one-on-one site visits with comprehensive follow up where required In conjunction with one-on-one interviews, develop a standard questionnaire to use on site visits to ensure vital information about the needs for information by the business community is known to the CO EDC Provide industry sector reports based on the information gained through the visitation program to the CO 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>April</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Business Development Bank of Canada;</p> <p>Women’s Enterprise Centre – BC (WESBC);</p> <p>Chambers of Commerce;</p> <p>Okanagan Valley Economic</p>	

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OBJECTIVE	RATIONALE	ACTION ITEMS	TIMELINE	POTENTIAL PARTNER(S)	
<p>Business Enhancement Site Visitation Program– Con’t.</p>	<p>provided to thousands of businesses in the Central Okanagan since 2002.</p>	<p>EDC Advisory Board during the Commission’s Activity Assessment periods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide “good news” stories and information to industry/special interest publications and other media • Coordinate a Business in the Park education program on “Access to Capital” • Develop a quarterly “Access to Capital” information tool to be published on the CO EDC website • Provide appropriate discussion documents/informational pieces on several topics related to the current needs expressed by local employers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How to Write a Business Plan/Why planning is Important; - How to become Investor Ready; - Importance of Exporting - Human Resources- topics may include: HR shifts, Working with Generation Y, and Working with 50+ Employees • Coordinate educational opportunities on topics that promote operational efficiency (LEAN manufacturing, ISO) • Develop a strategy for attracting media with special interests in industry sectors to the Region as a means of 	<p>May</p> <p>May</p> <p>April, June & Nov.</p> <p>April, July & Nov.</p> <p>June</p> <p>April</p>	<p>Development Society (OVEDS);</p> <p>Community Futures Development Corporation (CFDC);</p> <p>Canadian Manufacturers Exporters (CME);</p> <p>Okanagan College School of Business;</p> <p>University of British Columbia – Okanagan (UBCO);</p> <p>Tourism Kelowna;</p> <p>Thompson-Okanagan Tourism Association;</p> <p>And others as identified</p>	

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OBJECTIVE	RATIONALE	ACTION ITEMS	TIMELINE	POTENTIAL PARTNER(S)	
<p>Business Enhancement Site Visitation Program– Con’t.</p>		<p>promoting business capacity in the Region as it relates to the manufacturing, high technology and agricultural sectors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with tourism agencies on the potential role the CO EDC could play in developing ‘FAM’ (familiarization) tours that promote business attraction and investment in the Region. i.e. CIO magazine & Rackforce 	<p>April</p>		
<p>2. Work to secure the Central Okanagan’s manufacturing base</p>	<p>The manufacturing sector is one of the most important contributors to the Canadian economy and in the Central Okanagan, is a major provider of quality, long-term, well paying jobs</p> <p>The Business Enhancement programs have identified strategic planning – especially marketing strategy, awareness of supply chain opportunities and export development – as areas where local manufacturers need the greatest amount of assistance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add a PT Export officer to CO EDC staff profile Develop a strategy for attracting media with special interests in industry sectors to the Region as a means of promoting business capacity in the region as it relates to the manufacturing, high technology and agricultural sectors *see objective #1 Hold networking events for manufacturers Identify collaborative opportunities such as educational programs & resources for manufacturers 	<p>April</p> <p>May</p> <p>May- Dec</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Chambers of Commerce;</p> <p>Canadian Manufactures and Exporters (CME);</p> <p>Export Development Canada (EDC);</p> <p>Ministry of Community Development;</p> <p>And others as identified</p>	

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OBJECTIVE	RATIONALE	ACTION ITEMS	TIMELINE	POTENTIAL PARTNER(S)	
<p>3. Build upon and expand marketing opportunities within the Agricultural & Agrifoods Products Sector</p>	<p>Agriculture is an important industry sector in the Central Okanagan with significant ties to tourism. The CO EDC has had an Agricultural Field Service Coordinator working specifically with businesses in this sector for 3 years; 2009 initiatives reflect opportunities to expand into new markets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate Local Food Supplier workshop • Develop an inventory of local food products and promote/facilitate inclusion of these products at regional events with an international market audience • Facilitate the development of a "Food Tier Guide" guide and map based on a regional direct farm marketing inventory • National CCFCC (Canadian Culinary Federation) conference • Agri-Tourism Summit • Conduct 25 one-on-one site visits • Work specifically with individual secondary food-related manufacturers to develop export-related marketing opportunities • Facilitate & communicate to the farm community, stakeholders & service providers on opportunities & initiatives identified through the Agricultural Field Service Program by publishing information on the CO EDC website, the CO EDC newsletter; and distribution of press releases to service providers 	<p>February</p> <p>April</p> <p>May</p> <p>March</p> <p>June</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Investment Agriculture Foundation;</p> <p>BC Agriculture Council;</p> <p>Okanagan Valley Economic Development Society (OVEDS);</p> <p>Farm Credit Canada;</p> <p>Federal & Provincial agencies;</p> <p>Tourism Kelowna;</p> <p>Thompson-Okanagan Tourism Association (TOTA)</p> <p>And others as identified</p>	

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OBJECTIVE	RATIONALE	ACTION ITEMS	TIMELINE	POTENTIAL PARTNER(S)	
<p>4. Assist the Hospitality/Tourism sector with its Labour-related Needs</p>	<p>According to go2, created by BC Tourism HR Association BC will be short 30,000 workers in the tourism industry by 2015 and 64,000 by 2025.</p> <p>In the 2008 Tourism Cluster Study developed by the Okanagan Partnership, 28% of respondents in the tourism cluster cited that they fail to fill employment positions because they cannot identify appropriate prospects. 26% of the respondents want to learn how to recruit foreign workers.</p> <p>The CO EDC has identified the need to provide support to this sector by investigating creative ways to attract and retain hospitality/tourism workers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate links between industry associations and local employers in the region • Visit 50 local employers with the goal of educating them about attraction and retention opportunities and facilitating action plans • Coordinate a Business in the Park program on attracting & retaining workers to the hospitality/tourism sector • Showcase employers who are helping address labour issues in this sector through creative housing solutions 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>March</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association;</p> <p>Tourism Kelowna;</p> <p>BC Food & Restaurant Association;</p> <p>Hotel/Motel Association;</p> <p>go2BC;</p> <p>And others as identified</p>	

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Facilitated an Okanagan presence at the Globe 2008 Sustainable Energy Trade & Investment Show

\$57 million inbound investment through PNP/PR

A Valley-wide attraction & branding strategy continued in 2008 with the launch of the Okanagan Strategic Advantage website with specific focus on the aerospace sector

BUSINESS ATTRACTION

While the Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission worked for many years to attract new businesses to the Okanagan, efforts shifted to attracting *investment into existing businesses* in the community in 2005. This reflects the need for capital to facilitate continued growth and expansion of the many small businesses that make up the Central Okanagan, as well as the number of established niche markets and products that have developed in the Region.

“Business Attraction is about attracting investment into our Region, as well as people; Work in this area has to be strategic and focused.”

OBJECTIVE	RATIONALE	ACTION ITEM	TIMELINE	POTENTIAL PARTNER(S)	FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
<p>1. Support investment needs within the Agricultural and Agrifoods sector</p> <p><i>*Activities undertaken in developing this investment strategy will take advantage of CO EDC’s presence at key events related to other initiatives, thereby maximizing the value of activities.</i></p>	<p>The agricultural sector in the Okanagan faces several critical demographical challenges including the average age of farmers (57 years) and the need for succession planning and human capital. At the same time, numerous opportunities exist to build the sector, and the CO EDC can play a key role in assisting the farm community to benefit from these opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inventory, Promote and Facilitate opportunities for 'local food' in Regional events. Reaching an international market. Events may include: Okanagan International Marathon and Apple Triathlon Seek foreign direct investment into the Okanagan by investment into existing farms 	<p>April - November</p> <p>April-December</p>	<p>Investment Agriculture Foundation;</p> <p>BC Agriculture council;</p> <p>OVEDS;</p> <p>Farm Credit Canada;</p> <p>Federal & Provincial agencies;</p> <p>Thompson-Okanagan Tourism Association</p>	

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OBJECTIVE	RATIONALE	ACTION ITEM	TIMELINE	POTENTIAL PARTNER(S)	FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
<p>2. Assist in the Growth and development within the High Technology Sector</p> <p><i>*Activities undertaken in developing this investment strategy will take advantage of CO EDC's presence at key events related to other initiatives, thereby maximizing the value of activities.</i></p>	<p>Based on the research provided in the Premier's Technology Council's Report (June 2008) & direction provided by the CO EDC Advisory Board, five specific areas have been identified within the technology sector as having the greatest opportunity for growth in the Region and will be top of mind during attraction work related to this sector.</p> <p>A large number of small businesses in the Central Okanagan sit at the top of the value chain – possessing top level management & creative capacity while they contract out most back office functions, prototyping, mass manufacturing, and logistics.</p> <p>Northern Europe is a specific area of focus due to the flow of Europeans into Canada and the positive value of the Canadian dollar compared to the British Pound. Additional opportunities to attract investment in Okanagan businesses relate to research which demonstrates the large number of IT businesses in the UK and talented human capital in this area, and the fact that 1/3 of Britain's want to leave their country.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add Technology attraction officer to CO EDC staff profile • Create & Develop an Okanagan presence at the CES Trade & Investment Event and Reception • Attend the Pacific Northwest Wireless Summit in Vancouver • Continue to build relationships with contacts in the UK and Nordic region(s) • Raise the profile of the Central Okanagan with provincial & federal organizations beyond a tourism destination through the in-depth sharing of information with strategically linked, high profile organizations such as the Okanagan Research and Innovation Centre (ORIC), BC Innovation Council, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) & European trade commissioners • Identify niche marketing opportunities in the wireless sector with ORIC and Scottish Trade International, building on the proposed mission to Wireless Summit in Vancouver • Develop a "Work Where you Play" promotional campaign including literature targeting the corporate retreat market in the UK through continued work on the Air Attraction task Force 	<p>January</p> <p>January</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>(TOTA)</p> <p>Business Retention Team (<i>Downtown Kelowna Association, Kelowna Chamber of Commerce, CO EDC</i>);</p> <p>Okanagan Science & Technology Council (OSTEC);</p> <p>Okanagan Research & Innovation Centre (ORIC);</p> <p>BC Trade and Investment Representative(s) in San Jose;</p> <p>Department of Foreign Affairs & International Trade (DFAIT);</p> <p>European Trade Commissions</p> <p>And others as identified</p>	

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OBJECTIVE	RATIONALE	ACTION ITEM	TIMELINE	POTENTIAL PARTNER(S)	FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
<p>Assist in the Growth and Development within the High Technology Sector - Con't</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for the planned visit by of major U.S. companies (by inviting CTO's & CEO's from the Silicon Valley) to visit the Okanagan and explore collaborative opportunities • Develop an inward investment strategy that will look to the region's tourism market and encourage entrepreneurs and key decision makers visiting the Okanagan to think about locating where they can enjoy an unparalleled quality of life • Facilitate a corporate retreat package in Kelowna & Big White, targeting executives in the Silicon Valley • Facilitate links between local companies currently operating in the Silicon Valley to encourage them to reinvest in Okanagan companies - using a "Bridge to the Valley" theme • Develop resources on the BC Business PNP, CIC Business Program, Inter-Company Transfers and Labour Market Opinion issues for Foreign Employers • Development of Web Portal 	<p>April</p> <p>April</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>September</p>		

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OBJECTIVE	RATIONALE	ACTION ITEM	TIMELINE	POTENTIAL PARTNER(S)	FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
<p>3. Increase access to business investment opportunities in the Region.</p>	<p>Significant numbers of investors are looking to move to Canada from other countries, as the number of applications for the Business PNP program shows, as well as from other parts of Canada. While in Europe to participate in initiatives such as emigrate trade events, the CO EDC will build on its presence and contacts to participate in additional activities related to business investment in the Region, resulting in value-added programming and generation of significant tourism visits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate via site visits, the CO EDC newsletter & website an Expression of Interest which invites local companies to post their businesses for sale • Participate in the Okanagan College International Student's Dinner • Partner with Province in investment related activities as targeted at the United Kingdom • Develop a tangible inventory/database of Central Okanagan businesses for sale • Distribute the database at Trade & Investment Attraction and Foreign Skilled Worker recruitment events 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>February</p> <p>March & October</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Okanagan College;</p> <p>University of British Columbia-Okanagan;</p> <p>Ministry of Community Development, BC PNP program</p> <p>And others as identified</p>	
<p>4. Support the growth and development of the Sustainable Energy Sector</p>	<p>Supporting collaboration between local environmental industry companies as they work to expand their markets provides an additional investment attraction opportunity for the Region. The CO EDC began working with this emerging sector in 2006 by assisting with the formation of the Okanagan Environmental Industry Alliance (2007). As companies in this sector grow and the sector gains strength through it provides an increasingly attractive investment opportunity which also increases the likelihood of federal and provincial funding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide CO EDC representation on the OEIA Board • Collaborating with the OEIA, facilitate opportunities for participation by local sustainable energy companies in the Globe 2010 trade event • Work with site selectors to identify prerequisites for green technology companies to locate in the Region 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>August - November</p>	<p>Okanagan Environmental Industry Alliance, (OEIA);</p> <p>Okanagan Science and Technology Council (OSTEC);</p> <p>Okanagan Research and Innovation Centre (ORIC);</p> <p>And others as identified</p>	

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OBJECTIVE	RATIONALE	ACTION ITEM	TIMELINE	POTENTIAL PARTNER(S)	FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
<p>5. Facilitate the development of a Venture Capital Corporation for film production in the Region</p>	<p>Preliminary work to this initiative includes the ERA Feasibility study in 2007 which identified excellent potential to develop a film studio in the Region, a strategy for marketing the investment opportunity, and the actual securing of a temporary production facility in mid-2008. Local education and training for the film industry available through the Centre for Arts & Technology further contributes to the infrastructure in place to support a regional film facility.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the development of a full service film studio in the Region • Facilitate legal framework for establishment of Venture Capital Film Fund • Create an inventory of available land for development • Create a database of potential investors who support development of the Studio 	<p>Ongoing – multi-year project</p> <p>January</p> <p>April</p> <p>April</p>	<p>Public/private partnerships;</p> <p>Okanagan Film Commission;</p> <p>Southern Interior Innovation Fund;</p> <p>Okanagan Innovation Fund;</p> <p>Ministry of Community Development;</p> <p>And others as identified</p>	
<p>6. Continue to promote the development and expansion of Kelowna International Airport</p>	<p>Studies have shown for every 10 percent gain in passenger traffic in a metropolitan area, there is a 1 percent gain in service employment.</p> <p>The Commission will continue to play an important role in the development of Kelowna International Airport by working through the Airport Advisory Committee to communicate with government agencies the Region's opportunities for economic growth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in Airport Advisory Committee meetings • Meet with Regional, Provincial and Federal government re: airport related issues • Promote the availability of airport expansion routes which support the needs of the local business community as well as recruitment of foreign direct investment • Facilitate work with tourism development in the Region with efforts to make airport users aware of the business investment opportunities in the Region 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>		

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OBJECTIVE	RATIONALE	ACTION ITEM	TIMELINE	POTENTIAL PARTNER(S)	FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
<p>7. Provide Economic Data & Information to Business Community, Service Providers, Community Stakeholders, general public and Media</p>	<p>Providing a wide range of economic data in formats that can be made readily available has proven to be an essential core service provided by the CO EDC.</p> <p>Some of the most important & comprehensive sources of data are the Central Okanagan Regional Economic Profile, and Community Profiles for the following areas: District of Peachland Profile, District of West Kelowna Profile, City of Kelowna Profile, District of Lake Country Profile and Central Okanagan East Profile. The Profiles are valuable documents for key information & demographics sought by potential business investors, new business owners & students researching the region.</p> <p>The CO EDC website provides links to the Economic Profile and newsletter as well as a wide range of resources and economic data in the community – approximately 2.5 million hits were recorded to the CO EDC website in 2008.</p> <p>Timely information is also communicated through the Commission's electronic newsletter which is distributed to approximately 2,000 businesses/ contacts weekly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish the 2009 Regional Economic Profile • Publish Community Economic Profiles for: District of Peachland, District of West Kelowna, City of Kelowna, District of Lake Country and Central Okanagan East • Publish/update site selection toolkit • Publish electronic newsletter • Data & informational updates to website • Develop & Distribute Quality of Life messaging for distribution at CO EDC attended Foreign Direct Investment events, recruitment events and inquiries 	<p>April</p> <p>April</p> <p>April</p> <p>Weekly</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>		

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In 2008, the CO EDC was actively involved with the Airport Advisory Committee & Air Attraction Task Force & provided ongoing liaison with regional, provincial & federal decision-makers regarding airport-related issues

Via 97 International Alliance -Initiation of the of Heavy Haul Corridor

In recent years the CO EDC assisted in the facilitation of community visioning forums for the District of Peachland & the District of West Kelowna

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FACILITATION

Business Facilitation requires developing an information infrastructure that ensures effective communication with decision-makers at all levels of government and with other community organizations. The CO EDC works to bring a business perspective to the decision-making process by these organizations, and the Commission must be aware of the financial resources available for business retention and growth. Effective business facilitation also requires the Commission to work with groups outside its specific region on growth management strategies with regional benefits.

“Clear, collaborative communication between businesses and organizations is essential to growing a regional economy. The CO EDC plays a vital role in this area by ensuring a business perspective is brought to the decision-making process on all levels.”

OBJECTIVE	RATIONALE	ACTION ITEM	TIMELINE	POTENTIAL PARTNER(S)	FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
1. Assist the District of West Kelowna in the development of a long-term economic development strategy	As an organization responsible for several areas within the Central Okanagan Region, the CO EDC can provide guidance to the District of West Kelowna as it develops an economic development strategy, likely through provision of the services of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist in Request for Proposal (RFP) development regarding the establishment of committee as per direction from council Continue to provide direction to the administrators of the plan 	<p>Quarterly meetings</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>District of West Kelowna;</p> <p>Ministry of Community Development;</p> <p>And others as identified</p>	

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OBJECTIVE	RATIONALE	ACTION ITEM	TIMELINE	POTENTIAL PARTNER(S)	FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
<p>2. Work with the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) in developing Employment Opportunities</p>	<p>a consultant.</p> <p>The Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) is the Tribal Council of Westbank First Nation, Upper and Lower Similkameen, Upper Nicola, Penticton, Okanagan and Osoyoos Indian Bands. As part of their ongoing mandate the ONA has created a Business Development Unit that will interact with the mainstream business community in our region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide representation on the ONA Economic Advancement Committee and facilitate opportunities to assist the ONA Business Development Unit to accomplish mutually beneficial goals 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Okanagan Nations Alliance (ONA);</p> <p>Westbank First Nation (WFN);</p> <p>Ministry of Community Development;</p> <p>And others as identified</p>	
<p>3. Review the CO EDC's Administrative Function</p>	<p>The CO EDC is at a critical point in that demands for its services have grown steadily but have not been matched by growth in staff or Funding (<i>i.e. the levels of inquires have risen 300% since 2000</i>). The organization's effectiveness is compounded by the fact that in a challenging economic environment, an economic development function requires sufficient resources to help businesses increase market share, assist new entrepreneurial ventures and facilitate the supply of workers and infrastructure are in place to encourage economic sustainability.</p> <p>To ensure the CO EDC's ability to continue to deliver a high level of service on a timely basis, the Commission Advisory Board has determined the need to appoint a third party to identify the opportunities available to the region if the CO EDC were granted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a working committee amongst the Central Okanagan Municipal CEO's 	<p>Quarterly meetings</p>	<p>District of Peachland;</p> <p>District of West Kelowna;</p> <p>City of Kelowna;</p> <p>District of Lake Country;</p> <p>And others as identified</p>	

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OBJECTIVE	RATIONALE	ACTION ITEM	TIMELINE	POTENTIAL PARTNER(S)	FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
	an operational budget increase.				
<p>4. Develop a formal environment where business support providers can share the state of the industry, develop partnerships and facilitate information exchange</p>	<p>As the Region grows & the needs of the business community evolve, a collaborative approach to communicate programs & resources is essential to best serve the business community. The various agencies need to be aware of who is doing what in order to avoid duplication of services and ensure a cooperative approach to initiatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate 2 Providers Summits 	<p>June & Oct.</p>	<p>Chambers of Commerce; Community Futures Development Corporation (CFDC); Western Economic Diversification (WED); Ministry of Community Development; Okanagan Research & Innovation Centre (ORIC);</p>	
<p>5. Continue to work with institutions that have economic impact on the Region</p>	<p>Within the economic development arena, facilitation work is aimed at ensuring positive relationships exist not only with the local business community but also with local and regional organizations and government decision makers.</p> <p>Facilitation work brings a business perspective into the decision-making process and acknowledges the relationship between economy, society, culture and education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect local high schools with appropriate program providers to assist students in becoming employment ready Continue representation on appropriate advisory committees & task forces Examples include the CO EDC's representation and input to the: <i>Provincial Small Business Roundtable;</i> <i>International Economic Development Council;</i> <i>Okanagan Partnership;</i> <i>Economic Developers Association of BC;</i> <i>Convention Centre Task Force;</i> <i>Airport Advisory Committee;</i> <i>Highway 97 Corridor;</i> <i>Young Entrepreneur Program;</i> 	<p>November</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Chambers of Commerce; Community Futures Development Corporation (CFDC); Western Economic Diversification (WED); Ministry of Community Development; Women's Enterprise Centre of BC (WESBC); Okanagan Research and Innovation Centre (ORIC); Okanagan Science and Technology Council (OSTEC); Okanagan College; And others as identified</p>	