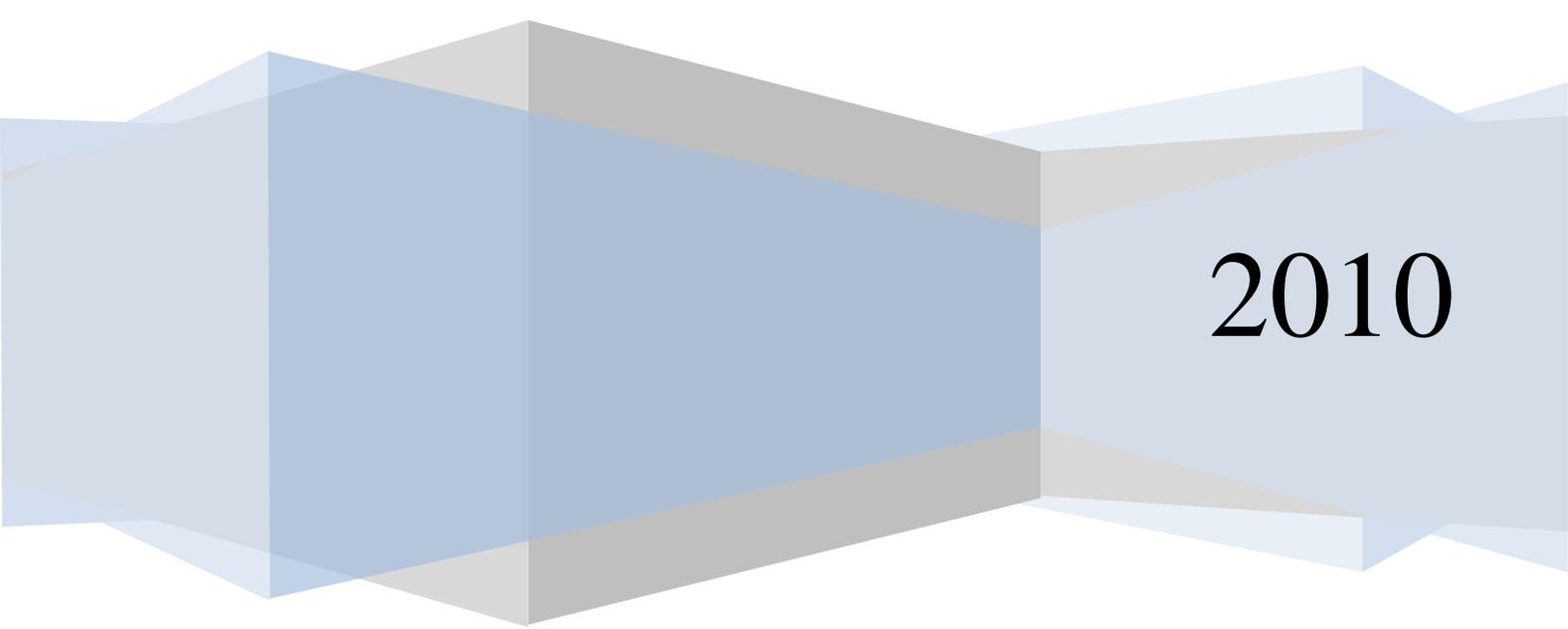


Denman Island Community Economic Enhancement Committee
Report prepared by S. Clarke, DICEEC
Adopted Feb 18, 2010

DICEEC

5 Year Strategic Plan



2010

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INTRODUCTION

Economic Enhancement

- Action by people locally to create economic opportunities and enhance social conditions on Denman Island on a sustainable and inclusive basis.

Community economic enhancement is a community-based and community-directed process that combines social and economic enhancement and fosters the economic, social, ecological and cultural well-being of communities. All elements of the Denman Island economy comprising the system of exchange, distribution and consumption of goods and services will be considered. All sectors will be included from primary sector (e.g. forestry, fishery), processing, services (including the knowledge industry), to research and development and the informal economy. Also included will be individual enterprise and those contributing to general community wealth and quality of life on the Island.

Committee Mission

DICEEC'S purpose is to take a leadership role in the development and implementation of solutions to socio-economic issues facing the people of Denman Island. DICEEC will assist in the planning and organization of actions to achieve appropriate enhancement goals defined by Denman Islanders.

*Extracted from the Denman Island Community Economic Enhancement Committee Terms of Reference, Revised April, 2009.
DICEEC was formed in October 2005, as a sub-committee of DIRA*

Need for a 5 Year Strategic Plan

The purpose of the DICEEC 5 Year Strategic Plan is to guide the Committee in determining Economic Enhancement priorities and to inform the Community about the rationale for evaluation of projects for funding support.

VISION

Community Vision Statement

Denman Island is a small rural island where individuals, the environment, and the community interact in ways that foster mutual health and vitality. We support the mandate of the Islands Trust.

We accept the challenge of adapting to climate change and will alter our lifestyles to live more lightly on the land.

We respect and conserve the natural environment. We will protect the ecosystems and their rich biodiversity, including that of the coastal waters.

We acknowledge that fresh water is critical to all aspects of life on this island. We will conserve the streams, lakes and wetlands, and encourage the collection and storage of rainwater.

We have a long history of farming. We will grow most of our food and encourage small-scale, rural-compatible activities which contribute towards local employment.

Islanders historically have been an independent, diverse and creative people with a long history of volunteering for the benefit of the natural environment and the human community. We will be supportive, cooperative and respectful in our interactions. We will use innovative options to promote a diversity of age and financial means within the carrying capacity of the island.

Polluting vehicles dominate our thoroughfares. Our roads will increasingly be utilized by pedestrians, bicycles, horses and shared, alternately-powered vehicles moving at an appropriate speed. We will create an extensive network of trails for non-motorized use.

We believe that Denman Island can become a model for sustainability and self-sufficiency. All islanders share the privilege and responsibility for realizing this vision.

Extracted from the Denman Island Official Community Plan, Denman Island Trust Committee Bylaw No. 185. The Vision Statement was created in 2008 by a group of volunteers consulting widely with the community as part of the 2008 revision of the OCP.

Guiding Principles and Economic Objectives

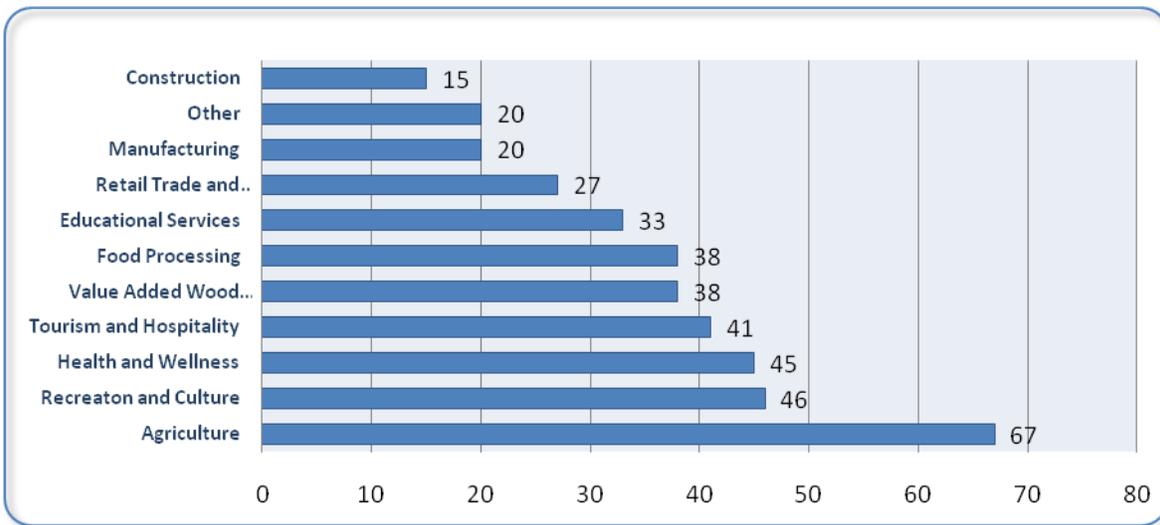
- a) Provide for a range of economic activities that respect the natural environment and the character of the human community
- b) Encourage a variety of economic activities to support a diverse community
- c) Create opportunities for self-employment and self-reliance
- d) Support the creation and manufacture of local products
- e) Encourage the use of alternate technologies for the generation of electric power
- f) Support activities which make the Village area - the commercial and cultural heart of the Island - safe, convenient and friendly by including such amenities as pathways, a village square and open spaces
- g) Promote and support types of tourism that are low impact, environmentally sensitive and educational and that provide local employment
- h) Encourage educational tourism, agri-tours, cultural tours, fairs, festivals, craft markets, garden or studio tours, hiking, biking, kayaking, walking, and low impact nature observation.

*Summarized from the Official Community Plan,
Economic Activities - Guiding Principles*

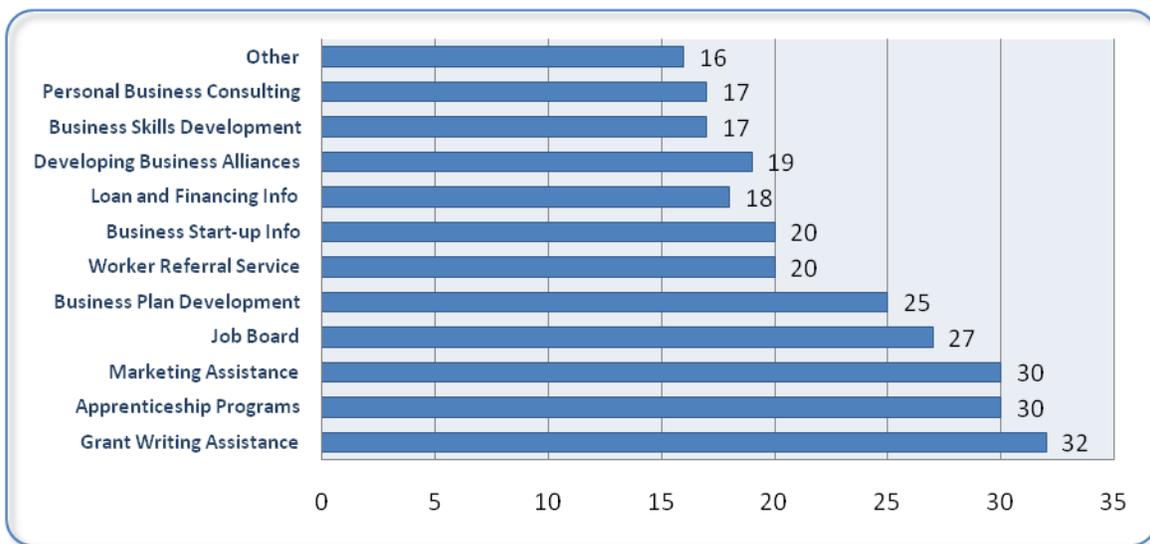
COMMUNITY INPUT

Community Questionnaire

A Community Questionnaire was distributed to every household receiving the Grapevine, and extra copies were available at the General Store, the Post Office and on the denmanlinks.com website. The results were compiled and made available in the local Dora Drinkwater Library and at the DICEEC Open House. These statistics were used to determine the sectors to target for the focus group meetings held in November 2009.



1 Preferred Sectors for Development or Expansion



2 Needed Business Services

5 Year Strategic Plan

Sector Focus Groups

In November 2009, Focus Groups were held for the following sectors: Agriculture, Arts, Culture and Recreation, Tourism and Small Business. To get input from the Health and Wellness sector, Denman Island Health Network meetings were attended and email comments were received. Community input from the group sessions and email responses have been summarized and categorized into common themes.

Branding

Each of the sector groups identified Community Branding as a desirable marketing strategy, including development of a “Denman Style” identity and promoting Denman as a destination for arts, cultural and recreation events.

Marketing

All sector groups identified the need to expand marketing and publicity, including:

- Website and on-line promotion
- Brochures, directories, signage, maps
- On Island marketing, promoting a ‘buy local’ theme
- Target summer through traffic and visitors
- Off Island marketing, including attracting participants to arts and recreational events, and development of larger markets for Denman products
- Development of low-impact tourism, such as agricultural, cultural and epicurean, and joint tourism marketing initiatives,

Sector Associations/Organizations

All sector groups identified the mutual benefits of collaborating on joint initiatives and forming sector associations, including a business association, agriculture associations, tourism organization, and an umbrella arts organization. Possible collaborative activities included:

- Lobbying and a voice in local government
- Promoting a positive business development climate
- Sharing of resources, information and equipment
- Co-op purchasing, marketing, shared transportation costs
- Collaboration or partnerships with other communities

Training

Apprenticeship programs, mentoring and skills training were seen as ways to assist organizations and businesses to fill staffing and volunteering needs, as well as addressing service gaps in the community.

Business Assistance / Resource Centre

All sectors saw the need for access to business assistance and resources, such as:

- Business start-up assistance and mentoring
- Shared services and administrative support (e.g. bookkeeping)
- Access to business, regulatory and demographic information
- Assistance with fundraising, marketing, accessing government programs
- Hiring/employment information (e.g. job board, student employment)

5 Year Strategic Plan

Business Initiatives/Projects

A number of community or business ‘ideas’ were suggested which identified potential areas for business development or projects. Some examples:

- Downtown beautification
- Improved basic public amenities, such as washrooms and potable water
- Improved tourist amenities, such as more food and beverage options and outdoor recreational facilities
- Shared local food processing facilities
- Year round outlets for local goods and food products
- Development of online businesses

Community Economic Planning Workshop

Process

An all-day Community Economic Planning workshop was held on Saturday, November 21, 2009. As well as advertisements in the local paper inviting community participation, 170 people, identified as being active in the target sectors or in community organizations, were individually contacted and invited to participate.

Results

The Notes from the Community Meeting, attached as APPENDIX B, were compiled by the workshop facilitator and represent an accurate recording of the proceedings of the meeting. The report is intended as a working document only, and includes both the notes taken during the “Visioning Exercise” which determined the major themes explored during the workshop, and the “Goals and Objectives” statements, which were brainstormed in breakout groups, then prioritized by the whole group.

The report also includes the synthesis of the visioning notes into the major topic areas, done by the facilitator.

The *Long Term Goals* were developed by the DICEEC members from this working document, together with other community input.

LONG TERM GOALS

Long term goals are broad spectrum and indicate the direction the community would like to move in over the coming years. They will be reviewed and changed as the needs and wishes of the community change. This section is a summary of the goals defined in the Community Workshop. The detailed workshop notes are attached as Appendix B.

Quality Of Life / Community Services

The long term goal is that Denman Island will be a safe, healthy and vibrant community in which to live, raise a family and age with dignity.

Denman Island will have:

- access to social services and health & wellness activities
- access to arts, culture and recreation education and community programming
- short and long term accommodations that are safe, affordable and sustainable
- a community alternate energy infrastructure
- a community that welcomes, values and supports small business

Community Branding

Denman Island will develop and implement a community branding/marketing strategy that reflects its rural values and lifestyle, and identifies Denman as a destination for:

- healthy, natural, locally grown food products
- sustainable agricultural practices.
- arts, culture and recreation
- green tourism and hospitality

Collaboration Between Businesses & Organizations

Denman Island will establish collaborative associations that will mutually benefit all economic sectors on the Island, including

- a tourism association to coordinate and enhance the hospitality sector
- a local farmers/agricultural/growers organization to represent all agricultural sectors
- organizations which effectively, cooperatively and efficiently share, coordinate and promote the use of recreation and cultural facilities
- a business association where businesses collaborate with each other, the wider community, and the region for mutual benefit and to advance opportunities
- Close links between the arts, culture and recreation and the provision of accommodation, transportation, food and dining,

Economic Enhancement

The Denman Island Community Economic Enhancement Committee will provide assistance in establishing:

- a Community Resource Centre
- year-round outlets for local products, both on Island and off Island
- low impact, sustainable tourism that respects the rural nature of the Island and focuses on agricultural, educational, arts and cultural, spiritual, outdoor recreation and alternative lifestyle activities
- community resources or facilities for processing and sharing local food products and for sustainable resource management
- opportunities for youth and families to engage in farming activities
- agri-educational opportunities

EVALUATION

Review

The DICEEC 5 Year Plan is intended to be a living document and will be reviewed annually. The Committee will periodically solicit community input in order to keep the report current and reflect changing community needs.

Reporting

The DICEEC 5 Year Strategic Plan will be available in the Committee Binder in the Dora Drinkwater Library. It will also be provided to individuals on request.

APPENDIX A

Summary of Comments from the Economic Planning Focus Groups

APPENDIX B

Working document from the Community Economic Planning Meeting