

5 Year Strategic Plan – Appendix A

Summary of Comments from Economic Planning Focus Groups

Branding

Each of the four sector groups identified Community Branding as a desirable marketing strategy, including:

- Development of a Denman identity, e.g. logo
- Friendly, “Denman Style” branding
- Raise Denman’s profile
- Creating a positive image
- Attracting a more diverse demographic, i.e. young people, trades
- Promoting Denman as a destination for arts, cultural and recreation events

Marketing

All Sector Groups identified the need to expand marketing and publicity. Common themes:

Website and On-line Promotion

- Sector websites – tourism, agriculture, business
- Online promotion of goods and services
- Communication and links via other websites, e.g. Hornby

Brochures, Directories, Signage

- More welcoming, positive signage
- Revamping of the Tourism Brochure
- Improved food directory
- Business Directory / database
- Business / Tourism Map

On Island Marketing

- Promote hiring locally
- Encourage shopping locally
- Assist and encourage bartering
- Educate consumers about relative costs of local vs off-island
- Capitalize on summer through traffic
- Market local goods and services to visitors and part time residents
- Encourage local participation in arts and events
- Promotional programs for Denman arts and businesses

Off Island Marketing

- Regional promotion of local events and business activities
- Develop larger markets for Denman products
- Market agricultural products to the Comox Valley
- Attract off-island participants to Arts and Recreational Events
- Broaden audience base for performance arts

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Tourism

- Develop low-impact tourism, such as agricultural, cultural and epicurean
- Promote “Stay-cations”
- Attract shoulder season visitors for year round activities
- Increase markets for local goods by attracting visitors
- Develop joint tourism marketing initiatives
- Collaborate on tourism ‘packaging’ (accommodations, workshops, agriculture)

Sector Associations/Organizations

All Sector Groups identified the mutual benefits of collaborating on joint initiatives and forming Sector Associations, including

- Business Association or Chamber of Commerce
- Cooperative Agriculture Association or Farming/food cooperative
- Tourism office or Tourism organization
- Umbrella Arts organization representing all local artists and providing support, administration, marketing and promotion.

Lobbying

- Access to government resources
- Promote positive business development climate
- Voice in local government
- Addressing land use regulations, e.g. commercial zoning
- Land use solutions that increase farming opportunities
- Address restrictive farming legislation
- Solution to high transportation costs

Sharing Resources

- Sourcing and sharing information to assist farmers
- Equipment sharing
- Co-op bulk fuel delivery
- Shared shipping and transportation costs
- Access to recreation facilities and infrastructure for program development
- Organized harvest sharing (e.g. LUSH)

Partnerships

- Collaboration or partnerships with Hornby
- Partnerships with Comox Valley
- Connecting producers and consumers
- Cooperative marketing
- Support for community facilities (participation, volunteers, fundraising)

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Training

- Peer mentoring, counseling and consulting from elders with experience
- Marketing education
- Hospitality training and staff development
- Apprenticeship programs
- Training opportunities to fill service gaps
- Volunteer development, especially young people
- Development of organizational skills
- Liability insurance information

Business Assistance

- Business Resource Centre
- Business start-up assistance and mentoring
- Shared services and administrative support (e.g. bookkeeping)
- Assistance finding startup capital
- Marketing assistance for businesses
- Fundraising assistance for organizations
- Assistance accessing government programs
- Assistance with regulatory interpretation and advice
- Access to information, e.g. demographic, markets, culture
- Student employment assistance
- Solutions to high cost and accessibility of transportation
- Central administration and marketing for volunteer organizations.

Business Initiatives/Projects

- Improved basic amenities for visitors : parking, public washrooms or outhouses, laundry facilities, potable drinking water, sani-dumping
- Outdoor recreational facilities : dock, public beach access, trails for horses, walkers, joggers, bikers, outdoor eating areas, sheltered recreational facilities
- Improved tourist amenities : better hours, more places to eat, , winter activities, museum, pet friendly, expanded facilities
- Downtown beautification
- Neighborhood Pub, Wineries
- Shared local food processing facilities
- Outlets for local goods, co-op store or year round market site with bathrooms, tables
- Produce “bus” to distribute agricultural products
- Park and lake supervision/monitoring
- Develop online businesses
- Development of sustainable food resources locally available year round
- Organized sporting events