



COUNCIL REPORT
Development Services
For the May 12, 2015 Council Meeting

DATE: May 5, 2015 File No. 6750-30
TO: Jim Zaffino, CAO
FROM: John Perrott, Economic Development Officer
RE: 2015 Economic Development & Tourism Strategy

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

THAT Council approve the 2015 Economic Development & Tourism Strategy.

RATIONALE:

The development of the 2015 Economic Development & Tourism Strategy provides the framework for activities which will be carried out by the Economic Development Office in 2015. These activities are focused on meeting the longer term community economic development goals of population and business/investment growth, supporting existing businesses, improved communication, and partnerships.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY OBJECTIVE:

- 2015 Strategic Priority 1: Economic Development

BACKGROUND:

The purpose of this report is to obtain Council's approval of Economic Development and Tourism activities and initiatives to be undertaken by the Economic Development Office in 2015 (Appendix A).

The recommended strategy has been developed using input from Council's 2015 Strategic Priority discussions; 2014 Breakfast with Business and business visit activities, and various discussions with West Kelowna businesses. The strategy identifies activities under six headings:

1. Business Retention and Expansion – activities and programs which support existing West Kelowna businesses to thrive and expand;
2. Investment Attraction – activities to encourage and entice business, land, or residential investment to West Kelowna;
3. Coordination, Facilitation and Communication – opportunities and activities that the Economic Development Office can support or facilitate within the community;
4. Product Development and Retention – activities and programs which will utilize existing tourism businesses or community amenities to attract visitors to West Kelowna;
5. Visitor Attraction / Marketing – activities and communications designed to generate desire to visit the Westside by visitors outside of West Kelowna;
6. Visitor Services – activities geared towards servicing visitors once they arrived to West Kelowna.

The 2015 Economic Development and Tourism Strategy relies on a number of internal department and external agency partnerships to see the stated goals and objectives achieved. External agency partnerships include:

1. Greater Westside Board of Trade
2. Central Okanagan Economic Development Commission (COEDC)
3. Okanagan Valley Economic Development Society (OVEDS)
4. Neighbouring Local Governments
5. Destination BC
6. Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association (TOTA)

Strategies and practices by other local economic development agencies have been reviewed to identify cooperative opportunities and avoid duplication of services.

Completion dates for the projects identified within the strategy will be aligned with the 2015 and 2016 core work plans. This strategy will encompass a degree of flexibility to accommodate additional tasks or opportunities as they present themselves. Staff will provide regular monthly updates to the Development Services General Manager and quarterly updates to Council.

Next Steps:

- Staff to initiate the 2015 Economic Development and Tourism Strategy
- Staff will present updates to Council as part of the Quarterly Updates
- Staff will present semi-annual update reports to Council

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The costs for economic development and tourism implementation activities identified in this strategy will be funded through the Council approved 2015 Budget:

- 2015 District of West Kelowna Economic Development Program Budget: \$21,000
- 2015 District of West Kelowna Tourism Budget: \$96,000
 - Visitor Centre: \$35,608
 - Marketing, Product Development, & Communication: \$60,392
- 2015 District of West Kelowna contribution to the COEDC: \$150,644

Additionally, the Economic Development Office will be actively applying for tourism grants available through Provincial funding programs to leverage the 2015 Tourism Budget provided by the District of West Kelowna:

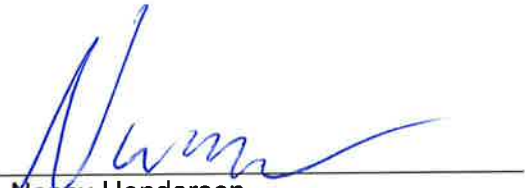
1. Destination BC – Visitor Centre Operation Grant: \$6,300
2. TOTA / Destination BC – Community Tourism Opportunities Grant: \$8,500

ALTERNATE RECOMMENDATION:

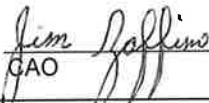
- **THAT** Council direct staff to redraft the 2015 Economic Development and Tourism Strategy based on the feedback provided by Council.

Respectfully submitted,


John Perrott
Economic Development Officer


Nancy Henderson
General Manger of Development
Services

PowerPoint: Yes No

Approved for Agenda	
 GAO	May 6, 2015 Date

Attachments: Appendix A: 2015 Economic Development and Tourism Strategy

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Appendix A:

2015 Economic Development & Tourism Strategy



West Kelowna Economic Outlook Snapshot

Economic Development is a priority

- Council has continued to set Economic Development as the top priority during its annual strategic plans.

West Kelowna's population is growing

- West Kelowna experienced nearly 13% population growth between 2006 and 2011
- Statistics Canada ranked the Kelowna CMA as the 5th fastest growing area in Canada

West Kelowna's business license numbers are stable

- Business License numbers in West Kelowna continue to remain stable year over year of more than 1,400 licensees issued annually.

West Kelowna businesses like doing business here

- Identified in the annual COEDC Businesses Walks, West Kelowna businesses responded that their customers and sense of community are what they like best about doing business here.

West Kelowna building activity is stable

- Annual building permit figures remain stable with commercial, multi-family, single family, and subdivisions continuing to drive employment in West Kelowna.

The economic base is entrepreneurial, diversified, and stable

- West Kelowna is home to a diversity of industries including manufacturing, forestry, aviation, retail and professional services, and tourism providing a mix of employment opportunities

Opportunities for industry growth exist

- West Kelowna is home to a number of industry sectors with clusters of three or more businesses. The combination of available staff and a track record of success point to opportunities for growth of the industry category - other businesses, suppliers, etc.

Quality of life measures are positive

- West Kelowna continues to provide strong quality of life services: parks, beaches, community activities and events, attainable housing options, low crime rates all lead to reasons to locate here.

Businesses need people

- During Business Visits and as identified in the Regional Workforce Study, attracting and training qualified employees, especially young families, continue to be a priority for West Kelowna business

West Kelowna investment is affected by external factors...

- Recent drop in oil prices and Canadian Dollar do have an effect on the local business community and the local economy, however a well diversified West Kelowna economy and local businesses with diversified customer bases mean those economic shifts have a smaller impact.

West Kelowna Economic Development Vision

“That West Kelowna Economic Development and Tourism activities will encourage community growth and investment through active partnerships, collaboration, and program development while serving the taxpayers of West Kelowna in an efficient manner.”

Economic Development Goals (2015 – 2019)

1. Encourage population growth in West Kelowna
2. Encourage Development / Investment activity in West Kelowna
3. Support West Kelowna businesses to grow and flourish
4. Continuous communication improvement with internal and external stakeholders
5. Continuous improvement and collaboration with regional Economic Development agencies

Economic Development Office Structure

Economic Development Officer: This position oversees Economic Development and Tourism activities and is often the first point of contact for businesses or investors looking to grow, expand or relocate to West Kelowna. This position is supported with:

- ↳ **Economic Development Summer Student** (.33 FTE): Student position which support the Economic Development Officer on projects, client follow up, and research assignments.
- ↳ **Tourism Coordinator** (Contract 0.6 FTE): This contracted position oversees tourism activities, meets with stakeholders, and manages marketing and promotional initiatives.
- ↳ **Visitor Centre Management** (Contract): The Visitor Centre management is contracted to the Westbank Museum and Arts and Crafts Society.

Economic Development Committee: New for 2015, this committee comprising of representatives of the local business community will provide support on strategic direction for Economic Development Activities as well as industry intelligence.



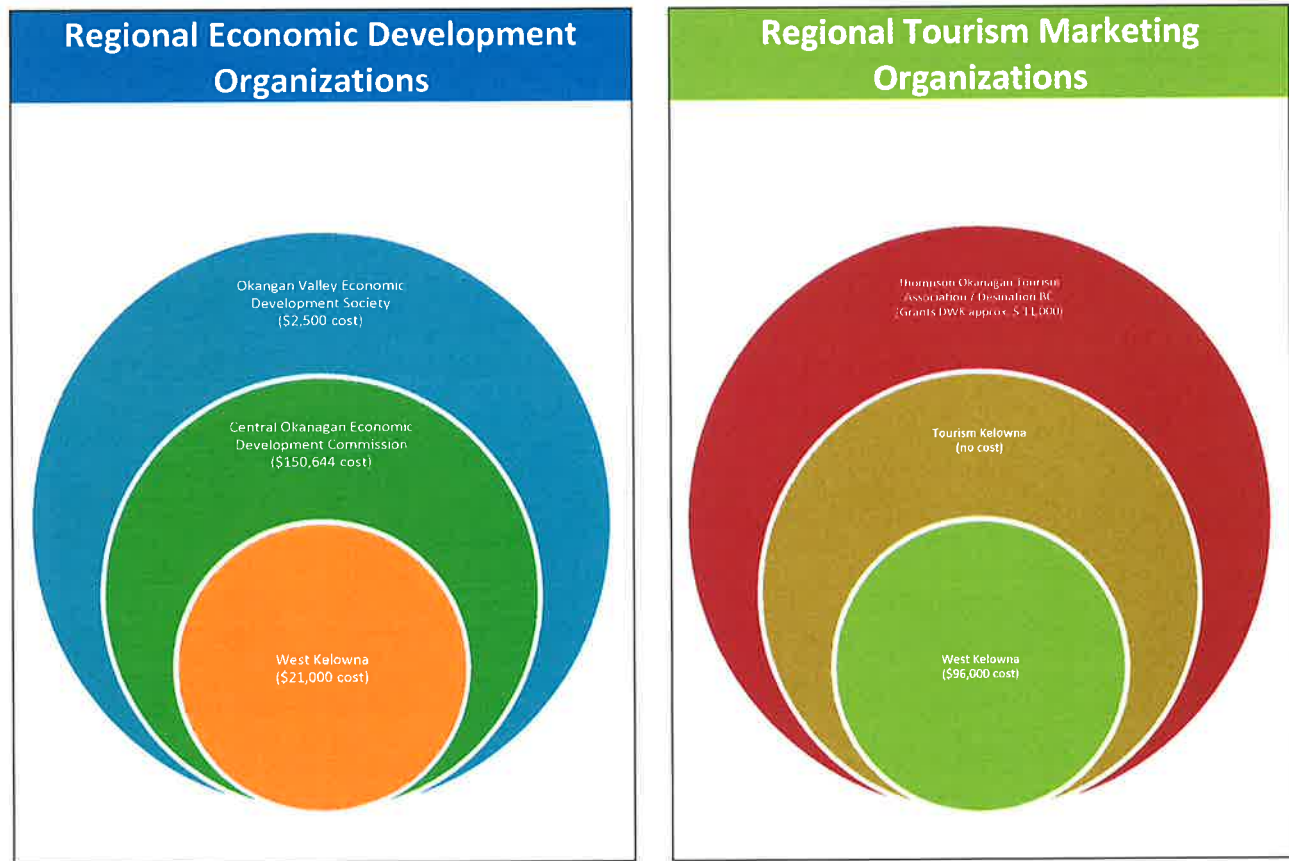
Active Partnerships

The effectiveness of Economic Development and Tourism activities relies heavily on partnerships and collaboration in an effort to benefit from economies of scale, financial and human capital resources while building a sense of community. Active Partnerships in 2015 include:

Westside Wine Trail	Westside Farm Loop	Greater Westside Board of Trade
COEDC	Okanagan College	Okanagan Young Professionals
TOTA	Westbank First Nation	Province of British Columbia
Destination BC	Peachland Economic Development	

Regional Context / Partnerships

Economic Development and Tourism are supported by a variety of organizations within the Okanagan. Each organization provides a select group of services targeted at broader audiences than West Kelowna Economic Development and Tourism activities. This differentiation in scope minimizes duplication of services. It should be noted that West Kelowna participates in a number of the programs as either a funder (value for services) or funding recipient (receives funding for programs).



2015 Economic Development Activities

Business Retention and Expansion:

Objective: Examine the feasibility for a West Kelowna organization or private business to open a collaborative workspace in Westbank Centre which would support the growth and expansion of current home-based businesses (Technology, Professional Services, etc).

Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
Collaborative Workspace Research Project Complete a business plan to consider the feasibility of a collaborative workspace in Westbank Centre for at-home professionals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify number of at-home workers Obtain data for possible office investment in Westbank Centre Improve work space options for West Kelowna businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of the feasibility study/business plan. Opening of a collaborative workspace.

Objective: Good principles of Community Economic Development stress on the importance of investment from within the community versus attracting outside investment. The goal of this initiative is to identify opportunities for growth in two of West Kelowna's larger employee sectors: Aviation & Manufacturing.

Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
Expansion of Existing Industry Cluster (Aviation & Manufacturing) Identify current status, commonalities, challenges, and needs of each sector with a look towards developing an action plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hosting industry cluster meetings of businesses to identify to obtain data for Increased opportunities for targeted investment attraction Improved local economy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a growth, constraints, and opportunities report

Objective: Support Westside Farm Loop members to make improvements to their farms in an effort to create a better retail experience for their customers and by extension a better tourist experience for the Westside.

Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
Agri-tourism Retail Education Support Provide interactive meetings with Farm Loop members to help them identify opportunities to provide a better retail experience on their farm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist farmers to become better retailers – increase sales Improve the visitor experience on the Westside 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of farms participating in roundtable session. End of season survey with Farm Loop members to gauge their sales.

Objective: Continue to gather West Kelowna business intelligence through participating in the Regional Business walks program where information gather can be used to identify potential service referrals, issues effecting business, and compare trends to previous years.

Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
<p>Participate in Provincial Business Walks Complete Business Walks in conjunction with Greater Westside Board of Trade to gauge the state of local businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measure the current state of West Kelowna compared to previous years. • Identify businesses which need assistance • Early warning sign if a business is considering growth, departure, closure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of West Kelowna businesses visited. • Number of follow up activities and/or referrals to support services / agencies.

Objective: Gain a better understanding of new and existing businesses, recent District service experiences, and ways in which the EDO can support business through a comprehensive business visit with Council and the Greater Westside Board of Trade.

Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
<p>Facilitate Monthly Business Visits with Mayor, Council & Board of Trade Tour and meet with new and existing West Kelowna businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify businesses which need assistance • Identify / gauge recent service interactions with the District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of West Kelowna businesses visited. • Number of follow up activities and/or referrals to support services / agencies.

Investment Attraction

Objective: Provide information to local and out of town investors to generate awareness and interest in Westbank Centre.

Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
<p>Increase awareness of Westbank Centre Investment Opportunities Working in partnership with other regional Economic Development Offices, attend the International Council of Shopping Centre's Western Canadian Conference.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase awareness of District initiatives • Provide local Real Estate Group with opportunities to showcase properties • Collaboration with regional Economic Development Offices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of prospects • # of investment leads generated • # of Commercial Real Estate Agents partnered with.

Objective: Encourage potential new residents from around Western Canada to relocate to West Kelowna for business or investment opportunities, employment opportunities, and/or quality of life opportunities.		
Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
Build awareness of Residential Relocation opportunities in West Kelowna Working in partnership with other regional Economic Development Offices, attend trade shows to showcase opportunities in West Kelowna at Fort McMurray and Edmonton Home Shows.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support growth of available local workforce / Assist West Kelowna businesses to source potential employees • Stimulate demand for housing in West Kelowna • Support awareness of investment opportunities • Increase the number of workers that come and stay in the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of prospects • Increased number of visitors from Alberta • # of families that relocate to West Kelowna • Connecting employers to potential employees

Objective: Inform and arm Commercial Real Estate Agents with community information, project updates, and District available online tools to support Commercial Property investment and business sales in West Kelowna.		
Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
Work with Commercial Real Estate Industry to support Investment Purchases Hold a series of workshops with local Commercial Real Estate Agents to identify support opportunities, update on District projects, and train on using GIS system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support commercial Property investment and business sales in West Kelowna • Improve collaboration with Commercial Real Estate Agents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of participants • Survey participants after the workshops to gauge satisfaction.

Objective: Raise the awareness of investment opportunities and succession plan business sales in West Kelowna.		
Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
Support foreign investment in West Kelowna Present three times a year in Vancouver to the Provincial Nominee Program investor sessions held by the Ministry of Job, Tourism and Skills Training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional investment in West Kelowna. • Grow the population • Community Diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of follow up visits to West Kelowna following the presentations. • # of businesses purchased or considered by PNP applicants.

Coordination, Facilitation, and Communication

Objective: Continue to evolve and grow the Economic Development function to be responsive to the needs of local business while better understanding the trends effecting the local economy, the Economic Development Committee will bridge the gap between Business and Government		
Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
Establish Economic Development Committee An action item brought forward by Council in 2014, the establishment of an Economic Development Committee will help to better connect local businesses and the District.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better connection between the Business Community and West Kelowna Economic Development Activities Develop Economic Development Actions which are more responsive to the needs of the business community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly update reports to Council including issue identification Provide input to Annual Economic Development Strategy

Objective: Gain a broader understanding of the economic impact of the tourism industry in West Kelowna as a first step towards identifying a longer-term, industry supported, tourism marketing strategy.		
Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
Initiate an economic impact analysis of the Tourism Industry in West Kelowna Gain an understanding of the economic generation, job creation, and impact of tourism in West Kelowna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better understanding of impact of tourism in West Kelowna Foundation information to use towards long-term tourism marketing strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of the study Report to Council

Objective: Host and event where ideas and concerns can be shared while building and enhancing the relationship between Council and the Business community.		
Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
Hold annual Breakfast with Business event Hold the 4 th annual Breakfast with Business event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide venue for business owners to network Provide opportunity for Council to share stories about improvements made for business. Provide opportunity for Council to get feedback from business community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of participants Event summary report to Council – action items

Objective: Provide updates on Economic Development activities to stakeholder in an effort to provide a better understanding of activities underway and partnership opportunities.		
Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
Communicate to Internal & External Stakeholders Through attending community meetings, events, and activities provide ongoing connection to the business community through	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better community understanding of Economic Development activities • More opportunities for collaboration & partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # community presentations • # of community events attended

Objective: To provide accurate and timely information, resources, and community data for businesses and investors on the District's Economic Development website pages.		
Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
Update Economic Development Information on the District's website. Update information, resources, and community data on District website.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved resources available for internal and external use. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major update to current pages (February 2015) • # of additions • # of posts

Tourism Marketing & Development

Product Development and Retention

Objective: To raise awareness, improve visitation, and celebrate West Kelowna farmers and the agricultural community.

Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
Westside Farmloop Provide funding and marketing support for the Westside Farmloop as it enters into its second year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting small businesses – improving sector business climate Improving awareness of Agriculture to residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yearend survey of participating farms regarding sales and visitation activity.

Objective: Identify a season kick-off event to get residents reintroduced to the participating farms on the Farm Loop.

Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
Westside Farmloop Season Kick Off Event Identify and hold a memorable seasonal kickoff event which encourages Westside residents and visitors to go to the various farms to learn about what they grow and sell.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify number of at-home workers Obtain data for possible office investment in Westbank Centre Improve work space options for West Kelowna businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of participating farms Number of participating

Objective: Increase awareness and visitor use to the many Westside Parks, Trails, Beaches, and Playgrounds through

Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
Hiking & Biking Guide: Online Mapping New online, interactive map to direct people to trails and parks on the Westside.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness of trails and parks by residents and visitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of visitors to the website
Hiking & Biking Guide: New Brochure Develop a new gate-fold brochure which shows feature trails and activities including access points, length, and other facts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness of trails and parks by residents and visitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of guides distributed in 2015

Objective: Support the growth of agriculture and the Wine Industry on the Westside while attracting visitors and residents to support these businesses.		
Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
Ongoing support of the Westside Wine Trail Society Provide financial support to the Westside Wine Trail Society for marketing, events, and visitor attraction to wineries on the Westside.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased visitation to the Westside - additional spending at hotels, restaurants, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yearend funding report from the Wine Trail Society.

Visitor Attraction / Marketing

Objective: Continuous improvement to VisitWestside.com website to ensure information is up-to-date, meeting the needs of visitors, and remains current with website trends.		
Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
Update www.VisitWestside.com Continuous content and feature updates on website based on feedback provided by the Visitor Centre and local tourism business.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved distribution Provide up-to-date information sought after by visitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of visitors to the website Length of time on the website.

Objective: Improve information sought after by visitors and the community within the Visit Westside Official Visitors guide		
Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
Update Visitor Guide Make a series of small content updates to the Visitor Guide based on feedback provided by the Visitor Centre and local tourism business.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide up-to-date information sought after by visitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of guides distributed in 2015 Anecdotal feedback provided by tourism businesses and guide users.

Objective: Enhance a social media presence which keeps the Westside as a top of mind destination through highlights of engaging experiences, opportunities, and interactions.		
Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
Social Media Presence Utilize social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, etc) to tell and showcase experiences to visitors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Top of mind awareness for existing and future visitors Highlight Westside tourism businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of social media postings Number of social media interactions

Objective: Through shoulder season promotions, generate desire for potential visitors within a two-hour drive to come to the Westside for an overnight stay.		
Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
Weekend Getaway Promotion: Create itineraries of activities and experiences to generate desire for in-region (within a two hour drive) visitors to travel to the Westside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase visitation & overnight stays • Engage with businesses • Highlight local attractions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of click-thrus (referrals) • Number of visitors to visitwestside.com website

Visitor Services

Objective: Provide Visitors to the Westside a memorable experience while accessing accurate, timely, and informative information about accommodations, attractions, and activities on the Westside.		
Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
Contract Visitor Centre Services to the Westbank Museum Contract operation of the Visitor Centre to Museum with enhanced in 2015 to support more Tourism Marketing activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased referrals to tourist businesses • Longer stays on the Westside by tourists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of operation agreement • Annual Visitor Centre Statistics • Participation in tourism marketing activities

Objective: Improve visitor and business awareness of the Visitor Centre as part of the District's "Visit Westside" tourism marketing efforts.		
Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
Co-brand Visitor Centre through signage, publications, and website. Strengthen business and visitor awareness of the Visitor Centre as part of larger Visit Westside tourism services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased referrals to tourist businesses • Better awareness of services offered to local businesses • Longer stays on the Westside by tourists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of operation agreement • Annual Visitor Centre Statistics • Participation in tourism marketing activities

Objective: Assist local sports teams/associations, corporations, and hoteliers to host tournaments or conferences on the Westside		
Project & Tactic	Outcome	Measurement Guideline
Hosting at Home Package Complete a business plan to consider the feasibility of a collaborative workspace in Westbank Centre for at-home professionals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify number of at-home workers • Obtain data for possible office investment in Westbank Centre • Improve work space options for West Kelowna businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of the feasibility study/business plan. • Opening of a collaborative workspace.