

NEWS RELEASE

Distributed May 3, 2017

Establishment of Nanaimo's new Economic Development function underway

Summary

During its May 1 Council meeting, Nanaimo City Council endorsed a three-task process to establish an "in-house" economic development function. Steps to be taken immediately include: (1) forming an Economic Development Strategic Planning Committee to oversee the creation of an updated economic development strategy, (2) finalizing an economic development work plan for 2017 and (3) budget for and develop an adequately resourced Economic Development department.

Members of the community who are interested in participating in upcoming discussions pertaining to economic development in Nanaimo are encouraged to watch for announcements advertising opportunities to engage. Similarly, members of the business community and local industry wishing to join the Mayor and two members of Council on the soon to be established Economic Development Strategic Planning Committee can put their names forward during a forthcoming call for membership.

Strategic Link: Economic Health: this community value supports the creation of a vibrant culture of innovation, stewardship and partnership to encourage a healthy economy, now and into the future. Governance Renewal: this priority guides Council and staff in renewing the City's capacity to effectively and efficiently serve the residents of our community.

Key Points

- In December 2016, Council passed a motion to cease operations of the Nanaimo Economic Development Corporation (NEDC) effective January 31, 2017 and replace it with an in-house model.
- Via the formation of an Economic Development Strategic Planning Committee chaired by the Mayor, work will now get underway to explore the structure and resources required to create an effective in-house model, starting with the creation of a new Economic Development Strategy.
- As part of the City's outreach and planning, the direct involvement of the following organizations will be sought: Nanaimo Airport, Chamber of Commerce, Regional District of Nanaimo, Snuneymuxw First Nation, Vancouver Island University and Community Futures.
- Additional sector representation from transportation and warehousing, manufacturing, renewable energy, healthcare and education, tourism, technology, labour market, commercial real estate and construction is also strongly encouraged.

Quotes

"I am very excited to get this work underway and will be working closely with staff as we initiate our process. My focus over the coming days and weeks is to assist in sharing information with the community and encourage involvement from those who are in a strong position to participate and help shape the economic potential of Nanaimo."

Bill McKay
Mayor
City of Nanaimo

Continued... Establishment of Nanaimo's new Economic Development function underway

"Creating the environment in which businesses can grow and thrive is a key priority. The process of undertaking a new economic development strategy will help galvanize the business community around a common economic vision and common goals."

Amrit Manhas
Economic Development Officer
City of Nanaimo

Quick Facts

- Creation of an Economic Development function operated in-house provides a number of benefits including: (1) coordinated services across all City departments (i.e. development services, permitting, zoning), (2) ready access to key decision makers and enhanced transparency and oversight of operations and budgets and, (3) direct alignment with the City's community vision, planning and strategic plan.

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