CHARTING BC’S ECONOMIC FUTURE
100 COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS
PARTNERED WITH KITIMAT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### HOPES AND CONCERNS FOR BC'S ECONOMY

- **HOPES**
  - 2
- **CONCERNS**
  - 3

### SWOT ANALYSIS FOR BC'S ECONOMY

- **STRENGTHS**
  - 4
- **WEAKNESSES**
  - 4
- **OPPORTUNITIES**
  - 5
- **THREATS**
  - 5

### TOP ACTIONS FOR BC'S ECONOMIC FUTURE

- **GROUP #1**
  - 6
- **GROUP #2**
  - 7
- **GROUP #3**
  - 8
- **GROUP #4**
  - 9
HOPES AND CONCERNS FOR BC’S ECONOMY

Hopes

• To achieve a stable economy in the midst of opportunity
• Attract investment without taking away what people value in the province
• That there can be a change in the disconnection between the lower mainland and everywhere else in one generation
• For more certainty around future projects and development
• Employment choices for all
• Find a way to have economic wealth and expansion, and to also improve social wealth
• Sustainability for future generations
• That technology can be better used to develop the resource sector
• To be able to look back in 30 years, and say we did a good job managing development
• More certainty and a conclusion to the relationship with First Nations
• More awareness amongst children of what’s coming, and awareness of the coming boom
• To move forward with growth in a balanced way
Concerns

- That Kitimat won’t be prepared to manage coming economic development
- Uncertainty surrounding the future of BC, the provision of services, and taxation
- The disconnect in social equity—those without very much end up with even less
- Wealth generated will not be put back into the community
- Not paying enough attention to the needs of health and social infrastructure
- Increasing gap between those who are doing well and the most marginalized in each community
- Increasing struggle faced by upcoming generations
- The future will be decided by a small percentage of the population, and youth are not engaged
- Not thoughtful in how resource booms are managed, and negative outcomes as a result
- Time will not be taken to manage growth well or ensure lasting impacts
- Lessons from the past will not be learned
- Children and youth will not be aware of the opportunities and coming growth
- Will be blinded by one way forward, and will not keep cool heads or look at all perspectives
SWOT ANALYSIS FOR BC’S ECONOMY

STRENGTHS

• The environment
• Ideal geography for export industries
• Both human and natural resources
• Stable government
• Strong potential for long-term economic growth
• Abundance of natural resources
• Considerable change
• Hydro power availability
• Diversity
• Labour force
• Relatively transparent government

WEAKNESSES

• How sustainable is it?
• Gentrification
• Polarization in the province, for example, the environment versus the industry (what is the best for the South may not be the best for the North and vice versa)
• Technology Gap
• Federal and Provincial relationship as it pertains to resource management
• Skills shortage
• Diversity of the economy could always be improved
• Inability to create “shared prosperity”: aboriginal and non-aboriginal, urban and rural, etc.
OPPORTUNITIES

- Diverse human resources
- Extensive wealth generation
- Great long term employment
- Innovation
- Chance to reduce taxes and debt
- Tourism
- To show leadership in resource sector (innovation to improve environmental performance, new technology, etc)
- Proximity to growing international markets (Asia, India, etc)
- Build capacity
- “We have it all”
- Global markets, and linkages to the world economy

THREATS

- Regressive education system
- Lack of time—not capitalizing on opportunities quickly enough
- Lack of skilled workers
- Polarized political climate
- Global economy swallowing up BC
- Not learning from the past
- Ability to act in a timely way to take advantage of global opportunities—other competitors
- Global uncertainty—relapse of the global financial crisis part two
- Poor flow of information
- Potential lack of education of our citizens to be ready for economic growth/stability
- Global instability
- Poverty
- Not investing in sustainable growth
- World economy
TOP ACTIONS FOR BC’S ECONOMIC FUTURE

GROUP #1

Top Actions to Create Wealth:

1. Increase education through innovation
   - More creative approaches to education
   - Encourage and foster lifelong learning

2. Decrease cumbersome bureaucracy

3. Childcare and family stability
   - Provide services as a means to provide equal access to employment opportunities
   - Employment policies—supported employment as well as youth employment opportunities

4. Housing policies and capacity
   - Create policies that support local needs

5. Foster a closer relationship between non-profit and private sectors

Additional Actions to Address Social Equity

- Provide early services for children, family, health and poverty
- Youth employment programs—mentorships and apprenticeships
- Flexible education options that foster lifelong learning
- Foster a healthy work/life balance

Additional Actions to Protect the Environment

- Address the efficiency of transportation
- Provide increased opportunities for effective opportunities
- Provide access to current and reliable information regarding the BC economy
- Approach the community as a whole
GROUP #2

Top Actions to Create Wealth:

1. Natural Gas Development

2. Invest in Skills Training
   • Build a skilled workforce

3. Expand eco-tourism
   • Ensure ecology and tourism can co-exist

4. Develop the technology sector and drive innovation

5. Pursue the resolution of the ‘land question’
   • Reconciliation with First Nations

Additional Actions to Address Social Equity

• Reconciliation with First Nations
• Provincial Equalization payments – recover resource wealth captured in resource communities to support transportation in rural areas, and to educate people in urban areas about life in rural BC.
• Establish government policies and grants to encourage “communities supporting communities” such as volunteer opportunities and diverse programs such as homecare
• Establish a 3-year rolling budget (rather than an annual budget) for social services and programs, including healthcare and education

Additional Actions to Protect the Environment

• Invest in infrastructure, including hydro, water and public transit
• Expand incentives to encourage improved environmental performance at the individual, community and business level
• Find a way to address and manage cumulative impacts without creating disincentives for business
• Develop a culture of promoting environmental best practices, shared learning and information exchange
• Implement triple bottom line reporting for government and business
GROUP #3

Top Actions to Create Wealth:

1. Establish the Provincial Government’s ‘5 conditions’ for the Gateway pipeline for all development projects
   - Ensure all investors and proponents are aware of the conditions

2. Education—overhaul the education system to support the skilled workers of the future
   - Create a greater role for industry in the educational system

3. Implement more rewards for innovation, to foster leadership in innovation

Additional Actions to Address Social Equity

- Support education as the top action, both in the classroom and in society
- Establish housing options as a means to providing a sense of home and hope

Additional Actions to Protect the Environment

- Establish strong measures for environmental protection balanced with industry needs.
- Balance the review process so that there are clearly established timelines
- More long-term planning
GROUP #4

Top Actions to Create Wealth:

1. Education
   • Focus on skills training
   • Focus on early childhood development

2. Aboriginal engagement
   • Certainty in the legal realm
   • Foster inclusion
   • Acknowledge traditional knowledge

3. Internet Equity
   • Address the ‘bandwidth divide’
   • Create community communication and engagement

4. Grow small business and industry
   • Foster innovation
   • Implement contests
   • Provide micro-loan drivers