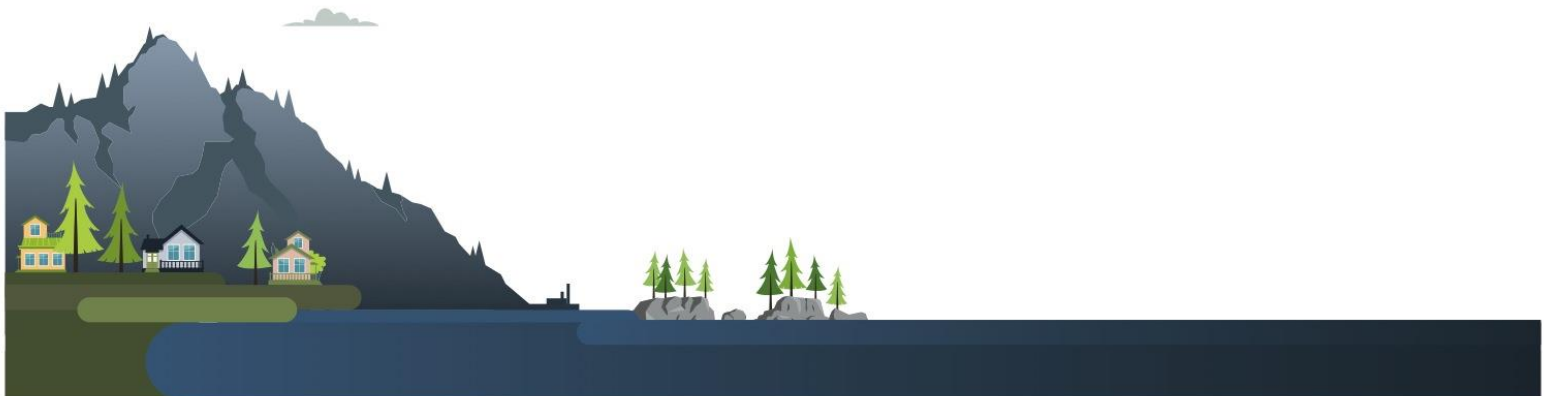


# PORT OF POTENTIAL

PORT ALICE'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

January 2016



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# PORT OF POTENTIAL

## PORT ALICE'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

### VISION

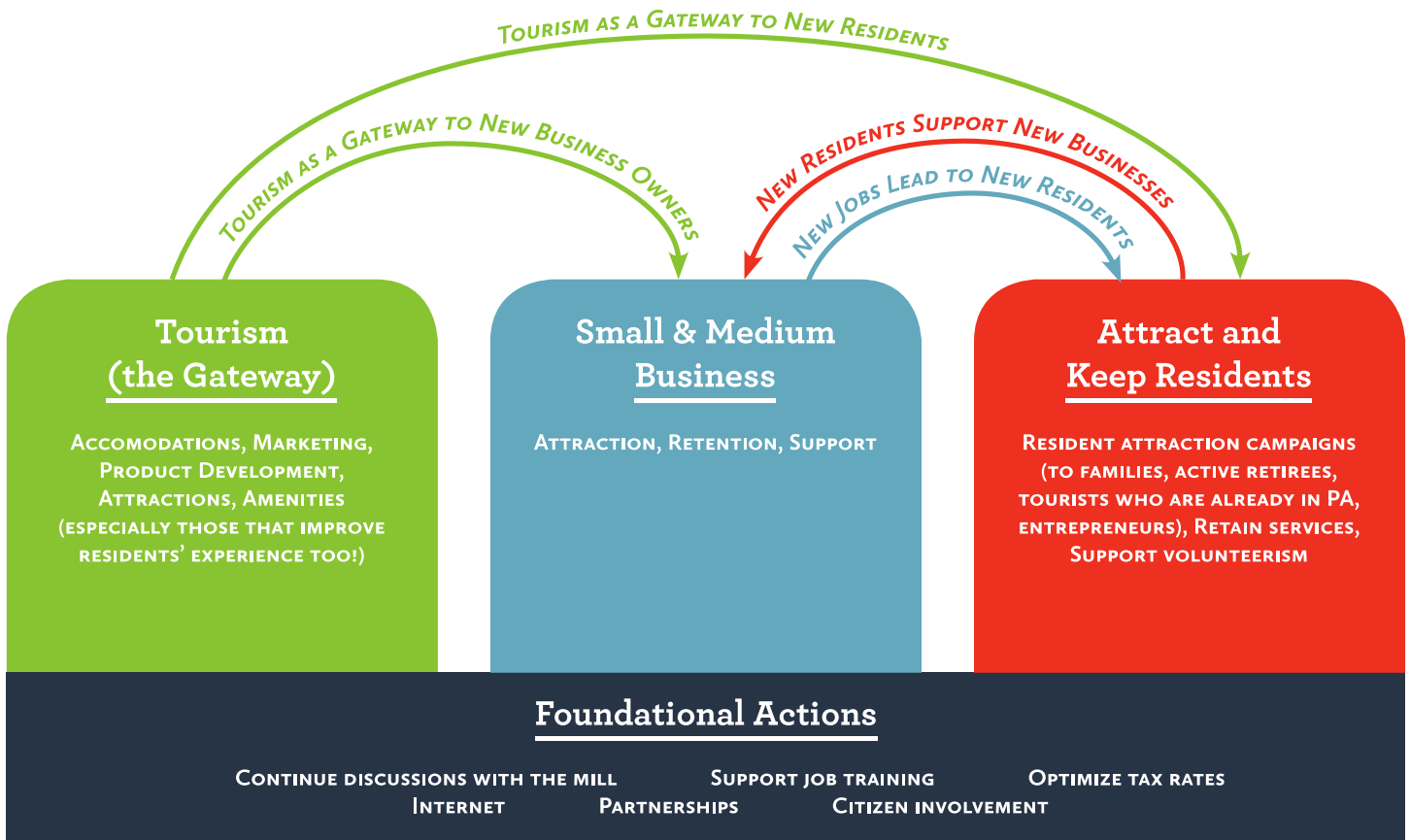
*Port Alice is a vibrant, inclusive, engaged community with a healthy, diverse economy based on a range of businesses, particularly tourism related, and industries and capitalizing on the village's attractive oceanfront setting.*

### OBJECTIVES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- ▶ Encourage more families and youth to call Port Alice home
- ▶ Attract and retain businesses
- ▶ Attract and retain jobs
- ▶ Promote a diverse and stable economy
- ▶ Protect our natural environment
- ▶ Maintain a peaceful and safe community
- ▶ Encourage well paid employment

### THE STRATEGY

Overall, the areas where we have the most potential impact in the near-term are on tourism and small business support. These two sectors have the potential to lead to more jobs, resident attraction, second homeowners, and a 'virtuous cycle' of **population increases** → **more jobs** → **population increases**.



# ACTIONS

## FIRST 100 DAYS

## SHORT TERM (0-2 YEARS)

## MEDIUM TO LONG TERM (3-5+ YEARS)

### FOUNDATIONAL ACTIONS

Continue to optimize tax rates

Kick-start community involvement

Meet with potential partners

Faster internet

Continue discussions with Mill

Support job training

### LEGEND

One-time action

Ongoing action

### IMPROVED ACCOMMODATION FOR VISITORS

Support new B&Bs

Improve existing accommodations

Develop a business case for accommodations

Tax incentives for accommodations and restaurants

### GENERAL TOURISM

Tourism strategy (Short term)

Tourism strategy (Longer term)

### TOURISM PROMOTION

Improve highway 19 signage

Improve online presence

Signage at the Marina about available services

Increase tourism marketing

Promote Port Alice as a marine fueling and supply hub

Improve signage upon entering Port Alice

Improve coordination among North Island Communities

### TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Artists show space at FP Foods

Support water and land based rentals business

Develop industrial tourism

Support residents in developing "events"

Village waterfront walkway, art, interpretation

Continued marina upgrades

Support the development of an outdoor school

Predator interpretation centre

### SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED BUSINESS ATTRACTION, RETENTION AND GROWTH

Buy local campaign

"Starting a business in Port Alice 101"

Support commercial real estate turnover

Advocate for changes to Community Forest operations

Support formal or informal business networking

Expand the industrial park

Continue to work with and support existing service providers for small business support

Promote business opportunities and events in North Island media

### INVESTMENT ATTRACTION (GENERAL)

Land Inventory

Zoning and development information for investors

Promote town to target businesses desired

### ATTRACT AND KEEP RESIDENTS

Resident attraction campaigns

Market Port Alice's liveability to tourists who are already in Port Alice

Encourage volunteerism





## Introduction

Port Alice is a historic resource community that developed around the forestry industry and a pulp mill that was first built in 1918. Over the years, the mill has been a major economic driver, not only for Port Alice, but also for the larger North Island region. Employing approximately 400 people<sup>1</sup> until the most recent curtailments in 2015, the mill has been the driving economic force in Port Alice, responsible for most of the community's employment, income and local tax base.

With the mill, Port Alice has benefited from quality jobs and the development of high quality infrastructure and community amenities. At the same time, Port Alice has been forced to cope with the volatilities of the timber based economy and the pulp and paper industry. A 30-year history of intermittent mill closures and curtailments has been a major factor in the Village's population cycles, including the long-term decline from 1,800 people in the 1970s to less than 800 today. In response to the cyclical operations of the mill, Port Alice has moved to strengthen and diversify its economic base over the years. For example, as part of the North Island Community Forest partnership, the Village sought revenue and jobs apart from the mill. By opening the Rumble Beach Marina in 2013, Port Alice aimed to expand into tourism and sport fishing.

### Why "Port of Potential"?

Port Alice community members suggested names for the plan, and voted on the name at the September 29<sup>th</sup> 2015 Community meeting. The winning suggestion was "Port of Potential" put forward by Trish Weatherall.

### Purpose of the *Port of Potential* Strategy

The development of this economic development strategy was motivated by the most recent mill curtailment, which started in late 2014 and continues to date (Winter 2015). The purpose of undertaking this strategy was to continue the process of economic diversification and resiliency by creating a strong economic base (e.g. population and businesses) that can better capitalize on and create opportunities.

Today, Port Alice is at a crossroads with many potential future scenarios: a thriving small town, a bare bones work camp, a retirement community, a tourism destination and more. The development of this Strategy sought to understand what future Port Alice community members wanted to see, and what was actually possible. To do this, we worked with over 130

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<sup>1</sup> Not all of these people lived full time in Port Alice. Approximately 200 people lived full time in Port Alice, and many others lived part time in Port Alice for part of the week. Still others commuted from the North Island.

community members, reviewed case studies from similar towns and worked with an experienced steering committee and consulting team.

Ultimately, the goal was to create a pragmatic Economic Development Strategy grounded in the values of Port Alice residents, the economic realities of the area, and the capacity and resources available.

The *Port of Potential* Strategy provides:

- A 5-year work strategy for Port Alice staff, Council and community to undertake economic actions in a strategic way.
- Analysis of the current economic situation of both Port Alice and the broader economic region (where appropriate).
- Community-supported economic development objectives, strategies and actions.

### Past reports and plans

A number of past reports, plans and documents were reviewed in the creation of this strategy. These documents provided context and direction and allowed us to see what progress was made on past plans, what progress was NOT made on past plans and why. Individually and collectively, they all provided valuable lessons that were incorporated into this strategy.

Past plans and reports that were reviewed included:

- Vancouver Island North Community Tourism Plan (2015)
- Port Alice Transition Team Notes (2015)
- Port Alice Summary for 'Still Standing' TV Show (2015)
- Economic development strategies for other North Island communities (Port McNeill 2015, Alert Bay 2015, Malcolm Island 2014)
- RDMW Sector study (2014)
- Port Alice Official Community Plan (Relevant Economic Development Sections) (2010)
- Tourism in Port Alice: Exploring Fit and Future Potential (2010)
- North Island Regional Protocol Agreement (2010)
- Transition Plan Village of Port Alice (2006)
- Service Provision in rural and Small Town Places: A report for Port Alice, BC (2006)
- RDMW The Regional Net Wealth Balance Sheet (2003)

### Process

This project ran from August 2015 to January 2016. Our Economic Development planning work was organized around a four-phase strategic planning approach that was designed to help us answer four guiding questions:

#### **1. Where are we now?**

*What's the current state of Port Alice's economy? Are there issues we need to address?  
What assets can we build on?*

**2. Where do we want to go?**

*What is our vision for economic development? What are our objectives and goals for economic development? What kind of economic development do community members want to see? What do they NOT want to see?*

**3. How do we get there?**

*What actions should we take in the short, medium and long term? What actions are realistic to implement, given our time, money and capacity? Who will do them and when?*

**4. Have we arrived?**

*Once we have a strategy in place, how can we track it to make sure it's helping us achieve our economic development vision and objectives?*

The remainder of this strategy is structured around these four questions.

### How was the community involved?

The development of *Port of Potential* involved the **participation of community members, staff and Council from the very beginning**. The project team worked very hard to ensure that all community members were aware of the project and given an opportunity to participate and provide feedback. The avenues for participation are listed below.

- **Steering Committee:** The project was overseen by a Steering Committee<sup>2</sup> consisting of local business people, industry, economic development experts from the region, Village staff and Council.
- **Key informant interviews:** Initially, the intent was to interview 10-15 people to begin developing an understanding of some of the key issues and opportunities in Port Alice. However, this grew to over 40 people, as the level of interest was very high, and there was concern about people being left out.
- **Survey #1:** Although it was not originally planned as part of the project, a simple survey was developed that asked the same questions as the key informant interviews, in order

- 
- <sup>2</sup> Port Alice Mayor Jan Allen, Committee Chair
  - Madeline McDonald, CAO of Port Alice
  - Local Business: Bill Feader Jr, Manager FP Foods
  - Local Business Alternate: Bill Feader Sr, Owner, FP Foods & Brooks Bay Cable
  - Forestry: Jon Flintoft, Sr Operations Planner, Western Forest Products
  - Forestry Alternate: Vince Devlin, Jeune Landing Manager
  - Cheryl McLay Regional Manager Vancouver Island/Coast Region, Ministry of JTST
  - Kathy Lachman, Regional Manager, Northern Vancouver Island, Ministry of JTST
  - David Mitchell, General Manager of Community Futures Mount Waddington
  - Pat English, Manager of Economic Development, RDMW



to give all Port Alice residents a chance to share their initial thoughts. Surveys were sent out on paper and online.

- **Community workshop:** Over 60 people attended a community workshop on September 29, 2015 at the Community Centre. A report from this workshop can be found in the Village Office and on the Village website.
- **Survey #2:** The second survey asked the same questions that were asked at the community event, so that we could combine the results. About 40 people responded to the survey. Surveys were conducted on-line or in person by community groups (see next bullet point).
- **Working with community groups:** The project team provided donations to Henny Penny Preschool and the Port Alice Minor Hockey Association in return for their support in delivering surveys to community members.
- **Council updates:** The Steering Committee included a member of Council who reported back and forth with Council throughout the project. Council members were given the opportunity to comment on the analysis and draft throughout the project, and were active participants at the Community Workshops.
- **Communications:** We kept community members aware of the project and of opportunities to get involved through:
  - Three newsletters (in print and on the Village website)
  - Regular updates in the monthly 'Rumble Sheet' newsletter
  - Village website updates
  - Facebook updates
  - Bulletin boards

Feedback from these events and activities was used to identify community issues and objectives, and develop and prioritize action ideas.

## 1. Where are we now?

### Regional economic context

One of the first steps in this project was to create a 'Community Economic Profile' — a snapshot of the economy of Port Alice and the region. Creating this document led to the development of a number of economic action ideas that were then incorporated into the overall strategy. Additionally, the profile serves as a 'baseline' against which our progress can be measured.

Some key highlights from the profile are shown in Appendix 1 to this document. *The full profile is available on the Port Alice website or in the Village office.*

## 2. Where do we want to go?

*Port of Potential* aims to create a value-driven local economy that meets the needs and vision of Port Alice residents. Over 130 people told us what their ideas and objectives were for economic development, and the kind of future they wanted to see.

### Economic vision

The following vision is from the 2010 Official Community Plan (OCP). The project Steering Committee decided that this vision accurately reflects the current economic vision for the Village, based on community input as part of this project:

*Port Alice is a vibrant, inclusive, engaged community with a healthy, diverse economy based on a range of businesses, particularly tourism related, and industries and capitalizing on the village's attractive oceanfront setting.*

### Objectives

Our objectives answer the question, "Why are we doing economic development"? The following objectives were developed by the community and are listed in order of importance.

1. Encourage more families and youth to call Port Alice home
2. Attract and retain businesses
3. Attract and retain jobs
4. Promote a diverse and stable economy
5. Protect our natural environment
6. Maintain a peaceful and safe community
7. Encourage well paid employment

We used our objectives as a way to evaluate all the potential action ideas, carefully choosing actions that would help meet these specific objectives and move us towards our vision. The success of this strategy will be measured in how well we meet these objectives.

Although 'Encourage more families to call Port Alice home' is a key objective and was voted the highest priority by community members, many community members also readily acknowledged that this would be dependent on jobs. Because of this - in the short term at least - any population increases are beneficial, not just young families.

### 3. How will we get there?

#### How we came up with our actions and strategies

We came up with a long list of over 100 actions by examining past plans, talking with Council and staff, and gathering the input of over 130 community members at the Community Workshop, through interviews and surveys and in examining best practices and case studies from across North America.

We did not want our economic development strategy to be a wish list of too many actions. We wanted a realistic strategy with:

- Actions we could achieve (based on our time, money and skills).
- Actions laid out in the proper sequence to achieve them.

To begin narrowing down the list of actions, we asked community members to identify which actions they liked the most. This was done through discussions, comment cards, presentations and 'dot voting' at the Community Workshops. This process was a very rough screening tool that was used to weed out the least popular or unrealistic options. These actions are included in Appendix 2: Actions that were screened out early in the process.

#### Key points about the Strategy

1. **It's not dependent on the mill:** Port Alice's core strategy is the same **regardless of whether or not the mill reopens**. If the mill reopens, some actions could be implemented more quickly, but actions will be implemented regardless of the mill's status.
2. **It's multi-pronged:** There is no "silver bullet," so Port Alice will need to deploy multiple actions.
3. **It's dependent on community engagement:** The community *wants* to be involved, and *must* be involved in order for the plan to succeed.
4. **It's interconnected:** There are significant synergies and interconnections between primary and secondary strategies.
5. **It's not going to be easy:** Major obstacles exist around attracting families and new residents in the short term, especially if the mill does not reopen. This reality needs to be acknowledged. Stabilizing the population on a year-round basis and keeping core services are important to achieving Port Alice's long term vision.

The project team then **analyzed the remaining actions** in three different ways.

- 1) The first round of analysis was based on how well the actions met the community's objectives, like so:

PART 1 SCREENING: BY OBJECTIVE										
Action Name	Description/notes	More families/ youth	More businesses	More jobs	More stability (i.e. diversification)	Protect nature	Keep peacefulness	Positively impacts resident's quality of life	Better Income (i.e. well paying jobs)	SCORE ON EFFECTIVENESS IN MEETING OBJECTIVES (out of 5)
		Weighting: 8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
		1-No impact 5-Big impact	1-No impact 5-Big impact	1 - 0 jobs 2 - 1-5 new jobs 3 - 6-10 new jobs 4 - 10-20 new jobs 5 - 21+ new jobs	1 - Less diversification 3 - No change 5 - High diversification	1 - Degrades nature 3 - No impact 5 - Restores nature	1 - Degrades peacefulness 3 - No impact 5 - Improves peacefulness	1 - Negative impact on residents' QoL 3 - No impact 5 - Positive impact	1 -Worse than before, low paying jobs 3 - No change or unknown 5 - Improved incomes	
Support new B&Bs	Actively work to support Port Alice homeowners in opening BnBs through workshops, tax incentives, linking them up with Community Futures, supporting them in navigating regulations, etc.	1.0	3.0	2.0	4.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.5

The objectives were weighted based on how important each objective was to the community (in the light blue row). So for example, 'More Families/Youth' was the most popular objective, so was weighted 8/8, and the others were rated relatively less.

- 2) The second round of analysis looked at 'practical concerns' based on the following criteria:

- Implementation cost (time and effort)
- Resource availability (availability and access to necessary funding and staff time, either locally or through grant applications)
- Likelihood: Level of confidence that we can implement it and achieve the expected outcomes (in other words, is it a sure bet or a long shot?)
- Community support (this came directly from community input from the Community Workshop, interviews and surveys)

For every action, each criterion was given a total score of up to 5 points and weighted, as illustrated below.

		PART 2 SCREENING: PRACTICAL CONCERNS				
		Implementation Cost (time and effort)	Resource availability	Likelihood: Level of confidence that we can implement it and achieve the expected outcomes	Community Support	SCORE ON PRACTICAL CONCERNS (out of 5)
Weighting:		1	1	1	1	
Action Name	Description/notes	1- Higher cost (>20,000) 3 - Medium cost (10,000-20,000) 5- No/low cost (<10,000)	1=No funding/resources available 5 = All funding/resources would be easy to access	1-Long shot 5-Sure bet	1- Very unpopular 3- Neutral/unknown 5 - Very popular	
Support new B&Bs	Actively work to support Port Alice homeowners in opening BnBs through workshops, tax incentives, linking them up with Community Futures, supporting them in navigating regulations, etc.	4.0	5.0	3.0	3.0	3.8

These scoring systems do not ‘tell you’ which actions to choose, but they can be useful discussion tools. The variation in scoring can indicate where trade-offs need to be made, or where there is a need for further discussion.

- 3) We then worked with the Steering Committee and Council to review this analysis, and determine which actions should be included in the strategy. Steering Committee and Council members prioritized each action after looking carefully at the community’s priorities, the two scoring systems and using their own knowledge about implementation capacity in Port Alice (time, money, skills).

The actions that were rated lower priority in this review were removed from the list of actions to pursue in the next five years (i.e. this strategy). They are included in Appendix 3: Non-priority actions. If new funding opportunities arise or circumstances change, these actions can be moved back into the list of priority actions.

New opportunities will inevitably come along after this strategy is completed. When they do, the Village of Port Alice should evaluate them using the same criteria used for evaluating the actions in this strategy.

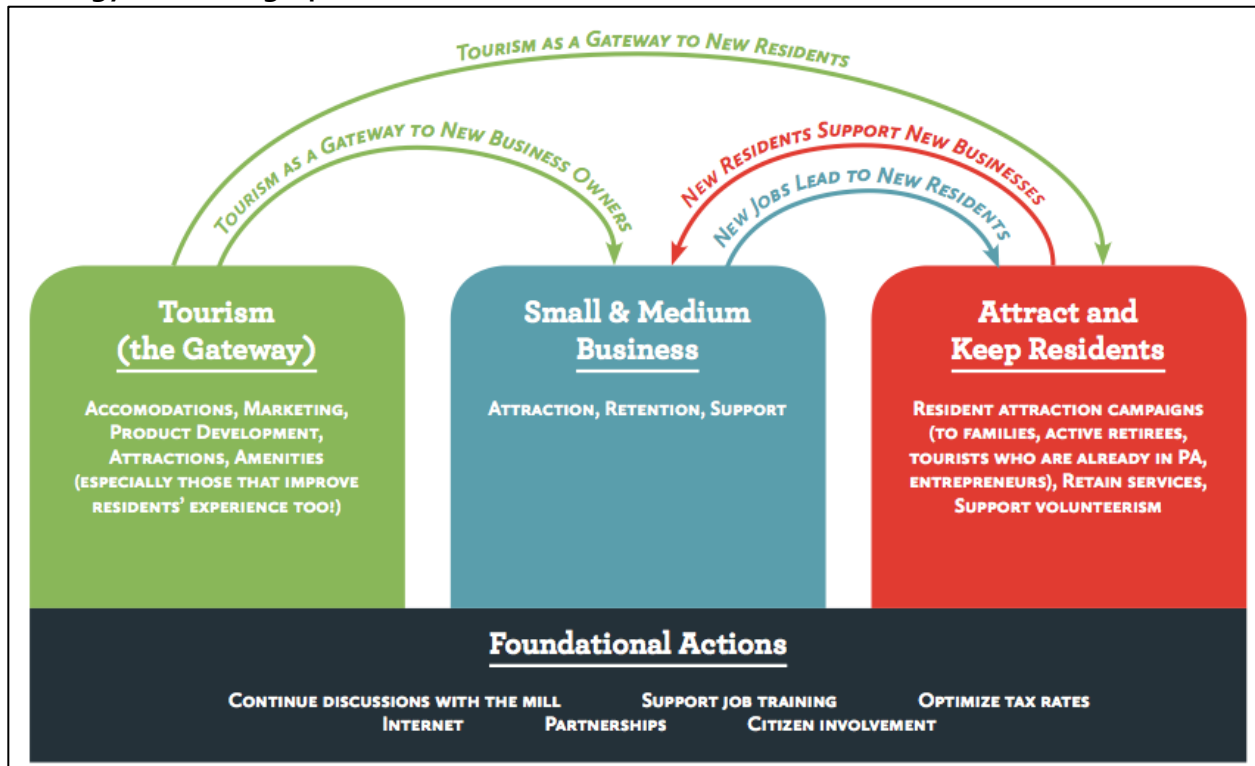


*"We can always start with the smaller inexpensive plans to get the ball rolling. Any activity usually leads to more. I know that expanding the marina has brought a lot of new homeowners to Port Alice. Even implementing one small thing could have a ripple effect." – Port Alice Resident*



## Our actions and strategies

### Strategy overview graphic:



**Overview description:** In the short-term, focusing on tourism and small and medium business are the areas where the Village has the most opportunity for influence (i.e. actions are achievable and realistic given current resources). There are linkages between these two strategies. For example, tourism-focused small businesses could be expanded and supported, and entrepreneurs could be encouraged to participate in the tourism sector.

Tourism and small business support could lead to increased residency (by creating jobs in small businesses, and by increasing interest in Port Alice via tourism). Increased residency will also be targeted more directly through new resident marketing. One key way to do this will be to make sure visitors to the community are made aware (through marketing) of the advantages of living, working or starting a business in Port Alice.

Simultaneously, there are other 'foundational' actions that should be pursued in order to create a strong business enabling environment – things like internet provision, ongoing conversations with the mill, supporting volunteerism and meeting with potential partners.

In addition to the main strategies shown in the graphic, there are also actions and strategies that address accommodations and food services, and investment attraction.

***The following sections describe the strategies and the actions within each strategy.***

### Strategy 1: Foundational actions

These are the actions that support a wide variety of strategies and enable other actions to succeed. They are the 'foundation' for success. For example, improved Internet service will make Port Alice more attractive to residents and businesses alike.

Timeframe	Action Name	Description/notes	Community Support 1- Very unpopular 3- Neutral/ unknown 5 - Very popular
First 100 Days + ongoing	Continue to optimize tax rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examine tax rates and ensure that Port Alice is competitive with other municipalities</li> <li>Ensure that tax rates are set to support local economic development and jobs</li> <li>Current tax rates are lower than other North Island Communities for residential and business (except Port McNeill)</li> </ul>	3
First 100 Days + ongoing	Kick-start community involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dozens of community members indicated that they would be interested in volunteering, leading actions, starting businesses, setting up volunteer committees etc.</li> <li>This action would include taking the lists of interested individuals and contacting them about getting started. Ideally, the Village could help set up a first meeting or two among the groups, and then the groups could be self-organizing thereafter</li> <li>The Village and Community Futures have been provided with the lists of interested people</li> </ul>	3
First 100 Days + ongoing	Meet with potential partners	Set up meetings with potential partners to discuss the Strategy and look for areas of mutual interest and cooperation. A list of potential partners (many of whom have already expressed interest in collaboration) is on Page 41	3

<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Action Name</b>	<b>Description/notes</b>	<b>Community Support 1- Very unpopular 3- Neutral/ unknown 5 - Very popular</b>
Short term	Faster internet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bill Feader is heading up effort and writing grants to get high speed internet into Port Alice. Band width used to be 11.5MB/S, moved to 30MB/S in July and he is aiming to have 200MB/S soon</li> </ul>	5
Short term + ongoing	Continue discussions with Mill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue existing negotiations and relationship building with Neucel and Zhejiang Fulida Ltd</li> <li>Negotiate for the best interests of Port Alice residents (current and future), including the potential for industrial tourism, reinstatement of mill tours, golf course upkeep, and (if they reopen) contracting with small local businesses rather than outside suppliers</li> <li>Many community members wanted to see renewed discussions about moving back to an 8 hour shift, but this is unlikely as it was voted on by workers. Port Alice would need to present a very clear business case for making this shift.</li> </ul>	5
Short term + ongoing	Support job training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to support training and capacity building in conjunction with the 'Transition Team', Mount Waddington Community Futures and post secondary agencies.</li> <li>Coordinate with both major employers (e.g., WFP) and small business operating in Port Alice area to provide needed skills training for local labour force.</li> <li>Community members wanted to see the following types of courses: computer skills, life skills, administration skills, care-aid course.</li> </ul>	4

## Strategy 2: Accommodations and food services

There is a need for more and better accommodations in Port Alice, which could be achieved realistically through a combination of new bed and breakfasts and improvements to the existing hotel. In the longer term, once tourism is more established, it may be possible to attract new hotel facilities to town. Accommodations are important for tourism, but also for visiting workers (for the mill, Western Forest Products, etc.) and visiting sports teams. At the same time, there are currently limited restaurant facilities in town, which is a major barrier to tourism and impacts resident quality of life.

Timeframe	Action Name	Description/notes	Community Support 1- Very unpopular 3- Neutral/ unknown 5 - Very popular
First 100 Days	Improve existing accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet with existing hotel and BnB managers to identify opportunities for support, encourage upgrades and staying open (both the hotel and restaurant)</li> <li>Coordinate meetings between hotel owner and PA tourism/business operators, North Island Tourism, Provincial Representatives and Regional Representatives and the Village of Port Alice to understand what support is needed</li> </ul>	5
First 100 Days	Support new B&Bs	Actively work to support Port Alice homeowners in opening BnBs through workshops, tax incentives, linking them up with Community Futures, supporting them in navigating regulations, etc.	3
Short term	Develop a business case for accommodations	In order to encourage more accommodations (through increased BnBs, inward investment or improvements of existing accommodations), the Village could develop a business case for accommodations. The business case would look at # of visitors to Port Alice, length of stay, typical amount spent on hotels in similar towns, typical # of hotel beds per capita etc. Much of this information is	3

Timeframe	Action Name	Description/notes	Community Support 1- Very unpopular 3- Neutral/ unknown 5 - Very popular
		available in the Port Alice Economic Profile (2015).	
Short term	Tax incentives for accommodations and restaurants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review options such as setting standards for when they are open (e.g., year-round), and/or if they meet a certain quality threshold (number of stars through BC Hotel Association, Hello BC approved accommodations, etc.)</li> <li>Could potentially be implemented using the 'Revitalization Tax Credit' model (see Town of Oliver Bylaw 1328 for a sample policy)</li> <li>Ensure that this tax opportunity is well advertised (on Port Alice website, britishcolumbia.ca, directly to potential hoteliers and restaurateurs)</li> </ul>	4



### Strategy 3: Tourism

There is the potential for tourism to provide an inflow of money into Port Alice, however, Port Alice is not currently well set up to attract tourists or capture their spending. Additionally, the season is short. Because of this, Tourism is one part of the overall strategy, it is not seen as a 'silver bullet'. Tourism related activities include some broader planning activities (on this page), as well as two key 'sub-strategies' in tourism marketing and tourism product development (on the following pages). All of these areas need to be worked on simultaneously in Port Alice. For example, there is no point increasing marketing if there is no place for visitors to spend their money (amenities/activities).

Timeframe	Action Name	Description/notes	Community Support 1- Very unpopular 3- Neutral/ unknown 5 - Very popular
First 100 Days	Tourism strategy (Short term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the short term, there is a need to develop a clear 'Brand' for Port Alice based on its differentiating features (how it differs from other North Island communities and why it's worth the drive)</li> <li>Several ideas for branding and differentiation that came from the community were: storm watching, industrial tourism, gateway to the west coast, hunting, motorcycle tourism (see Appendix 4 for details on motorcycle tourism shared by a community member)</li> <li>EcoPlan thinks a good angle might be a combination of wild coast + industrial history (which could include mill tours, historical signage, industrial public artwork, etc.). However, it should be community supported and developed in coordination with North Island Tourism and others</li> </ul>	5
Medium to Long Term	Tourism strategy (Longer term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A longer term, more structured approach to tourism, following completion of the many tourism "quick start" actions identified in this strategy</li> <li>Work with Destination BC, Quatsino First Nation, North Island Tourism, and directly with other North Island communities</li> </ul>	3

**Strategy 3a) Tourism marketing:** There is a need for greater marketing of Port Alice as a destination, especially to tourists that are already on the North Island. A 2010 Port Alice tourism plan outlined a number of tourism marketing actions that should be followed up on, many of which are still relevant and well thought out. Since this plan was developed, Vancouver Island North Tourism has been created, which should be leveraged as much as possible for Port Alice.

As an additional element to tourism marketing, Port Alice should ensure that visitors are targeted with marketing messages *once they are in Port Alice* – specifically around why it’s a great place to live and start a business (and how to get started living or working in Port Alice).

*"Residents should be ambassadors of Port Alice. Always talk about the positive reasons to reside or visit our Village!"*  
 – Port Alice Resident

Timeframe	Action Name	Description/notes	Community Support 1- Very unpopular 3- Neutral/ unknown 5 - Very popular
First 100 Days	Improve highway 19 signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better marketing for Port Alice on North Island highway</li> <li>Ensure that the 'services' sign on the highway is accurate and up to date</li> <li>RDMW Rural Grant Program Funding could be accessed</li> </ul>	4
First 100 Days	Improve online presence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued improvements to portalice.ca and Port Alice social media channels for tourism attraction (November 2015 North Island Visitor Profile found that destination specific websites were the number one form of information gathering for tourists)</li> <li>Ensure that third party web sites and social media are also advertising Port Alice appropriately (e.g., HelloBC AHOY BC, Destination BC, Vancouver Island North Tourism). Review their sites and contact them to make changes to align their marketing with Port Alice’s brand/differentiation</li> </ul>	3

<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Action Name</b>	<b>Description/notes</b>	<b>Community Support 1- Very unpopular 3- Neutral/ unknown 5 - Very popular</b>
First 100 Days	Signage at the Marina about available services	Ensure that visitors to the Marina are aware of all the services in town (Showers and laundry at Ozzieland, groceries, fuel, liquor, post office, etc.)	3
Short term	Increase tourism marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closer collaboration with other North Island communities, Vancouver Island North Tourism, Tourism Vancouver Island and Destination BC</li> <li>• Implement tourism marketing actions from 2010 VIU Port Alice Tourism Report</li> <li>• Use the branding and differentiation determined in task "Tourism Strategy (Short term)"</li> <li>• A variety of free and paid promotional opportunities should be explored (e.g., press releases about events to North Island Gazette, free online calendar listings, taking advantage of joint advertising opportunities with North Island Tourism, optimizing profiles on Vancouver Island North Tourism, etc.)</li> </ul>	5

Timeframe	Action Name	Description/notes	Community Support 1- Very unpopular 3- Neutral/ unknown 5 - Very popular
Short term	Promote Port Alice as a marine fuelling and supply hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Market to boat-access-only houses in the area: Quatsino, Winter Harbour etc.</li> <li>Better promotion of fuel services, 4-hour free marina parking, etc.</li> <li>Advertise the many services currently available and easily accessible from the marina in Port Alice, which is an advantage relative to other fuel stops or launch points with gas, food, banking, liquor, post office, etc.</li> <li><b>Ensure that the marina has signage for all the services available in town (including showers at Ozzieland, groceries, liquor, post office, etc.)</b></li> <li><i>See additional research notes in Appendix 4 for high level feasibility</i></li> </ul>	3
Short term	Improve signage upon entering Port Alice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that signage aligns with the brand (see Action "Tourism Strategy (Short term)"), and clearly shows the attractions in/near Port Alice</li> <li>Consider having space for local businesses to advertise (e.g. accommodations, FP Foods' services for hunters (smoking, butchering) etc.)</li> <li>Consider putting up information about the benefits of living in Port Alice and/or opening a business in Port Alice</li> <li>RDMW Rural Grant Program could be accessed for funding</li> </ul>	3

Timeframe	Action Name	Description/notes	Community Support 1- Very unpopular 3- Neutral/ unknown 5 - Very popular
Medium to long term + ongoing	Improve coordination among North Island Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At present, it is difficult for other North Island communities to promote Port Alice due to limited services. But as accommodations and tourism products improve in Port Alice, it is important that other North Island tourism stakeholders are aware of these changes</li> <li>Improve coordination among North Island Visitor Centres. Interviews with tourists and site visits indicated that the visitor centres on the North Island do not encourage people to go to Port Alice (note that this has been cited as a problem for other North Island communities as well - e.g., Malcolm Island, Alert Bay. Therefore it is likely that these places would also support this action). This action would include working with North Island Tourism and/or the visitor centres directly to increase knowledge of each others' offerings (e.g., 'fam' tours)</li> <li>Partner with other North Island communities to cross-promote each others' communities</li> </ul>	3

**Strategy 3b) Tourism product development (amenities and attractions):** There is a lack of activities for tourists, so there is limited reason to stay or spend money in Port Alice. The Village should support product development and focus on amenities that attract tourists and *also improve quality of life for residents*.

Timeframe	Action Name	Description/notes	Community Support 1- Very unpopular 3- Neutral/ unknown 5 - Very popular
First 100 Days	Artists show space at FP Foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FP Foods has offered to host a consignment space for local artists and craftspeople</li> <li>Will require a volunteer to organize it (the Village has someone in mind that they can reach out to)</li> <li>Will require marketing around town to alert visitors and residents to its presence</li> </ul>	4
Short term	Support water and land based rentals business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water based rentals (like kayaks, canoes, stand-up-paddle boards) located at the marina could provide an activity for visitors and a boost to quality of life for residents. Land based rental could include bicycles also for rent at marina</li> <li>To start, the Village could take action to attract private business (e.g., providing space, tax breaks, other support). FP Foods has expressed interest, <b>but would need support in researching insurance requirements</b></li> <li>If the Village cannot attract private business, consider setting up a small scale rental through the Village as part of recreation program (as is done by the town of Burns Lake and other locations)</li> <li>See research notes in Appendix X for details</li> </ul>	5



Timeframe	Action Name	Description/notes	Community Support 1- Very unpopular 3- Neutral/ unknown 5 - Very popular
Short term	Develop Industrial tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop interpretive tours or signage about the town's industrial history and sites, E.g., Britannia Mines</li> <li>Work with the mill to restart mill tours, advertise widely around town and externally</li> <li>Ideas could include interpretive signs or plaques, old equipment displayed in parks or turned into art along the seawalk, encouraging locals to start tour guiding</li> <li>In terms of logging history, there are apparently not any good pull outs with views, and it would be hazardous to have visitors driving to the log sort. However, historical (i.e., non active) sites could be used</li> </ul>	3
Short term + ongoing	Support residents in developing "events"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Events can attract people to the town. The North Island Visitor Profile (2015) found that 14% of North Island Visitors were on the North island for a specific event (like Filomi Days or Shoal Bay Music Festival)</li> <li>This action would need significant community (resident) leadership and support (the Village does not have the resources to organize events on its own)</li> <li>Village has access to good insurance rates for events that could be used for events</li> <li>The idea of a fishing derby was very popular with the community, and could be promising but time consuming to organize. Events could also be structured around music, art show, food, history, etc.</li> <li>Can start small (e.g., Port Alice Pig Roast day(s)) and should build on existing Port Alice strengths and assets</li> </ul>	5

Timeframe	Action Name	Description/notes	Community Support 1- Very unpopular 3- Neutral/ unknown 5 - Very popular
Medium to Long Term	Village waterfront walkway, art, interpretation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve the existing waterfront walkway for pedestrian/bike safety, add interpretation at viewsheds and art (idea to use/recycle industrial waste as art), make it a link between marina/town and industrial tourism (see 'Industrial Tourism' Action)</li> <li>No current funding, but could be a possibility if funding streams open up</li> </ul>	4
Medium to Long Term	Continued marina upgrades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interviews with boaters indicated that showers, power and laundry lead to longer stays (NOTE: Ozzieland offers showers and laundry. This is not well advertised at the marina and should be promoted more)</li> <li>Ideas put forward include power, showers, bigger boat slips and more slips (Note that recreational slips are at capacity during peak summer season (for one or two weekends only, at which point they can 'double park'). This might not be a problem now, but as tourism increases there may be a need to investigate additional permanent or seasonal (temporary) fingers</li> <li>A boat lift was also suggested, which would likely be popular but very expensive due to environmental considerations</li> </ul>	5

Timeframe	Action Name	Description/notes	Community Support 1- Very unpopular 3- Neutral/ unknown 5 - Very popular
Medium to Long Term	Support the development of an outdoor school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the development of marine or outdoor teaching (e.g., sailing, kayaking, marine biology, etc.)</li> <li>• Contact various secondary and post secondary institutes about setting up temporary or permanent field school locations in Port Alice (and clearly articulate the benefits of the location, what incentives could be offered, what accommodations are available, etc.)</li> <li>• Outdoor educational facilities are a priority on the entire North Island, so consider working with RDMW and SD 85 on codevelopment</li> </ul>	4
Medium to Long Term	Predator interpretation centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could be developed in conjunction with marina upgrades (e.g., washrooms, showers). Could be situated at /near the marina, and double as a Marine Visitor Centre</li> </ul>	3

#### Strategy 4: Small business attraction, retention and expansion

Port Alice has historically had a very low level of entrepreneurship relative to other towns, and the province as a whole (this is common in towns that are heavily dependent on a single resource and employer). However, there are a small number of successful businesses in town, and several new ones that have recently started. Small business does not just include retail stores with a shop front, it also includes artists, services, home based businesses, BnBs, and others.

The experience of the existing Port Alice entrepreneurs is a key asset that could help support further entrepreneurial development. Also, there are already a number of programs on the North Island and online for supporting small businesses development (Community Futures, North Island Employment Foundations, Small Business BC online courses, etc.).

Over 65% of Port Alice residents that were surveyed indicated that they had thought about opening a business, so there is a ready pool of potential entrepreneurs that could be targeted.

As outlined in the actions below, support should include direct support to all entrepreneurs (in particular, one-on-one support), and targeted programs or services for *diversifying the small business base*. For example, allowing access to logs from the community forest to local sawmills or artisans, or supporting artists with online sales.

#### **“We need a restaurant!”**

Throughout this project, the community put forward many ideas for businesses that they wanted to see in Port Alice. It is not typically the role of local government to start businesses, but they can support people who want to start them. The following is a list of business ideas that were suggested by community members. This list could be circulated to people interested in starting businesses.

- Hunting guide
- Smokehouse
- “Alone” themed survival camp
- Sports bar
- Call centre
- Medical marijuana growing facility
- Property management company (for part time residents to rent out their homes)
- Hockey school
- Shellfish farm
- Restaurant/coffee shop
- Add value locally to forestry products (e.g., a sawmill, wood based art)
- Pellet plant
- Fish hatchery
- Retreat centre (e.g., weight loss centre)
- Produce bottled water from Eternal Fountain
- Bike shop
- Call centre
- Laundry service for mill overalls
- Brewery or winery

Timeframe	Action Name	Description/notes	Community Support 1- Very unpopular 3- Neutral/ unknown 5 - Very popular
First 100 Days	Buy local campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasize the importance of shopping locally and supporting local businesses (and the dangers of not doing so to local services)</li> <li>Likely just periodic reminders in the Rumble sheet, occasional posters</li> </ul>	4
First 100 Days	"Starting a business in Port Alice 101"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This action pulls together the outputs from a number of other actions (e.g., Land Inventory). The idea is to ensure that potential entrepreneurs/investors have all the information they need in one place. This could take the form of a one page hand-out, information on the website, a physical package available at the Village Office, or brochures on community bulletin boards, at Community Futures drop-in hours, etc.</li> <li>These products should all be available in one place, updated regularly, and promoted by the Village on their website, in person, and around town</li> <li>Staff should be able to quickly direct potential investors to the right resources, or the right resource person</li> </ul>	3
First 100 Days	Support commercial real estate turnover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage businesses that are for sale or lease (and commercial brokers) to list on spacelist or venture connect (in order to show up on britishcolumbia.ca)</li> <li>Kathy Lachman (JTST) will follow up with businesses. Port Alice should provide her with a list of businesses.</li> </ul>	3

Timeframe	Action Name	Description/notes	Community Support 1- Very unpopular 3- Neutral/ unknown 5 - Very popular
Short term	Advocate for changes to Community Forest operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of availability of local fibre has been cited as a barrier to local job creation and entrepreneurship (e.g., small scale mills, value-added products, wood-based art)</li> <li>The North Island Community Forest was created as a way for communities to be able to access fibre for this purpose. However, currently the forest is managed to maximize profits, and fibre is not available locally</li> <li>The mayors are the shareholders and could collectively decide to change how the forest is managed. However, it is not easy or quick to change, as all shareholders need to agree on the change in direction, and the fibre rights have already been sold for a defined cut control period. Nonetheless, this could be a longer term point for discussion</li> <li>Forest could also be optimized for more recreational use</li> <li>A Good case study for local fibre and jobs is Bella Coola (see Appendix X)</li> </ul>	5
Short term	Support formal or informal business networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gauge level of interest in a local Chamber of Commerce (which could be funded through Business License Revenue). Possibly facilitate discussion with other Chambers for mentoring purposes</li> <li>If there isn't interest in a formal chamber at this time, there are other less formal options that could be supported, such as one-off meetings about specific topics. Village could champion these initially with the goal of having a community champion step up shortly thereafter</li> </ul>	4



Timeframe	Action Name	Description/notes	Community Support 1- Very unpopular 3- Neutral/ unknown 5 - Very popular
Short term	Expand the industrial park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The success of the industrial park expansion would depend (in large part) on the mill's viability</li> <li>A first step would be to budget for a legal survey to assess viability</li> <li>Prioritize tenants that provide local jobs</li> </ul>	4
Short term + ongoing	Continue to work with and support existing service providers for small business support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to support and promote Community Futures' 1-on-1 office hours</li> <li>Encourage existing businesses to meet 1 on 1 with Community Futures to talk about growth potential. Community futures can help with business expansion planning, potential for loans, access to grants, coaching, etc.</li> <li>Stay up-to-date on other North Island programs and refer people to them as needed (e.g., NEIFS Self Employment Program)</li> <li>Work closely with service providers to ensure that services are meeting the needs of community members, and encourage service providers to conduct regular, anonymous evaluation of programs</li> </ul>	3
Short term + ongoing	Promote business opportunities and events in North Island media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain regular contact with local media and provide press releases on business opportunities and events. Look for free publicity whenever possible.</li> <li>E.g., North Island Gazette, calendars on Vancouver Island North Tourism, North Island Gazette etc.</li> </ul>	3

## Strategy 5: Resident attraction

Priorities for resident attraction are families and also active retirees.

Tourism and small business support could lead to increased residency and improved quality of life in the longer run by creating jobs in small businesses, and by increasing interest in Port Alice via tourism. Additionally, targeted resident attract promotions could begin immediately, focusing on key assets like affordable housing, scenery, recreation opportunities, etc. The actions in this strategy aim to keep the amenities and services we already have, and improve upon them. These factors will not only help us retain our current population, but will make Port Alice more appealing to potential new residents.

Tourism in particular could be a vehicle to increased residency (home sales, rentals, etc.) but only if Port Alice lays out the welcome mat by:

- Clearly articulating the benefits of living in Port Alice to visitors (affordability, varied housing stock, nature, views, activities, amenities). Information could be presented on community signs, at the visitor centre, and target various audiences (retirees, camp workers, entrepreneurs).
- Making it easy for visitors to look at and purchase homes (e.g., real estate information and listings on the Village website, prominently posted around town and information available in the Village office).
- Making it easy for second (or primary) homeowners or renters to rent out their homes (via sites like VRBO and AirBNB), and supporting people to do so through education.
- Making it clear that Port Alice is 'Open for New Business', by clearly showing business sale listings, lists of potential opportunities and supporting potential new entrepreneurs in whatever way possible.

Ideally, these measures will eventually increase the population, which can create a positive cycle (more population makes it more viable to open businesses, more businesses make it more vibrant and a more attractive place to live, etc.).

Timeframe	Action Name	Description/notes	Community Support 1- Very unpopular 3- Neutral/ unknown 5 - Very popular
Short term	Resident attraction campaigns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Market to identified target audiences (active retirees, down island residents, camp families) (<i>see notes on the following page for more details</i>)</li> <li>Optimize Portalice.ca and Port Alice social media channels for resident attraction (<i>see notes on the following page</i>)</li> <li>Develop "Everyone is a town ambassador" program. Give residents the information (e.g., Welcome package), tools and education so that every person in Port Alice can promote Port Alice (to tourists, when they leave town for camp, online, etc.)</li> <li>Develop a paid advertisement campaign if resources allow</li> </ul>	5
Short term	Market Port Alice's livability to tourists who are already in Port Alice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and market a "welcome package" so that all visitors to the town are made aware of the benefits of living in Port Alice (programs and assets), the available real estate, how to start a business in Port Alice, etc.</li> <li>Information could be available on the 'Welcome to Port Alice' sign, at the Village office, and posted on bulletin boards around town</li> </ul>	3
Short term + ongoing	Encourage volunteerism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased volunteerism could improve quality of life, support services</li> <li>Many people expressed interest in volunteering and helping out the town, and many people provided their contact information. The Village has this list of people to contact</li> <li>Examples of volunteer opportunities include: leading workshops, town beautification, helping neighbours, welcome wagon, community 'work bees' to clean up key sites</li> <li>This is a good opportunity for service groups to get involved</li> </ul>	4

### *Notes on resident attraction campaigns:*

The following groups have been identified as potential target audiences for resident attraction campaigns.

#### **Active, younger Retirees**

- Marketing could be led by Port Alice residents (e.g., building on work already being done by Pauline Steele). Elliot Lake ON's efforts to attract retirees was led by residents and very successful
- Could target the parents of existing North Island residents (One recent study found that over 30% of older in-migrants had children residing near by)
- Be creative (i.e., think outside of just advertisements). Ideas from Port Alice community members included trade shows, renting a bus and take people up from Victoria, putting on a seniors event

#### **Camp families:**

- Existing PA camp families pointed out the low cost of living and safe community for kids to run around in make it an idea place for camp families. Could send out collateral with existing camp workers and ask them to be ambassadors

#### **Down Island residents**

- Many residents on the North Island have moved up from Campbell River, Courtney, Parksville, as they look for more affordable real estate. Down Island residents are therefore a key potential audience for new residents

### *Notes on optimizing portalice.ca for resident attraction:*

- Ensure that Portalice.ca makes it easy for people to find information to move to Port Alice or start a business in Port Alice: making sure that available land, real estate and for sale businesses are all listed on their website (or easily linked from their website)
- Ensure that all photos and captions are marketing statements about Port Alice's key assets (affordable housing, easy access to the outdoors, etc.)

### Strategy 6: Investment attraction

This strategy includes a small number of actions aimed specifically at getting specific businesses or sectors to locate or reopen in Port Alice.

There are four key items that potential investors consider in choosing a community: land, human resources, community profile, and planning policies. Allotting time and resources to address them could be the difference between investments and holding vacant land.

Timeframe	Action Name	Description/notes	Community Support 1- Very unpopular 3- Neutral/ unknown 5 - Very popular
First 100 Days	Land Inventory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inventory should include the following (for undeveloped, available land): Availability and size of sites, land use designation, zoning, servicing, sale and leasing potential, ownership</li><li>• Inventory should be updated at least twice a year</li><li>• Ensure that available lots are listed on britishcolumbia.ca (as custom opportunities) and the portalice.ca website (can attach the map, have a list, etc.)</li><li>• Note that this inventory should <i>not</i> include residential real estate, or lots/land that are not available (i.e. they are empty but the owner does not want to sell them)</li></ul>	3
First 100 Days	Zoning and development information for investors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure zoning and development information is clear, easy to access and business friendly</li><li>• Use the checklist in this document on pages 8 and 9 (<a href="http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=1536">http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=1536</a>)</li></ul>	3

Timeframe	Action Name	Description/notes	Community Support 1- Very unpopular 3- Neutral/ unknown 5 - Very popular
Short term	Promote town to target businesses desired	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target businesses that fit into the Village vision, that can survive and thrive at smaller resident population numbers. A list of businesses that the community wants to see is shown in the description for Strategy 4.</li> <li>Work with retail space owners to ensure that their space is targeted and marketed appropriately (already in progress)</li> </ul>	4

### Community-led actions

Many community members expressed interest in supporting the implementation of this Strategy. There were a number of actions that came up during this project that are well suited to be led by community members or groups. These actions are listed below.

*"Do all that you can in town—use the doctor, shop locally—in the long run, it will help us retain our services"*

– Port Alice Resident

Action	Description
Saturday summer market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Many community members expressed interest in a summer market, however, many others were against it, or thought it was unfeasible</li><li>• Could start small with 1-4 pilot markets</li><li>• There are concerns that there is not enough supply or demand. FP Foods has agreed to expand their 'sidewalk' displays during summer weekends for a market feel. Those selling produce and crafts are encouraged to sell their products through FP Foods</li></ul>
Starting a business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Many ideas were put forward for local businesses that could be started by residents. These include a smokehouse, hunting guiding, hair salon, restaurant, marijuana operation, Market Gardens (FP Foods would be willing to sell their local produce). A full list is included in the description for Strategy 4</li><li>• Community Futures provides extensive support and financing for small businesses.</li></ul>
Greenhouse/community garden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Would need to be led by a community group or residents (Village could support wherever possible)</li><li>• The Village could help link interested individuals with the school (who has an existing gardening program). Explore opportunities for seniors/children intergenerational gardening, workshops from knowledgeable local residents, or for residents to use some of the school's lands.</li></ul>
Concert society to bring in artists and musicians	

Action	Description
Writing about Port Alice for publications (e.g., retiree magazines, newspapers, tourism magazines)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are many excellent writers in the community</li> <li>• Many publications are constantly looking for content. The North Island Gazette is always interested in local stories. A Port Alice resident could call the Gazette about anything interesting happening in Port Alice (for example, they reported on both the community meetings associated with this project)</li> <li>• Port Alice community members could write articles or press releases. For example, a community member suggested marketing Port Alice to motorcycle tourists. This person could pitch an article to ROADRunner magazine</li> </ul>

Additionally, there are many small actions that ALL community members can take to support Port Alice's economic development. These include

- Shopping locally whenever possible
- Word-of-mouth marketing about the great things Port Alice has to offer
- Being friendly and helpful to visitors
- Picking up litter
- Keeping your yard tidy
- Write an online review of Port Alice attractions (genuine ones only of course)

At the final community event, we asked participants to indicate what actions that would like to work on. Lists of interested citizens (and their contact information) have been provided to the Village to follow up.



## 4. Are we there?

This section talks about how we will actually **implement the strategy**. First, we discuss the role of community and partners, and then provide a workplan and a monitoring and evaluation plan.

### The role of community and partners

*Port of Potential* includes many actions. The Village cannot do them all with its current resources (staff time and money), so it is critical that community members and partners are part of the implementation plan.

### Community members are key to implementation

Many of these actions could (and should) be taken up or supported by community members or community groups. **This will greatly speed up the implementation of the strategy.** There are a number of ways that community members can help implement the strategy, as described below.

- 1) Civic Volunteer List (e.g., volunteers to help beautify the town, participate in town clean-ups, help out in other ways as needed).

*During the last workshop, a number of people signed up to be on a volunteer list. The Village has been given this list and can contact these people as needed.*

- 2) Getting citizens involved in specific actions (asking for help!): The Village should put out 'calls for help' on specific actions. We have explicitly identified a number of actions that could be carried out and led by community members on Page 39.

*During the last workshop, a number of people signed up to carry out specific actions (including community gardens, starting a business, summer markets, putting on events, and setting up an 'everyone is a town ambassador' program). The Village has been provided with lists of names for each action, and a 'First 100 days' action is for the Village to reach out to these people to set up initial meetings.*

- 3) Citizens implementation committees: Several residents were interested in being involved in implementation committees that could support the implementation of the strategy, using the unique skills of residents (for example, grant writing, business planning, project management).

There were three ideas for committees put forward:

- a. General implementation committee
- b. Tourism committee
- c. Active retiree attraction committee

*During the last workshop, a number of Port Alice residents indicated that they would like to be involved in an implementation committee. The Village has been provided with lists of names of people who want to be involved in each committee. A 'First 100 days' action is for the Village to reach out to these people to set up initial meetings.*

- 4) Keeping the Village and citizens accountable for implementing this Strategy through regular progress updates. This has been included as part of the 'Monitoring and Evaluation' section, below.

The Village should support these groups wherever possible. Support could take many forms, from advertising in the Rumble Sheet, to making introductions, setting up first meetings, providing meeting space, etc. Community Futures has also offered to put on a grant-writing workshop if community members are interested.

### **The importance of Partners and Networks for Implementation**

There are many Partners that should be engaged to help implement this plan. These include:

- Quatsino First Nation: Quatsino is implementing/investigating a number of economic development projects, including a floating lodge, fish farms at Victoria Lake, forestry, and Season 2 of Alone. They are open to working with Port Alice where possible.
- The other communities of the North Island: Many of these communities are also implementing their Economic Development strategies and facing similar challenges and opportunities. Additionally, the Regional District's economic development office can support the implementation of some actions.
- The Province: Working with the regional Economic Development representative for the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training. The representative could help link Port Alice up with funding streams and support within the provincial government.
- Community Futures: Community Futures is already supporting Port Alice entrepreneurs, and this relationship and support should be nurtured.
- Vancouver Island North Tourism: VINT has a number of programs and services that Port Alice can participate in (and indeed, is already doing so to a degree). They are also an excellent source of knowledge about local tourism and funding streams for tourism development.
- Funding agencies: Islands Coastal Economic Trust, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, and many others.
- Port Alice Library: The Library showcases local artwork, has meeting space, has computers that can be used for job searches, resume creation, etc. There could be other areas where they can support plan implementation.

Port Alice has existing relationships with all of these groups. Discussions about mutual areas of interest and opportunities for collaboration should take place immediately.

### Implementation plan

The following schedule shows roughly when each action should be implemented, by whom, and a rough indication of the resources required (on a scale of 1-5 \$ signs). Of course, this schedule should be flexible and respond to new funding opportunities, new partners or changing economic circumstances. For example, if funding was available next year for an action that we had deemed 'longer term', it could be moved up to 'short term'.

VOPA = Village of Port Alice

VINT = Vancouver Island North Tourism

RDMW = Regional District of Mount Waddington

Timeframe	Action Name	Lead organization	Resources required (rough estimate, from \$ (less than 5K) to \$\$\$\$\$\$ (over 20K))
First 100 Days	Improve existing accommodations	VOPA	\$
First 100 Days	Support new B&Bs	VOPA	\$\$
First 100 Days	Tourism strategy (Short term)	VOPA	\$\$\$\$\$
First 100 Days	Improve highway 19 signage	VOPA	\$\$\$
First 100 Days	Improve online presence	VOPA	\$\$
First 100 Days	Signage at the Marina about available services	VOPA	\$
First 100 Days	Artists show space at FP Foods	VOPA + FP Foods	\$
First 100 Days	Buy local campaign	VOPA	\$\$
First 100 Days	"Starting a business in Port Alice 101"	VOPA	\$
First 100 Days	Support commercial real estate turnover	VOPA + JTST	\$
First 100 Days	Land Inventory	VOPA + RDMW	\$
First 100 Days	Zoning and development information for investors	VOPA + RDMW	\$\$
First 100 Days + ongoing	Continue to optimize tax rates	VOPA	\$
First 100 Days + ongoing	Kick-start community involvement	VOPA + Community members	\$

First 100 Days + ongoing	Meet with potential partners	VOPA	\$
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Timeframe	Action Name	Lead organization	Resources required (rough estimate, from \$ (less than 5K) to \$\$\$\$\$ (over 20K)
Short term	Faster internet	Bill Feader Sr., VOPA	\$\$\$\$\$
Short term	Develop a business case for accommodations	VOPA	\$
Short term	Tax incentives for accommodations and restaurants	VOPA	\$
Short term	Increase tourism marketing	VOPA + VINT and others	\$\$\$
Short term	Promote Port Alice as a marine fuelling and supply hub	VOPA	\$
Short term	Improve signage upon entering Port Alice	VOPA	\$\$\$
Short term	Support water and land based rentals business	VOPA	\$
Short term	Develop Industrial tourism	VOPA	\$\$\$\$
Short term	Advocate for changes to Community Forest operations	VOPA	\$\$\$
Short term	Support formal or informal business networking	VOPA	\$\$\$
Short term	Expand the industrial park	VOPA	\$\$\$
Short term	Promote town to target businesses desired	VOPA	\$
Short term	Resident attraction campaigns	VOPA	\$
Short term	Market Port Alice's livability to tourists who are already in Port Alice	VOPA	\$
Short term + ongoing	Continue discussions with Mill	VOPA	\$
Short term + ongoing	Support job training	VOPA, RDMW	\$
Short term + ongoing	Support residents in developing "events"	VOPA + Community members	\$

Timeframe	Action Name	Lead organization	Resources required (rough estimate, from \$ (less than 5K) to \$\$\$\$\$ (over 20K)
Short term + ongoing	Continue to work with and support existing service providers for small business support	VOPA	\$
Short term + ongoing	Promote business opportunities and events in North Island media	VOPA + Local businesses	\$
Short term + ongoing	Encourage volunteerism	VOPA	\$

Timeframe	Action Name	Lead organization	Resources required (rough estimate, from \$ (less than 5K) to \$\$\$\$\$ (over 20K)
Medium to Long Term	Tourism strategy (Longer term)	VOPA	\$\$\$\$\$
Medium to Long Term	Village waterfront walkway, art, interpretation	VOPA	\$\$\$\$\$
Medium to Long Term	Continued marina upgrades	VOPA	\$\$\$\$\$
Medium to Long Term	Support the development of an outdoor school	VOPA	\$\$\$\$\$
Medium to Long Term	Predator interpretation centre	VOPA	\$\$\$\$\$
Medium to long term + ongoing	Improve coordination among North Island communities	VOPA	\$\$

## Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

In order to know if this strategy is working and to hold us accountable to implement it, it is important that we have a plan in place to monitor and evaluate the implementation of *Port of Potential*.

**Monitoring** = collecting data on the implementation of the actions in *Port of Potential*

**Evaluation** = evaluating the data to see if we need to make changes

We will have to monitor and evaluate two things:

### 1. Monitoring and evaluating the *process*

**What?** Checking whether or not the actions are being carried out as planned (i.e. are staff, Council and community members doing what they agreed to do?).

**Who is responsible?** The Chief Administrative Officer is responsible for process M&E.

**When?** Process M&E should take place quarterly (every 3 months). Progress reports should be presented regularly to Council and community.

**How?** The CAO should use the process M&E tool included in Appendix 5: Monitoring and evaluation planning tools (Tool 1). It is straightforward and easy to use. The tool will reveal which actions are on track, and it has space for recording any issues that arise. After filling out the tool, the project team should consider the following:

- Organizational issues or challenges to implementing the actions.
- What actions need to be **refined or changed**?
- Do we need to **add new actions** or **remove some** that aren't working?
- Do the timelines **need to be changed or expanded** (e.g., moving a Medium-term Action up to a Short-term Action)?
- Do resources need to be reallocated in order to help achieve actions (i.e. do we need more time, staff, or money in order to complete the action?)?

### 2. Monitoring and evaluating the *outcomes*

**What?** Outcome monitoring helps us make sure our actions are **having the desired effect on our community's objectives**.

The results from outcome monitoring will help us determine whether we have chosen the right planning actions, or if we need to try something else. We will be able to see where large gains are being made, or where actions need to be refined, adjusted or replaced with other more effective actions.

**Who is responsible?** The Chief Administrative Officer is responsible for outcome monitoring.

**When?** Outcome monitoring and evaluation should take place yearly.

**How?** To measure our progress, we have developed simple indicators (shown below) for each of our seven community objectives. These can be tracked using the outcome-monitoring tool included in Appendix 5: Monitoring and evaluation planning tools (Tool 2). *Over time, as the actions are implemented, we can see if the actions are making the positive impacts we had expected.*

### **Indicators for measuring outcomes**

Objective	Indicator(s)	Data Source
Encourage more families and youth to call Port Alice home	Number of households with children living at home, or median age.	Statistics Canada Census
Attract and retain businesses	Number of businesses licenses issued in Port Alice.	Village of Port Alice
Attract and retain jobs	Assuming that data is released by Statistics Canada for 2016 for Port Alice, a good indicator would be under 'labour force status' and the number of 'employed' individuals.	Statistics Canada Long Form Census
Promote a diverse and stable economy	Subjective. Should be scored based on a scale (1 = entirely dependent on one sector, very vulnerable to shocks, 5 = very diversified, able to withstand shocks in any single sector)	Staff/Council
Protect our natural environment	Subjective. Should be scored based on a scale that compares the state of the natural environment to the 2015 baseline (1 = environment greatly degraded relative to 2015, 3 = the same as 2015, 5 = environment greatly restored/improved since 2015)	Staff/Council
Maintain a peaceful and safe community	Crime statistics for Port Alice	RCMP
Encourage well paid employment	Assuming that data is released by Statistics Canada for 2016 for Port Alice, good indicators could be Median Income or Average Income.	Statistics Canada Long Form Census

### Schedule for reviewing the entire strategy

In addition to the ongoing and yearly monitoring and evaluation described above, the entire *Port of Potential* Strategy should be re-evaluated **every five years**. This process should include updating the community economic profile in order to get a more current picture of the local economy, as well as community engagement to ensure that the vision, objectives and actions still meet community needs.

### Communicating our progress

The results from monitoring and evaluation should be communicated to the community, staff and Council on a regular basis. Everyone put significant time into the development of *Port of Potential*, and it will be important that they are kept up to date on progress.



Monitoring and evaluation must be a transparent process, with ALL results (of successes and challenges) made public. This will ensure that support for the project remains high, and that community members feel that the Village is accountable to them and to carrying out *Port of Potential* (and vice versa).

Communications activities that should take place include:

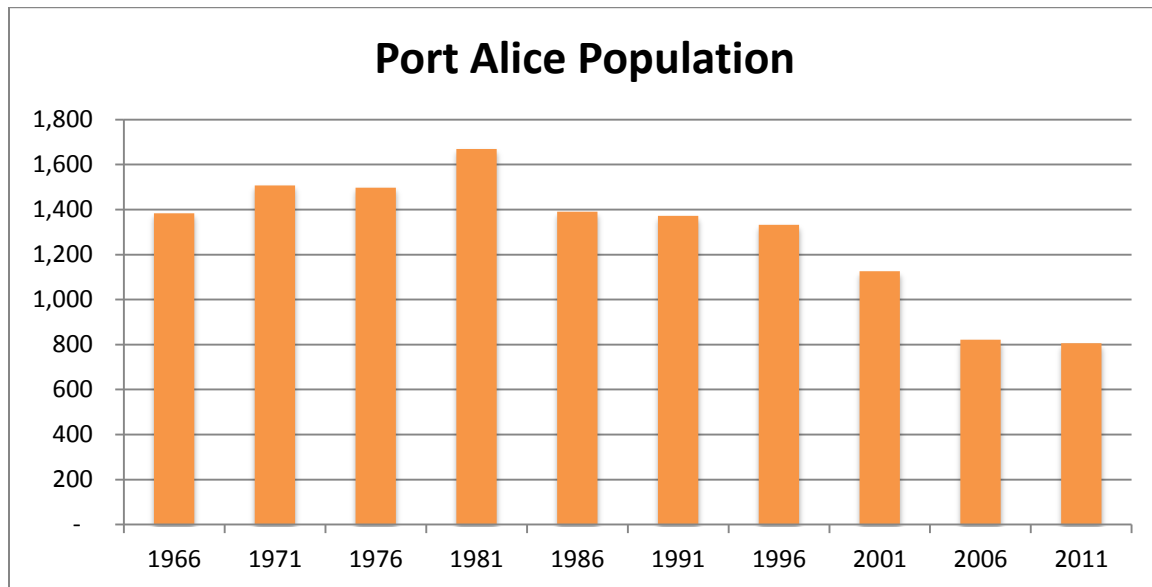
- Quarterly updates on progress and outcomes should be made available to the community through regular communications (e.g., Rumble Sheet newsletters, Facebook and Village website).
- The CAO should provide regular status updates on all *Port of Potential* planning actions to Council.

## Appendix 1: Highlights from the Community Economic Profile

The full profile is available on [portalice.ca](http://portalice.ca) and from the Village office.

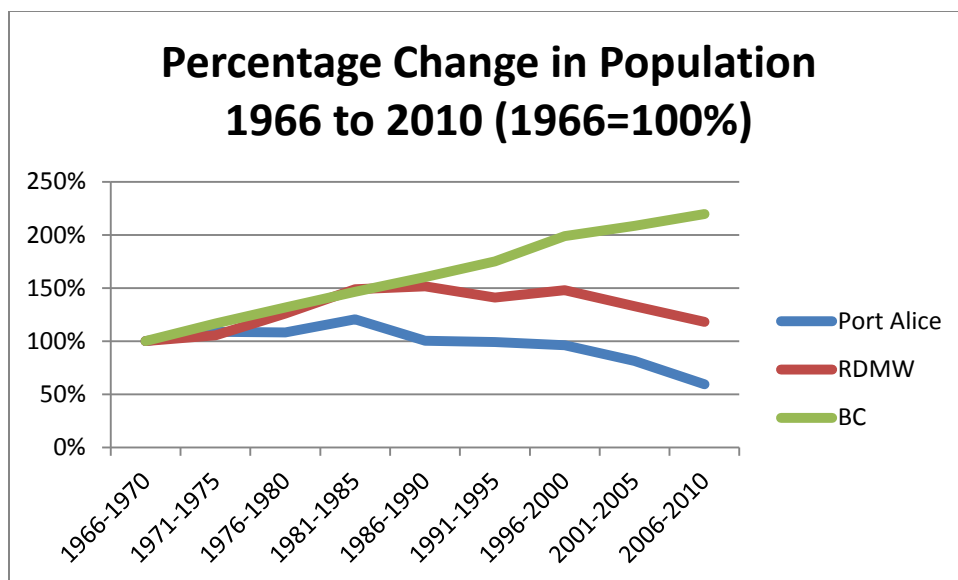
### Population and demographics

- Our population is declining. Port Alice reached a peak population of 1,668 in 1981 but has since seen residents gradually leave the community. Declines coincide with mill closures and shift changes.



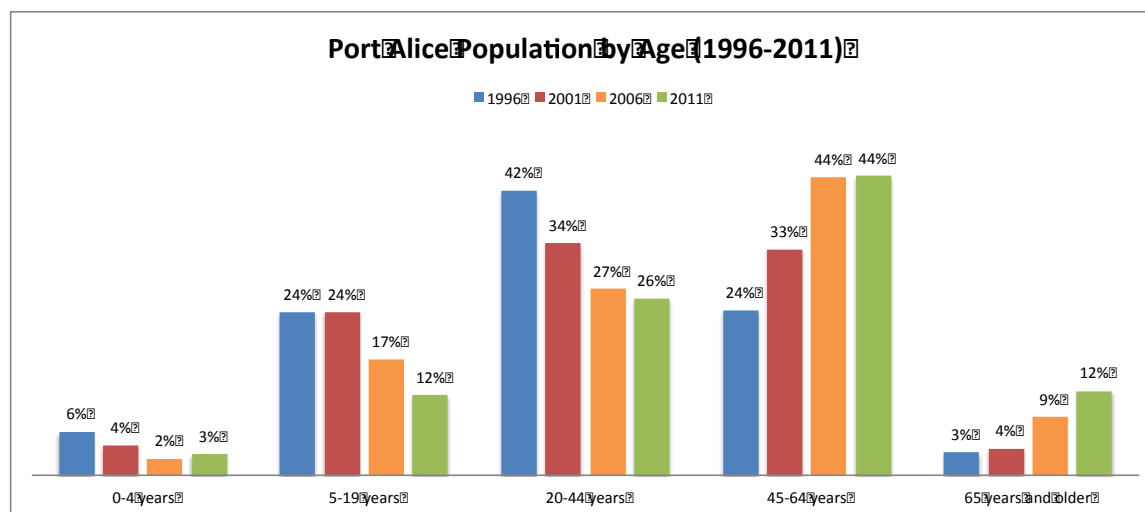
Sources: 1966-1986 Port Alice 2010 OCP; 1991-2011 Statistics Canada Census Profiles 1996-2011

- Compared to the Regional District and the Province, our community has seen a more pronounced contraction in population (shown below).



Source: Statistics Canada 1996-2011 Censuses; Port Alice 2010 OCP

- In particular, we are losing our young families. Seaview School has lost about 70% of students in the past decade. Between 2001 and 2011, our median age went from 39.3 to 48.9.



Source: Statistics Canada Census 1996-2011

## Services

- Port Alice has excellent services for a community of its size, and easy land and marine access to these services (e.g., RCMP, Post Office, liquor store, grocery store, recreation services).

## Housing and residency

- 217 out of 591 residences in Port Alice are not primary residences (i.e., they are second homes). As of 2006, 36% of units were vacant.
- About 10 single-family detached homes are currently listed for sale in Port Alice with an average price of about \$180,000. Average sale prices in Port Alice have declined steadily since about 2006, and declined faster than the North Island average.

## Business sector

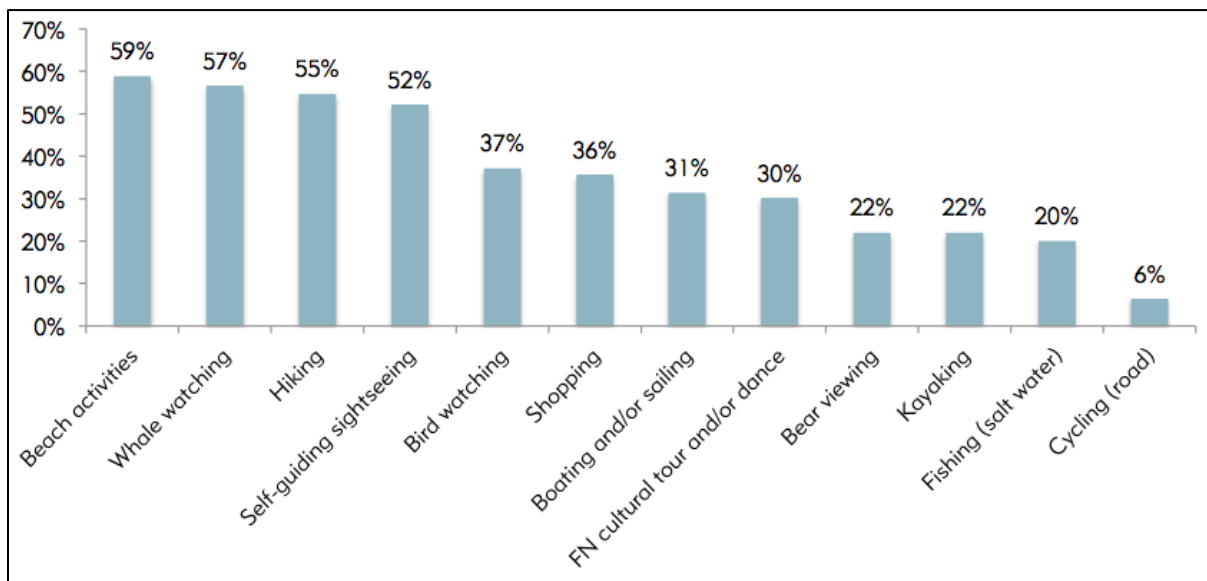
- There are about 62 businesses in Port Alice (according to Port Alice Business Directory).

## Tourism

- 775 tourists visited the Port Alice Visitor Centre in 2015 (no comparison years are available). Visitors came mainly from Vancouver Island (40%), the rest of BC (24%), Alberta (8%), USA (7%) and Germany (3%).
- According to a November 2015 report<sup>3</sup>, visitors to the North Island visited and participated in the following activities.

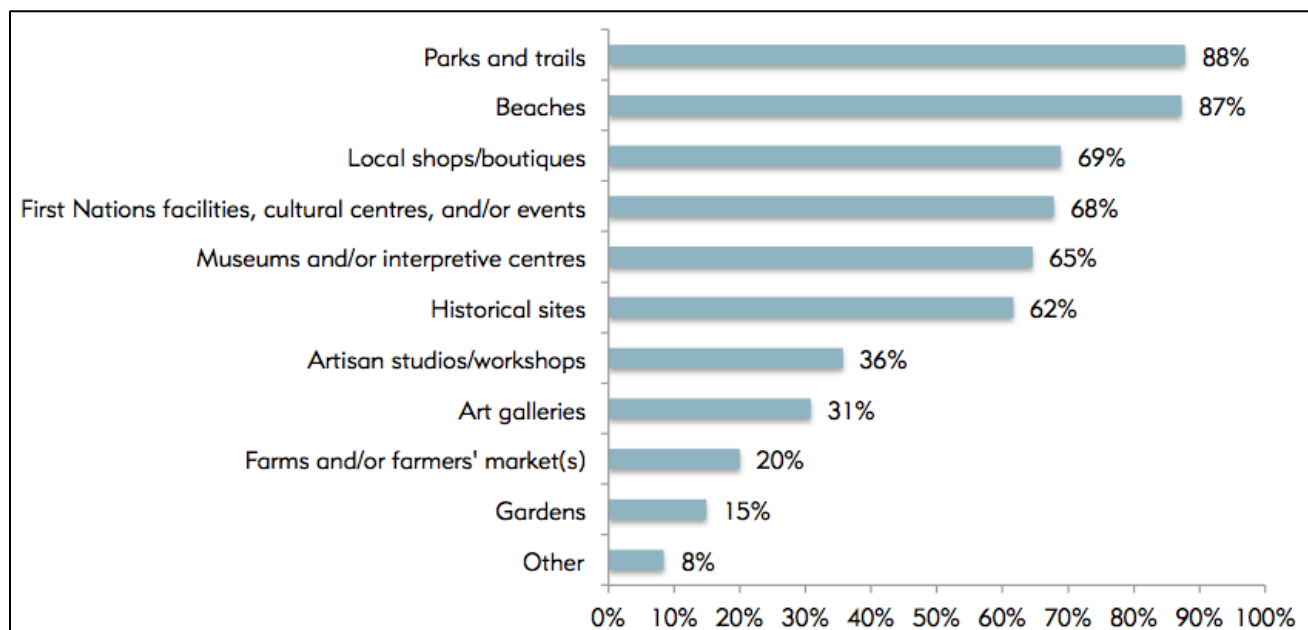
### Tourism Attractions *Visited* While on the North Island (i.e. North of Sayward)

Source: Vancouver Island North Tourism 2015 Visitor Profile



### Activities *Participated in* on the North Island (i.e. North of Sayward)

<sup>3</sup> 2015 Visitor Profile – Vancouver Island North Tourism

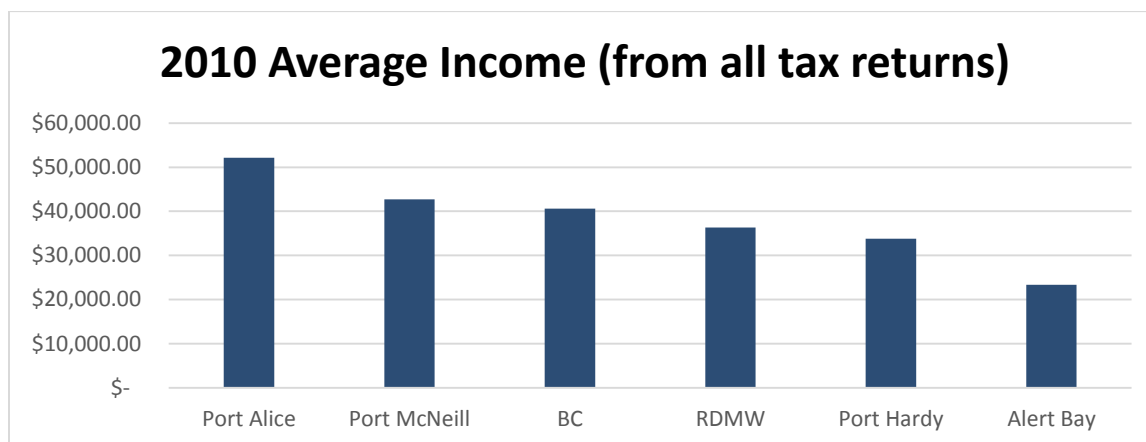


Source: Vancouver Island North Tourism 2015 Visitor Profile

- Port Alice should tailor its product development to meet the interests of these visitors (e.g., highlighting access to beaches and hiking, parks and trails).

## Income

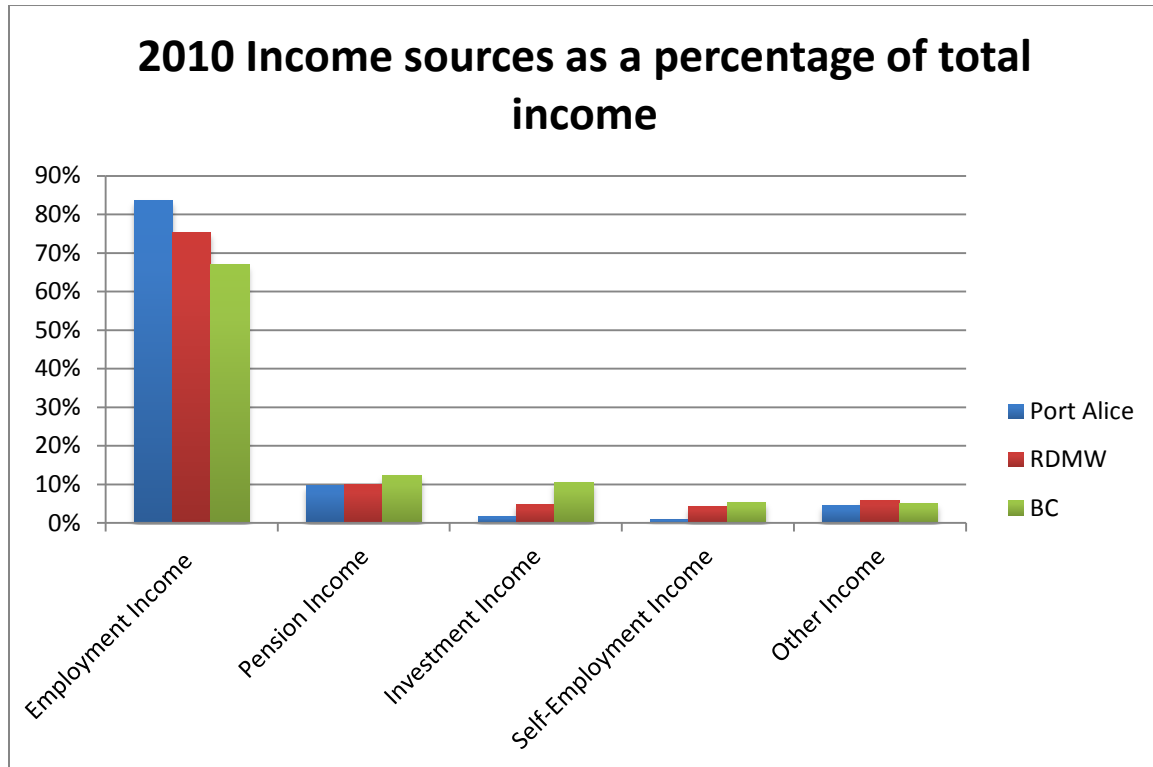
- In 2010 (latest year available), Port Alice had the highest average<sup>4</sup> income on the North Island (\$52,181), which was also higher than the BC average at that time.



Source: Canada Revenue Agency, Individual Tax Statistics by Area for Taxable Returns, by Source of Income – 2010 Tax Year (<http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/gncy/stts/itsa-sipr/2010/menu-eng.html>)

<sup>4</sup> Using the arithmetic mean

- In 2010, Port Alice had a very high proportion of total income coming from employment (relative to other locations) and very low levels of income coming from investment, pensions and self-employment, as shown below.



Source: Canada Revenue Agency, *Individual Tax Statistics by Area for Taxable Returns, by Source of Income – 2010 Tax Year* (<http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/gncy/stts/itsa-sipr/2010/menu-eng.html>)

- This seems to indicate that the community was very reliant on higher paying employment, was not well diversified through other income sources, and therefore quite vulnerable if employment income was threatened.
- Self-employment, in particular, is very low compared to regional and provincial averages. Interviews confirmed that the culture is more 'jobs' focused than entrepreneurial (this is common in many resource towns). This can make it difficult to diversify the economy.

## Unemployment

- No local level data on unemployment is available. However, about 350-400 people were recently unemployed due to the mill curtailment, about 200 of whom likely lived full-time in Port Alice. A union representative said that many (but not all) mill workers that have trades tickets, specialized skills or degrees (like engineering) have found

replacement work. Most lower-skilled or un-ticketed workers are still looking for work (no numbers available).

- Regionally, 2.8% of Mount Waddington residents were receiving Employment Insurance (EI) during the 2012 tax year (BC Statistics, 2012). EI can be used as a proxy measure to estimate unemployment rates in a region (BC Statistics, 2012). Relative to other regional districts in BC, Mount Waddington ranks fourth as having the highest number of residents receiving EI. In BC, 1.5% of residents receive EI.<sup>5</sup>

### **SWOT analysis from the Community Economic Profile**

Each bullet point in this summary is explained in more detail in the Economic Profile (available on the Village website or in the Village office).

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<sup>5</sup>BC Statistics -<http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/SocialStatistics/SocioEconomicProfilesIndices/Profiles.aspx>.

## Strengths

- Our people
- Great place to raise a family
- Scenic & natural environment assets
- Recreational services
- Gateway to Brooks Peninsula & logging road network
- Regional collaboration
- Deep-water port
- Variety of available, affordable housing
- Access

## Weaknesses

- Dependency on mill
- Limited developable land
- Aging population
- Lack of elderly care services
- Limited tourism services/accomodation
- Lack of business coordination
- Limited local purchasing

## Opportunities

- The mill re-opening
- Tourism
- Marina improvements
- Retail storefronts and space
- Industrial park
- Local value-added businesses based on the community forest
- Renewable energy
- Supporting entrepreneurs/small business
- Attracting retirees /second home buyers
- Increasing regional service provision

## Threats

- Mill not re-opening
- Regional competition
- Shrinking population
- Declining services
- Centralization of government and business
- Second home-ownership
- Inaction



## Appendix 2: Actions that were screened out early in the process

The following is a list of actions that were put forward by community members, but were screened out early in the process. In some cases the actions were very unpopular with other community members. In other cases, the actions were deemed unfeasible in early discussions with staff or steering committee members. The rationale for excluding them is shown below.

Action name	Description/ Rationale for not pursuing this action
Lobby government to get Port Alice designated as a Northern Living Allowance Zone.	This is not possible. EcoPlan conducted research into this, which is included in Appendix 4 in this report.
Permit yard sales	Port Alice already <i>does</i> permit yard sales.
Develop rural properties so small business, hobby farms, agricultural farms and light industrial will have a place to live and work.	Little available suitable land (Port Alice is surrounded by parks, protected lands and forest tenures). What land there is will be promoted. Light industrial can locate in the industrial park, which will be expanded.
Build a municipal pool	Unlikely given current funding availability, population size
Establish a drug and alcohol rehab centre	Not a popular idea with the community (in the Open House and Survey)
Collective kitchens and a food bank	The community centre already has a commercial kitchen. Port Alice already has an informal food bank.
Allow businesses to advertise on the Port Alice highway	This is Ministry of Transportation land and they do not allow this
Warehousing at the yacht club in the off season	Discussions with the Yacht club revealed that this is not feasible at this time.
Becoming a major recycling facility for the lower mainland	This idea was not popular with the community, and was not deemed to be feasible during initial discussions.
Marijuana production	This idea was put forward by several people. It will not be pursued by the municipality at this time for several reasons (including uncertain regulations). Additionally, several other towns in BC have actively tried to recruit medical marijuana, with limited success. The market is still very young and should potentially be examined at a later date.

## Appendix 3: Non-priority actions

These actions were evaluated using the methods described on Page 12. After evaluation and discussion with the steering committee, they were deemed 'non priority' for the initial *Port of Potential* Strategy based on the resources available for implementation.

This is not to say that these are not good ideas, only that they are not appropriate or feasible at this time. Circumstances might change and merit a second look at these ideas over time. For example, funding may become available, or a community member may decide to 'champion' a particular action.

Action name	Description/Rationale
Support the 'Sharing Economy'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support community members to share community assets</li> <li>E.g., tool library, people renting out their second homes on Air BnB (as a temporary measure until hotel accommodations improve), ride sharing around town, ride sharing going into Port McNeill or Port Hardy (potentially using hitchplanet.com or other sites)</li> <li>Port Alice already has a ride service for seniors, and there are rides available into PH and PM for medical appointments. Better advertisement of these existing services would be a good start.</li> </ul>
Increase the number of mill workers living in Port Alice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the mill reopens, interview out-of-town workers to find out why they don't live in Port Alice, and work to remove these barriers. This could be done by survey via the Union if they were agreeable</li> <li>Support absentee homeowners to rent out their homes to mill workers (e.g.. providing them with guidance on how to rent, linking up mill workers with homeowners)</li> </ul>
Assisted living facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This would allow people to age-in-place in Port Alice</li> <li>However, it could be difficult to attract investors to Port Alice, as there are lots of other communities that would be more appropriate (i.e. those with more comprehensive medical care, transit, seniors services)</li> <li>This action was ranked low priority by Steering Committee due to the low chance of success and limited role for the Village. However, if a community group, investors or group of individuals wanted to pursue it, the Village would support them however possible.</li> </ul>
Increase the # of days that second home owners stay in Port Alice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct interviews/survey with second home owners to understand what they would want/need to stay in PA for more days per year, then work to support this shift</li> </ul>

Action name	Description/Rationale
Make use of unused space for community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow/support people to use unused spaces for artists and writer's studios and galleries, arts and crafts clubs and lessons, community projects, other clubs, etc.</li> <li>• Community groups should be encouraged to approach the private sector who has ample vacant storefront <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Village can provide meeting space in the Community Centre</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Improve public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lobby for improved public transport to Port Alice (Note that Port Alice has looked in to it before, and has been told that it would be very difficult. This would be a long term goal, for example, if/when regional transit reviews take place.)</li> <li>• Investigate other, creative ways to move people around, such as public bikes, ride share boards (e.g. hitchplanet.com), etc.</li> </ul>
Link River campsite improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct facility review to improve and integrate with PA (consider weekend boat rentals, summer camps, etc.).</li> <li>• The site is currently full during the summer, so there may be a need for more sites. It is surrounded by private property but new sites could be in-filled</li> <li>• The Village owns the site, and RDMW runs it</li> </ul>
Market Port Alice to tour groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reach out to existing tourism operators and 'sell' Port Alice (work in conjunction with tourism businesses in PA)</li> <li>• Start small with Victoria and Vancouver based tourism operators who already take people to the North Island</li> <li>• Would require a strong brand/differentiation and quality accommodations and food services</li> </ul>
Promote the town to the film industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact Vancouver Island North Film Commission (inFilm) to discuss increasing Port Alice's exposure and requirements for doing so</li> <li>• Look into alternative promotional opportunities other than InFilm (though initial discussions with two production companies revealed that they would always work directly with inFilm for scouting)</li> </ul>
Informal business mentoring program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up informal mentorship program between existing businesses owners and potential new business owner (not just retail)</li> <li>• Start by Identifying a few business owners that would be willing to be mentors.</li> <li>• When potential entrepreneurs or investors are identified, put them in contact with the mentors.</li> </ul>

Action name	Description/Rationale
Set up an ongoing business retention and expansion program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BR+E is a process of gathering information about the current climate for existing business and actions to address issues.</li> <li>Includes retail, home based businesses, and all other businesses in town</li> <li>Ensure ongoing conversations between Village leadership/staff and business owners to understand their needs/barriers. This could be formalized (like a Business Walks program or yearly survey) or informal.</li> <li><b>Potentially the most realistic option is a yearly survey upon renewing their business license</b></li> </ul>
Remove the fees associated with the marina's business sign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apparently administering the fees is time consuming and uptake is low</li> <li>Experiment with offering this service for free to any interested business who has a business license and would benefit from the exposure</li> </ul>
Advocate to get bigger companies (mill, WFP) to work with local suppliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This may not be possible to achieve. However, it is worthwhile investigating it.</li> <li>When the mill was open they did go out of their way to purchase food at FP foods. Continue to support this.</li> <li>Local suppliers fully dependent on the mill would potentially be too risky due to mill closures (e.g., laundry services)</li> </ul>
Use vacant retail space creatively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with vacant retail space owners to look at creative ways of leasing/using the space to support new small businesses</li> <li>E.g., Pop up stores, seasonal rentals, collectives of small businesses, incubators, collaborate with Community Futures, artists collective</li> <li>Some Steering Committee members said that this was very unrealistic and not worth pursuing.</li> </ul>
Retain existing services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure ongoing conversations with core service providers (health, RCMP, post office, liquor store, bank etc.) and keep in touch to see if there is anything Port Alice can do to support them.</li> <li>This is important, however, it is not a priority at this time because interviews with service providers have revealed that the Village has virtually no control over this. Decisions to close these would come from higher up, and local level wouldn't have much of a say or advance warning. However, this was a popular idea with the community and the Village should strive to retain existing services as much as possible.</li> </ul>

Action name	Description/Rationale
Become a hub for refugee resettlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This idea was put forward by two community members, but was very unpopular with other community members who attended the Open House or filled out the survey.</li> <li>This would be a complex project involving multiple levels of government. A representative from the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training pointed out that that it would be difficult and have an uncertain economic payoff.</li> <li>Without community support, it is not high priority at this time.</li> <li>Individual community members are welcome to pursue this action (by privately sponsoring refugees. Information can be found on the website of Citizenship and Immigration Canada)</li> </ul>
Lobby for new government services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examples: Coast guard facility, navy outpost</li> <li>This idea was put forward by community members but would likely be difficult to actually achieve. Many government services are moving out of smaller towns. However, it could be a longer term strategy if Port Alice worked in conjunction with other North Island or coastal communities. The focus for now is keeping existing services.</li> </ul>
Offer tax or other incentives for starting new businesses, or locating in Port Alice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are concerns about fairness, which is why this action has been moved to this section. For example, exemptions for new businesses would not be fair to existing businesses that may be struggling. For this reason, any tax/incentives should be equal for all businesses, and therefore reflected in the general tax code. Ensuring the tax code is competitive is a separate action.</li> </ul> <p><b>Notes from the community on this action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Could be targeted at small and medium sized businesses, and specific sectors (e.g., film, industry, etc.). E.g., exemptions for new business or new development. See Campbell River Bylaw and Campbell river research for a summary.</li> <li>E.g., first year break on utilities? Free business license? Free advertising in the Rumble Sheet? Discounted or free temporary office space</li> </ul>
Open and promote a municipal campground / RV park	<p>Little available land, and the municipality does not want to compete with private business. Therefore not a priority at this time.</p>

Action name	Description/Rationale
Support improvements to the private campground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the private campground to determine how the Village can support improvements (e.g., research, marketing, setting up partnerships, etc.)</li> <li>• At this time, not a priority, because the campground is in a geotechnically unsafe area. Support should be given to them to move the campsite, ensure tourists are aware of the danger, etc.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 4: Additional research on select actions

### Action idea: Port Alice designated as a Northern Living Allowance Zone.

**What is the Northern Zone:** There are two levels of Northern Living taxation benefits. Northern Zone and Intermediate Zone (which gets half the tax benefit of Northern Zone). In BC: the Northern and Intermediate Zone for taxation purposes is described here: [http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/c.r.c.,\\_c.\\_945/page-161.html](http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/c.r.c.,_c._945/page-161.html)

Basically, there is a line of latitude drawn on the map of BC, and everything above that is the Intermediate Zone. Then there is another line and everything above that is Northern Zone. Even the Intermediate zone is quite far north (about mid-province). There are a very small number of exceptions (only four) across Canada (all of which are reasonably remote islands).

#### **How do you become part of the Northern or Intermediate zone?**

Changing the zone lines (or getting an exception) is a matter of federal tax policy. This requires a change to the Income Tax Act and parliamentary approval and is very rare. There are only four exceptions across Canada.

The Department of Finance wrote a letter explaining their policy, and explaining that Port Alice would not be eligible for an exception. The letter is copied below.

DEC 29 2015

2015FIN426328

Ms. Colleen Hamilton  
Planning Associate  
EcoPlan International (EPI)  
colleen@ecoplan.ca

Dear Ms. Hamilton:

Thank you for your correspondence of October 19, 2015.

The intent of the Northern Residents Deduction for Canada's northern and isolated regions is to assist them in drawing skilled labour to their communities by providing recognition for the additional costs faced by residents of these areas.

The current zonal system of tax benefits for northern residents was established following an extensive review of the former community-based system by the Task Force on Tax Benefits for Northern and Isolated Areas. Starting in 1988, the Task Force held extensive consultations across the country and concluded that determining eligibility for the tax deductions for residents of northern and isolated areas on a community-by-community basis was arbitrary and divisive – residents of neighbouring communities were being treated differently for tax purposes, even though they often shared common workplaces, services, and cultural and recreational facilities.

In October 1989, the Task Force recommended replacing the community-by-community approach with a zonal approach, where only communities within a "Northern Zone" would qualify for tax benefits. The boundaries of the Northern Zone were delineated with a view to ensuring that communities in the zone had similar characteristics. The Task Force used objective criteria to compare communities on the basis of isolation, nordicity, community characteristics, and environmental factors. The Task Force also attempted to minimize border delineation problems by having as much separation as possible between qualifying and non-qualifying communities.

The Task Force recommended a Northern Zone and, following further consultations, an Intermediate Zone was added to bridge the gap between the Northern Zone and the less-isolated areas of the country. The approach used by the Task Force to design the Northern Zone was also applied in developing the Intermediate Zone: the same ranking system was used, and efforts were made to minimize border problems. The new system of Northern Benefits took effect starting in 1991.

Canada



- 2 -

It was determined that the final border design incorporated fair trade-offs in difficult circumstances that were deemed workable in a broad-based, national tax system. Given this reality, regardless of where the borders are set, there would inevitably be communities across the country that would be disappointed with their exclusion.

I note your interest in extending eligibility to the Northern Residents Deduction beyond its current reach. However, such an extension of the Northern Residents Deduction would effectively reintroduce the former community-by-community approach, which the Task Force found inequitable and unsustainable. Reintroducing the community-by-community approach would also greatly intensify pressure to include more communities in similar situations. Such an expansion would entail significant additional costs.

Thank you for writing.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill Morneau', followed by a period.

The Honourable Bill Morneau, P.C., M.P.

## Action Idea: Rentals (kayak, canoe, stand up paddle board) at marina

### Call with Burns Lake Municipal rental:

We called the Village of Burns Lake and spoke with Colleen from the Recreation Department. We talked about the "Village Recreational Rental Shack", which is municipally owned and operated.

Colleen stated that the rental business operates under the banner of the recreation department. Its activities have to be approved by the village, including all rates. Everyone involved in the rental business is considered municipal staff, and work as recreation staff. Though the business didn't start out that way, the kayak rental business now operates out of the recreation facility called the "Multiplex". Before it was running out of the general recreation facility, 1 summer student ran it.

Rental operations are from 9 to 7 now, with staff also running the gym, drop-in programs, membership signups and other program registration. There are 2 shifts that cover the canoe and kayak rentals.

Colleen believed that insurance was already in place when the rentals began, **because their insurance covers all sports and recreation.**

She said the challenges are that the rentals are very tourist dependent - about 70 to 80 percent of renters are tourists. People who live in the village most often own their own kayak or canoe. They also worry about people not returning the boats, as well as keeping people safe.

There is also the challenge of multitasking- who ever is in charge of the recreation center also has to run out and unlock the canoes and kayaks for people. In addition, people often want assistance loading the boats and carrying them to the water. The facility is about 100 meters from the water.

In terms of profitability, Colleen felt that the rentals are more about giving back to the public and providing them with the services they expect of the municipality. She said it is not necessarily a good source of money, but did not know the specifics of the finances of the rental business.

### Contact Information

Colleen- Recreation Department

Phone: 250-692-3817

## Examples of Canoe and Kayak Rental Businesses

The following 3 canoe and kayak rental businesses offer differing prices and scheduling. The Village of Burns Lake Rental Shack is the only municipal-run rental service of the three.

### The Village of Burns Lake “Village Recreation Rental Shack”<sup>6</sup>

The rental shack is located in Spirit Square Park. There are public washrooms, a free municipal campsite, as well as other amenities that would attract visitors. They offer kayaks, canoes, skateboards and water toys for rent. Rentals include necessary safety equipment.

Operating hours are in summer months, from late June to the end of August, Tuesdays to Saturdays, 9am to 6pm.

All equipment is due back at the end of the day and they do not take reservations- first come, first serve.

#### Rental Costs

	Lake District Residents	Non-Resident
Kayaks and Canoes	\$10/hr per person	\$13/hr per person
Kayaks and Canoes- Groups of 4	Half day pass \$120	Half day pass \$160

The Village Recreational Shack only accepts cash or cheque, and PST and GST are included. Note that offering lower costs for local residents may attract more regular business.

### Rocky Mountain Boat Rentals<sup>7</sup>

Rock Mountain Boat Rentals offer boat rentals on Alouette Lake in Golden Ears Provincial Park.

#### Rental Costs

	Hourly Rates	All Day/Overnight Rates
Single Person	\$20 1 <sup>st</sup> hour, \$15 for every additional hour	\$40 for 1st day, \$25 each additional day
Two Person	\$30 1 <sup>st</sup> hour, \$15 for every additional hour	\$50 for 1st day, \$30 each additional day

<sup>6</sup> <http://office.burnslake.ca/recreation/rental-shack/>

<http://office.burnslake.ca/wp-content/uploads/Rental-Shack-Brochure.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> <http://alouette.tripod.com/>

Three Person	\$35 1 <sup>st</sup> hour, \$15 for every additional hour	\$60 for 1st day, \$35 each additional day
Four Person	\$40 1 <sup>st</sup> hour, \$15 for every additional hour	\$80 for 1st day, \$40 each additional day
Five Person	\$45 1 <sup>st</sup> hour, \$15 for every additional hour	\$90 for 1st day, \$45 each additional day
Six Person	\$50 1 <sup>st</sup> hour, \$20 for every additional hour	\$100 for 1 <sup>st</sup> day, \$50 for each additional day
Seven Person	\$50 1 <sup>st</sup> hour, \$20 for every additional hour	\$110 for 1 <sup>st</sup> day, \$55 for each additional day
Eight Person	\$55 1 <sup>st</sup> hour, \$20 for every additional hour	\$120 for 1 <sup>st</sup> day, \$60 for each additional day

#### Hours of Operation

Month	Times
May	Weekends from 11am to 6pm, and groups accommodated on weekdays.
June	Weekdays from 11am to 5pm, Weekends 10am to 5pm
July – Labour Day	Weekdays- 10am to 6pm, Weekends 10am to 7pm

#### North Island Kayak<sup>8</sup>

North Island Kayak is located in Telegraph Cove, BC and offers rentals on site, as well as pick-up and delivery to most points on the North Island for a fee.

#### Rental Costs

	Single Kayak	Double Kayak (center gear hatch available)	Triple Kayak (2 Adults, 1 Child)
Half Day	\$80	\$100	\$100
Full Day	\$100	\$120	\$120
2 Days	\$120	\$160	\$160
3 Days	\$150	\$200	\$200
4 Days	\$180	\$240	\$240
5 Days	\$210	\$280	\$280
6 Days	\$240	\$320	\$320
7 Days	\$270	\$360	\$360
Additional Days	\$30	\$40	\$40

<sup>8</sup> <http://northislandkayak.ca/>

## **Insurance Considerations**

### **1. Commercial General Liability Insurance:**

- Protects business from financial loss if sued because of property damage, injuries or death related to the services provided by the business, business operations or employees. Example- slip, trip and fall coverage, which would protect the business against lawsuits if someone, were to fall on business premises.
- The cost of commercial general liability coverage is based on the type of business you operate.
- Types
  - Bodily injury/property damage
  - Personal and advertising injury liability
  - Medical payments
  - Tenant legal liability

### **2. Commercial Property Insurance**

- Can be tailored to protect physical assets against loss or damage from a variety of causes including fire, theft, smoke, water and vandalism. When renting, general property insurance provides coverage for equipment, furniture, valuable documents, inventory, outdoor signage, and other real and personal property owned by your business. Also provides coverage with regards to damages in the rental building.
- Types
  - Named perils policy- specific events like fire, hail, vandalism
  - All risk policy- any loss by perils not listed as exclusion in policy

### **3. Business Interruption Insurance**

- Provides coverage when business operations are stopped due to a number of reasons, for example, a fire in your office. It can provide reimbursement for salaries, rent, taxes and other expenses.

## **Other costs and considerations**

- Advertising costs
- Access to waterfront, restrooms or an existing facility
- Waiver- likely will need to consult a lawyer to develop a waiver, to release business from liability
- Staff Safety Certification (First Aid Certification)
- Staffing Requirements:

- Need to determine necessary number of staff and the different tasks involved with the business including:
  - Reservations/trip planning
  - Guest services/equipment check and return
  - Additional Bookkeeping and other office work
  - Equipment cleaning and maintenance
  - Safety certification needed for staff.

### **Action Idea: Promote Port Alice as a marine fueling and supply hub**

For this action, we researched how many people live nearby, the available services in other communities, and potential revenue.

When looking at a map it appears that it Quatsino and Winter Harbour are two communities that might logically boat to Port Alice as opposed to Coal Harbour.

#### **Quatsino**

##### **Size**

When doing a Google Map search it states that it has a population of 90 people<sup>9</sup>, while the Hamlet of Quatsino's website report the population to be 75<sup>10</sup>.

Looking at 2011 census data<sup>11</sup> for the area, it has the population at 47 people. It also states that total private dwellings in the area are numbered at 66. Private dwellings occupied by 'usual residents' (dwellings lived in permanently) are reported at 26, suggesting vacation properties.

##### **Travel Distance**

Quatsino's website reports that it is 15 minutes by boat to and from Coal Harbour. Wikipedia<sup>12</sup> says that it is about 20 minutes by boat to Coal Harbour and about 40 minutes to Port Alice.

##### **Services and Amenities**

Services and amenities listed on Quatsino's website include:

- Post office
- Waste facilities
- Recycling depot
- Community lending library

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.google.ca/maps/place/Quatsino,+BC+VoN/@50.5353998,-127.6632802,15z/data=!4m2!3m1!1sox546389bdcc4da31f:ox5022137fd095b523>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.quatsino.org/about.html>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=DPL&Code1=590338&Geo2=PR&Code2=59&Data=Count&SearchText=Quatsino&SearchType=Begin&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=&TABID=1>

<sup>12</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quatsino>

- Quatsino Government wharf

Local businesses listed on Quatsino's website include resorts, fishing lodges, a fishing club and a contractor. There is no mention of a grocery store, bank, or liquor store.

## **Winter Harbour<sup>9</sup>**

### Size

Wikipedia reports that it is a fishing village of about 20 people<sup>10</sup>. 2011 Census data also places the population at 20 people, with the total private dwellings numbered at 36<sup>11</sup>. Of these dwellings, usual/permanent residents occupy only 12.

### Travel Distance

Winter Harbour can be accessed by road - 75 km from Port Hardy (1 1/2 - 2 hour drive). As a result of the conditions of the road, a local business reports that they are 45 to 60 minute boat ride from Coal Harbour and states that, to avoid the road trip, visitors often put their boats in at Coal Harbour.

## **Services and Amenities**

Some of the services and amenities available at Winter Harbour include:

- Approximately 1000 ft of moorage available in the Marina
- Large fish cleaning stations with fresh water
- Satellite Internet is available via WiFi Winter Harbour Wireless Hotspot for a fee.
- Coin operated laundry and shower facilities available
- Fuel Dock: Sells commercial and retail diesel and mid grade gasoline, as well as oil, hydraulic fluid, filters, belts and other necessities
- A General Store which sells groceries, liquor, ice, fish gear and souvenirs

## **Coal Harbour<sup>12</sup>**

Coal Harbour is stated to be a "perfect launch point for fishing charters, boaters, kayakers and campers heading into the scenic coastal waters and old-growth forests of Vancouver Island North's wilderness areas. There is also a growing artisan community encompassing a wide range of artistic pursuits. A Music and Arts Festival celebrates this creativity annually at the

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.winterharbourlodge.ca/>

<sup>10</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Winter\\_Harbour](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Winter_Harbour)

<sup>11</sup> <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=DPL&Code1=590339&Geo2=PR&Code2=59&Data=Count&SearchText=Winter%20Harbour&SearchType=Begin&SearchPR=01&B1=All&GeoLevel=PR&GeoCode=590339&TABID=1>

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.vancouverislandaccommodations.com/porthardy/index\\_coalharbour.html](http://www.vancouverislandaccommodations.com/porthardy/index_coalharbour.html)

end of April or beginning of May. Whales, dolphins, seals and sea otters are regular visitors into Stephens Bay”.

**Services and Amenities**

- A general store
- Post office
- Government wharf and boat launch
- B&Bs
- Fishing and floatplane charter
- Water taxi service
- A Fuel station



### **Action idea: Tourism strategy (Short term) - *Additional Details about the 'Dragons Tail'***

This information was provided by a community member, and has been left in the first person as it was sent to EcoPlan.

- I think the potential for our road (Port Alice Highway) as a driving destination could be a good addition to the village promotions. And it could still be marketed as something like "Dare to Ride the Dragon's Tail, 112 curves in 30 kilometers".
- "There is one other highway ride called the "Tail of the Dragon at Deals Gap", which is a "big deal" down in the USA. They state their dragon's tail has 318 curves in 11 miles.
- There are approximately 112 curves in 30 kilometers (112 places that a rider would have to lean into the curve counts as a curve to me). Other people should confirm this.
- In my opinion and personal experience motorcyclists, sports car enthusiasts, and cyclists like to travel with a destination in mind. They like to stretch their legs and look at some beautiful nature too, that part we've got covered.
- They also like to eat and drink at that destination (and have a glass of wine or beer). We are currently weak in this area. For myself and my friends who rode bicycles every weekend, on our big rides, 40-50 kms, we liked to be able to stop at clean place with good atmosphere, friendly proprietors, simple healthy food and drink.
- We can't rely on just our beautiful scenery to bring the people (and their money).

## Appendix 5: Monitoring and evaluation planning tools

This section provides planning tools that should be used by Village staff and Council to assist for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of *Port of Potential*.

The tools in this section are:

- ☐ Tool 1: Process Monitoring and Evaluation Tool
- ☐ Tool 2: Outcome Monitoring and Evaluation Tool

### Tool 1: Process monitoring and evaluation tool

The M&E tool is to be used every 3 months by the CAO or any individual responsible for the implementation of a planning action to provide a summary assessment of the progress and status of action implementation. The completed tool can be used to provide updates to staff, Council and community.

Timeframe	Action Name	% Complete	Progress Update	Changes needed?
First 100 Days	Improve existing accommodations			
First 100 Days	Support new B&Bs			
First 100 Days	Tourism strategy (Short term)			
First 100 Days	Improve highway 19 signage			
First 100 Days	Improve online presence			
First 100 Days	Signage at the Marina about available services			
First 100 Days	Artists show space at FP Foods			
First 100 Days	Buy local campaign			
First 100 Days	"Starting a business in Port Alice 101"			
First 100 Days	Support commercial real estate turnover			
First 100 Days	Land Inventory			
First 100 Days	Zoning and development information for investors			
First 100 Days + ongoing	Continue to optimize tax rates			
First 100 Days + ongoing	Kick-start community involvement			
First 100 Days + ongoing	Meet with potential partners			
Short term	Faster internet			

Timeframe	Action Name	% Complete	Progress Update	Changes needed?
Short term	Develop a business case for accommodations			
Short term	Tax incentives for accommodations and restaurants			
Short term	Increase tourism marketing			
Short term	Promote Port Alice as a marine fueling and supply hub			
Short term	Improve signage upon entering Port Alice			
Short term	Support water and land based rentals business			
Short term	Develop Industrial tourism			
Short term	Advocate for changes to Community Forest operations			
Short term	Support formal or informal business networking			
Short term	Expand the industrial park			
Short term	Promote town to target businesses desired			
Short term	Resident attraction campaigns			
Short term	Market Port Alice's livability to tourists who are already in Port Alice			
Short term + ongoing	Continue discussions with Mill			
Short term + ongoing	Support job training			
Short term + ongoing	Support residents in developing "events"			

Timeframe	Action Name	% Complete	Progress Update	Changes needed?
Short term + ongoing	Continue to work with and support existing service providers for small business support			
Short term + ongoing	Promote business opportunities and events in North Island media			
Short term + ongoing	Encourage volunteerism			
Medium to Long Term	Tourism strategy (Longer term)			
Medium to Long Term	Village waterfront walkway, art, interpretation			
Medium to Long Term	Continued marina upgrades			
Medium to Long Term	Support the development of an outdoor school			
Medium to Long Term	Predator interpretation centre			
Medium to long term + ongoing	Improve coordination among North Island Communities			

### Tool 2: Outcome monitoring and evaluation tool

The outcome monitoring and evaluation tool should be used once per year by staff and Council. Collecting the data for this tool could take some time. Due to the format of the 2011 Census, most data was repressed for Port Alice, which makes it difficult to establish baselines. However, the 2016 Census may have better data for Port Alice which could serve as baseline data. Results from this tool should be discussed at a yearly *Port of Potential* evaluation meeting and communicated to staff, Council and community members.

Objective	Indicator(s)	Data Source	2015 Baseline	2016	2017
Encourage more families and youth to call Port Alice home	Median age	Statistics Canada Census	2011 (latest year) = 48.9		
Attract and retain businesses	Number of businesses licenses issued in Port Alice	Village of Port Alice	62 listed on portalice.ca		
Attract and retain jobs	Assuming that data is released by Statistics Canada for 2016 for Port Alice, a good indicator would be under 'labour force status' and the number of 'employed' individuals	Statistics Canada Long Form Census	Not available in 2011 (latest year)		
Promote a diverse and stable economy	Subjective. Should be scored based on a scale (1 = entirely dependent on one sector, very vulnerable to shocks, 5 = very diversified, able to withstand shocks in any single sector)	Staff/Council	TBD		
Protect our natural environment	Subjective. Should be scored based on a scale that compares the state of the natural environment to the 2015 baseline (1 = environment greatly degraded relative to 2015, 3 = the same as 2015, 5 = environment greatly restored/improved since 2015)	Staff/Council	3		
Maintain a peaceful and safe community	Crime statistics for Port Alice	RCMP	TBD		
Encourage well paid employment	Assuming that data is released by Statistics Canada for 2016 for Port Alice, good indicators could be Median Income or Average Income.	Statistics Canada Long Form Census	Not available in 2011 (latest year)		