



Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce

2007

BUSINESS PLAN

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1. ABOUT THE CHAMBER

1.1. Background

The Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce was founded in 1863, only two years after the City of Victoria was founded and has played a significant role in the Victoria region ever since. The Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce holds the charter for Chambers within the Victoria region and has consented to the formation of additional chambers within the region. Chambers of Commerce in the Victoria area include:

- Saanich Peninsula Chamber of Commerce
- Salt Spring Island Chamber of Commerce
- Sooke Harbour Chamber of Commerce
- West Shore Chamber of Commerce
- Esquimalt Chamber of Commerce

The Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce is one of 131 chambers in the Province of BC. The chambers of commerce in the province vary greatly in size and in the services they offer. The Greater Victoria Chamber is considered one of the larger chambers and has approximately 1,300 members.

The Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce (GVCC) is governed federally because it is incorporated under the Federal Board of Trade Act. Governance is conducted by an elected board of directors. The GVCC day-to-day operations are the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer and the CEO's staff.

1.2. Membership Data

The breakdown of the current membership is as follows:

Membership Data Sep 06

	2004	2005	2006	% change
0 emp			29	
1 emp	305	282	296	-3.0%
2-5 emp	378	477	480	27.0%
6-10 emp	181	197	223	23.2%
11-15 emp	118	120	123	4.2%
16-25 emp	81	82	85	4.9%
26-35 emp	47	47	45	-4.3%
36-49 emp	45	48	47	4.4%
50-75 emp	34	30	28	-17.6%
76-149 emp	34	35	34	0.0%
150-199	9	9	9	0.0%
200-299	6	6	6	0.0%
300+	5	5	7	40.0%
			1412	
Governors			39	
Seniors	7		4	
Students			6	
Not For Profit			28	
			1489	

Membership Trends					2004	2006	
	2004	2005	2006	3 year Change	% of Total	% of Total	
Central Saanich	30	37	34	13.3%	2.4%	2.3%	
Colwood	17	11	19	11.8%	1.4%	1.3%	
Esquimalt	52	52	52	0.0%	4.2%	3.5%	
Highlands	1	1	3	200.0%	0.1%	0.2%	
Langford	17	22	30	76.5%	1.4%	2.0%	
Metchosin	6	6	7	16.7%	0.5%	0.5%	
North Saanich	0	1	2	100.0%	0.0%	0.1%	
Oak Bay	48	47	55	14.6%	3.8%	3.7%	
Outside CRD	44	49	51	15.9%	3.5%	3.4%	
Saanich	301	310	344	14.3%	24.1%	23.1%	
Sidney	28	25	28	0.0%	2.2%	1.9%	
Sooke	4	5	6	50.0%	0.3%	0.4%	
Victoria	695	761	851	22.4%	55.6%	57.1%	
View Royal	7	8	8	14.3%	0.6%	0.5%	
	1250	1335	1490	19.2%			
		Average Change		17.8%			

1.3. Economic Data

The following economic data regarding the Greater Victoria Region is relevant to our role as a chamber:

	Business (1)	Population (2)	Properties (3)	Assessed Property Value \$ million(3)	Average Household Income (4)
Esquimalt	651	17,124	4,602	1,797	46,490
Oak Bay	372	18,694	6,691	3,272	75,004
Saanich	4,967	110,512	39,064	12,932	61,876
Victoria	6,345	78,460	24,889	10,442	42,323
Core	12,335	224,790	75,246	28,443	
Central Saanich	764	16,370	7,022	2,123	69,461
North Saanich	319	11,168	5,132	2,230	81,989
Sidney	610	11,889	5,207	1,442	50,934
Peninsula	1,693	39,427	17,361	5,795	
Colwood	484	14,972	4,506	1,441	62,341
Highlands	45	1,870	1,000	255	78,061
Juan de Fuca EA	71	4,408	3,032	836	50,233
Langford	940	21,130	7,601	2,031	54,911
Metchosin	225	5,185	2,217	640	63,773
Sooke	299	9,717	4,232	835	50,329
View Royal	252	8,095	2,918	957	61,535
Western Communities	2,316	65,377	25,506	6,995	
VMA	16,344	329,594	118,113	41,233	
Indian Reserves	60	2,467			
Salt Spring Island EA	427	10,269			
Southern Gulf Islands EA	179	4,921			
Gulf Islands	606	15,190	13,946	3659	
Capital Region	17,010	347,251	132,059	44,892	55,144

(1) based on CRD 2003 data

(2) 2004 Estimates based on 2001 Census data

(3) Actual 2004 Values

(4) Based on 2000 data

2. Mission Statement

2.1.1. VISION

The Chamber of Commerce is the Voice of Business for the Greater Victoria region.

2.1.2. MISSION

The Chamber of Commerce will ensure Greater Victoria is a vibrant and prosperous place to carry on business.

2.1.3. VALUES

The Chamber seeks to maintain and enhance a strong, socially responsible business climate, based on the principles of free enterprise, fair profit and job creation for businesses of all sizes. We value the region's historical character, its culture and its diversity, while embracing economic prosperity and innovation as the key components to a quality of life enjoyed by all.

2.1.4. GOALS

- To advance existing business and attract new economic opportunities
- To constructively influence public policy and governments in supporting a healthy free enterprise system
- To build value for our members, while ensuring the sustainability of the organization

2.1.5. 2007 Priorities

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belleville St. Terminal • Social Issues • Amalgamation Of Municipal Services • WHTI / Passport Requirements • Transportation Infrastructure • Conference Centre Expansion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Vote • Homelessness • Crime Prevention • Labour Shortages • Regional Economic Development • Sewage Treatment
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2.1.6. Priorities Action Plan

Amalgamation of Municipal Services		
<i>Current Policy</i>	<i>Problem Statement</i>	<i>Action</i>
May 2005 - Police Amalgamation	Police amalgamation has been recommended by the BC Progress Board. Lobbying efforts need to be continued to see this government recommendation implemented. Details in policy.	Continued advocacy for the amalgamation of police services. Meet with Solicitor General
	Other services such as fire protection and emergency preparedness may also be better delivered through an amalgamated municipal service.	Government Affairs Committee will address integration of municipal services
Belleville Street Terminal		
<i>Current Policy</i>	<i>Problem Statement</i>	<i>Action</i>
May-05	As per policy	Continued advocacy
		Request Hbr Auth representative (Ian Ferguson) brief board in last half of year.
Business Vote		
<i>Current Policy</i>	<i>Problem Statement</i>	<i>Action</i>
Mar-05	As per policy	Continue to advocate for fair representation of business in municipal elections

Conference Centre Expansion		
<i>Current Policy</i>	<i>Problem Statement</i>	<i>Action</i>
No policy	The Victoria Conference Centre is a small facility and cannot host larger, city-wide conferences.	Examine results of current governance review and make recommendation to Board
	The Victoria Conference Centre is facing increased competition from the Nanaimo Conference Centre due to be completed in 2009.	Advocate for GVCC voice in new conference centre governance
		Appoint replacement member to Governance Structure for conference centre.
Crime Prevention		
<i>Current Policy</i>	<i>Problem Statement</i>	<i>Action</i>
Community Court Policy drafted	There is an increase in street level crimes across the region, but particularly in the downtown core. The lack of a perception of public safety is negatively affecting economic activity.	The Community Court Task Force of the 2007 Board will review the suggestions from Judge Hugh Stansfield on innovative community approaches to dealing with street crime and make recommendations to the board as to the Chamber's next step on this issue.
	The current judicial system does not adequately deal with street level crimes expediently and does not act as a deterrent.	Staff to review 2006 Provincial Progress Report on Crime, and crime policies of the Canadian and Provincial Chambers and make recommendations regarding our own GVCC policy on this issue.

Homelessness		
<i>Current Policy</i>	<i>Problem Statement</i>	<i>Action</i>
No policy	The problem of homelessness in Victoria is increasing, as is its negative impact on businesses.	Staff will work with other community organizations and chambers in the province to research possible ways of addressing this issue from a business perspective.
	The cost of homelessness to tax payers is higher than the cost of providing homes when all factors are considered: health care, policing and judicial costs, and community service provision.	Draft a policy for board approval.
Labour Shortages		
<i>Current Policy</i>	<i>Problem Statement</i>	<i>Action</i>
No policy	Labour shortages continue to be a challenge at all levels of the employment range.	Staff to explore opportunities to address parts of this complex issue as we are capable.
	Business growth capacity is hampered through lack of staff and inability to attract staff.	Identify partner organization that may be interested in addressing this issue jointly
		Draft a policy for board approval.
Regional Economic Development		
<i>Current Policy</i>	<i>Problem Statement</i>	<i>Action</i>
Terms of Reference - GVEDA	The Regional District has rejected playing a role in the economic development of the region and municipalities do not have the capacity to take on the role.	Launch the Regional Economic Development Agency whose mandate is to facilitate and promote the development of a strong economic base in Greater Victoria.
	Greater Victoria needs to actively engage in economic development to diversify our economy and attract businesses with higher average wages.	Create a year long communication strategy on the work of the Agency

Sewage Treatment		
<i>Current Policy</i>	<i>Problem Statement</i>	<i>Action</i>
Mar-06	The lack of sewage treatment in the Capital Region has received international attention and has become problematic to the tourism industry.	The 2007 Board has appointed Richard Gordon to the CRD Technical and Community Advisory Committee for Sewage Treatment
	The federal government has committed to provide funding for sewage treatment in the capital region should an acceptable plan be presented.	The Chamber's role will be to ensure that a sound business perspective is included in the discussion.
	The province has given the CRD a deadline of June 30, 2007 to submit a plan to provide sewage treatment in the region	Advocate for business based approach to sewage treatment
Social Issues		
<i>Current Policy</i>	<i>Problem Statement</i>	<i>Action</i>
Broad issue area, no specific policy	Chamber members expect that the Chamber be more vocal on emerging social issues that impact on the health of business.	Form Ad hoc committees or Task Forces as necessary to address emerging issues.

Transportation Infrastructure		
<i>Current Policy</i>	<i>Problem Statement</i>	<i>Action</i>
May 2006, Regional Transportation Authority at the BCC	Transportation planning is done by separate municipalities and lacks a regional perspective	Continued advocacy for Regional Transportation Authority.
October 2006, internal omnibus transportation policy	Transportation planning is not linked to economic development	The 2006 Transportation Committee commented at the end of the year that light rapid transit should be a top priority for the GVCC moving forward.
	The region has growing transportation choke points between the core and the West Shore, the core and the Malahat, and the core and the Peninsula	Staff to create a policy specific to light rapid transit for board approval. CEO may consult membership as necessary to draft this policy.
		Create a list of other required transportation policy issues for action in future periods.
WHTI/ Passport Requirements		
<i>Current Policy</i>	<i>Problem Statement</i>	<i>Action</i>
No policy	WHTI is an American policy initiative and the yet-to-be-determined documentation requirements are essentially a US decision.	The GVCC continue to support the Business for Economic Security, Tourism and Trade (BESST) Coalition.
	Should the documentation be onerous, it will have a negative impact on the tourism industry.	Continue appropriate advocacy
	Both Canadian and US travellers are confused as to the requirements and deadlines. The confusion negatively affects business.	Monitor the strain on the Canadian Passport System and identify any concerns

2.2. External Influences:

2.2.1. Economic Development

The Capital Region faces unique challenges. First, the region comprises 13 municipalities and three electoral areas. These 13 communities are economically and socially integrated and should work together in order to develop the economy of the Capital Region. Unfortunately, the segmentation of the Capital Region creates barriers to effective regional development, as each community has its own bureaucracy, issues, and growth strategy.

Second, the Capital Region is geographically separated. Our location on an island presents challenges other communities do not encounter e.g., additional travel expenses.

Finally, as the capital of BC, our workforce is proportionately more affected by the workforce adjustments in the provincial civil service.

2.2.2. Membership

The changing and diverse needs of a fluctuating membership create a number of challenges for the Board as outlined below.

2.3. Associations and Agreements Affecting the GVCC

2.3.1. BC Chamber of Commerce

The GVCC maintains a close working relationship with the BC Chamber, which charged with performing provincial lobby on behalf of its members. The BC Chamber does have a corporate membership and can be in a position to compete with the GVCC for large corporate members.

2.3.2. BCCE

The BC Chamber Executives organization is designed to provide a professional connection for Chamber managers to discuss common problems and issues. The BCCE membership is optional and the Victoria Chamber has the potential to be a leader in this area.

2.3.3. CCEC

The Chamber of Commerce Executives of Canada is a professional organization on a national level that provides a professional connection for chamber managers nationally.

2.3.4. GVEPS

The Greater Victoria Enterprise Partnership Society was formed to create the Regional Economic Blueprint. This organization is made up of the leading local organizations and is critical to the GVCC.

2.3.5. Board of Governors

The Greater Victoria Chamber is fortunate to have a number of distinguished past presidents. These past presidents are all active and influential in the Victoria Business Community and their council and support is critical.

2.3.6. Tourism Victoria

The Tourism organization in Victoria is very strong and is much larger than the Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce but has a much more focused mandate. The CEO of Tourism Victoria has been in place for some time and is a wealth of knowledge and advice.

2.3.7. Victoria – Esquimalt Hbr Society

The chamber has an appointment on this board.

2.3.8. Other Affiliations

The Chamber is a member of other groups that are formed on a project basis and these include:

- Safe Streets Coalition – BC Chamber
- Community Charter Coalition – BC Chamber
- Property Tax Working Group – BC Chamber
- Conference Centre Working Group – City of Victoria
- DVBA Working Group – DVBA

3. Operating Principles

As GVCC strives towards achieving its long-term goals, the day-to-day operations and decision-making processes are guided by a commitment to a number of operational principles:

3.1. Providing Excellent Customer Service

GVCC is committed to meeting the needs of its customers in a professional and efficient manner at all times. The Customers of the Chamber are its members, partner organizations, and board of directors. The GVCC will strive to provide excellent service to all who contact the GVCC.

3.2. Representing Member's Interests Publicly

The GVCC is expected to comment publicly on matters affecting the business community. The GVCC will support the principles of free enterprise, and decreased taxation. The Chamber will generally discourage government or regulatory intervention that would interfere with the natural market forces. The GVCC will regularly poll the membership and maintain close informal ties with members to ensure the Chamber remains representative of its members.

3.3. Professional Service Delivery

The GVCC provides a wide variety of services to our members including:

- Advertising Opportunities
- Networking Events
- Business Development Events
- Referral Service
- Discount Programs
- Financing Programs
- Insurance Programs
- Educational Opportunities

The services above will be delivered in a professional manner having respect for the time constraints on our busy membership.

3.4. Sound organizational and fiscal management

The GVCC is committed to providing services to members within the constraints of sound organizational and fiscal management. This includes ensuring that adequate staff and financial resources are available, not only to meet current and immediate future needs, but also that sufficient financial reserves are set aside to meet long-term needs that may involve significant expenditures such as the purchase of a new building or expanding programs.

3.5. Progressive organizational development

The GVCC is committed to making the best use of our expert staff by maintaining a positive team oriented work environment. The corporate culture should be responsive to changes in society and encourage creative and innovative thinking while providing a stable and secure work environment. Ongoing professional development is a key component of this commitment.

3.6. Integral role in the community

The GVCC is a community leader acting as the Voice of Business and second largest Chamber of Commerce in the province of BC. The GVCC is active in a wide variety of community activities and takes a leadership role in organizations such as the Greater Victoria Enterprise Partnership Society and the Greater Victoria Economic Development Agency.

4. Organization and Structure

GVCC is incorporated under the Canadian Board of Trade Act as follows:

Corporation #4251 BN #107449936RC0001

Corporation Name(s): GREATER VICTORIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Status Date Active 1878/10/28

The GVCC is governed by the Federal Board of Trade act and the corporate bylaws filed with the articles of incorporation.

5. Financial Structure

GVCC is funded through membership dues, event activities and providing advertising opportunities. The funds collected are used to service our members. Annual budgets are prepared based on the anticipated funds collected and services required. Monthly financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Not-For-Profit standards set out under the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. Audits are conducted annually by an independent firm.

6. Organizational Structure

