

SEDS 2025 Workplan

Shuswap Economic Development Society

2025 Workplan



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The Shuswap Economic Development Society is pleased to present our 2025 Work plan. The plan is supplemental to the 2022 Shuswap Economic Development Strategic Plan and 2024

Investment and Attraction Strategy and focuses on the following strategic themes as outlined and identified within the plans.

Strategic themes

- Market business and labour friendly environment
- Support those who a promoting year around Tourism
- Inclusive Active transportation and Housing
- Grow healthy local food systems
- Improve Community Services and Infrastructure to include Hard Infrastructure, Soft Infrastructure and Critical infrastructure.
 - o Hard Infrastructure: Transportation, Energy, Telecommunications, and waste removal
 - o Soft Infrastructure: Education, Health Services, and emergency services
 - o Critical Infrastructure: E.G. access to food, water, heat, and shelter

General service delivery goals

- Develop programs that support workforce development and education
- Develop programs that support business retention and expansion
- Attract business investment, including entrepreneurial businesses, through regional marketing, information provision, trade show participation and social media campaigns
- Establish new resident attraction strategies
- Develop relationships to work collaboratively on key regional facilities and infrastructure such as alternative energy, affordable housing, improving social Supports

Our mission is to nurture a strong and sustainable economic future for the communities that we serve, and we look forward to building a bright future together.

Best regards,

Sue McCrae
President

Land acknowledgement- *We are honoured to be Living and Working on the Traditional, Ancestral & Unceded Lands of the Skwlawx te Secwepemeculew People.*

Shuswap Economic Recovery Taskforce Economic

Business recovery, Business Retention & Expansion

Goals/ actions

Continue to lead the Shuswap Economic Recovery Taskforce, in the aftermath of the Bush Creek East Wildfire to identify the immediate, mid-term, and long-term needs and actions necessary to promote recovery throughout all sectors of the local economy.

Subcommittee structure: To be responsive to the needs of the communities

Determine the best plan forward to support businesses who are experiencing long-term effects of the Bush Fire.
Connect all stakeholders who can contribute to reducing the long-term affects to Tourism from the ongoing effects of the annual fires. Support the reduction of wild-fire destruction through early Government intervention.

Governance structure:

Through consultation with communities and stakeholders, determine the most effective structure to collectively reduce the negative effects of the fires in the Shuswap and surrounding areas.

Indigenous Inclusion Strategy

**Indigenous Reconciliation and Inclusion
Business Retention and Expansion ^{OBJ}
Investment and Attraction**

Continue to establish strong relationships and identify collaborative opportunities with Indigenous partners, through transparent and sincere dialogue, engagement, and cooperation, which acknowledges reconciliation and healing.

Objectives/ Actions

- Identify key stakeholders and leaders within Indigenous Communities (ongoing) and create meaningful connections.
- Continue outreach and meeting opportunities throughout 2025 (ongoing)
- Engage key stakeholders and leaders within Indigenous Communities in all SEDS communications, Strategic Plan and Investment and Attraction initiatives
- Identify and act on cross-cultural learning opportunities
- Identify short and long-term opportunities for collaboration/ joint ventures throughout all economic event sectors throughout 2025.

Business Course Series

Workforce development, Business retention and expansion.

Support and foster Workforce development, Business expansion and retention through the continuation and delivery of SEDS educational Business course series. Business courses will be delivered and available in-person and online, focus on, but not be limited to the following subjects:

- Business planning
- Finance
- Grant Writing
- Indigenous partnerships
- Sales
- Digital marketing
- Human Resources
- Governance

Objectives/ Actions

- Design survey, collaborate with and communicate through regional partner business and community networks (First Nations, Chambers, Community Futures, Non-profit, Okanagan College) to survey the greater business community on topics of relevance and interest in January 2025.
- Recruit & secure facilitators to deliver a curriculum that focuses on desired courses identified from the survey.
- Courses could be offered if there is interest, throughout the year, except for July and August and resume by mid-September.
- Courses will be held at a combination of local Community Halls.

Reorganization and Continuity of SEDS

Immediate and Future Requirements.

- Review of Governance Structure to meet the new membership requirements.
- Expand service area to include those who can financially support Economic Development in the Shuswap.
- Liaison with CSRD nurturing a supportive and collaborative approach to Economic Development.
- Strengthen the relationship between other entities in Economic Development and Chambers of Commerce and Community Organizations.
- Development of a strong effective marketing and communication strategy to the rural areas of the Shuswap of who SEDS is and what they provide.
- We need to determine Business Model going forward.
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Board Governance and Training

Future Success and Foundation

Review current Governance Documents and modify to reflect the change in membership structure and funding available. Lay the foundation for the future of SEDS.

Objectives/ Actions

- Work with the Board Governance committee to review existing documents and recommend changes to support SEDS going forward.

Actions

- Perform continual review of Board governance effectiveness
- Manage, define expectations and requirements for Board member participation on Task Force and Steering committees to fully leverage the expertise of Board members for the benefit of the strategic delivery of programs, organizational purpose, and effectiveness.
- Define the board's future composition and structure, making sure that it can support the organization's strategy.
- Build an inclusive board culture, one in which all Board members feel valued and engaged, and further that the collective knowledge and contacts base of the Directors is utilized for maximum results.
- Provide board training the will help us to monitor and align Strategic plan objectives, goals, and outcomes.
- Nurture board relationships through in person meetings and social interactions.

Affordable Housing

Investment and Attraction, New Area Resident Attraction Business Retention & Expansion

Goals/actions

- Continue to advocate for and support affordable housing projects through SEDS participation in the Rural Shuswap Housing Society (RSHS).
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- Explore Community Land Trusts as a model for affordable housing, as well as Housing Cooperative models
- Work with the Province and developers to encourage affordable and available housing including a wider range of housing stock.
- Continue to collaborate with members of the rural communities to support housing development.



**Improve Community Services & Infrastructure.
Healthcare.**

**Investment and Attraction,
New Area Resident Attraction
Business Retention & Expansion
Community Services &
Infrastructure**

Initiate discussions with health care providers serving the Rural Shuswap Communities with the vision of creating a collaborative approach to encouraging more primary and allied health care facilities for the communities.

Goals/ actions:

- Work with the Province and local Health care and related business organizations on strategies that attract more health care professionals to the area, to provide improved access to these services, increase community sustainability and growth, through and “age in place” model.
- Meet with local indigenous and non-indigenous Healthcare organizations to identify opportunities for advocacy, assistance, and project support for same between Jan. and Mar 31st '25
- Develop an action plan for advocacy and support, based upon the outcomes of these meetings by Apr. 30, '25
- Work with RCCBC Rural Coordination Centre of BC and BCRHN BC Rural Health Network and those serving the Rural Shuswap Communities.
- Dec 2024 Participate in RCCBC supported event.
- Continue to reach out to stakeholders and engage in Physician Recruitment.
- Initiate the pursuit of Community owned and operated Health Centres.

Investment, Attraction Strategy

**Investment & Attraction
Business Retention & Expansion**

Implement the suggested implementation activities of the Investment and Attraction Strategy to include.

- Investment and Attraction Guide.
- Photography and Video
- Marketing Campaign
- Resident Relocation Guide
- Industry Sector Profiles
- Investment Opportunities

Goal/ actions/ key outcomes of the Strategy

- Identify the areas competitive advantage
- Complete a retail sector gap analysis
- Analyse potential target industries and businesses
- Develop a short-list of investment attraction opportunities
- Identify existing and future investment ready sites

- Design investment attraction strategies and tactics
- Implement, monitor, evaluate and adjust

A grant has been applied for to complete each step and includes 10,000 in administrative wages to complete the implementation of IAS over two years.

Business Façade Improvement Program Expansion

Business Retention & Expansion

Building on the success of the 2023 Scotch Creek Business Façade Improvement Pilot program, expand to include the following new areas:

- Remaining communities of the North Shuswap in partnership with the North Shuswap Chamber of Commerce. The continuation of this initiative has been approved by the North Shuswap Chamber of Commerce for 2024.
- Review and identify grant opportunities to support the expansion of this program. The Economic Trust of the Southern Interior of BC (ETSI-BC) supported the Pilot for this program and discussions are already in place with ETSI-BC about opportunities to support the expansion of the program.
- Utilize the grant in the amount of 15,000 for the implementation of the Pilot program for Area D.

Shuswap Broadband Cooperative – Improved Broadband throughout and beyond SEDS service areas.

Background

On March 8, 2022, [an agreement was announced between the provincial and federal governments](#) to provide up to \$830 million to support the expansion of high-speed internet services to the remaining rural and Indigenous communities who are underserved in the province. This funding supports a target to provide access to internet services for all households in B.C. with a minimum 50/10 Mbps by 2027, as well as a key item in the Declaration Act Action Plan to connect all First Nations communities to high-speed internet services by 2027. High-speed internet services will improve access to the services people in British Columbia count on, including education and healthcare, economic opportunities, and expanding the ability for local businesses to reach national and international markets.

SEDS hired the i-Valley Intelligent Community Association to complete an internet speed test to determine the current upload and download speeds (or lack thereof) throughout SEDS service areas. The findings of this test were conclusive enough to justify the completion of a grant application package for submission to the second CCBC grant intake, for the design of a community owned, open access Broadband network. The application was submitted in March 2023.

SEDS Broadband Taskforce, together with Indigenous partners and the i-Valley team is currently working with Cooperatives First to explore and establish the Shuswap Broadband Cooperative and is currently in discussion with several potential community partners.

Goals/ Actions

- Establish the Shuswap Broadband Cooperative in partnership with community partners by end of Jan. '25 upon successful award of the grant from CCBC
- Confirm operating capital and bridge financing loan with BMO, by the end of January 2025 pending the successful award of the grant from CCBC.
- Confirming addition Indigenous funding for 15% of the project by January 2025.
- Continue collaborating with Connecting Communities B.C.
- Establish strong relationships.

Agriculture Task Force Farmers Exchange

Business retention & expansion

Engage the small farmers in the Rural Shuswap to come together to form a Farmers Exchange .

Goals/ actions

- Establish and promote food security & sustainability
- Mitigate supply chain risks through uniting and communicating the presence and values of local small farmers
- Support and provide opportunities for local area Small Farmers to connect with new markets, and build a preferred Shuswap brand
- Ensure the consistent supply and processing of local meats, produce, and fruit and assist in building a sustainable and note-worthy Shuswap brand to local and external markets.

Pre-feasibility study for Shuswap Agri-Foods Cooperative Farmers Exchange

To conduct a pre-feasibility study and assess the demand to create a Farmers Exchange to include and farmers auction which would unite the Shuswap agriculture supply chain and become the leading, innovative provider of premium quality Shuswap, dairy, produce and food products and services, returning value to our members and to be recognized as a successful, profitable and environmentally responsible cooperative.

To research the feasibility of a Cooperative Abattoir to service the rural Shuswap and compliment existing facilities.

Salmon River Valley Business Association (SRVBA)

Business retention & expansion

To continue to support the launch and ongoing development of an organization which represents the interests of the businesses and Non-profits' found throughout the Salmon River Valley area (Falkland, Silver Creek, Gardom Lake, Salmon Valley, Deep Creek, Rancho), and to position these



distinct and vibrant communities as an integral part of the overall experience and attractiveness of the Shuswap for residents and visitors.

Goals/ actions

- Meet with SRVBA Board of Directors to determine next steps for the Society by end of January 2025.
- Identify synergies with existing organizations who are offering programs, packages, and promotions for the area (e.g. Tourism Shuswap, Farmgate program).

Support Year-round Tourism

**Business retention, visitor attraction,
Shop local focus.**

Continue to promote year-round tourism through **collaborative participation** and strategic funding support for initiatives led by the South Shuswap Chamber, North Shuswap Chamber, the Salmon River Valley Business Association, Shuswap Tourism, Sicamous Economic Development, Salmon Economic Development, and Salmon Arm Chamber of Commerce.

Objectives/ Actions

- www.shuswapconnects.com, continue to build, populate, and position the Directory as the premier business listing portal for residents, visitors and investors who live, work, and play in the Shuswap.
- Increase directory membership from to 500 by July 2025

Infrastructure Task Force

Investment and Attraction Hard Infrastructure

Collaborate with Rural Shuswap Communities to work with the stakeholders who can support the development of wastewater services and water services to increase the availability of land for development of housing and industrial sites.