

City of Coquitlam
Economic Action Plan

July 22, 2009

Coquitlam

Coquitlam is a diverse and active city, connected through excellent transportation and communication networks. Our innovative and highly educated population contribute to our strength as a City in which to live, learn, work and play.

Mayor's Message

Late 2008 and 2009 may be remembered for the economic turmoil that beset the world economy. While credit markets have been constrained and businesses have faced deep challenges, there is a sense of optimism in the City of Coquitlam, which offers a counterpoint, a ray of hope that shines beyond the challenges we face today. In the City of Coquitlam, our citizens will remember this as a time on the cusp of transformative changes. In the coming years, enabling investments in transportation infrastructure will create a watershed of opportunities that will cascade through all corners of our community, generating exciting options for citizens and businesses. We will look back on this as the time when new opportunities led us to our next phase, our emergence as an economic powerhouse, driving the economy of the Northeast Metro Vancouver area.

Our Economic Action Plan (EAP) is based on careful consideration by a broad group of community stakeholders and is designed to seize these emerging opportunities. Our Council, working closely with business and community representatives, has engaged in a year-long process, which included broad research and significant consultation. The resulting Plan identifies specific economic development actions that move our community forward. Specifically the Economic Action Plan focuses on:

- Capitalizing on significant infrastructure investments in the community;
- Enabling business success;
- Building on economic links that result from our cultural diversity; and,
- Capitalizing on our unique assets.

Investments in the Evergreen Line and the Gateway Program (Hwy 1 corridor, new Port Mann Bridge) will create new opportunities to intensify development in the City. As our April 2007 Industrial Lands Strategy noted, the City of Coquitlam has a limited supply of industrial land compared to other communities in the region. It is incumbent on us to use our available employment generating lands to their full potential. Rapid transit and other transportation improvements will allow us to reach this potential. The City must intensify use on some lands, while creating opportunities on other lands to support transportation functions in the Lower Mainland that help to position us as Canada's Gateway to the Asia Pacific.

Our Council believes that Coquitlam must strive to be a place that enables the creativity, innovation and motivation of our business community. Cities have a responsibility to regulate business and development, but how that role is exercised contributes to the success of businesses and citizens. There is a clear link between the provision of efficient and reasonable regulation and business success. Coquitlam

is an innovative and entrepreneurial community and that innovation, creativity and entrepreneurial spirit, must permeate our business community and be promoted by our City.

Coquitlam has become an increasingly diverse community, with First Nations citizens, Francophones and Koreans and Chinese Canadians, along with many other ethnicities living together and working to improve our City. This diversity is a source of strength and stores huge potential to advance the economy of our City. Through our recent signing of a Friendship City Agreement with the City of Paju, Korea, we continue to build bridges to stronger cultural and business relationships. As a City, we need to position ourselves to meet these opportunities and capitalize on our diversity.

Finally, there are a series of assets our City possesses that set us apart from our neighbours. Each of these assets requires unique and nuanced approaches to ensure that we maximize community benefits. These assets include Q-Net, our city-owned fibre optic network that stretches across Coquitlam and creates opportunities for business and residents to receive more affordable and higher-capacity broadband access. They also include the Riverview Lands, a locale at which we must skilfully blend economic development opportunities with our community's aspirations for this unique location. As well, the quality of life Coquitlam residents enjoy is directly tied to our natural environment. We have large urban parks, rivers, ravines, trails, greenways and access to Pinecone Burke Provincial Park. Our City should be heralding our significant natural assets and building a community marketing brand that showcases these assets along with our other community strengths.

We all have a role to play. Our Council, our Land Use and Economic Development Standing Committee, our staff, our business community, and our citizens will all need to be engaged to advance this Plan. If we pull together and focus our energy, we will deliver on Coquitlam's enormous potential.

Richard Stewart,
Mayor, City of Coquitlam

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

Acknowledgement of Participants

The Strategy

1. Economic Action Plan

The Process

2. Process for Formulating the Economic Development Strategy
3. Overview of Reports Supporting the Economic Development Strategy
4. Economic Action Plan – Tracking Progress

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Economic Analysis of the City of Coquitlam - Kunin Report

Appendix B - Internal Policy Review of the City of Coquitlam

Appendix C - Coquitlam Community Business Survey

Appendix D - Cost of Doing Business Survey

Appendix E - Demographic Trends and Analysis

Appendix F - Findings of the Community Business Roundtable

Copies of the extensive material supporting development of the Economic Action Plan are not attached to this document. The supporting materials are available:

- On the City’s website, under the Economic Development Strategy heading at:
 - www.coquitlam.ca/EconomicOpportunitiesand at,
- The front counter of the Planning and Development Department, Main Floor, City Hall.

As well, a copy of the supporting material has been placed for reference in the Councillor’s Office.

Executive Summary

The City of Coquitlam's Economic Action Plan (EAP) is the result of extensive business and community engagement, research, analysis and strategizing. The EAP outlines the actions the Manager Economic Development and other City staff will take to support business retention and expansion in the City of Coquitlam, in partnership with other parties, agencies and the business community. The Plan is strategic, seeking to capitalize on the unique opportunities available in Coquitlam, outlining specific, focused actions to assist the City and its business partners in the next three to five years.

The City is indebted to the citizens and the business owners and operators who assisted by providing input that shaped this economic development plan. Participants provided hundreds of hours to the City's EAP development process. As well, this process included significant research and the findings of this research and engagement with the business community are attached as appendices.

The Economic Action Plan development process was initiated during tumultuous economic times. Every effort has been made to consider the emerging economic context and tailor solutions to the new situations that businesses and our community face.

The EAP identifies four goals for economic development action in the next three to five years:

- 1) **Capitalize on Major Transportation Infrastructure to Create New Business Opportunities** - The first goal focuses on commitments to develop significant transportation infrastructure projects in and near Coquitlam. The two most significant projects are the Evergreen Line (Automated Light Rapid Transit) that will connect Lougheed Mall with the David Lam Campus of Douglas College and the Gateway Program that will result in a new Port Mann Bridge. While the construction of the Evergreen Line will result in jobs and investment, the most significant opportunities will emerge at, or near the proposed station locations once the line is constructed. Over the next twenty years, the investments in the Evergreen Line will catalyze significant development in the Northeast Metro Vancouver region and Coquitlam, as the designated City Centre of the Northeast region is poised to take on a leadership role. The Gateway Program will improve transportation access to industrial properties across South Coquitlam
- 2) **Support Business Success** - The second thrust of the Economic Action Plan involves City efforts to simplify and improve regulatory processes. The City of Coquitlam acknowledges that business opportunities develop not just from the creation of the right kind of space. They also develop as a result of the creation of the right opportunities and that local government must play a key role in facilitating opportunity and guiding implementation so that it meets with the expectations of citizens. To this end, the City is reviewing and updating a wide range of development

policies and processes and has identified and implemented a number of improvements. Further changes and process improvements are contemplated, including a review of industrial zoning regulations to identify the right mix of zones to facilitate the new industry opportunities that the City will pursue.

3) **Build on Our Cultural Diversity to Create Trade and Investment Opportunities**

Leading economic thinkers have noted the link between diversity and the economic success of communities. From the streets of Maillardville, to the businesses of North Road, to the high schools across the City, cultural diversity of Coquitlam is a source of strength and opportunity. The City is keen to leverage the relationships of our diverse populations to their countries of origin to create new economic development opportunities. The EAP identifies a number of options for advancing economic development by cultivating and building on Coquitlam's cultural diversity attributes.

- 4) **Leverage Community Assets to Drive Investment and Job Creation** - The EAP will leverage Coquitlam's positive attributes and assets that can drive community and economic development. These assets include the City's fibre-optic network, Q-Net. Launched in 2008, this network will soon serve all corners of the City and will provide extensive broadband capabilities to businesses considering locating in Coquitlam. The City's natural environment is also a key asset. Whether it is salmon bearing streams, just blocks from City Hall, the City's immediate access to mountainous areas that include excellent hiking and mountain biking opportunities, Coquitlam has significant potential to market its recreation and eco-tourism potential. The EAP proposes making these assets central to our City marketing campaigns. As well, the City of Coquitlam has an opportunity to show leadership, as the City Centre of the Northeast Metro region, and as one of the larger municipalities in Metro Vancouver, Coquitlam can play an important role in the evolving regional economy.

While the EAP identifies some of the steps that can lead to improved economic outcomes for the City of Coquitlam, each citizen has a role to play in ensuring that the City has an entrepreneurial, can-do spirit. To be a community which creates jobs and opportunities, going forward, the City needs to be open to supporting business, innovation and entrepreneurialism while maintaining the significant quality of life attributes that make Coquitlam an attractive place to work, live, learn and play.

Acknowledgement of Participants

In October, 2007, Coquitlam City Council instructed staff to initiate development of an economic development strategy. Staff worked with the City of Coquitlam Economic Development Committee, commissioned research and engaged the local business community to develop the Economic Action Plan. As such, the EAP is the culmination of significant involvement of many people. The EAP is informed by the assessments of leading economic thinkers who considered the unique attributes and challenges facing local businesses. Preparation of the EAP also closely involved Coquitlam’s business community to better understand the challenges and opportunities the business community faces. Without this broad participation of business and community members, this plan could not adequately reflect the considerations of these various stakeholders and their contribution is gratefully acknowledged.

Participants in the Economic Action Plan development process included:

2008 Economic Development Steering Committee

Councillor Mae Reid, Chair

Councillor Lou Sekora, Vice-Chair

Brian Adams

Wayne Beggs

Stan Burt

Ann Carlsen

Edward Deng

Jess Doyle

Alan Flowers

Abbas Khayam

James Moller, Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce Representative

Economic Development Roundtable Participants

The City of Coquitlam hosted a roundtable on January 16th, 2009. At the roundtable, staff provided participants with information about economic development strategy process to date and sought input regarding next steps in developing a strategy. The following table lists roundtable participants.

LARGE EMPLOYERS	
Laura Coueffin	Oppenheimer Group
Edward Deng	Eurofins Scientific Group
Jimmy Ho	Boulevard Casino
Velvet Cates-Capell	Canstar Restorations

Hazel Postma	Douglas College
Lois Swanson	Tim Hortons
Mark Breier	Thrifty Foods
Jean Rothenberger	Rothenberger Recruitment Inc.
Kristen Stuber	RDK Career Services
HOME-BASED BUSINESSES	
JoAnne Emery	La Boheme Consulting
Barrie Seaton	Royal Lepage
Sam Lee	Ablaze Heating
Darrell Denton	Pivotal Marketing
Susan Jarema	New Earth Marketing
Steve Lafond	All Tri-Cities Contracting & Landscaping
Brady Bevan	All Tri-Cities Contracting & Landscaping
RETAIL/COMMERCIAL BUSINESSES	
James Moller	Coquitlam Centre
Ann Carlsen	Ann Carlsen & Company
Erin Davidson	Austin Heights BIA
Jonas Hulten	IKEA - Coquitlam
Brad Liski	Gotham Alliance Corp.
Mr Kwon+1	H-Mart
Gerri Wallis	2nd Look Day Spa
Lancia Greenwood	Atkinson & Terry
Wayne McCartney	Kerrisdale Camera
Mark Withenshaw	
Mr. Hongil Lee	H-Mart
Ann Tanner	Pinetree Village
TOURISM, HOSPITALITY & ACCOMODATION	
Chris Swan	Go-West RV
Tereza McDermid	Best Western Coquitlam
Joan Roberts	Place Des Arts
Lesley Thomas-Cullen	Eagle Mountain Bed & Breakfast
Scott Masse	Westwood Plateau Golf & Country Club
Jean Fraser	Coquitlam Heritage Society
Gabriela Dagan	Societe Francophone de Maillardville
Lucille Riedle	Societe Francophone de Maillardville
Helen Daniels	ArtsConnect
LIGHT INDUSTRIAL/MANUFACTURING	
David Wallace	Consultant

Ross Jeboult	Northern International
Janet Tecklenborg	Catalyst Paper Corporation
David Rothenberger	Rothenberger Recruitment Inc.
Karen Lally	Speedpro Imaging
LIGHT INDUSTRIAL, MANUFACTURING AND HIGH TECHNOLOGY	
Tim Provenzano	VP Business Development
Larry Parks	LCP Signal Management Inc.
Doug Stead	Tri-M Group of Companies
Roger Loubert	
NEW IMMIGRANT BUSINESS OWNERS	
Albert Koopman	AlbertKoopman.com
Veronica Park	First Data
Holly Kim	TD
Myung Kim	Korean Business Association
Dae June Han	North Rd Mall Owner
FINANCE, INSURANCE & REAL ESTATE	
Dan Paris	VanCity Enterprises
Tom Lewis	TD Canada Trust
Matthew O'Brien	TD Canada Trust
Jim Pearcy	Certified General Accountant
Michelle Khosravi	CIBC
Hadi Abrahimi	Shahrvand Newspaper
Dave Gormley	The Beedie Group
Diane Swintak	Real Estate Board Of Greater Vancouver Burnaby, New West Tri-City Division
Mary Saleh	Remax
Kevin Volz	Cushman & Wakefield Lepage Inc.
Rick Eastman	Cushman & Wakefield Lepage Inc.
Larrie Forbes	Remax All Points Realty Group
Jon Kingsbury	Chairman, Comad Communications
NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS, SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS	
Joanne Granek	Share Family & Community Services
John Wolff	Share Family & Community Services
Rhian Piprell	Coquitlam Public Library
Brad Watson	Act II Child & Family Services
Robert Buller	Douglas College
Barb Hobson	Place des Arts

Linda Delparte	Polaris Employment Services
Laurel Lawson	Coquitlam Foundation
Ebby Mohseni	MESO-Step Society (BC)
Bob Logelin	Douglas College
RW (Bob) Janzen	
GUESTS	
Diane Thorne, MLA	Coquitlam Maillardville
Mayor Richard Stewart	City of Coquitlam
Councillor Linda Reimer	City of Coquitlam
Jill Cook, CEO	Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce
Barrie Seaton, Chair	Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce
Fin Donnelly	Coquitlam Councillor
Brent Asmundson	Coquitlam Councillor

City of Coquitlam Economic Development Strategy -Draft (July 10, 2009)

Goal	Area of Focus	Objective	Action
<p><u>Capitalize on Transportation Infrastructure To Create New Business Opportunities</u> - Transportation investments (Gateay Program/ Port Mann, Evergreen) will leverage new opportunities.</p>	Corridor Investments	<p>Capitalize on the employment generating potential of the Provincial Gateway Program (Port Mann Bridge and Hwy 1 Upgrade)</p>	<p>Work with Planning and Development staff to identify emerging land development opportunities. Where appropriate, participate in planning processes to identify strategic opportunities to create new or expanded businesses and employment generation opportunities. (eg. Fraser Gateway) This will include identifying key development sites and working with business, key industrial sectors, owners, real estate brokers and lenders. This Action builds on the findings of the 2007 City of Coquitlam Industrial Lands Strategy.</p>
			<p>Create briefing material for Council that summarizes the importance of trade and trade corridors (Pacific Gateway) to the Tri-Cities economy.</p>
	Evergreen Line	<p>Work with Evergreen Line construction companies to assist them in locating and obtaining adequate space for various Evergreen related ancillary services.</p>	<p>Working with other city departments, create material which outlines the economic development potential created by the construction of the Evergreen Line, particularly in relation to development potential of employment centres including Burquitlam and the City Centre. This Action builds on the findings of the 2007 City of Coquitlam Industrial Lands Strategy.</p> <p>Work with the Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce and with local business to identify tendering opportunities that may be of interest to Coquitlam companies and to help facilitate connections between City companies and the project proponent to locally source supplies and services.</p>

Goal	Focus	Objective	Action
<u>Support Business Success</u> - Coquitlam will be the best place in the Lower Mainland to start or grow a business.	Competitive-ness	Improving the competitiveness and productivity of existing small businesses.	Work with federal and provincial partners and the Chamber of Commerce to identify opportunities to expand programming of the Canada-BC Business Service Centre services to the Tri-Cities area.
		Business retention and expansion.	Work with the Chamber and with a group of select volunteers to implement a business retention and expansion program.
			Keep a database of businesses and work to identify options for service improvement.
			Connect businesses to marketing, procurement and business development opportunities,
			Consider community and Tri-City business clusters and opportunities for co-opition
	Entrepreneurial Culture	Working to develop an entrepreneurial culture.	Support school and recreation centre-based Junior Achievement programs.
		Build a strong community connection to the Canada Youth Business Foundation.	

Goal	Focus	Objective	Action
<u>Support Business Success</u> - Coquitlam will be the best place in the Lower Mainland to start or grow a business.	Best Regulation	Creating the best environment for business to succeed.	Continue efforts to streamline municipal regulatory processes including consideration of process improvements and development of simplified industrial zoning.
			Join Metro Vancouver Commerce Initiative's mobile business licensing arrangement.
	Trade Facilitation	Connecting businesses to external opportunities that enhance their growth potential, including supporting trade and export and supporting establishment of links to advanced education institutions.	Work with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, the Provincial Trade Commissioners and with other agencies to help forge linkage for local business to access trade opportunities.
			Work with specific programs at SFU to explore and develop expansion and trade opportunities for businesses.

Goal	Focus	Objective	Action
<p><u>Build on Our Cultural Diversity to Create Trade and Investment Opportunities</u> - Coquitlam will harness the potential of our diverse communities and drive opportunities for increased trade and investment.</p>	Cultural Linkages	Capitalizing on connection to French culture through the Maillardville neighbourhood.	Building linkages with key regional organizations and government organizations. Explore the feasibility of incentives as a way to attract businesses to specific locations in the Maillardville area.
		Build on economic and cultural opportunities related to our large Asian community.	Work with Provincial trade officials to explore options for additional twinning relationships and build on the opportunities presented by our present twinning relationships.
		Continue working with our substantial Korean community and Korean focused businesses in the community.	Work to connect Korean business community to City's efforts to engage with Korean Consulate and Development Agency, especially in relation to receiving delegations relating to the 2010 Winter Olympic Games.
		Work with the Kwikwetlem First Nations.	Develop eco-tourism opportunities.
		Work with staff developing City's Multicultural Profile to identify options to improve knowledge and awareness regarding City's diversity.	Multi-lingual business cards, and other communications material.
			Cross-cultural communications courses.

Goal	Focus	Objective	Action
<p><u>Build on Our Cultural Diversity to Create Trade and Investment Opportunities</u> - Coquitlam will harness the potential of our diverse communities and drive opportunities for increased trade and investment.</p>	Trade Facilitation	Build Asia Pacific relationships and trade opportunities focusing efforts on connecting Coquitlam businesses to broader trade networks and broadening knowledge of trade opportunities.	Develop an action plan to maximize the benefits of a "friendship city" agreement with the City of Paju Korea.
			Participate in the Metro Vancouver Commerce 2010 Investment Attraction Initiative.
			Assist Mayor and Council in lobbying the federal government to achieve Free Trade and Open Skies Agreements with Korea. Work will involve engaging with Provincial partners.
			Identify opportunities to use our significant parks and recreation facilities to build bridges to cultural understanding through exhibits, performances, events and festivals.

Goal	Focus	Objective	Action
<p><u>Leverage Community Assets to Drive Investment and Job Creation</u> - Coquitlam will generate business, community and economic benefits from our significant assets and strengths (Riverview, outdoor opportunities, Q-net, position as largest city in Northeast Metro Vancouver region).</p>	Leadership	Support the Mayor, Council and senior staff in efforts to promote Coquitlam and the Tri-Cities area, further afield.	Identify and pursue opportunities for the Mayor and Council to present Coquitlam focused economic development information to broad audiences (eg. "Coquitlam is Open for Business" presentation to the Urban Development Institute).
		In partnership with the Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce and Port Moody, Port Coquitlam, Anmore and Belcarra, advance a coordinated marketing program.	Participate in the development of a Tri-Cities economic development magazine
		Explore the option of expanding marketing partnerships to include the entire Northeast Quadrant of Metro Vancouver.	Participate in the joint actions and initiatives of Metro Vancouver Commerce.
		Participate in regional economic development efforts.	Participate in Metro Vancouver Commerce initiative.

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<p><u>Leverage Community Assets to Drive Investment and Job Creation</u> - Coquitlam will generate business, community and economic benefits from our significant assets and strengths (Riverview, outdoor opportunities, Q-net, position as largest city in Northeast Metro Vancouver region).</p>	Marketing	Increase the profile and understanding of the City of Coquitlam's Economic Action Plan.	Identify opportunities for the Mayor and Council to present information regarding the economic potential of the City of Coquitlam (eg. Presentations to the Chamber of Commerce, or Board of Trade)
		Building on the actions taken to date, develop an annual economic development marketing plan.	Work with Communications staff to complete the marketing plan.
	Q-Net	Work with Q-Net Board and Executive Director to identify opportunities to market Q-Net in various arenas with a focus on connecting the infrastructure resource to emerging development opportunities.	Focus on identifying key conferences and events that will expose this opportunity to potential customer organizations.
			Work with QNet and Communications staff to identify appropriate communications channels through which to advance QNet.
			Identify specific location-based opportunities to advance Q-Net, including possible uses on the Riverview Lands, on the Barnet Corridor and in commercial structures in and around the City Centre.

Goal	Focus	Objective	Action
<p><u>Leverage Community Assets to Drive Investment and Job Creation</u> - Coquitlam will generate business, community and economic benefits from our significant assets and strengths (Riverview, outdoor opportunities, Q-net, position as largest city in Northeast Metro Vancouver region).</p>	Other	<p>Advancing the employment generation potential of the Riverview Lands. Supporting Pinecone-Burke/ Eagle Mountain Eco-tourism Opportunities. Improving the functions and impact of BIAs.</p>	<p>Liaise with the Riverview Committee, with an interest in promoting employment generating options on the Riverview Lands.</p>
		<p>Identify options and opportunities to support sports tourism and related uses at City of Coquitlam facilities.</p>	<p>Work with Leisure Services staff to identify opportunities to advance sports tourism in the City of Coquitlam.</p>
		<p>Supporting Pinecone-Burke/ Eagle Mountain Eco-tourism Opportunities. Improving the functions and impact of BIAs.</p>	<p>Work with community interests to explore opportunities for sensitive recreational use of mountainous areas to the north of Coquitlam.</p>
		<p>Supporting Pinecone-Burke/ Eagle Mountain Eco-tourism Opportunities. Improving the functions and impact of BIAs.</p>	<p>Support the Community Planning Division's work with Business Improvement Areas.</p>

2. Process for the Development of the Economic Action Plan

Purpose of the Economic Action Plan

The City of Coquitlam's goal is to be an employment, business and investment leader in the Metro Vancouver Region. This laudable goal must be measured against the tough economic realities that are currently facing our community and our businesses. Now, more than ever, the City must clearly target resources to maximize economic development potential. The Economic Action Plan represents the City, businesses and community efforts to identify a series of key actions that will advance the Coquitlam economy. The City recognizes that it is but one player in a larger economic picture that includes citizens, business, other levels of government and the broad provincial, national and world economies. There are aspects of our current economic situation that are beyond local control, yet there are many actions that the City can take to ensure that we are well positioned to take advantage of emerging opportunities.

Detailing of the Process

In December 2007, Council endorsed the process to prepare an updated integrated economic development strategic plan to position Coquitlam more effectively as a vital component of the regional economy. Updating the strategy is consistent with Council's Strategic Plan 2006 and Citywide Official Community Plan (CWOCP) policies which are aimed at achieving job targets expressed in the City's Regional Context Statement. This project also supported the City's corporate goals to expand local jobs and local prosperity by creating a vital economy well-positioned in the region. The EAP also supports healthy communities and neighbourhood objectives through sustained development of a vibrant local economy and job opportunities for a growing population.

The process to update the City's Economic Development Strategic Plan consisted of four phases:

1. Issue identification and trend analysis;
2. Vision formulation and identification of strategic goals and objectives;
3. Preparation of Economic Action Plan and directions;
4. Final review of the EAP and adoption by City Council followed by implementation, monitoring and progress reporting.

This four-phase work program was initiated and driven by Planning and Development (P&D) staff. Phase One, "Taking Stock", is now complete. This phase initiated a series of studies to review Coquitlam's current business and economic climate, identify long-term economic (global, national and regional) and demographic trends having an impact on Coquitlam, and a review of municipal and community policies and initiatives currently supporting Coquitlam's economy.

Key components of this phase have included:

- Presentations to City Council by:
 - Andy Ramlo of Urban Futures Institute; and
 - Dr. Rosalyn Kunin;
- Business Forum held on March 11, 2008 at City Hall;
- Completion of a series of consultants' reports including:
 - Economic Analysis of the City of Coquitlam by Dr. Rosalyn Kunin;
 - Internal Policy Review for the City of Coquitlam by Eric Vance & Associates;
 - Coquitlam Business Community Survey by Mustel Group;
 - Cost of Doing Business Analysis for Coquitlam by MMK Consulting;
 - Demographic Trends Analysis by Urban Futures Institute;
 - Interviews of Business Site Selectors; and
 - Update of the City's Employment Area and Employment Sector Profiles.

To help inform and engage the business community, staff held discussions with the Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce, representatives of Business Improvement Areas/Associations, local business leaders, the City's Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee (EDTAC) and City Council. This consultation process included visioning sessions, special events and regular attendance and participation at monthly meetings of these organizations.

The resulting Economic Action Plan is based on the foundation of research and community engagement advanced by the Community Planning division.

3. Synopsis of the Reports Supporting the Economic Action Plan

The following are summaries of the reports, surveys and planning sessions executed by the Planning and Development Department of the City of Coquitlam. This information forms the base for the strategic directions that are articulated in this EAP. Full versions of these reports can be obtained at:

<http://www.coquitlam.ca/Business/Developing+Coquitlam/Strategic+Plans/The+Economic+Development+Strategy.htm>

Economic Analysis of the City of Coquitlam

Dr. Roslyn Kunin, Senior Fellow and BC Director for the Canada West Foundation provided a broad analysis outlining global national and regional economic and demographic trends (Appendix I). Although the City's engagement with Dr. Kunin predated the economic upheaval that started in September 2008, subsequent conversations with Dr. Kunin indicate that she is confident that the position of Canada vis-à-vis other nations is strong. Dr. Kunin suggests that communities should take a cautious approach to increased expenditures. The Economic Analysis Report was also completed in advance of a number of major infrastructure announcements that will create significant economic development opportunities for the City of Coquitlam, including the new Port Mann Bridge and the Evergreen SkyTrain Line. Despite the economic challenges of the world economy, Coquitlam is particularly well positioned, along with other northeast sector communities, to be an increasingly large player in the regional economy.

Internal Policy Review of the City of Coquitlam

Earlier in the EDSP's preparation process, a review of a number of the City's policies, bylaws and strategic plans was undertaken, in order to determine possible policy changes that may promote economic development (Appendix II). The report suggests that the City needs to:

- Find the Right Economic Base: Consider the employment generation capacity of lands and the match of these jobs to the City's occupational profiles.
- Ensure that various City policies are integrated, so that land use and transportation policies are aligned with our efforts to create economic development opportunities.
- The City needs to consider the establishment of a business retention and expansion program.

- That the City needs an economic development implementation plan that sets priorities, timing, resource needs, lead roles and potential partners to support the City's goals.

Coquitlam Business Community Survey

Mustel Group was commissioned to conduct a random sample survey of the business community to assess the current business climate (Appendix III). The survey results outlined City strengths, including:

- The location of the community;
- Positive community feel including quality of life, attractive neighbourhoods and low crime rates; and
- Transportation accessibility.

Traffic congestion was cited as a key weakness, while some noted that increases associated with fuel costs and high taxation impacted their businesses. On balance, survey participants believed that Coquitlam was a positive business environment with a strong customer base.

Cost of Doing Business Survey

MMK Consulting was retained by the City to assess the differences in business costs between Coquitlam and other Metro Vancouver communities (Appendix IV). On balance, Coquitlam business costs were aligned with other Metro Vancouver communities.

Demographic Trends and Analysis

The Urban Futures Institute outlined the need to focus on skills development, support of small and medium-sized enterprises and the importance of leadership and entrepreneurial skills development programs (Appendix V).

Economic Development Roundtable

On January 16th, 2009, the City co-hosted an Economic Development Roundtable with the Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce. The Roundtable confirmed earlier research activities and provided additional details which will be utilized in the development of the final draft of the Economic Development Strategy.

4. Economic Action Plan – Tracking Progress

The Economic Action Plan is supported by a separate implementation plan that identifies the various steps that must be undertaken to address each proposed action and indicates the way that progress will be measured. The Implementation Plan is premised on the idea that an effective plan does not just catalogue intended actions, but rather, is a comprehensive framework that outlines the overarching actions, the steps for achieving actions, formats for reporting and measures both outputs and outcomes.

It is intended that the Manager Economic Development will report back to Council on a twice-yearly basis regarding the progress towards achieving the objectives of the Economic Action Plan.

