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PROJECT TEAM

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Summary Report

Introduction

As traditional economic sectors shift and global challenges evolve, Quadra Island is taking proactive steps to create a resilient, inclusive and environmentally responsible local economy. Funded by the Rural Economic Diversification and Infrastructure Program (REDIP) and Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET), this project is a collaboration between the Discovery Islands Chamber of Commerce and the We Wai Kai Nation. The result will be a community-rooted Economic Diversification Plan for Quadra Island.

As the first step in gathering community input, a workshop was held on June 3rd, 2025 at the Quadra Community Centre. It brought together 50 participants representing a broad cross-section of the community. The workshop was designed around four small group participatory activities, each followed by a large group discussion. The next steps in the community consultation process will include interviews and a community survey. Stayed tuned for more information, coming soon! The following is a brief summary of the results of the workshop. A glossary is included at the end.

Activity 1 - Community Values

Participants identified key values to guide future economic planning. These were later grouped into themes that will serve as guiding principles in future planning.

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| 1. Community & Connection | 5. Economic Vitality & Sustainable Livelihoods |
| 2. Collaboration & Trust | 6. Well-being & Quality of Life |
| 3. Diversity, Inclusion, & Honour & Respect for First Nations | 7. Personal Ethics & Character |
| 4. Environmental Stewardship, Connection to Nature, & Living in Balance | |

Activity 2 - Exploring Ideas through the Four Dimensions Framework

The Four Dimensions Framework was used to surface diverse needs, assets, and dreams for the future. The lists below provide a summary of the dominant themes within each of the dimensions, as well as an overall list of priorities that emerged.

Economic

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| 1. Local economic development and entrepreneurship | 4. Energy, infrastructure, and connectivity |
| 2. Housing, affordability, and cost of living | 5. Education, training, and skills development |
| 3. Sustainable resource use, including use of human labour, and self-sufficiency | 6. Tourism and cultural economy |
| | 7. Community well-being, governance, and participation |
| | 8. Planning and policy development |

Environmental

1. Land and forest stewardship
2. Water protection and climate resilience
3. Regenerative energy and sustainable infrastructure
4. Sustainable transportation and mobility
5. Community engagement and environmental culture
6. Local food systems and eco-system health
7. Natural spaces, parks, and recreation

Socio-Cultural

1. Inclusive and affordable living
2. Culture, creativity, and identity
3. Community connection and belonging
4. Learning, leadership, and intergenerational exchange
5. Reconciliation and inclusion
6. Communication and civic engagement
7. Transportation and accessibility

Psychological

1. Connection, belonging, and inclusion
2. Mental health, healing, and holistic support
3. Purpose, confidence, and personal growth
4. Access to nature and restorative spaces
5. Safety, stability, and equity
6. Movement, play, and physical wellness
7. Community spirit and shared responsibility

Interconnected Priorities Across Dimensions

1. Community Connection & Belonging
2. Sustainability & Stewardship
3. Accessibility & Equity
4. Education, Learning, & Capacity Building
5. Resilience & Adaptability

Activity 3 – Mapping Community Strengths and Challenges

In this activity participants reflected on Quadra Island's strengths and challenges. The key themes that emerged were as follows:

Strengths

- Natural beauty, biodiversity, trails, and outdoor recreation
- Strong arts scene and community organizations
- Skilled trades, volunteers, and essential services
- Core infrastructure: for example, the library, post office, daycare, and medical clinics
- Proximity to Campbell River and Cortes Island
- Educated population and community spirit

Challenges

- Housing shortages and affordability
- Aging population and volunteer burnout
- Gaps in employment, medical services, and youth programs
- Transportation (ferries, bike paths, access roads)
- Internet/cell coverage and service access
- Cultural institutions closure and limited Indigenous collaboration

Activity 4 – Gaps, Bridges, and Opportunities

Participants identified key gaps, potential bridges, and forward-looking opportunities for community and economic development. This table is based on the lists that were generated and aligns selected gaps and opportunities with bridging ideas.

Gap	Bridge	Opportunity
Affordable housing	Lease land, zoning updates, regulatory support	Multigenerational housing; tiny-homes; village model; rent control
Public transit	Shuttle, e-bike systems	Car/bike share; bike pathways; affordable commute options
Volunteer burnout	Community collaboration	Cultural/ Indigenous collaboration
Health service gaps	Island Health collaboration	Local health & wellness hub
Lack of focus on priorities	Update OCP; community strategic planning	Build on existing strengths; local business promotion & co-ops
Collaboration with We Wai Kai Nation	TRC-focused trust-building events; joint grant projects	Cultural & Indigenous partnerships
Lack of understanding of Indigenous history/culture	TRC events; tourism & cultural awareness booths	Cultural & Indigenous collaboration; visitor info booth with maps
Gig-economy instability	Digital-jobs promotion; virtual-work training	Economic diversity; flexible digital jobs
Youth representation/resources	Succession planning; youth engagement in planning	Teen programs; community centres; job opportunities
Communication gaps (locals & tourists)	Welcome centre; digital info platform; tourism booth	Connection to place & nature; tourism support
Affordability & local food	Support local	Economic diversity; market/co-ops
Lack of public green space & beach signage	Infrastructure coordination; improved signage	Connection to place & nature for residents/visitors
Cove water-system limitations	Coordinated infrastructure planning	Sustainable living; affordable lifestyle

Next Steps

Community engagement will continue over the summer with interviews and a community survey. In addition, we will be collecting relevant data and historical information.

Indigenous input and collaboration will be sustained, not only as a principle of inclusion, but as a source of leadership and knowledge in shaping Quadra Island's economic future.

Glossary

Accessible: Easy for everyone to reach, use, or understand, regardless of age, ability, income, or background.

Adaptability: The ability to respond to change in flexible and constructive ways.

Capacity building: Helping people or groups gain knowledge, skills, tools, or support so they understand more, can do more, or do better.

Civic engagement: Taking part in community life and decision-making—like voting, volunteering, or attending public meetings.

Community assets: The people, places, and things that make a community strong—like parks, schools, local businesses, or volunteers.

Community well-being: How healthy, happy, and supported people feel in their community.

Climate resilience: How well a community can deal with the effects of climate change, like floods, heat, or storms.

Diversity: Having different kinds of people and ideas in a community—different ages, cultures, beliefs, etc.

Economic diversification: Creating a mix of jobs and businesses so the community doesn't rely on just one industry.

Economic vitality: A strong and healthy local economy with good jobs, active businesses, and enough income for people to live well.

Eco-system: A natural system where plants, animals, people, and the environment all interact and depend on each other.

Eco-system health: How well nature is working—clean air, healthy water, strong forests, and thriving wildlife.

Environmental culture: A community's shared values, actions, and habits that show care for the natural world.

Environmental stewardship: Taking responsibility for protecting and taking care of the land, water, and air.

Equity: Fair access to opportunities and resources, especially for those who've been left out or left behind.

Governance: How decisions are made and who gets a say—like municipal/provincial/federal government, boards of directors, community groups.

Holistic support: Helping people in a way that considers their whole well-being—not just physical health, but also mental, emotional, and social needs.

Inclusive: Welcoming and involving everyone, especially people who are often excluded.

Infrastructure: The basic things a community needs to work well—like roads, buildings, internet, water systems, and public transportation.

Mobility: How easily people can move around—by walking, biking, driving, or using public transportation.

OCP: Official Community Plan

Reconciliation: Building respectful relationships, acknowledging past harms, and working together toward fairness and healing with Indigenous communities.

Regenerative energy: Energy that comes from renewable sources—like wind, sun, or water—and helps restore the environment instead of harming it.

Resilience: The ability to bounce back from challenges, like a tough economy, natural disasters, or social problems.

Resilient: Strong and flexible enough to recover from difficulties and adapt to change.

Quality of life: How good life feels—based on things like health, income, safety, connection, and access to services.

Stability: Feeling safe, steady, and supported in your day-to-day life and mental health.

Stewardship: Caring for and managing something responsibly, like land, money, or community resources.

Strategic planning: Making thoughtful, long-term decisions to help a community grow and improve in the right way.

Succession planning: Preparing for future leadership or job changes so that work continues smoothly when people move on.

Sustainable: Something that can last over time without harming people or the planet.

Sustainable infrastructure: Buildings, roads, and systems that are built to last and use resources wisely.

Sustainable livelihoods: Ways of making a living that provide enough income and also protect the environment for future generations.

Sustainable living: Daily habits and choices that reduce harm to the earth and support long-term health and balance.

Sustainable resource use: Using natural materials—like forests, fish, or water—in ways that don't run out or cause lasting damage.

Sustainable transportation: Travel options that are better for the environment—like walking, biking, public transit, or electric vehicles.

TRC: Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Village model: A way of organizing community life where people work closely together, support each other, and share resources—like in a small, connected town.

Well-being: A sense of health, happiness, safety, and purpose.