



The Evolution of Chemainus, British Columbia:

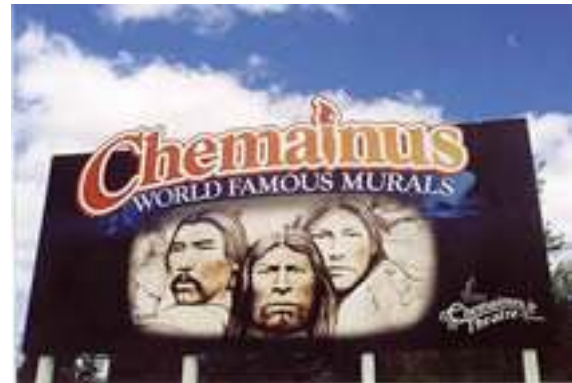
The Importance of Community-Driven Planning in Tourism Development

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Abstract

Many communities in British Columbia are dealing with the harsh reality of the failure of long term sustainability of primary resource industries such as logging, fishing and mining. Communities around the province must realize the importance of diversifying their local economy regardless of the level of success or failure of any given industry.

Chemainus, British Columbia, was once a primary resource-based community that learned the importance of a diversified economy. This case study looks at the evolution of community-driven tourism development and the progression of planning processes used. The case also highlights Chemainus's need for value-added tourism and strategic long-term community planning as the tourism industry grew. Additionally, this study emphasises the need for community-driven development to ensure that the requirements of the local population were met. Finally, the study examines future plans for growth and discusses how even the most strategic planning processes can be in conflict due to unforeseen future developments.

Introduction

Around the world small rural communities are struggling to survive as the pressures of globalization and demographic trends challenge their traditional functions and attractions (Murphy & Murphy, n.d.). Many communities in the province of British Columbia are dealing with the harsh reality of the failure of long term sustainability of primary resource industries such as logging, fishing and mining. Communities around the province are realizing the importance of a diverse economy regardless of the level of success or failure of any given industry. Many are looking at ways of diversifying so that they are braced for the inevitable collapse of any given sector. Around the province, communities have had to deal with the closure of primary resource industries and the mass unemployment that these closures create in rural communities (Miller, 2000). Although, many communities often fail to deal with such setbacks there are examples of townships in British Columbia that can be a model for success for others to relate too when faced with similar challenges (Personal Communications, August 15, 2006).

Chemainus was one of these struggling communities trying to survive as a one-horse town. When the local mill closed down in 1982, and laid off 700 workers in a town of only 3000, this devastated their local economy (Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 1998). However the community has overcome this dependency by diversifying their economy to include tourism development. Over the last decade, their unique mural based tourism has acted as a model for other struggling communities to learn from. Chemainus was then known as the “little town that did” (Personal Communications, February 10, 2007). It is internationally recognized as tourist destination and a best case practice (Personal Communications, February 10, 2007).

Due to increasing competition from surrounding communities, their distinctive appeal has started to become overlooked. Additionally, many tourists only visit Chemainus for the day. Chemainus is struggling to find value-added tourism with visitors only spending a short amount of time in the community; therefore local leaders are taking a proactive approach by encouraging new community enhancement projects to revamp their tourism

product. Chemainus is continuing to forge the way through new tourism development issues and will once again lead the way as an instructive case study.

The context

The issue of diversification has been thrust upon rural communities because of “global trade, specialization of production, resource depletion, corporate downsizing, government cutbacks, and newer more efficient technologies” and other uncontrollable outside influences (Miller, 2000). For communities are discovering the many economic and social advantages of tourism diversification, many are also struggling with challenges such as a lack of knowledge and expertise (Sharpley, 2002). This can stagnate the community-driven planning processes and provide resistance for creation of individual tourism products or unique selling points (Sharpley, 2002). Additionally, many researchers, including Sharpley (2002) indicate, “government-initiated development programs rarely solve small community dilemmas,” as governments frequently use an urban lens to look at rural community development processes, therefore small community needs are then not met (Personal Communications, September 2005).

Communities across Canada, which have already faced this issue, have in turn developed innovative ideas and ways to address the predicament, with one such tactic being the creation of as mural-based tourism. Additionally, communities are now looking past the first stage of development of their tourism product, towards repositioning and adding additional unique selling points.

Koster and Randall (2005), Sharpley (2002) and Lewis (1998) agree that rural tourism acts as a catalyst for social and economic development as well as economic regeneration after the collapse of primary resource industries. Previous research indicates that rural tourism is an opportunity that residents can create from within the community and through community-driven planning; tourism development can foster community pride, responsibility and ownership (Lewis, 1998; Huang & Stewart, 1996). These are some

positive sides to rural tourism development; however, according to many researchers, including the Rural Sociological Society (2006), communities can risk losing their own sense of culture and identity. For instance, tourism development can also weaken social solidarity, change quality of life levels, inflate the cost of living, and strain resources (Rural Sociological Society, 2006).

According to Lewis (1998) existing theories indicate that while there are tourism planning models already created, tourism development should be a community driven approach as current planning models do not take into account “that the development of tourism in rural communities is much different from the development of tourism in urban areas” (Lewis, 1998) He illustrates this through Butler’s model which proposes “that tourism was created and moved through a cycle, much like the lifecycle of a new product on the market” (Lewis 1998). According to Lewis (1998),

“Butler's model is often applied to tourism development, but there appears to be one shortcoming. His model does not take into account that the development of tourism in a rural community is much different from the development of tourism in an urban area. As stated earlier, rural communities, because of problems with the economy and the unique way that things are often done, are different. Thus, a generic model of tourism development may not necessarily apply to rural tourism development. As rural communities develop tourism, a process model that delineates the process exclusively for rural areas should be developed.”

Academics have previously written research articles analyzing rural community development practices and offered case studies on this issue. Lewis (1998) indicates that “while we, as a profession, spend a lot of time researching the impacts and economics of tourism, we have largely ignored the development process,” thus showing there is a lack of focus on rural tourism development planning processes from a community-driven approach. Additionally, many studies address tourism development however, the urbanized focus does not take into consideration the special characteristics of rural towns

such as “geographic isolation, narrow economic base, small population size, strong attachment to place, and a strong self-help culture” (Office of Rural Communities, 1997).

Mural-based tourism has been present as a unique selling point for decades; however there is little literature available on the subject. Koster and Randall (2005) state that future research should “focus on improving our understanding of the broader process of diffusion and adoption of mural-based tourism as one possible community economic development strategy in rural communities;” an investigation of this nature is about more than murals; it addresses the ‘how’ and ‘why’ communities appear to ‘join the bandwagon’ of this community-driven development strategy.

This case study attempts to minimize the information gap in two ways. First by providing an easily comprehensible example of what one rural British Columbian community has done to develop their individual tourism product, while maintaining the rural appearance and ambiance; specifically utilizing mural-based tourism as their unique selling point. Secondly, the case attempts to minimize the lack of information of rural community planning through illustrating a community-driven planning approach.

Background – “The Little Town That Did”

Chemainus is a quaint, seaside village located in central Vancouver Island within the Chemainus Valley (Chemainus, n.d). The valley is located on the East coast of Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada (See Map in Appendix A) (Chemainus, n.d.). The town is the heart of the Chemainus valley and is a short drive North of Victoria, BC. Chemainus was named after the bay it surrounds and is encased by mountain ranges to the west, ocean on the east, river to the south, and major highway to the North (Chemainus, n.d). The population remains small with only 4500 residents.

The initial industries in Chemainus were mining, fishing and forestry. Many residents believe “the early history of the Chemainus area is inextricably tied to its forests and the industries associated with it” (Visit a Little Town That Did, n.d.). Chemainus saw the

opening of a large sawmill in 1862 which was powered by a vigorous stream and waterfall. In the late 1880s the Trans-Canada railroad was built through Chemainus to export the lumber and this set off the town's slow but steady growth for the next 30 years. The railroad brought Chinese immigrant workers who worked in "bull gangs" to move the huge lumber planks to the ships (Experience the Magic of Chemainus, 2001). Following migration of the Chinese workers, were Japanese immigrants who came to Chemainus looking for the jackpot in the mines, but stayed for the forestry and fishing industries. By the late 1920s the town's population had reached approximately 600 residents, all whom were Chinese, Japanese and Salish Indian in, and eventually were joined by Scots, Germans, and East Indians origin (Visit a Little Town That Did, n.d.).

Chemainus was once primarily a mill town and home to the largest covered-in sawmill in North America. Chemainus's port was also one of the first ports to have been developed in the Pacific Northwest. For years, it was believed that the forestry sector, which was the backbone of Chemainus' economy, and indeed the Chemainus Valley, would always thrive. During the early 1970s the mill was considered to be using out-of-date methods and the 1980s brought large declines in the forest industry; the Chemainus mill operation suffered significantly. In 1983, after operating for 120 years, the mill closed. Almost 700 people became unemployed in a community of just under 4,000 people (Explore Vancouver Island, 2007). This left the community devastated and questioning what the future may hold.

The local natural resources failed to provide all the necessities of life, so a new vision for the future was needed. With the help of a provincial redevelopment fund granted at the same time as the mill shut down, a new vision was formed. The murals and revitalization strategy started in 1982 when the residents of Chemainus "invited internationally known artists to use the town as a canvas" (Visit the Little Town That Did, n.d.). Then in 1983 a new and young mayor, Graham Bruce, created a Merchant's Revitalization Committee for the downtown core. Led by a long-time resident and social entrepreneur, Carl Schutz, the city organized a festival of mural paintings that attracted many artists and more than 20,000 tourists (Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 1998). What started with only five murals

has now grown to over 35 murals and 13 sculptures; every year new artwork is added. Chemainus steadily encourages the establishment of an artisan community of antique dealers and art galleries, as well as other tourism-related businesses.

Today, in Chemainus, tourism is a year-round industry drawing 400,000 visitors annually. Chemainus brims with artistic spirit. It is a community that boasts a unique mix of gift shops, antique malls and collectable stores, art galleries, boutiques, specialty shops, museum, cafes and restaurants. The area is home to painters, glass blowers, potters, sculptors, carvers and other artisans who welcome visitors into their studios. Additionally, there is a 274 seat professional theatre which stages world classics and musicals. The community also hosts many exciting town festivals, nature-based local attractions, and a wide variety of opportunities for outdoor adventure (Visit a Little Town That Did, n.d.).

Methodology

The intended audience for this case study is community leaders, business owners, and practitioners throughout rural communities. As well, an aspiration for the development of this case study is to bridge the gap between academic research articles and the needs of rural communities. This is attempted through utilizing easily comprehensible terminology and suggestions that can be understood and implemented by the everyday practitioner.

The process of conducting research for this case study was done in three phases:

1. Secondary data retrieval
2. Observation and site visitation
3. In depth personal interviews

1. Secondary Data Retrieval

Initially the researchers retrieved both qualitative and quantitative secondary data on the topics of sustainable tourism in rural areas, mural based tourism, and on the community of Chemainus. This allowed the researches to gain a background understanding of the

community and to establish a context for further research. Qualitative data sources included:

- Newspapers - public interest and opinion
- Policy statements
- Planning documents
- Community reports
- Historical documents
- Official community documents

The quantitative data sources included:

- Published statistics
- National government sources
- Government surveys
- Local government data sources
- Planning documents
- Voluntary and charitable bodies
- Academic and research institutes

2. Observation and Site Visitation.

To familiarize themselves with the community of Chemainus, the researchers conducted site visitations during August 2006 and then again a second time in February 2007. By using primary observation the researchers had ample opportunity to see the first hand issues surrounding tourism development and also gave helpful insight on the local challenges facing Chemainus. This method of research is highly supported by academics, as indicated by Saunders (2003) who indicated that if your research question and objectives are related to what people do, a good way to discover this it to watch them in action.

3. In-depth Personal Interviews.

During two visitations to Chemainus, the researchers conducted personal interviews with four community members including a businesses owner, a local government official, a community leader and a representative of a local society. In-depth interviews help gather targeted information specific to the un-answered questions which arose in the previous methods.

There are many advantages and disadvantages to each method indicated in Table 1.

Table 1 *Advantages and Disadvantages of Methodology*

Method	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Secondary Data Collection</p> <p>The summary, collation and/or synthesis of existing research.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have fewer resource requirements (easier to access) • Unobtrusive to human subjects • Useful for longitudinal studies • Can provide comparative or contextual data • Can result in unforeseen discoveries • Permanence of data – more open to the public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be collected for a purpose that does not match your own study • Access can be difficult or costly • The way data was treated may not be suitable to your questions • You have no real control over the data quality • The data may be presented in a format that is not useful to you
<p>Observation</p> <p>The systematic observation, recording, description, analysis and interpretation of people’s behavior.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good at explaining what is going on • Heightens researcher awareness • Useful for organization research • Experiential • All data is useful to provide insight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time consuming • Ethical dilemmas • Role conflict • Observer bias • Demanding • Access is often limited • Data recording and analysis is difficult
<p>In-Depth Interview</p> <p>Open-ended face to face interactions, in which an interviewer tries to elicit a respondents knowledge, opinions, feelings, or behavior related to a defined set of topics with no predetermined list of responses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible and allows interviewer more opportunity to ask questions • Permits observation of non-verbal expressions of respondents • Personal contact with respondent enhances good probing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be difficult to find good interviewers • Personal opinion of interviewer may creep into interview • Difficult to generalize results

(Wikipedia, 2007; Vaugeois, 2006)

The Progression of Community-Driven Tourism

Mural-Based Tourism: The Beginning

When the mill was threatening to close down in Chemainus in the late 1970's, tourism was not the immediate answer. Locals were asking "what next" for their future. Residents were conscious that there were thousands of tourists driving up and down the Trans-Canada Highway every summer; however, locals were unaware that the tourists might be interested in visiting their rural resource-based community (The Little Town that Did, n.d.).

It was in 1982 that local resident and entrepreneur Karl Schutz linked tourism with local economic prosperity, and saw murals as the vehicle to draw the tourists to the town of Chemainus (The Little Town that Did, n.d.). At the time, murals were a very innovative and unique basis for tourism development and Chemainus was the first community to use it in this form in Canada (Greig-Manning, 1998). Originally there were five murals designed and now, twenty five years later, there are thirty eight works of art that line the narrow streets of Chemainus. There are in excess of 40 businesses established as a direct result of the original Chemainus mural success and over two hundred and fifty thousand visitors annually (Barnes and Hayter 1992).

Chemainus has led the way, as an example, for many other communities around the country and the world that are looking for a way to attract visitors to their communities (Koster 2002). The efforts put forth by the community members of Chemainus have led to numerous awards including the prestigious New York Downtown Revitalization Award for redevelopment of the town core and the British Airways Tourism for Tomorrow Award in 1994 (Chemainus Festival of Murals, 2007). The murals are a continuous project and the community hopes to include mural number 39 and 40 in the summer of 2007; which would include its first three dimensional mural set for August 2007 (Personal Communications, March 10, 2007).

Creation of the Festival of Murals Society: Active Management

The Festival of Murals Society was founded in 1983 and incorporated in 1987 according to acting, Vice President Johanna Reymerink (2007). Ms. Reymerink (2007) also indicated that the murals are owned by the municipality and the Festival of Murals Society who act on the behalf of the municipality maintaining the murals while working closely with the local Business Improvement Association (BIA). Ms. Reymerink is also responsible for overseeing mural maintenance (Personal Communications, 2007).

The Festival of Murals Society (2007) works hard to promote the Chemainus area as a destination and the society acts on fulfilling the following duties:

- managing and developing the Chemainus Murals Projects;
- fostering and encouraging the artistic interpretation of the history of the Chemainus Valley; and,
- promoting arts, culture and tourism within the Chemainus Valley.

The Festival of Mural Society (2007) website stated that

“Over the past twenty or so years, the creation of the murals has in turn created approximately 200 new businesses, the majority of these being Bed & Breakfasts, Gift Shops, Ice Cream Shops, Guided Tours and Horse Drawn Tours. Most of these businesses are owner operated and so many students are hired throughout the town during the summer including by the Festival of Murals Society through government grant programs.”

Residents of Chemainus knew that the murals were a selling feature of the community but they were never seen as an end in themselves by either Karl Schutz or the Chamber of Commerce (Chemainus Festival of Murals, 2007). Due to the success of the original mural concept and the efforts of local citizenry and organizations such as the Festival of Murals Society, Chemainus was ready to add additional components to their new found economic driver – tourism.

Chemainus Theatre Festival: Tourism Diversity

The Chemainus Theatre Festival (n.d) is operated by the non-profit Chemainus Theatre Foundation which

“Opened the doors of its \$4.0 million facility in 1993 with the aim of presenting quality live-theatre suitable for the entire family. During its first season the 274-seat theatre attracted 14,000 patrons but now draws over 70,000 annually from all over Vancouver Island, Greater Vancouver and the Pacific Northwest. With over 150 artists and staff, the theatre has presented almost 60 productions including 17 new scripts since its opening.”

The theatre also contains a Playbill Dining Room and Gallery Gift Shop, which is showcase to over 100 BC Artisans (About the Festival, n.d.). Some community leaders believe that Chemainus would not be as successful or what it is today, without the building of the theatre (Personal Communications, March 10, 2007).

The theatre has experienced strong growth and success during its life time. For instance, Mayor Jon Lefebure stated that the theatre has been incredibly successful, specifically financially, as one key patron initially subsidized the theatre but has since turned the theatre back over to the foundation who now is earning a profit (Personal Communications, March 10, 2007).

The Chemainus Festival Theatre is at the heart of the community and acts as a catalyst for the community’s tourism development by helping sustain the community’s success. This is through its many popular plays, by pairing with the newly built Best Western, and by organizing other fun community events such as a Show and Shine and street theatre.

Best Western Chemainus Festival Inn: Value-Added Development

Currently, visitors are only staying in the community for a few hours and the town is not receiving enough of an economic advantage from these visitors. Most of the tourists come via coach bus, however the busses only come to the community for a quick stop

and short tour, taxing the town's existing infrastructure. The tourists are not buying a great deal in the shops or spending a lot within the community elsewhere; therefore Chemainus has tried to encourage value-added growth (Personal Communications, March 10, 2007). More specifically, the Best Western Chemainus Festival Inn was built in spring 2005 to tackle this problem. Previously there were only smaller accommodations available, such as numerous bed and breakfasts, with the other closest accommodation existing in Duncan. This led to a high level of leakage from the community. Leakage effect is a concept within the tourism industry which refers to revenue created from tourism which is then not spent in the host community (Leakage Effect, 2007).

The Best Western was strategically constructed to prevent leakage from Chemainus by being located only a short walk from the main downtown area, across from the Mt. Brenton Golf Course, as well as only a small stroll from the theatre. The Best Western has a spa, fitness club, indoor pool and mountain views to cater to the needs of a variety of visitors and is open year-round to encourage tourists to visit Chemainus during all its seasons. Additionally the Best Western has paired with the golf course and theatre to offer "Stay for your Play" packages which combines a short or long term stay at the inn with your choice of golfing or theatre tickets (Theatre, n.d.).

The building of the Best Western was the most recent tourism development scheme within Chemainus. It was initially successful, however the main attraction of the murals has faded for visitors, leaving the community's tourist figures neither increasing nor decreasing (Personal Communications, March 10, 2007). This has left the community asking "What Now?" and once again the community has come together to start the planning process to develop more initiatives which will increase visitor numbers within Chemainus and raise the level of visitor expenditures inside the community.

The Progression of Community-Driven Planning

Chemainus Planning Chemainus

In 1999, over 350 residents of the Chemainus came together to determine the future development of their community (Welcome to North Cowichan, 2007). The volunteers were people from all walks of life and were given voice to create a document that would be used as the background document for a larger project concerning an official community plan for the North Cowichan region (Welcome to North Cowichan, 2007). During the planning process, the community members were required to discuss and produce a collective vision on what qualities and values the residents of Chemainus valued for both the long term and short term subsistence of their community (Welcome to North Cowichan, 2007).

Some of the most important items that stemmed from the Chemainus planning Chemainus (2007), exercise included the creation of community value statement which was as follows

“Chemainus residents describe their vision as one of a friendly community proud of its history and small town character; where people of all ages and backgrounds are respected. Residents enjoy outdoor recreational opportunities while having careful regard for the environment, and value a variety of employment opportunities” (Welcome to Cowichan, 2007).

The process took four months, during the months of March to June, which consisted of workshops and one evening meeting (Welcome to Cowichan, 2007). The Municipality of North Cowichan (2007) identified the following goals for managing change and basic community development practices as shown in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2

Goals for Managing Change

- Maintain "small town" qualities.
- Provide opportunities for a wider range of services (public and private) to residents - not just tourists.
- Ensure we remain proud of our attractive community.
- Protect and enhance the environment.
- Allow for economic diversity. Avoid reliance on single industry.
- As growth occurs, ensure we have proper access to the Highway and other communities.
- Remove government barriers to reasonable development.
- When decisions are made, political leaders should have the support of a well-informed public.

(Welcome to Cowichan, 2007)

Table 3

Community Development Principles/Objectives

- Do not aggressively control growth. Rather, monitor and adjust as necessary any pressures on infrastructure.
- Provide for a compact community with a variety of housing choices, but with a trend to a higher overall density than currently exists. However, keep the community to a human scale by restricting building size and bulk.
- Develop integrated mixed use neighbourhoods allowing for walking access to a variety of services (parks, schools, local stores, etc.).
- Ensure a growing respect and stewardship ethic for the environment.
- Provide for access to and along the waterfront.
- Make provision to acquire key parcels of land that may be a resource for future residents and visitors.
- Develop a linked network of trails and paths throughout the community.
- Encouraging people to use other means of transportation than simple reliance on the automobile.
- Allow for industry and business to expand by providing convenient access to major transportation corridors (highways, ports).

(Welcome to Cowichan, 2007)

Once the process was reviewed and opinions were taken by participants, it was then used as a document for the next step in the community planning process – the Official Community Plan (OCP).

North Cowichan Official Community Plan

An Official Community Plan (OCP) is a “statement of objectives and policies to guide decisions on planning and land use management, within the area covered by the plan (usually an entire municipality or parts of regional districts); An OCP also establishes how a local government will grow” and manage the area socially, economically, and environmentally (Urban Growth and Development: Smart Bylaws Guideline Glossary, 2007). The North Cowichan Official Community Plan was created in 2002 as the need for better, more permanent vision and growth guidelines arose for the future of the North Cowichan region (which encompasses Chemainus).

The planning process for the North Cowichan OCP included a high level of community consultation, such as 10 neighbourhood meeting discussions and household questionnaires which were completed in spring 1999. A draft was then formed and community evaluations of the draft through 12 workshops, were conducted by spring 2000 (Welcome to Cowichan, 2007). From there, the secondary draft plan was sent to adjoining municipalities, First Nations, Provincial Agencies, and School Districts before reaching final approval and being finalized (Welcome to Cowichan, 2007). Throughout the process of the OCP, the municipality was given assistance from outside sources, including the University of British Columbia School of Landscape Architecture who “selected the North Cowichan as a design studio on Open Spaces Planning” (Welcome to Cowichan, 2007).

All of the small communities within the Municipality of North Cowichan were all being faced with the same challenges associated with development; therefore, the municipality first clearly identified seven challenges and then worked the OCP around the challenges to ensure they were all adequately addressed. The seven challenges are as follows in Table 4.

Table 4

Challenges for North Cowichan Communities

1. Rural versus urban development - to create solutions using rural-friendly approaches for the rural issues, and to apply modern urban concepts when addressing urban needs.
2. Suburban zoning classification – to clearly identify which of these areas can truly be dealt with as rural areas and which are better classified as urban (zoning of low and high density areas)
3. Urban character - to create new developments that foster healthy communities, fit in well with the surrounding area and are created in an open and participatory process
4. Neighbourhood disparities - to encourage and support each community in developing its own unique character, while at the same time ensuring that there is not an imbalance or inequality between neighbourhoods in the composition of residents, housing choices and municipal services and amenities
5. Affordable housing - to foster a generous and trusting spirit among existing residents in all of the District’s neighbourhoods, and at the same time provide increased municipal attention (and assurances) that the siting and design of new developments will be compatible with existing neighbourhoods
6. Industrial and commercial development - to continue to encourage employment generating new businesses in locations and in forms that minimize impact on the rural character and natural environment
7. Leadership (for elected officials) - to listen to local concerns while keeping the residents involved and informed about the initiatives and issues affecting the community

(Welcome to Cowichan, 2007)

These challenges acted as guidelines for the development of the OCP, with an integration of the community visions.

Since the inception of the Official Community Plan in 2002, the community has been faced with strong tourism development pressures; the community is seeking more outside assistance to further their community planning and to review and amend their OCP.

Chemainus and Smart Growth

To deal with some of the pressures associated with development and growth Chemainus partnered with Smart Growth BC to address concerns that the citizenry voiced. “Smart Growth is a provincial non-governmental organization devoted to fiscally, socially and

environmentally responsible land use and development. Working with community groups, businesses, municipalities and the public, to advocate for the creation of more liveable communities in British Columbia” (Smart Growth BC, 2007). In September of 2006 a smart growth facilitator arrived in Chemainus and conducted a community workshop on the smart growth principals.

The focus of the workshop was the many common issues that small towns around the province face and to potentially identify some smart growth ideas to use in the future planning of Chemainus (Welcome to Cowichan, 2007). The Municipality of North Cowichan (2007) highlights the local challenges that were mentioned at the September 2006 workshop. These challenges include:

- water quality and supply
- sustainable development
- self sufficiency
- communication
- planned development
- commercial growth (shops)
- making Chemainus a year-round community
- balancing the natural beauty with growth
- keeping green space
- health care
- preventing urban sprawl
- transportation
- affordable housing
- youth employment

Further in-depth information regarding the Smart Growth workshop is provided in Appendix B which looks at other issues such as external factors in future decision making and a list of potential future plans for the community.

Official Community Plan Review

Rural tourism community development is always in a constant state of change; therefore the Official Community Plan will go through a comprehensive review approximately every five years, while in the meantime amendments can be made to address specific issues that arise (Welcome to Cowichan, 2007). Although the plan was initially created

very forward looking, as much as 20 to 50 years with special considerations for growth rates, technological changes and servicing requirements, there are always unexpected elements that need to be attended to (Welcome to Cowichan, 2007). It is a priority to ensure that the Official Community Plan remains applicable and valid through continuous monitoring and periodic revision (Welcome to Cowichan, 2007). This will take into consideration tourism development challenges or special initiatives that the community discovers or anticipates. 2007 marks the first five-year revision of the Official Community Plan. Due to the challenges and potential conflict associated with the future development proposals, this revision is very timely.

The evolution stages of community planning for Chemainus directly guided the tourism growth and development initiatives which the residents and key community stakeholders envisioned for their community. Through utilizing appropriate planning steps, such as the creation of the OCP and integrating Smart Growth strategies, Chemainus was able to focus development around resident's values, wants and needs. Additionally, through the community-driven planning stages, land use planning for tourism development was also addressed. Land use planning is a recurring issue in tourism development; consequently through concentrating on planning of their community, they were able keep their community within the limits of acceptable change. The limits of acceptable change addresses what kinds of resources and social conditions are acceptable and determines action steps to protect and achieve those conditions (USDA Forest Service, 2004). This enabled the acceptance of controlled future expansion and tourism development proposals to be steered by the community.

Future Initiatives

Chemainus has started an adaptive planning process and has started creating policies for its future tourism growth and development. According to Chemainus Planning Chemainus (2007), the community has outlined five objectives to be considered when managing their future growth, which include:

- Encourage growth for short term stimulation of the economy
- Anticipate the provincial average growth rate over the long term
- Use growth to achieve other goals and community objectives
- Manage the location of growth to preserve important natural features
- Maintain a small town scale and feeling despite population increases

These guidelines were established by the community and will help direct future initiatives and decision making for Chemainus. Some future initiatives for Chemainus include the Echo Heights subdivision development, the development of a marina paired with construction of condos, and additions to the community tourism product through the Chemainus Festival Theatre. Some of the developments have seeded future progression of tourism in Chemainus.

Echo Heights and the Urban Containment Boundary

Directly addressing the limits of acceptable change, one of Chemainus's forward-looking growth strategies is to manage its town boundary expansion. To do this they have created an Urban Containment Boundary (UCB) which focuses on town infill rather than town boundary expansion onto surrounding areas. Policies for Chemainus growth through the UCB encourage subdivisions of land parcels which are one hectare or larger to accommodate mixed housing thus increasing the density per hectare, and one policy on discouraging substructure developments, such as sewage, beyond the Urban Containment Boundary (Chemainus Planning Chemainus, 2007).

The UCB is a large issue within the community as residents support it; however developers are pushing the policy with expansion proposals outside the boundary. The proposal is to develop a subdivision which has been used over the decades by residents as informal parkland. Echo Heights is not a tourism development initiative in Chemainus; however, due to the disagreements and petitions against the proposal from residents, this has spurred the community to form the Chemainus Residents Association.

Chemainus Residents Association

The Chemainus Residents Association (CRA) is an important step in the evolution of tourism development for the community as there will be a citizen's advisory committee

to act as a “voice” for residents regarding tourism development issues. The Chemainus Residents Association is a non-profit organization and its purpose is to “engage residents of Chemainus in the planning of their community by providing an organization from which they can receive current information, lobby government, and submit opinions” (Constitution, n.d.) According to the Chemainus Residents Association Constitution (n.d.), these submitted opinions must relate to

- Development activities of the Municipality of North Cowichan within the boundaries of Chemainus and its adjacent areas
- Protecting the quality of life with respect to, but not limited to;
 - Parks; their size and access to them
 - Public and free ocean for eshore access and development of same
 - Air quality
 - Zoning and density
 - Water quality and availability
 - Implementation of Smart Growth planning
 - Roads and infrastructure
 - Protection of our environment
 - Protection of wildlife within the above areas
 - Waste management
 - Any other issues that we believe affects quality of life

By Chemainus forming an organization to act as a voice for the residents, tourism development will be steered by the residents. This is a very important step in the evolution of Chemainus’s tourism development as the community will continually have input in future growth, such as with the marina and condo development.

Marina and Condos

For years the residents of Chemainus have discussed the benefits of having a marina within the community. A marina development would allow boaters the opportunity to stop in and enjoy the community of Chemainus. Randy Huber stated in 2007 that

“It’s frustrating to hear that boaters are unable to stop in Chemainus and enjoy what the community has to offer. Currently, we are unable to meet the needs of boaters who would like nothing better than to spend a day or two in Chemainus” (Chemainus Courier, 2007, p. 1).

Former North Cowichan Mayor, Rex Hollett stated in 2007 that “we’ve done all we can to get people here by car, bus or motor home. Now we need to get them here by boat,” (Chemainus Courier, March 2007, p. 1) Chemainus residents realize the value added tourism dollars that can be brought into their community by making their community accessible by water. Chemainus resident, Peter Brady, in 2007 stated that “when people get off a bus they spend twenty bucks, when they get off a boat they spend two hundred bucks” (Chemainus Courier, 2007, p. 1).

The proposed Chemainus Quay project would be located on Chemainus Bay and would offer condominiums on the foreshore, parking, public waterfront walkway, causeway to a small island with a ramp, floating breakwater with concealed parking, residential units, restaurant and lounge, and a five-fingered marina (Association of Marine Industries, 2006). The marina would provide 4,500 linear feet of moorage space, both year-round and temporary mooring (Association of Marina Industries, 2006). A marina concept drawing is provided in Appendix C. With a future tourism development project of this scope, Chemainus will have an additional waterfront attraction which will draw more tourists to the community. As well, locals will have a higher appreciation of the waterfront and there will be an increase in value-added tourism for the community.

Chemainus Festival Theatre Expansion

As previously mentioned, the Chemainus Festival Theatre is a driving force for the tourism industry in Chemainus. The popularity of the theatre is steadily increasing so management is seeking to expand. For instance, the 25th Anniversary of the Theatre is from April to September 2007; therefore, the Chemainus Festival Theatre will offer street theatre shows hoping to encourage people to come and stay in Chemainus, while spending more money downtown (Personal Communications, March 10, 2007). If the street theatre proves to be successful, then the Chemainus Festival Theatre will make street shows downtown a fixture in their tourist product.

The theatre has already extended this past year by refocusing their artistic vision. According to the Chemainus Theatre Festival (n.d.)

“Artistic Director, Jeremy Tow, recently lead the company in the process of refocusing the artistic vision of the Chemainus Theatre Festival. This process took several months, many discussions, and finally, board approval...but we are pleased to say that the end result was embraced with great enthusiasm. In the future, CTF will produce seasons of plays that are chosen from the classics (including comedies, farces, dramas, musicals, mysteries, melodramas and operettas), from modern award winning scripts (including Canadian and International award winners), and adaptations from classic literature.”

The theatre will also refocus the theme of their shows and artistic vision and explore stories that celebrate hope, love, forgiveness and reconciliation (About the Festival, n.d.) As indicated by the Chemainus Theatre Festival (n.d.) by refocusing on the type of shows of the calibre described above, the festival hopes to reflect a company that is aware of the social, cultural and spiritual responsibility art has in society.

The Chemainus Theatre Festival is once again leading the way in Chemainus, building community pride, awareness, and responsibility. Once a stronger sense of pride and responsibility is established, sustainable tourism development will eventually follow.

Conclusion

The evolution of tourism development in Chemainus has gone through significant changes through the years. Chemainus started as a community that made the necessary transition from a primary resource based economy to having a more diversified industry, which included tourism. As the tourism industry grew in the community, Chemainus’s tourism product grew with it, offering more options to entice travelers to stay longer and spend more. These important options included the opening of the Chemainus Theatre Festival and the creation of the Best Western Festival Inn. Today, Chemainus is looking at locally supported tourism options that will allow for further expansion and local economic gain, but in a way that benefits the entire community.

Chemainus has long been a leader in rural tourism development and will once again be looked upon for creative ideas for tourism development, such as growth in value-added tourism products through expansion of existing amenities and resources, such as the waterfront marina concept and the Chemainus Theatre Festival. With the continued community-driven planning and the evolution of community-driven tourism development, Chemainus is showing why it is considered by many to be a tourism industry leader and “the little town that did.”

Discussion questions:

1. What lessons can be learned about Chemainus and the development of tourism in a former resource-dependent community?
2. What have been the factors that have most contributed to its current status in the industry?
3. Debate to what extent Chemainus has been successful at becoming a destination.
4. Once an initial product is developed and visitors know about a tourism destination like Chemainus, a different stage of the destination lifecycle is reached. Diagram and discuss what sort of strategies a community or destination needs to pursue in this stage of the lifecycle.
5. How do the various planning approaches emphasized in this case link with sustainable tourism development?

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Appendix A

Map Location of Chemainus





Appendix B

Chemainus and Smart Growth – Community Workshop Results 2006

1. What do you think are the best things about the community of Chemainus?
 - close to ocean
 - away from highway
 - big enough for most basic services and shops
 - small enough to walk to services, entertainment
 - the beach
 - good road to big places
 - fresh air
 - climate
 - small town
 - trees
 - peaceful, relatively safe small town atmosphere
 - Echo Heights forest for recreation, education, sanctuary
 - only have to travel to Duncan or Nanaimo every couple of months
 - feels safe
 - beautiful
 - friendly
 - beautiful homes and gardens
 - natural beauty

- community school
- friendly, involved, active community
- art appreciation
- hermit trail, land diversity, train track hikes
- geography
- size
- best of everything
- great quality of life
- home
- small country place by the sea

2. What do you think are the greatest challenges that need to be addressed here?

- need help communicating and working together
- water quality and supply (2)
- sustainable development that recognizes the needs and preferences of those already living here
- the town is not self-sufficient, everyone has to drive (or at least chooses to drive) to neighbouring towns for many items
- town is highly residential – worker bees can't afford to live in the town they work in
- most people here and potential newcomers want low density and preservation of green space
- more positive communication
- planned development
- commercial growth (shops)
- making Chemainus a year-round community
- attracting light industry to support tax base
- developing vacant spaces and derelict business premises
- balancing the natural beauty with growth
- challenging the monster home mentality
- keeping green space
- health care – sick people do better if they can be near their family
- preventing urban sprawl
- preserving adequate green space close to core
- transportation
- affordable housing
- youth employment
- food sustainability
- child care
- downtown revitalization (move out bus drop/carpark and create a square with little shops and cafes with living areas above, a fountain and trees)
- would like to see cobblestone streets and less traffic in town, more like a village and less touristy
- sea walk around the harbour and make Rotary Park attractive

3. What external factors should be considered when planning for the future of the community of Chemainus?

- water shortages (2)
- lack of nature (birds) – trees being cut at alarming rate
- lack of affordable housing
- lack of family housing
- infrastructure (sewer, garbage, roads)
- industry in decline
- tourism is seasonal
- intensity

- water supply (2)
- planned development
- commercial growth (shops)
- cheap transportation to Victoria
- demographics
- preservation of creeks and other wild areas within town
- development sufficient to support public transit
- water – respect Chemainus River aquifer
- maintaining diversity in the face of changing demographics
- Vancouver Island is turning into one big retirement community
- pressure of development for retirees is making housing unaffordable for average-income working families
- natural resources
- environmental issues
- transportation

4. Thirty years from now, will you be living here? What kinds of things would you like to see happen in the community of Chemainus between now and then? (e.g. new kinds of development, activities, examples from other towns)

- good community centre
- good access to beach (2)
- more nature preserved
- for me it would be no fun to live in a place without ready access to natural places (habitat). These places are threatened in Chemainus.
- eco-village, artisan village
- trolley cars through town
- housing opportunities

5. In the community of Chemainus, which do you think is the most important Smart Growth Principle, and why?

1. mixed land uses	2
2. compact, complete neighbourhoods	3
3. transportation choices	1
4. Diverse housing opportunities	2
5. Infill and redevelopment of existing areas	2
6. preserve open spaces, natural beauty	6
7. protect and enhance agricultural lands	1
8. utilize smarter and cheaper infrastructure	1
9. foster a unique community identity	3
10. nurture engaged citizens	

Appendix C

Marina Development Concept

