



Gala Dinner and Auction/Chamber Election

The Chamber held another successful Gala Dinner and Auction Saturday November 1st at the Prestige Lakeside Resort. The Board of Directors of the Nelson and District Chamber of Commerce would like to sincerely thank all of the businesses and organizations that contributed to the success of this years fundraiser. Every year the business community is approached by dozens of worthwhile groups and organization to donate to their fund raising cause. All of these groups rely heavily on the support of the local community, in efforts to help them offset yearly expenses. Our business community should be commended for their ongoing contributions towards these causes. The Nelson and District Chamber of Commerce holds one fund raising event each year, and our membership always responds with tremendous support. Remember when you are doing your shopping during this important Christmas retail season that you first think about your local community. These are the businesses that provide the ongoing support to non profit groups and organizations, schools and sporting organizations so that our kids can take part in group activities, and non profits can provide the crucial community support services.

Thank you again for the continuing support of the Nelson and District Chamber of Commerce Gala Dinner and Auction. Hats off to the Prestige a wonderful meal, thanks to Simone Varey and Cliff Maddix, and Reg Clarkson. And Special thanks to the key auction organizers from the Chamber Marg Craig, Angie Zeilinski, and Karen Van Vogt.

Chamber Election Dinner December 3rd Hume Hotel

The Nelson and District Chamber of Commerce will be hosting our annual Election Dinner on Wednesday November 3rd at the Hume Hotel. The Chamber has been fortunate to have had some key members of the business community step forward to play a role in the Chamber.

Your Chamber is currently involved in a number of important economic development initiatives. These include the Nelson Economic Development Partnership with the City of Nelson and Central Kootenay Community Futures, Invest Kootenay, The CP Rail Restoration project, as well as coordinating the formation of the Nelson Kootenay Lake Tourism Partnership. The Chamber, in partnership with the Nelson and District Credit Union and the Nelson Business Association has also recently launched a Shop Local media marketing campaign to coincide with the important Christmas retail season.

These and other key initiatives your Chamber is involved with have the potential to greatly influence our region's economic well being. We look forward to you joining us;

Wednesday December 3rd Hume Hotel

5:30pm-6:30pm No Host Bar

6:30pm-7:25pm Dinner

7:30pm Semi Annual Meeting and Election

Tickets to the Christmas Dinner and Annual Chamber of Commerce Election Dinner are \$25 plus gst. Contact the Nelson and District Chamber of Commerce at 250 352-3433 or by email at info@discovernelson.com

All Chamber of Commerce members are entitled to one vote per membership. If you would like to become a part of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce, you need to drop into the Chamber and pick up a nomination form and have it completed and back in the office by Wednesday November 19th.

The mission of the Nelson and District Chamber of Commerce is to be the voice of business and its membership, while also pursuing economic development for the greater good of the entire area. The Chamber of Commerce catchment area encompasses Kaslo, the Slokan Valley, and to the East Shore.

Shop Local Marketing Campaign

Supporting the local economy helps out everybody, even if you're not in the retail business. The reasons we live in Nelson and area are as diverse as the people that live here. Nelson comes complete with history, culture, natural beauty, and a small-town energy that is both powerful and positive. One of the worlds best outdoor playgrounds, and an entrepreneurial spirit second to no other community, providing a diverse local economy. Nelson is truly an area where opportunity meets lifestyle.

We often over look the need for a strong local economy, and the support of our small business sector. Small business is big business in our region. Anyone who owns a business knows it isn't easy. Let's face it, generating sales, meeting payroll, serving customers, maintaining inventory, and doing all of this well enough to earn sufficient profit to keep operating takes a lot of skill and energy.

Last year, the Nelson and District Chamber of Commerce launched a Shop Local campaign to counteract the effects of a soaring Canadian dollar and the negative impact of cross border shopping. While Cross border shopping is always going to be a lure, the recent economic meltdown of the financial sector has many people tightening their spending. It is our belief that now is another critical time to keep the dollars circulating in our local economy. The Nelson and District Credit Union learned of our initiative and jumped on board with a significant \$2500.00 contribution. Tom Murray of the NDCU notes that *"a strong diverse small business sector is vital to our region. Keeping money in our community sustains more jobs, helps fund more local services, and encourages neighbourhood improvements. Local businesses contribute significant dollars to local foundations, non profit organizations and local sports teams. As the Nelson and District Credit Union slogan states, "Logically...Locally.*

The Nelson Business Association was instrumental in contacting several businesses with word of the shop local campaign, and we

would like to thank these businesses for providing additional financial support:

Street Clothes Named Desire
Phoenix Computers
Touchstone's Museum
Chahko-Mika Mall
Mountain Baby
Ripping Giraffe
Annie's Fashions
Valhalla Pure
McLaughlin's Printers and Stationers
The Craft Connection
Pharmasave Nelson
Hall Printing
Feelings with Flowers
Hippersons Hardware
Remedy's RX
Shoe's for the Soul
RHC Insurance
Otter Books
Culinary Conspiracy
Lonnie's Lingerie
Cottonwood Kitchens
Kootenai Moon Furniture
Silver Fern Framing
Glass House Optical
ROAM
Natural Way Home
Sears Nelson
Kootenay Co-Op
Maglio's Building Centre
Cotton's For Her and Him
Save On Foods
Nelson Toyota
Gaia Rising

When you factor in the cost of travel, meals and accommodations for out of area shopping excursions, it doesn't appear to be even remotely worthwhile. We have wonderful retail, accommodation, dining and service providers in Nelson and area. If you find what you want locally, and the price is competitive. Buy it! It's a shame that some local businesses disappear because they are unable to balance the delicate expense/revenue challenge. Shopping locally is a great first step. Remember you can keep your town in business, by keeping your business in town.

The Municipal and Regional elections take place Saturday November 15th

The Chamber of Commerce co hosted a Nelson Mayoral forum on Wednesday evening featuring the David Aaron, John Dooley, Gord McAdams and Phillip McMillan. The Board of Directors felt it was important to get some feedback from those running for City Council as well as Area E. Electoral Area F RDCK seat was filled by Ron Mickel by acclamation. The Chamber posed three questions to the candidates and their response follow:

Question #1

In your opinion, what do you feel are the top issues facing small businesses in our region? What policies or initiatives can a City Council or Regional Government implement that would be most beneficial to ensure a healthy diverse business community?

Bob Adams:

The top issue facing both small and large business in our area is a shortage of qualified employees. This has resulted in small business owners working 7 days a week in order to remain open. Alternatively, other businesses are closing early or not opening one or two days a week. I have noticed several business establishments have permanent signs seeking employees. Given the economy, hours that you are not open relate in a loss to your business.

I consider the lack of affordable housing a serious problem to the business sector. If your employees are unable to live in this community it is difficult to retain their services. I am committed to working on and with local groups to address this problem. We also require business, developers and private citizens to step up and assist us to move forward on this agenda. The city has about \$75,000.00 in a fund and also requires all developers to make donations to this fund, by units or doors.

Kim Charlesworth:

Right now we have a significant economic downturn looming; climate change and high fuel costs will soon affect every business and force the need to rethink how we do business; workforce demographics and lack of affordable housing are causing a shortage of workers and individuals willing to take over existing businesses as owners retire. These are all huge issues.

I have referred to the 3 legged stool of sustainability a couple of times in this pre-election question time. If we take steps to strengthen the social and environmental legs, it also helps strengthen the economic leg. By strengthening the ability of people to live here (through affordable housing strategies), we feed the economy, provide workers and small business owners. By encouraging leadership in adapting to our changing world, we create stability for our economic future. By encouraging businesses and residents to buy local, shop local, source local we address multiple issues. In addition, Municipal government has the ability to influence trends through taxation and other fees. We can look at that structure to make sure it is promoting healthy business behaviour for the future and discouraging business behaviour that is unsustainable. The City's role is also in bringing the all partners to the table and in leveraging grant monies, as it currently does through the NEDP.

Robin Cherbo:

The top issue facing small business is the same that is facing the City which is the uncertain economic times. We have a balanced budget allocated 53,000 dollars to a Regional Marketing Strategy. As well the City has a number of programs & policies with grants to support local groups along with supporting tourism, heritage and arts and culture which are a benefit to the local economy.

The Cities budget allocations that includes local spending for infrastructure upgrades, parts and supplies, etc., benefits local business also.

Deb Kozak:

Three current issues I'm aware of are succession planning, employee attraction and retention and housing affordability.

It is critical to the health of our region to have a strong business sector with a broad array of services available to communities. As business owners look toward retirement it's sometimes difficult for them to find qualified, interested people to take over their businesses. As a result communities could lose important services. As well, some employers are experiencing difficulty in attracting qualified, experienced workers. This is affecting all business sectors from the trades to service industries. The Nelson Economic Development Partnership is working with businesses through such vehicles as the Invest Kootenay program and with educators like Selkirk College to address these two issues. The NEDP includes the Nelson and District Chamber of Commerce, Community Futures and the City of Nelson. The City provides direct funding to the Chamber and NEDP. I'd like to see the Regional District become a partner as well.

The issue of housing affordability has become a critical issue for local businesses. The NEDP has identified this as a priority issue this year. If people cannot find accommodation or afford it, they are unable to live and work here. It is imperative to have adequate labour force housing. I am actively working with a diverse group of people from the business sector, regional district, developers, Selkirk College, non-profits and others to develop a regional housing strategy.

The City of Nelson has seed money available in its affordable housing reserve to assist in addressing this issue. Local governments can also identify available land for affordable projects, negotiate affordable units with new developments and look at current bylaws and policies to ensure they create and retain affordable spaces and leverage funding from sources such as the CBT. Good ideas and action are needed from business owners to create solutions to this issue.

Donna MacDonald:

The issues facing local small businesses are shared by small businesses across Canada. Many of them are labour force issues, such as specific skill shortages. Or recruitment and retention, especially of entry-level employees.

Local government has an indirect role in addressing those issues. Creating an affordable, vibrant, culturally-rich community where people want to live has been a longstanding economic development goal. Now we're somewhat victims of our success.

We have become a destination community but in the process we're seeing what has been called 'economic evictions' – people with more modest means being unable to afford a home in Nelson. That can make long-term, reliable employees hard to find. While housing is a provincial responsibility, clearly local government has a role to play. In Nelson, many initiatives are underway but need to be coordinated by the City to ensure that projects address real needs in the most responsive, cost-effective way, and so that no opportunities for provincial funding are missed.

The global financial crisis will be creating a whole new wave of issues for small businesses. We won't escape the repercussions, but I don't think we see clearly yet what they will be. This crisis also signals more to come in this interlocked world. Climate change and energy price increases over time as cheap oil reserves are consumed will create more issues. Regional efforts to develop a community with reduced GHG emissions and reduced carbon-dependency will also help small businesses to be more resilient. Certainly, efforts like the current Buy Local campaign are excellent, and City Hall should make a practice of doing just that. The creation of the NEDP has provided a vehicle through which all sectors of the economic community can come together, and identify actions to address concerns. You don't want City Council figuring that out!

The NEDP must succeed as an efficient, co-operative model.

Ian Mason:

Business retention and expansion, employee retention, economic volatility, municipal tax burden.

Nelson is an attractive destination. The challenge is to ensure that maximum benefit can be achieved from tourism activity.

The recent city contribution to the Nelson and Kootenay Lake Destination Marketing Organization is a good initiative to grow the pie. Prior to this, support for the Roger Brooks report to enhance this sector has been a good initiative to build on what we have.

Ensuring our commercial core infrastructure is in good repair greatly assists our commercial sector. If access to stores is unavailable due to prolonged repairs or system failures, hardship to a business is ensured.

Encouraging regional taxation support for current city funded regional services would assist in alleviating the burden on our commercial tax base. This is an area of opportunity for not just the city, but the region as a whole.

Childcare initiatives such as the joint project between the city and province to create childcare space in the City Hall building should further be explored to support employee retention.

Margaret Stacey:

The top issue to me is the people-cost of doing business. We have to pay people more to keep them and allow them to thrive here without pricing our businesses out of the market, we have to find a way to house them nearby, we have to move to training them for the imminent gaps, and ensure succession in necessary trades and skills.

So we as a community don't favour large franchises and chains that will bury a small business competitively or keep wages too low. We encourage small-scale commercial

to be included in development. We are currently looking at a regional housing strategy that will encourage the provision of entry-level and affordable housing. We encourage our educational bodies to keep an eye on the community small business needs and react with course streams that will sustain people here and fill the gaps in industry. Through our sustainability discussions we have identified new business needs in the face of the changes to come, and the community as a whole is beginning to think imaginatively too. We have also supported the Nelson Economic Development Partnership, the Cultural Development Commission and the Heritage Advisory Commission as think tanks to consider the issues facing businesses, as well as funding the Visitor Information Centre.

Question #2

The Nelson and District Chamber of Commerce has reached a Memorandum of Understanding with CP Rail that could lead to the acquisition and restoration of Nelson's historic rail station. The Station project will fully restore one of the area's most treasured landmarks, designated in 1992 as a "Class A" heritage structure due to its historical and architectural significance. Inside the building, a full service Regional Visitor Information Centre will complement a Regional Interpretive Centre that showcases the regions character, businesses, investment opportunities, heritage and cultural diversity. The Centre will feature a special "Made in the Kootenays" marketing showcase for high margin value added export business. Next door, new offices for the Chamber of Commerce, the Nelson Economic Development Partnership, and a new Regional Destination Marketing Organization will be housed. Private sector offices and cultural development offices will fill the remaining portions of the building, adding to the vibrancy of this new place of business. This project is estimated to cost approximately 4 million dollars to restore.

Are you in favour of supporting the revitalization of the CP Rail Station and in what manner?

Bob Adams:

I support the revitalization of the CP Rail Station. The station received an "A" classification in the 1977 study "Nelson: A Proposal for Urban Heritage Conservation". It was this study that began Nelson's Downtown Revitalization Program. An "A" Classification is defined as a building of outstanding or excellent heritage value or significance. The CP Rail Station, the Superintendents House at 420 Railway Street and the Nelson Coke and Gas Works are the only "A" classified buildings in the industrial area. The city could look at providing seed money that will enable the Chamber of Commerce to leverage additional funds from the provincial and federal governments.

Robin Cherbo:

As I first came to Nelson in 1957 and arrived at the fully operational CPR Station, I am in favor of supporting the revitalization of CPR station by personally contributing and promoting local funding drives when it becomes appropriate.

The City has already proposed spending funds to use the CPR station area as a Nelson Transit turn-a-round and transferring location and I am sure there would be grant application available from all levels of government.

Kim Charlesworth:

Obviously it makes sense to support this venture – the question is not if, but how. I repeat myself by saying I believe the City's role is in helping to bring the partners to the table and in leveraging grant monies. This venture will showcase and benefit the whole region, and so requires regional partners. A key responsibility of the City needs to be working towards regional cooperation. I think the City is also well positioned to work with the Chamber in leveraging both Heritage and Tourism grant monies from the Provincial and Federal governments.

Deb Kozak:

I was a Chamber Director when this idea was first brought to the table and am very happy to see it reach this stage. I support the completion of this project and know that it will take significant resources to see the vision through. I supported the sale of the land where the cur-

rent Chamber offices are housed and know that the resale of this property will assist substantially in revitalizing the CP Rail station. As the current liaison to the Heritage Commission, I'm also aware that the Chamber is eligible for grants from other levels of government to assist in this project and would support those applications. I also support the funding that the Chamber currently receives from the City of Nelson and would encourage greater participation from Regional District governments.

Lastly, when it gets to the finishing stages, I'm not too bad with a paint brush! I wish the Chamber the very best in completing this project and look forward to the grand opening.

Donna MacDonald:

I am completely in support of the CPR station revitalization project. It's such a longstanding dream in the community that I'm sure there's a lot of pent-up enthusiasm just waiting to bust out to make it happen.

How can the City assist? Certainly by making this project a priority when considering applying to funding programs and organisations. Once a comprehensive fundraising program is developed, I'm sure there will be other ways the City and City Council can help, through networking, lobbying, singing Irish folk songs at fundraisers, etc.

Whether direct financial support from the City is possible, I don't yet know and won't make promises. But I'm open to innovative ideas!

The City needs to be your biggest cheerleader on this project, helping to energize the community around this revitalization and all it will mean for us.

Ian Mason:

Yes! The city can continue to encourage our Regional District partners to participate in the Visitor Information Center to ensure that this valued service is sustained. If we create a regional service, we unlock the ability to tax the dams in the boundary expansion area. This would add sizeable taxation relief to our

community. I would commit to long term stable funding from the city to the Chamber of Commerce regarding the VIC.

Margaret Stacey:

I am totally in support of the CP Rail Station project and am looking forward to it's completion. When I look down there and remember it's past as a vibrant piece of our community, it is easy to imagine it's restoration. And that is the reason the fundraising for this project will be successful –it does capture the imagination. With the sale of the Hall Street building, the compounding of that money with senior government money, and of course fundraising, it has the potential to fly as Touchstones did. The city's contribution can be the enhanced gateway and railway square, and any other way we can help, as long as there is also regional contribution. But I do have a burning question to put to the Chamber, provoked by sustainability discussions ever since peak oil reared its head. If peak oil hits in 2016, what will be the future of tourism, dependant by nature on travelers? I've heard discussions about regional tourism, I've heard that peak oil won't really have an impact on us, I've heard that the world is never going to stop being full of questing travelers and we just have to be better, faster, and more interesting than other regions in our promotional strategies. Are you as an organization feeling threatened? Is so, have you given any thoughts to modifying your industry strategy accordingly? And as far as the train station goes, have you another plan for the venue in our community, either as a rail stop again or as a central clearing house for good and products?

Question #3

The Nelson and District Chamber of Commerce has been working to establish the Nelson Kootenay Lake Tourism Association. The ultimate goal is to form a Non Profit society that would run a Destination Marketing Organization. This partnership would be made up of Industry stakeholders including accommodators, tourism operators like White Water Winter Resort and Ainsworth Hotsprings as well as representatives from the Cultural Development Commission, The Nelson Economic Develop-

ment Partnership, The Nelson Regional Sports Council, The Chamber of Commerce and others. This has the support of the Nelson, Balfour and Kaslo Chambers as well as Municipal councils and Regional Directors. The economic development benefits of arts, cultural and outdoor adventure tourism opportunities are proven to support many business sectors. **Are you in support of the creation of the Nelson Kootenay Lake Tourism Partnership? Do you support increased levels of financial commitments to enhance services of a Regional Visitor Information Centre to support this initiative?**

Bob Adams:

The creation of the DMO (Destination Marketing Organization) that was approved at the November 3, 2008 Council Meeting has received start-up funds from the City. The completion of the revitalization of the CP Rail Station will house organizations such as The Chamber of Commerce, Nelson Economic Development Partnership and the regional Destination Marketing Association plus private sector offices and Cultural Development Office. All these offices support the same goals for our region. I fully support this initiative.

Robin Cherbo:

As I mention the next Council will be dealing with uncertain economic times and it will be a delegate balancing act to produce a fiscally responsible budget and still provide monies for public services, infrastructure upgrades and tax exemptions with out raising taxes over inflation rates.

I answer to your question it will take a regional approach for financial commitments from the City, Regional District, Province and Federal government. I fought hard on the last budget to keep funding levels for the Visitor Information Centre, so unless RDCK puts more money on the table it will be a difficult job to keep the funding levels as they are now. I have been told that 15,000 people from outside the city limits access City public services (for one example ... the Municipal Library) so unless these issues are addressed

with participation of some level regional funding and cooperation then it is going to be difficult to do any increase funding; especially as we do not know what is going to happen economically in 2009!!

Kim Charlesworth:

Funding for the Visitor Center has been a contentious issue for a number of years. The Center serves and benefits a broader geographic area than just the City of Nelson, but has received only minor funding from the Regional District areas. This has been a source of frustration. Again I'm repeating myself – if a venture will benefit the whole region, it requires regional partners and the City's role needs to be working tirelessly towards regional cooperation.

Also, I believe there needs to be a balance in supporting all the various business sectors, so funding and operational strategies need to consider which sectors benefit, in what ways, from what funding. When I am on Council I will do my homework to understand how the various funding strategies in place now interrelate, and how we can both streamline and improve them.

Deb Kozak:

At its last meeting, the City of Nelson approved over \$52,000 in provincial tourism funding for the creation of the DMO this year. The report provided included strong projections for generating funding in a short period of time. This, along with funding received from Regional District partners will provide a strong start to the formation and long term health of this regional initiative. I am very encouraged by the commitments of financial support from regional partners to the DMO and understand that this is seen as an ongoing addition to regional tourism plans. The Nelson Economic Development Partnership and Cultural Development Commission have identified tourism marketing as priorities in their strategic planning as well. Both of these groups receive funding from the City and will be strong partners to the DMO. As the 2010 Olympics draw closer, I anticipate that there will be more funding made available to tourism initiatives.

Donna MacDonald:

This sounds like a great initiative, which I've just been learning about. Before I could confidently answer your question, I would need more information. In particular, I'd like to review the business plan for the DMO, to understand how the partnership works and how costs/benefits have been allocated, as well as what the priority goals and milestones are. I think it is reasonable for taxpayers to be partners in this marketing initiative, but I need to understand the bigger picture before I can assess how big that role should be.

Ian Mason:

I'm reluctant to commit to increased funding on any initiative until all details are considered including where the increased funding money comes from, impact on taxation, and competing budget priorities. The DMO is an initiative that I believe Council should support, but without doing the due diligence work, it's difficult to say yes or no to increased funding levels.

Working with our regional partners to ensure funding is regional will help the city consider additional funding as any new Regional Service allows the city to Tax the Dams in the boundary expansion area. This is a great opportunity for the region as a whole!

Margaret Stacey:

We supported the creation of the Kootenay Lake Marketing Organization last week at council, and even though the funding avenues are not formally set up, we were in agreement to commit the balance of our \$ 59,305 of our community tourism funding to it.

As far as increased levels of financial commitment for a Regional Visitor Information Centre go, I would wait for more information on the funding partnerships before committing more than the \$77000 annually that we already provide. I would hope that it would be based on assessment or some other fair distribution of responsibility, and that there would be a considerable regional commitment.

Ramona Faust RDCK Director Area E:

Question #1

In your opinion, what do you feel are the top issues facing small businesses in our region? What policies or initiatives can a City Council or Regional Government implement that would be most beneficial to ensure a healthy diverse business community?

I believe employee attraction and recruitment is and will remain an issue and requires an aggressive integrated marketing campaign to attract young people to the area and keep our post secondary graduates here.

From a social planning perspective transportation and housing needs to be addressed within the strategy for recruitment, however I believe young people are resourceful and will find a way to live, work and play in the area if we can use the ski hill, beaches, mountain biking and educational institutions to attract them. Marketing a day in the life in Nelson and area!!

Aging out business owners is another reality. We need people to buy businesses.

A prolonged recession could hurt some aspects of our goods and service sector as people reduce their purchases of non essential items and holidays. Again packaging and remarketing the businesses in the area will become important. On a positive note our lower dollar will make a "shop local" campaign easier. A demographic shift can slow business activity. An aging population often purchases less. Summer home owners are not here to purchase products throughout the year.

I think that looking at a proactive strategy using Selkirk College's Research Chair to do some predictive marketing is important to staying ahead of the curve.

I would like to see value added wood products from our area marketed from timber framers to furniture designers. There are many exciting initiatives but they are not integrated into a package that states the Kootenays is a wood culture.

Regional and municipal governments can partner with the chamber and others organizations to create targeted marketing campaigns.

The Discover Nelson website is a great tool!

Taxes and water costs are high in the city and may be prohibitive to small businesses during an economic downturn. Any community planning needs to ensure that there are appropriate opportunities and areas for business activity both in Nelson and surrounding areas.

Government encouraging, and providing information for a "purchase local" program for proponents of new developments and openly modeling and marketing these policies would be great for the area.

Question #2

Are you in favour of supporting the revitalization of the CP Rail Station, and in what manner?

The idea is exciting and I support it in principle. I think the project indicates the sophistication of Nelson and area's business and arts community. I think the Chamber and the Visitor's Center needs a more central location than it currently has. It seems the operational business plan has been considered but I don't know in what detail.

Looking at the financial commitments required of the RDCK I don't know if monetary support is possible, however I would be very supportive of attracting funding to the project from a variety of sources.

I would want to know that chamber members support this direction due to the enormity of the undertaking and know that the project did not divert attention from other key issues for businesses considering that resources of this magnitude could be invested in a number of ways to brace the community in the event of an economic slump and build long term capacity within the business community.

Gary Kalinski RDCK Director Area E

In your opinion, what do you feel are the top issues facing small businesses in our region? What policies or initiatives can a City Council or Regional Government implement that would be most beneficial to ensure a healthy diverse business community?

I think the top issues for small business is costs associated with taxation and compliance and marketing assistance in attracting both qualified workers and in some cases more customers to the area from other places. I think that local government can best assist them by making sure that bylaws and rules that are put in by regional districts and municipalities etc. protect, but don't put additional strain on business by duplicating what is already been done by a different level of government. Also, I think we can assist in giving organizations working on regional marketing strategies a hand-up when necessary.

Are you in favour of supporting the revitalization of the CP Rail Station and in what manner?

The previous director has made a commitment and been a very strong supporter of this project. The rebuilding of the Nelson Train Station is integral to a broader rail strategy for bringing tourism into the community. This would not only help Nelson, but also areas like Harrop Procter and Balfour. The past director has already committed \$10,000.00 for planning funds and I would continue to support this project if elected.

With the creation of a DMO do you endorse increased levels of financial commitments to enhance services of a Regional Visitor Information Centre that would support this tourism initiative?

Area "E" has supported the DMO initiative and we have also supported the Tourism Information Centre in the past although not to the same levels as the City of Nelson. I think it is important that we continue to support it. The level of support needs to reflect the benefits received by the businesses in our area.

Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors

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