



Hornby Island Community
Economic Enhancement Corporation

**Hornby Island
Business Service Park
or
Trades and Services Area
or
Artisan Village**

**Time to re-envision a vintage concept?
*A HICEEC INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION PAPER***

The concept

The idea of creating a “business service park” in the centre of the Island has been around for a couple of decades or more. It was on the front burner in the mid-1990s when a proposal was developed and was almost ready to go. Concerns from some in the community halted this project. The concerns have since been addressed. The proposal, or something like it (a Trades and Services Area or Artisans' Centre) could now be revived if there is a critical mass of interest.

The 1990's proposal

In 1995, the Hornby Island Residents' and Ratepayers Association (HIRRA) and the Hornby Island Local Trust Committee (LTC) set up a joint task force to prepare a development plan for a Business Service Park on land zoned for light industrial use between the Fire Hall and the Recycling Depot.

This Task Force* carried out a site assessment and drafted a site plan. They initiated discussions with the Province which was prepared to sell the site. They prepared a business plan** and financial plan, formed a non-profit corporation (HICEEC) to administer the project and obtained support from the Islands Trust and the Regional District.

Why didn't it happen?

Despite the momentum, there was strong opposition from some in the community, particularly from residents of Galleon Beach who had concerns about the possibility of light industrial activities having an impact upon the groundwater resource. The Province's time-line for reserving the land for this project lapsed while these discussions were taking place.

In September 1996 the Task Force reported to the Local Trust Committee that the groundwater concerns need to be addressed. It also suggested that the scope of permitted light industrial activities was too broad and was thus causing alarm. These concerns were subsequently addressed.

*Task force: Michael McNamara, Sheila McDonnell, Tim Biggins, Judith Lawrence, Tony Quin

** Original business plan available from HICEEC

How concerns about groundwater protection were addressed

The Local Trust Committee commissioned a Groundwater Geochemistry Study of Hornby Island. This indicated that the site in question is likely within a groundwater recharge area. The Official Community Plan was amended to include the “public use” area in the centre of the Island in a Development Permit Area. This requires that any applications for development must meet specified guidelines for groundwater protection.

How concerns about “light industrial” uses were addressed

The Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw were amended to delete “light industrial” uses and instead allow “community trades and services”. The Bylaw defines “community trades and services” as “the creation of artisan products or the provision of services such as personal, business, food preparation, repair and professional services and may include associated retail sales”. This use is allowed in the whole of the “public use” area south of Central Road.

Advantages of the location

This location is distant from residential areas which reduces potential concerns from neighbourhoods. This area is becoming a more dynamic centre with Joe King and Community Hall activities joined by the Farmers' Market, the Round Room Cafe and the ARC and future plans for an Arts Centre.

Examples of businesses that could utilize such a location:

- businesses inappropriate for home occupations on residential lots (eg. saw mill, car repair);
- workshops/studios for renters who do not have secure tenures on residential lots;
- collective enterprises (eg. professional centre, wood-workers collective, community kitchen);
- artisan studios open for retail sales.

How the land could be secured

There are three possibilities.

- a Nominal Rent Tenure which would involve meeting specified selection criteria;
- a commercial lease which would have an annual cost of 5% of appraised land value;
- purchasing the land at market cost (if the Province makes it available for sale)

How this project could be carried out

Crown land zoned for the purpose could be leased or acquired by an existing or new organization. This organization would plan, service and manage the land on behalf of the community. Individual or collective businesses could sub-lease sites on the land. Although originally created as potential operator of a business service park, HICEEC has now moved on to embrace a larger mandate but could provide assistance to a new special-purpose organization. This could be:

- a society
- a co-operative or
- a non-profit corporation.

First steps?

HICEEC is making this information available to encourage discussion, realizing that some Islanders may not be aware of this option. If there is a core of people interested, HICEEC could assist in exploring how to move forward.

Interested? Contact HICEEC: ceec@telus.net