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GCIA Economic Questions Response – October 28, 2008

What is your current view of the economic environment in the Gibsons area?

The current economic environment in Gibsons is one of under utilization. There are loads and loads of business opportunities going begging in our community. Between now and well past the Olympics we are going to have an incredible marketplace, through the influx of residents into the Upper Gibsons and other emerging neighborhoods. We can create for ourselves, quite a healthy and self sustaining business environment – we just have to encourage our business community to continue think creatively and strategically.

What do you believe are the key economic opportunities in the Gibsons area and what would you do to maximize these opportunities?

The key areas to create economic sustainability is the continued encouragement of high tech, restaurant & service, retail and revitalizing Tourism with a fresh view to creating a vibrant culinary / Agra tourism base through encouraging the creation and competition of small wineries, breweries and distilleries.

What do you believe are the key economic challenges in the Gibsons area and what would you do to overcome these challenges?

The key problem challenging the business community is lack of a clear vision of what the Town of Gibsons is all about. For example: are we a tourist town? Are we a resource town? Are we a sleepy community? Are we a hotbed of high technology? We need to paint a picture of where we want to be and then go there.

How should government support the economic development function?

By encouraging economic sustainability and depth of products & services over quantity. Rather than trying to encourage big businesses to relocate here, we need to help new and existing businesses strengthen their bottom line and take on new employees, risks and initiatives. Also, we have to encourage a larger percentage local businesspeople to create “economic driver” enterprises that not only make full use of local labor and resources, but derive their revenues partially or wholly off the coast. In essence, to be a tiny, niche market export country – exporting our products and services to Vancouver and beyond.

How would you support the GCIA financially and philosophically?

I would be blunt tell the GCIA the same thing the Town told the Chamber - Support yourself. Then I would tell the GCIA to merge with the Gibsons Chamber and I would encourage them to lead the way in rallying the business community to back the Town and it’s vision – whatever it may ultimately be.

What role do you believe business should play in economic development in the Gibsons area?

Who else is going to create economic activity?

It appears taxpayers are not agreed on how to develop the Gibsons area. How would you manage this issue?

I would address this by getting away from the concept of ‘development’ and ‘growth’ as the only idea for creating wealth. Instead, I would work on defining, developing and articulating economic sustainability as a clearly achievable vision for an active, thriving future that everyone from a bed and breakfast operators to large operations could get behind and be interested in.