

WHAT DOES HICEEC, YOUR COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION, DO FOR YOU?

Our yearly projects are laid out in our Annual Plan under 4 main headings. The pandemic has upended this year's work plan: some projects have been put on hold, and involvement with public health guidance has taken center stage.

1 EXPAND THE ECONOMY

COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELL-BEING This year the major initiative of course has been to keep all members of our community safe. Concern for the health, economic security, and environment of our island has been, and continues to be, our focus.

As soon as the pandemic was declared, HICEEC brought together a team of government officials and community leaders who used a five-pronged approach to get the "stay at home" message out:

- * Press releases to radio, TV and print.
- * COVID-19 advisory banner on hornbyisland.com
- * Social media campaign on the Hornby Facebook and Instagram pages.
- * COVID-19 alert banner on www.hiceec.org with Islands Trust video featuring Casey & Finnegan.
- * Messaging on the Hornby Island Community Connections Facebook Group.

During the spring HICEEC guided the messaging for hornbyisland.com and board member Carlyn Bishop posted frequently to members of Facebook & Instagram asking them to "take a break from Hornby" and reiterating the Provincial Health Officer's recommendations.

HICEEC also initiated a weekly Zoom call with 50 representatives from all sectors of the community. The goals were to coordinate information about access to the rapidly changing government support programs, discuss reports from each sector, and consider how to implement Public Health and WorkSafeBC recommendations.

When the Premier lifted the State of Emergency this collaboration paid off: local businesses were ready with their WorkSafeBC plans in place so they could re-open safely.

HICEEC staff was also active on the HIRRA-organized COVID Response Team calls.

INTERNET We have been working toward upgrading Hornby's inadequate Internet infrastructure. A "shovel ready" detailed proposal for installing fibre optic Internet on Denman and Hornby has been completed. The proposal—officially, the Internet Digital Roadmap & Implementation Plan—was funded by HICEEC, Denman Works, Island Coastal Economic Trust and Northern Development Initiative Trust. The challenge now is finding the money to proceed. Seeking Angels!

SUPPORT FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS AND BUSINESS OPERATORS

* Small Business Loans: HICEEC facilitates a Micro Loan program that provides start-up and expansion money to small island enterprises, using funds provided by a group of local supporters.

* Spring & Fall Mixers: free public networking events for everyone who makes their living providing a service or running a business. If you are thinking of starting a new business this is a great place to make connections and get information.

* Hornby Island Business Network: a Facebook forum for information exchange.

* Hours of operation listing: This summer we assembled a directory of businesses' hours of operation, as things were changing so quickly.

* Internet Service to the Farmers' Market: We provide Internet for the vendors from our office.

* Visitor guide: HICEEC produces the Hornby Denman Visitor Guide. This familiar fold-out has maps and information about our community and the goods and services available here. It's funded by advertisers.

HISTRA In response to an Islands Trust-identified need, HICEEC provided administrative and start-up support for the formation of the Hornby Island Short Term Rental Association (HISTRA). The 12-member Board has developed a list of best practices and a COVID cleaning protocol, and has sourced PPE suppliers. Everyone doing short-term rentals is encouraged to join this 75-member society. (histra.ca).

MRDT We are working on a program to charge a "pillow tax" on visitor accommodation. The money