

# **Valemount and Area Economic Development Plan**

## **Strategy Workbook**

Prepared for:

Residents of the Valemount Area  
and  
Council of Valemount

Prepared by:

Valemount and Area Economic Development Commission

Sponsored by:

Human Resources Development Canada  
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# Introduction

The purpose of this workbook is to assist local groups and residents in dealing with economic development issues and planning an efficient strategy.

The workbook consist of 4 main parts:

1. Economic Development in Valemount
2. Steps in Community Strategic Planning
3. Valemount and Area Community Survey
4. Valemount and Area Economic Development Strategy Plan 2000

Although all parts are complimentary and interact with each other, they can be read and discussed independently.

This workbook and the Conference held in September 1999 are the result of local commitment and successful partnerships with ***Human Resources Development Canada*** and the ***Columbia Basin Trust***.

This workbook is dedicated to Terry Sabourin who passed away on August 20, 1999. Terry was a member of the founding committee of the Valemount Economic Development Society and a driving force of the first Valemount and Area Strategy Plan.

Terry was a true believer in planning and always trying to formulate a vision for our community. But he also emphasized the importance of the implementation side of strategic planning. He was a true facilitator and his motto was *"it does not matter who gets the recognition of the work, as long as it gets done"*.

Valemount and Area Economic Development Commission

# Part 1

# Economic Development in Valemount

- **Economic Development in Valemount**
- **Community Capacity Building**
- **The Importance of Volunteers**
- **The Importance of a Strategy Plan**
- **Focus on Opportunities**
- **A Strategy Planning Conference**

## Introduction

### Valemount and Area Economic Development Commission

The Valemount Area went through a comprehensive community economic development planning process in 1993 and 1994. As a result, the Economic Development Strategy Plan was published in July 1994 and the Economic Development Commission was registered as a society in January 1995. The Strategy Plan has been a very important tool for local planning activities and the implementation of concrete actions and projects.

### Community Economic Development

In 1993, Tim Barry, *Regional Economic Development Officer of Small Business, Tourism and Culture* and Mitchell Edgar of *Prince George Region Development Corporation* started to assist both Valemount and McBride in their process of Community Economic Development (CED). CED is a strategy for development and change which attempts to address existing imperfection concerning institutional structures and socio-economic realities. Since 1996 Dwayne Prokopowich, *Programs and Services Officer of Human Resources Development Canada*, strongly supported the efforts of CED in Valemount.

## Community Capacity Building

### Local Involvement

In recent years, the process of globalization has led to a weakening of macro national economic policy. At the same time, more decentralized approaches to development and local involvement in decision-making are becoming more effective. Critical to this process is the development and growth of community capacity to deal with complex issues and information, make local policy decisions, and create and manage community based organizations.

### The People Factor

People with their skills and abilities to respond to change and manage new situations represent a fundamental component for community economic development. Strategic planning and partnerships formed by people and organizations also play a key role in the process of community economic development.

## The Importance of Volunteers

### **Beautification Committee**

For instance, the members of the Beautification and Revitalization Committee promoted Valemount's image and appearance. These volunteers organized clean-up days for three consecutive springs. Over 20 old car wrecks were removed from town lots by this program in the first spring. The town's appearance has been improving since then.

### **Education and Technology Committee**

Also the Education and Technology Committee was able to achieve its set goal, namely to prepare Valemount for the 21<sup>st</sup> century educational opportunities. A very functional learning centre with 12 workstations, two learning rooms, and a direct access connection to the Internet was built between 1996 and 1997. In 1998 the Learning Centre registered 811 attendance at workshops and training sessions, and hundreds of users have used the Community Access Site and learned how to use the Internet for business, educational and job search purposes.

### **Tourism Committee**

The Tourism Committee assessed the training needs of the hospitality sector and with the Learning Centre organized a series of business courses and improved the skills of personnel employed by restaurants, retail stores and gas stations.

## The Importance of a Strategy Plan

### **Strategy Plan As Tool**

All these activities and successes demonstrate how important it is to have a strategic plan with regard to economic and community development.

### **The Need of a Revised Strategy Plan**

In 1998 and 1999, the Valemount Area was facing times of dramatic and inevitable change. The lumber industry was confronted with substantial problems. The consequences were seriously impacting the economic and social structure of the area. Slocan Forest Products Ltd., the major local employer, had to lay off 80 workers in January 1999. The community needed to define a clear vision in order to survive and guarantee a successful future for its residents.

## Focus on Opportunities

### Identify Opportunities And Concentrate Resources

A revised strategy plan is needed in order to select and concentrate resources within the framework of identified opportunities. The most important results of a strategic planning process are a clear vision statement and well-defined short-term strategies.

### Sophisticated Analysis Of External and Internal Factors

A good strategy plan is based on a sophisticated analysis of external and internal factors that impact the regional and local economy. Brainstorming sessions were no longer sufficient to determine weaknesses and strengths of Valemount. In fact, too many complex factors are affecting the local economic and social reality.

## A Strategy Planning Conference

### New Input

New input from specialists was absolutely needed, especially for topics with a global character. The Valemount Area needed some clear answers and guidelines with regard to popular topics such as *eco tourism, knowledge based economy, value added, and change management* in order to formulate a clear vision and an action plan that would effectively direct the community's limited resources towards achievable objectives.

### Planning Conference

The highlight of this strategic planning process was a conference held in Valemount, September 17-19, 1999. The conference was open to residents of Valemount, McBride and the Robson Valley.

### A Rural Community Survival Conference

Renowned speakers such as David Baxter, Michael Goldberg, Ross Cloutier, Doug Taylor, Ray Rasker, and others presented basic concepts regarding Economic Development, Tourism, E-Commerce, Marketing, and Demographics (see Appendix). These concepts and other suggestions will be used to formulate a clear vision and an action plan in order to effectively direct the community's limited resources towards achievable objectives.

Part 2

Steps

in

Community

Strategic Planning

- **Strategic Planning**
- **Environmental Scan**
- **Situation Analysis**
- **Goal Formulation**
- **Strategic Formulation**
- **Plan Development**
- **System Improvement**
- **Strategic Planning Summary**
- **The Key Question**
- **Setting Priorities**
- **Weaknesses of Strategic Planning**
- **Essence of Strategic Planning**

## Strategic Planning

### Shaping the Future Of a Community

Strategic planning can be described as an outlook, guiding reflection on the future, or guiding action toward shaping the future of a community.

### Planning Process

In a strategic planning process, strategies are formed as responses to opportunities or to a decision situation rather than set out in advance as long-term benchmark activities.

### Concentrate Resources

Strategic planning selects and concentrates resources within the framework of identified opportunities. The most important results of a strategic planning process are a few well-defined short-term strategies.

## Environmental Scan

### Identify Issues

The basic question is “what do we know about current conditions and future trends?”. The study of current trends and future directions and their implications for the community’s continued prosperity.

The scanning can be relatively simple and informal or it can involve very sophisticated sources and ambitious analysis.

## Situation Analysis

### List Strengths and Weaknesses

### List opportunities and threats

The basic question is “what does this information tell us?”. The situation analysis is directed toward identifying the community’s strong points and weak points. Communities should pursue opportunities that are consistent with their strengths and avoid those that reflect their weaknesses.

## Goal Formulation

### Set Goals

The basic question is “what do we do differently?”. The goal formulation is necessary to prevent a community from “drifting toward an uncertain future”. Two questions are relevant: What are our goals now? What should they be to take us where we want to go in the future?

### Formulate a Vision Statement

A vision of the community in the future is an important element in the goal formulation. The vision will guide priorities among the goals and strategies to come. A shared vision of the future should become the framework for community projects and decision making.

## Strategic Formulation

### Develop Strategies to Fit Goals

The basic question is “How do we get it done?”. The strategic formulation combines community strengths with environmental opportunities to define a specific set of desired outcomes, and to establish action plans to reach them. The crafting of strategies is the most crucial and exciting phase of the process.

## Plan Development

### Create a Specific Action Plan for Each Strategy

The basic question is “who does what; when?”. The plan development focuses on making sure that the community has defined who has authority for what and on ensuring that the resources and expertise are where they should be. It also focuses on implementation and potential obstacles that may cause problems.

### Identify Tasks and Specify Time Lines

Obviously, if the strategic planning process is to succeed, the assignment of tasks is critical. It makes sense to include simple, short-term projects so that some immediate results will be visible. In this way, community interest can stay strong and at least some of the frustration can be avoided.

## System Improvement

**Assess progress**

**Reevaluate activities**

**Celebrate success**

The basic question is “How well is it Working?”. The system improvement ensures that the support systems exist to achieve the new defined goals.

## Strategic Planning Summary

Analysis	→	Environmental Scan External and Internal Factors	Studies SWOTs
Vision	→	Formulation	Goals
Action Plan	→	Formulation Action	Objectives Who What When

## The Key Question

**What Kind of Community  
Do We Want**

A strategic planning approach can help a community clarify what it wants and then assess if the goal is a realistic one.

## Setting Priorities

### Select Achievable Priorities

No community can be everything to everyone, and community representatives need to help their communities to come to grips with priorities in a way that combines realism with hope for the future. A strategic planning approach can help a community in selecting priorities that are actually achievable within a defined time period. This approach is also helpful in deciding what not to do.

### Focus on Controllable Contingencies

In many communities a lot of time and energy is wasted in worrying about things that no one can really do much about. The strategic planning approach focuses on controllable contingencies, not uncontrollable ones.

### Concentrate Energy

Within the controllable contingency list, priorities must be established to make sure that the community's energy and concern goes to things it can actually control, and the most important of the items in that list.

## Weaknesses of Strategic Planning

### Plan to Act

Many organizations fall into the trap of learning how to plan, but then never do anything as a result of that planning. They may produce a nice-looking document, they may update the plan on schedule, and they may distribute it to the right audiences. They "plan to plan", but they don't "plan to act".

## Essence of Strategic Planning

Communities need

- to know what they want
- an opportunity to conceptualize
- to develop a realistic action plan with wide participation

The end result of good planning is "the making of today's decisions for tomorrow's results". The future has to be realized today. If you are not doing it today, you're not going to do it.

# Part 3

Valemount

and

Area

Community

Survey 1999

## Summary

In the process of reviewing the Strategy Plan of 1994, some members of the Valemount and Area Economic Development Commission felt that a revised strategy plan should also include the opinion of local residents expressed by means of a survey. The 1999 survey was mailed out to all households of the Village of Valemount and to the Area of Valemount. In addition, local residents could pick up questionnaires at the Village Office, the Government Agency and at the Open House of the Village of Valemount held on December 17, 1999.

The return rate for the whole area was almost 23%, and this result is a real success when two to four percent is considered good for a mailed, volunteered survey. Over 100 questionnaires were returned at the Open House, and this may have contributed to the high return rate of the survey.

Local residents wish more and better services, but they do also realize that improved services can only be supported by a larger population base. Valemount and area residents confirm national concerns and trends: life quality issues such as water, air, health care, and education are on top of their priority list.

Among public and private projects, the *College of New Caledonia – Northern Outdoor Recreation and Ecotourism Program* tops the list with a support level of 81%. The *Canoe Hot Springs*, the *Gateway Community Pilot Project*, the *Interpretive Centre*, and the *Canoe Mountain Gondola* all receive a very strong support level over 75%.

With regard to forestry issues, the *Small Business Logging Operations* receives the highest support (71%), followed by the *Community Forest* (61%), and a *Log Sort* (53%).

Local residents strongly support the activities undertaken by Council and the Economic Development Commission with regard to growth and diversification, and they do support a vision statement that leads Valemount to a mixed economy town with a sustainable forestry, tourism, and service sector.

## Households and Return Rate

The number of households for the Valemount Area can only be estimated through the Postal Office Boxes, since BC Stats and Canada Census include the Valemount Area in to the Regional District Area Subdivision B of Fraser-Fort George. The number of households, however, can be precisely determined for the Village of Valemount.

Valemount	495
Area (estimated)	269
Total Households	764

In 1994, for the first Valemount Community Survey 123 questionnaires were returned. 175 Questionnaires were returned by Jan. 1, 2000, for the second Valemount Survey.

No direct comparisons can be made between the two surveys. The first one required opinions and suggestions in almost every second question, whereas the second survey was focused on yes/no questions and evaluation questions (minimum support – maximum support).

Survey 1994	123
Survey 1999	175

The overall return rate was 22.9%. Area residents participated at the survey with an astonishing 28.6% (77 returned questionnaires out of 269 households). Valemount residents returned 98 questionnaires and achieved a return rate of 19.8%. Of the returned questionnaires Valemount residents represent 56% and the area residents 44.0%

	Returned Questionnaires	Return Rate	% answered
<b>Valemount</b>	98	19.8%	56.0%
<b>Area</b>	77	28.6%	44.0%
<b>Total</b>	175	22.9%	

## Residence

### *Question 1: In what area do you reside*

The majority of respondents (56%) reside within the Village boundaries and the majority of the remaining 44% are evenly composed by Hwy 5 North, Cedarside and Tete Jaune residents. No one from the Albreda area returned a complete questionnaire.

	#	% surveyed
Valemount	98	56.0%
Hwy 5 North	18	10.3%
Cedarside	18	10.3%
Tete Jaune	16	9.1%
Hwy 5 South	12	6.9%
Other	9	5.1%
Mount Robson	4	2.3%
Albreda	0	0.0%

## Age and Gender

More than 11% preferred not to indicate the age and gender of the person answering the questionnaire. Females and males are equally represented.

<b>Male</b>	<b>% answered</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>% answered</b>
84	49.7%	85	50.3%

With regard to the participation rate by generation groups, the baby-boomers generation is the largest group, and youth and seniors are almost equally represented.

<b>Age Groups</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>% surveyed</b>
<b>33 - 53</b>	73	41.7%
<b>54 and over</b>	42	24.0%
<b>16 - 32</b>	40	22.9%
<b>No Age Response</b>	20	11.4%

### Age Groups Break-down by Gender

The returned surveys confirm the average age group of the population. Female boomers (48%) scored with a stronger participation rate than male boomers (38%). This gender predominance is reversed in the other age groups where senior males (29%) and youth males (28%) are much stronger represented than their counterparts, i.e. 18% for both senior and youth females.

Age Groups	Male	% surveyed	% answered
33 - 53	32	18.3%	38.1%
54 and over	25	14.3%	29.8%
16 - 32	24	13.7%	28.6%
No Age Response	3	1.7%	3.6%

A remarkably higher reticence to disclose age among females is also confirmed by this survey. Almost 7% of females do not answer the age question, whereas this percentage drops down to 1.7% for males.

Age Groups	Female	% surveyed	% answered
33 - 53	41	23.4%	48.2%
16 - 32	16	9.1%	18.8%
54 and over	16	9.1%	18.8%
No Age Response	12	6.9%	14.1%

## Permanency

### ***Question 3: How long have you lived in Valemount?***

All respondent answered question 3. The strongest group is represented by “old-timers”, i.e. people who have been in the area more than 10 years or were born here.

	<b># of responses</b>	<b>% surveyed</b>
<b>c) over 10 years</b>	94	53.7%
<b>b) 5 - 10 years</b>	42	24.0%
<b>a) 0 - 4 years</b>	21	12.0%
<b>d) born here</b>	18	10.3%
<b>No Response</b>	0	

## Population Growth

**Question 4: What would you like the Valemount area population to be in 10 years. (presently just under 2,000)**

Over 90% of the respondents support some kind of population growth. The vast majority (44.3%) supports a population growth up to 4,000, and if one combines answers c) and d), 47% support a population growth up to 5,000.

	# of responses	% surveyed	% answered
<b>b) 3,000 to 4,000</b>	77	44.0%	44.3%
<b>c) 4,000 to 5,000</b>	52	29.7%	29.9%
<b>d) 5,000 to 6,000</b>	31	17.7%	17.8%
<b>a) 2,000</b>	14	8.0%	8.0%
<b>No Response</b>	1	0.6%	

A more detailed analysis shows that Valemount residents are more progressive with regard to population growth. 94.8% of Valemount respondents support some kind of growth, while population growth is supported by a strong 88.3% of the Area residents.

	Valemount	% answered
<b>b) 3,000 to 4,000</b>	49	50.5%
<b>c) 4,000 to 5,000</b>	26	26.8%
<b>d) 5,000 to 6,000</b>	17	17.5%
<b>a) 2,000</b>	5	5.2%

	Area	% answered
<b>b) 3,000 to 4,000</b>	28	36.4%
<b>c) 4,000 to 5,000</b>	26	33.8%
<b>d) 5,000 to 6,000</b>	14	18.2%
<b>a) 2,000</b>	9	11.7%

Given that almost 93% of males and 92% of females support some kind of growth, there is no significant gender related difference with regard to population growth.

	Male	% answered	Female	% answered
<b>a) 2,000</b>	6	7.1%	7	8.3%
<b>b) 3,000 to 4,000</b>	40	47.6%	33	39.3%
<b>c) 4,000 to 5,000</b>	22	26.2%	30	35.7%
<b>d) 5,000 to 6,000</b>	16	19.0%	14	16.7%

Interestingly, young (97.5%) and senior residents (92.7%) support a greater population growth than the boomers (91.8%).

	Youth	% answered	Boomers	% answered	Seniors	% answered
<b>b) 3,000 to 4,000</b>	17	42.5%	32	43.8%	19	46.3%
<b>c) 4,000 to 5,000</b>	11	27.5%	26	35.6%	12	29.3%
<b>d) 5,000 to 6,000</b>	11	27.5%	9	12.3%	7	17.1%
<b>a) 2,000</b>	1	2.5%	6	8.2%	3	7.3%

The propensity for supporting some kind of population growth tends to decrease with long time residents. 100% of new residents support some kind of growth, while 88.2% of “old timers” support some kind of population growth.

Time of Residency	Population Growth Support
<b>0-4 years</b>	100.0%
<b>5-10years</b>	97.6%
<b>over 10</b>	88.2%
<b>Born here</b>	88.9%

	0-4 years % answered	5-10 years % answered	over 10 % answered	born here % answered
<b>a) 2,000</b>	0.0%	2.4%	11.8%	11.1%
<b>b) 3,000 to 4,000</b>	33.3%	33.3%	49.5%	55.6%
<b>c) 4,000 to 5,000</b>	38.1%	42.9%	24.7%	16.7%
<b>d) 5,000 to 6,000</b>	28.6%	21.4%	14.0%	16.7%

## Strategies to Attract People and Businesses

**Question 5: Do you think that the Village of Valemount, the Chamber, and the Economic Development Commission should develop specific strategies to attract more people and businesses?**

The support for specific strategies confirms the trend expressed with regard to population growth. There is a clear desire to support growth with an adequate strategy.

	# of responses	% surveyed	% answered
<b>Yes</b>	152	86.9%	93.3%
<b>No</b>	11	6.3%	6.7%
<b>No Response</b>	12	6.9%	

In this question, there is a 100% gender concordance.

	Male	% answered	Female	% answered
<b>Yes</b>	74	93.7%	74	93.7%
<b>No</b>	5	6.3%	5	6.3%

Valemount residents express a higher need for a strategy than Area residents.

	Valemount	% answered	Area	% answered
<b>Yes</b>	90	94.7%	62	91.2%
<b>No</b>	5	5.3%	6	8.8%

Youth and Boomers indicate a higher need for a strategy than Seniors.

	Youth	% answered	Boomers	% answered	Seniors	% answered
<b>Yes</b>	38	95.0%	65	94.2%	34	91.9%
<b>No</b>	2	5.0%	4	5.8%	3	8.1%

Age Group	Support level of Strategy
Youth	95.0%
Boomers	94.2%
Seniors	91.9%

100 % of new residents feel that a strategy is extremely important in order to attract people and new businesses, whereas this importance decreases with old-timers and people who were borne here (83.3%).

	0-4 years % answered	5-10 years % answered	over 10 % answered	born here % answered
<b>Yes</b>	100.0%	94.9%	93.0%	83.3%
<b>No</b>		5.1%	7.0%	16.7%

## General Issues

**Question 6: How important are the following sectors/issues to you?**

**(1= not important, 5= very important )**

This question was aimed at measuring the degree of importance given by each respondent to relevant issues of the local community life. The following table reproduces the answers with numerical values. Each number indicates the total responses for each sector and evaluation value.

Sector / Issue	1	2	3	4	5
	Not important	Low	Medium	High	Very Important
Natural Resource Extraction (forestry, mining)	11	27	48	32	53
Water & Air Quality	0	1	8	30	134
Visual Quality	1	3	13	44	108
Land Use Issues (Agricultural Land Reserve)	10	20	55	45	41
Outdoor Recreation	3	5	21	46	97
Tourism	5	9	17	53	90
Small Business	3	4	19	54	93
Government services	5	9	44	58	57
Health Care	0	1	16	28	130
Education (School System)	2	3	12	34	123
Training and Learning (V L Centre)	4	6	36	51	76
Communications (Telephone, Internet)	5	4	30	50	84
Improvement of Valemount Airport	17	20	47	44	46
Valemount Community Television	47	32	52	22	21
Attraction of Retirees	13	21	54	39	43
Arts & Culture	12	14	59	44	45

The support level for each sector/issue can be measured in percentage. 0% of support was assigned to the negative answer “not important” and 100% of support to the positive answer “very important”.

<b>Numeric Expression</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Linguistic Expression</b>	<b>Not Important</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Very Important</b>
<b>Support Level in %</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>100%</b>

The following table shows the support level for each issue as a total percentage number. The sectors are sorted by importance.

<b>Sector / Issue</b>	<b>Support Level in % of surveyed</b>
<b>Water &amp; Air Quality</b>	91.9%
<b>Health Care</b>	91.0%
<b>Education (School System)</b>	88.7%
<b>Visual Quality</b>	84.7%
<b>Small Business</b>	82.3%
<b>Outdoor Recreation</b>	81.9%
<b>Tourism</b>	80.3%
<b>Communications (Telephone, Internet Access)</b>	78.6%
<b>Training and Learning (Valemount Learning Centre)</b>	76.4%
<b>Government services</b>	71.3%
<b>Arts &amp; Culture</b>	63.4%
<b>Natural Resource Extraction (forestry, mining)</b>	61.6%
<b>Improvement of Valemount Airport</b>	61.4%
<b>Land Use Issues (Agricultural Land Reserve)</b>	61.3%
<b>Attraction of Retirees</b>	59.7%
<b>Valemount Community Television</b>	40.9%

## Growth Strategy and Services

**Question 7: Do you favour a growth strategy (for example, attraction of more people and businesses), if that means more services in health care, education, and government services?**

This question reaffirms the need and support for a growth strategy if that results in benefits such as improved services.

		% surveyed	% answered
<b>Yes</b>	158	90.3%	93.5%
<b>No</b>	11	6.3%	6.5%
<b>No Response</b>	6	3.4%	

In this question there is no absolute gender parity as in question 5.

	Male	% answered	Female	% answered
<b>Yes</b>	77	95.1%	77	92.8%
<b>No</b>	4	4.9%	6	7.2%

Valemount residents are far more supportive of growth strategies than Area residents.

	Valemount	% answered	Area	% answered
<b>Yes</b>	90	95.7%	68	90.7%
<b>No</b>	4	4.3%	7	9.3%

100% of young residents support a growth strategy, and almost 93% of boomers and seniors do also support a growth strategy if growth is associated with improved services.

	<b>Youth</b>	<b>% answered</b>	<b>Boomers</b>	<b>% answered</b>	<b>Seniors</b>	<b>% answered</b>
<b>Yes</b>	39	100.0%	65	92.9%	38	92.7%
<b>No</b>	0	0.0%	5	7.1%	3	7.3%

New residents (100%) are more receptive to a growth strategy than “old timers” (91.1%), and people who were born here (88.2%).

	<b>0-4 years % answered</b>	<b>5-10years % answered</b>	<b>over 10 % answered</b>	<b>born here % answered</b>
<b>Yes</b>	100.0%	97.6%	91.1%	88.2%
<b>No</b>		2.4%	8.9%	11.8%

## Village Expansion

### *Question 8: Do you favour the expansion of the Village borders?*

Numerous respondents indicated that this question needed additional information in order to express a clear opinion.

	# responses	% surveyed	% answered
<b>Yes</b>	115	65.7%	68.9%
<b>No</b>	52	29.7%	31.1%
<b>No Response</b>	8	4.6%	

Females are more inclined to support an expansion of the Village.

	Male	% answered	Female	% answered
<b>Yes</b>	53	64.6%	60	75.9%
<b>No</b>	29	35.4%	19	24.1%

Almost 80% of Village residents favour an expansion of the village, whereas the support of Area residents decreases to 56.6%.

	Valemount	% answered	Area	% answered
<b>Yes</b>	72	79.1%	43	56.6%
<b>No</b>	19	20.9%	33	43.4%

Young residents are more progressive than boomers and seniors with regard to village expansion.

	<b>Youth</b>	<b>% answered</b>	<b>Boomers</b>	<b>% answered</b>	<b>Seniors</b>	<b>% answered</b>
<b>Yes</b>	29	76.3%	49	71.0%	29	72.5%
<b>No</b>	9	23.7%	20	29.0%	11	27.5%

New residents and settled residents (5-10 years) strongly support the idea of expanding the village boundaries. This support decreases with “old-timers” and people who were born here.

	<b>0-4 years % answered</b>	<b>5-10 years % answered</b>	<b>over 10 % answered</b>	<b>born here % answered</b>
<b>Yes</b>	73.7%	81.0%	64.0%	58.8%
<b>No</b>	26.3%	19.0%	36.0%	41.2%

## Forestry Issues

**Question 9: With regard to Forestry, how important are the following issues to you? (1= not important, 5= very important )**

This question was aimed at measuring the degree of importance given by each respondent to relevant issues concerning forestry. The following table reproduces the answers expressed by numerical values.

Forestry Issues	1	2	3	4	5
	Not important	Low	Medium	High	Very Important
Increase Annual Allowable Cut	41	27	44	27	29
Forests be Available to Small Logging Operations	6	10	42	55	54
Increase Protected Areas (Parks, Reserves, etc.)	35	30	40	19	42
Decrease Protected Areas (Parks, Reserves, etc.)	60	22	37	21	24
Planning a Community Forest	13	22	45	47	39
Planning a Log Sort	22	27	50	34	29

The following table shows the support level for each issue as a total percentage number. The issues are sorted by importance.

Forestry Issues	Support Level in % of surveyed	Support Level in % of answered
Forests be Available to Small Logging Operations	67.9%	71.1%
Planning a Community Forest	58.4%	61.6%
Planning a Log Sort	49.3%	53.2%
Increase Protected Areas (Parks, Reserves, etc.)	47.9%	50.5%
Increase Annual Allowable Cut	44.6%	46.4%
Decrease Protected Areas (Parks, Reserves, etc.)	36.4%	38.9%

## Projects

**Question 10: Please indicate your level of support for the following proposed projects. (1= no support, 5= maximum support)**

This question was aimed at measuring the degree of support given by each respondent to proposed projects. The following table reproduces the answers expressed by numerical values.

	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Projects</b>	<b>No Support</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Maximum Support</b>
<b>Downtown Beautification</b>	9	14	29	38	81
<b>Interpretive Centre on HWY 5 and Pine Road</b>	8	14	26	43	79
<b>Canoe Mountain Gondola</b>	15	7	27	34	87
<b>Canoe Hot Springs</b>	13	6	18	36	97
<b>Gateway Community Pilot Project</b>	13	2	25	45	78
<b>College of New Caledonia – Northern Outdoor Recreation and Ecotourism Program</b>	7	6	19	42	94

The following table shows the support level for each project as a total percentage number. The projects are sorted by importance.

<b>Projects</b>	<b>Support Level in % of surveyed</b>	<b>Support Level in % of answered</b>
<b>College of New Caledonia – Northern Outdoor Recreation and Ecotourism Program</b>	78.0%	81.3%
<b>Canoe Hot Springs</b>	76.9%	79.1%
<b>Gateway Community Pilot Project</b>	71.3%	76.5%
<b>Interpretive Centre on HWY 5 and Pine Road</b>	73.0%	75.1%
<b>Canoe Mountain Gondola</b>	73.0%	75.1%
<b>Downtown Beautification</b>	72.9%	74.6%

## Vision Statement

**Question 11: Please indicate your level of support for the following vision statements. (1= no support, 5= maximum support)**

This question was aimed at measuring the degree of support given by each respondent to proposed vision statements for the revised Economic Development Strategy. The following table reproduces the answers expressed by numerical values.

	1	2	3	4	5
Vision Statements	No Support	Low	Medium	High	Maximum Support
Valemount a service centre for the Robson Valley, Mount Robson and Jasper	9	11	24	40	79
Valemount an exclusive forestry town	98	33	22	6	4
Valemount a mixed economy town (forestry, tourism, services)	1	5	19	28	114

The following table shows the support level for each vision statement as a total percentage number.

Vision Statements	Support Level in % of surveyed	Support Level in % of answered
Valemount a mixed economy town (forestry, tourism, services)	83.3%	87.3%
Valemount a service centre for the Robson Valley, Mount Robson and Jasper	70.7%	75.9%
Valemount an exclusive forestry town	15.9%	17.0%

Valemount and Area Economic Development Commission

# Part 4

# **Economic Development Strategy Plan 2000**

- **Economic Development Plan**
- **Change and Growth**
- **Technology and Information**
- **Forestry**
- **Land Issues**
- **Tourism**

## Vision and Mission Statement

### Survey Results

87.3% of respondents support the vision statement of “Valemount a mixed economy town (forestry, tourism, services)”.

### Vision

Transform Valemount and Area from a one-industry community to a mixed economy town with a specialized forestry base, and a growing tourism and services sector.

### Mission Statement

The Economic Development Commission (EDC) will promote and encourage change and growth of the area from Albreda to Small River.

### Objectives

- Promote economic development by endorsing specialization in forestry, tourism and in the service sector.
- Support established business, and consider social and environmental issues in an effort to enhance the quality of life of the community.

### Areas of importance

- Change and Growth
- Communication Technology
- Tourism
- Forestry
- Training
- Business Development
- Arts and Culture
- Beautification and Revitalization
- Regulatory and Land Issues

Valemount and Area Economic Development Commission

# Change and Growth

## **Strategy Plan**

**2000**

## Situation Analysis

### Change is Constant

*“Change is constant. Change is here to stay. Therefore, we must adapt to change. To embrace diversification means we must embrace change. We can be proactive and help to create and deal with the change, or we can let the change be forced upon us. Diversification means reinventing your community, literally. This is your responsibility, not the Governments or anyone else’s.”*  
(Dale McMann, Economic Diversification, Valemount Conference September 17 –19, 1999)

### Change Causes Distress

The change and transition from a resource based economy to a knowledge based economy is causing distress and polarization into those who are excited and those who are appalled. It is difficult to give up the old ways and it is hard to learn the new info-age-based rules.

### The Information Revolution will Happen within a Lifetime

The most remarkable aspect of this transformation is that it will not only revolutionize the character of the world economy, but it will do so more rapidly than any previous phase change.

Unlike the Agricultural Revolution, the Information Revolution will not take millennia to do its work. Unlike the Industrial Revolution, its impact will not be spread over centuries. The Information Revolution will happen within a lifetime. And it will happen almost everywhere at once.

Technical and economic innovations will no longer be confined to small portions of the globe. The transformation will also involve a profound break with the past. [Davidson, 1997:16-17]

### Social Issues

*“One of the problems with this “new economy” is that it leaves a lot of people behind. Perhaps they don’t have the skills or attitudes necessary, and they may end up feeling angry and looking for someone to blame. This is where some of the ‘conspiracy theories’ may come from.”*  
(Ray Rasker, From Resource-Extraction to Amenity-Driven Growth, Valemount Conference September 17 – 19, 1999)

**Change is Inevitable**

In this century, mechanization and technological innovations caused a dramatic and inevitable change in various economic sectors. We have experienced a transition from an agriculture based economy to an industrial economy and to an information based economy.

In 1905, 80% of the Canadian workforce was active in agriculture and natural resources. Now in 1997, 3% produce food and extract natural resources. In 1951, 73% of the Canadian workforce was active in industry and manufacturing. Now it is less than 15% and more than 70% work in service related sectors.

Canada

Sector	1905	1951	1997
Agriculture/Natural Resources	80%		3%
Industry/Manufacturing		73%	15%
Services			72%

**The Good Old Days are Gone**

*“Those communities that are waiting for the good old days to return (such as log prices going back up/pulp prices improving) will be dead, as the old boom towns continuing to boom and old economies are basically already dead.”*  
 (Michael Goldberg, How to Market your Business and Community, Valemount Conference September 17 –19, 1999)

## The Service Sector

### Increased Service Sector

There is an ever-increasing demand for services in the north American and Canadian job market.

*“This trend has been growing steadily and consistently. For example, only a very small percentage of the cost of an automobile goes towards the raw materials needed to make that car. The rest of the costs are all in “services” towards designing, making and selling that car. Making a bicycle needs a wide variety of “services” in order to design, manage, market and manufacture the bicycle.”* (Ray Rasker, From Resource-Extraction to Amenity-Driven Growth, Valemount Conference September 17 – 19, 1999)

### A Scattered Global Assembly Line

*“Today the costs of making most products is about 25% raw materials, and the rest goes into “services”. ... In the 1950’s, manufacturing consisted of raw materials going in one end of the factory, and the product coming out of the other. Blue-collar workers did the work, and some managers did the design and other services. ... In the 1990’s, companies may be managed by people in different geographical locations. Some of the manufacturing is done in a variety of places. Service providers are contracted out in a variety of locations. The final product rolls out in one particular location. In other words, the assembly line is now a ‘scattered global assembly line’.”* (Ray Rasker, From Resource-Extraction to Amenity-Driven Growth, Valemount Conference September 17 –19, 1999)

### High Salaries in the Services Industries

Also the frequent comment that a service based economy can only provide low-paying jobs in tourism is not always true. In the Greater Yellowstone area salaries in the service industries (business services, quality tourism, software development) are 20% higher than the average wages for all other industries [Rasker, 1995:996].

## Change in Valemount

### Valemount a Forestry Town

The Valemount statistics show that this community still is anchored in the first and second waves of economic trends, i.e. forestry and manufacturing of forest products. However some sectors of the third wave are becoming more important, especially tourism. The following numbers reflect a telephone survey conducted in July 1997. The survey includes businesses that are located in Valemount and in the surrounding communities from Albreda to Small River.

Valemount 1997

Sector	Labour Force
Logging & Forestry	29.9%
Tourism	25.4%
Wholesale & Retail	13.2%
Govt/Edu/Health/Municipal	10.3%
Personal & Other Services	8.4%
Construction	4.7%
Transportation & Communication	3.5%
Finance & Insurance	3.0%
Agriculture	1.7%

Note: Labour Force includes employees and self-employed

### Automation of Forestry

Forestry in Valemount is a mature industry and has been increasingly automated. Therefore the demand for log graders, tree scalers and heavy equipment operators will continue to be weak. It is unlikely that any new significant job creation enterprises will occur in the primary forest industry in the Valemount area. However, this sector is still the major contributor to the local economy and, with timber supply diminishing, there will be an increased demand for professionals such as silviculturists, conservationists, genetic engineers and wildlife biologists. [cf. also Feather, 1996:43]

### Valemount a Supply Region

The history of Valemount's economic life reflects that of a typical timber supply region. Rich or poor, supply regions are inherently overspecialized and wildly unbalanced economies. Therefore they are unresilient, fragile and helpless when they lose their fragments of distant markets [Jacobs, 1984:63]. Boom and bust cycles of Valemount confirm the character of a one sector based

economy. As time passes, supply regions succumb to many hazards. Depletion of resources is common [Jacobs, 1984:66]. Many supply regions, far from being forced into their role, simply slide into it for sheer default of alternatives.

**Alternatives for Supply Regions**

Now, thanks to new telecommunication tools location has become less relevant and thus a supply region may look for alternatives. This may be the real new revolution of the information age. And due to globalization even strong urban regions are affected by competitive distant markets. In other words, Vancouver's economy is affected by New York's stock exchange in the same way as Valemount is affected by declining construction activities in Tokyo.

This is the first time in history that the location of a community may not play the most important factor with regard to economic survival and success. In fact, work is rapidly being decentralized away from urban centres and info-workers don't need to travel downtown to work; now work 'travels' to them, electronically.

**Diversification Requires Large Scale Economies**

However, economic diversification requires larger scale economies and supply regions in most cases are remote areas with low density population. Only larger economies that can create substitutes for their imports can truly diversify economically.

*"Diverse economies are easier to say than to create. You can only achieve a diverse economy if you have enough people to support it. It would probably be more realistic for Valemount to be a specialty community. You may then see diversity occur as a result of your successful specialty."* (David Baxter, Amenity Based vs. Resource Extracting Communities, Valemount Conference September 17 –19, 1999)

**Human Resources and Leadership are the Most Important Factor**

In an information age, human resources and leadership, not location, are the most important factors in community survival. This means that what really matters is what Valemount residents can do with what is available, by specializing in some economic sectors.

*"The advantage you have in this community is the people in this community. You must find out what the strengths are of your people."* (David Baxter, Amenity Based vs.

Resource Extracting Communities, Valemount Conference September 17 –19, 1999)

*“Governments do not have the answers. The people that know the market the best are the people that work within their markets. Do not rely on Governments. Do not rely on people from outside your community for answers. Look within.”* (David Baxter, Amenity Based vs. Resource Extracting Communities, Valemount Conference September 17 –19, 1999)

**Economic Development and Conservation**

American studies show that environmental protection can be an economic development strategy. For instance employment and personal income levels grew faster in “wilderness” counties in northwestern Montana than in “resource-extraction” counties in eastern Montana.

Research on the economy of Greater Yellowstone indicates that protection of the wild, the scenic character of the landscape and the quality of life serve as a magnet to retain local people and their business and attract new people and their new businesses [Rasker, 1995:996].

*“Economic development is often characterized as being ‘mining, logging, ranching’, versus tourism. In reality, industries are holding their own at a consistent rate, however, the bulk of growth in the last 2 decades has all been in the service sectors (e.g. hotels, amusement parks, engineering, management services, legal services, hospital/health services, etc.)”* (Ray Rasker, From Resource-Extraction to Amenity-Driven Growth, Valemount Conference September 17 –19, 1999)

**The GPD of the Resource Sector is Shrinking**

If Canada’s system of national accounts were to be designed from scratch, agriculture, forestry, fishing and mining would be probably considered as one category. The resource sector represents 6% of GPD. *“Without subsidies to the farm economy – which, as a whole, runs at an economic loss – agriculture’s share of GPD would shrink dramatically. Without government intervention in logging and forestry ... forestry’s share of GPD would likely shrink even more.”* [Solomon, 1999]

**Raw Commodities are not the Most Important Export to the Cities**

*“But most of all, the resource sector would shrink because our forests, mountains, lakes and rivers are usually worth far less as board-feet of timber and storage ponds for mine railings than as objects of splendour. Though rural*

*folk may think their most important export to the cities are the raw commodities they produce, the rural economy is more highly valued as a natural playground, whether in the form of cottage alone or tourist destination.”* [Solomon, 1999]

**The Source of Prince Edward Island’s Wealth – is its Natural Beauty**

*“GDP which count all activity, whether productive or destructive – is a poor measure by which to judge a sector’s importance. A better measure is profit. Prince Edward Islanders think their economy depends on agriculture and tourism, in that order. In fact, the farm economy is run as an elaborate federal-provincial make-work project – for every dollar that a PEI farmer makes tilling the soil, governments contribute more than \$4 in subsidies. Potatoes, PEI’s chief crop, provides 4,500 jobs while losing money; the tourism industry 20,000 while making money. The productive PEI economy – an the source of PEI’s wealth – is its natural beauty.”* [Solomon, 1999]

*“On the opposite coast, B.C. residents view their salmon fishery with great pride. But B.C.’s commercial salmon fishery has little value: \$100-million a year, or about one-fifth the value of its salmon sports fishery, which doesn’t deplete fish stocks.”* [Solomon, 1999]

*“In Ontario, large-scale logging would all but disappear if the government privatized its Crown forests – say by selling them to the loggers who now depend on them for their livelihood. As owners, loggers would soon understand that the best way to exploit the value of their holdings is in hunting and fishing lodges, in cottages and camping sites, in cross-country ski resorts and in selling private woodlots to urbanites who will simply set them aside for their conservation value.”* [Solomon, 1999]

**The Environment is Often the Ultimate Value-Added Product**

The environment – with its countless ecological niches, each capable of arousing wonder in an individual destined to fall in love with its offerings – is often the ultimate value-added product. [Solomon, 1999]

## The Necessity of Growth

Population growth is necessary in order to maintain and improve private and public services.

The viability of business operations, government and community services is not based on proportional relationships. That is, operations need a minimum number of users, customers, sales or revenues to cover fixed and variable costs. Operations start to be viable and profitable only once there are enough users paying for a specific product or service. Let's consider an example that illustrates why there is a need of population growth to finance the operations of a larger public facility.

### Pool Complex Example

In 1993-94 many residents of the Valemount Area expressed the interest for a Sports and Pool Complex. This was also seen as a means for attracting, supporting and retaining a retirement population. The Sports and Pool Complex was also a high priority in the Survey of 1994.

### Assumptions

a) Let's assume that the complex has been built and is open for operations.

### Fixed Costs = \$100,000

b) Let's set basic maintenance costs or fixed costs at \$100,000 per year. These costs will be incurred even if nobody uses the pool complex.

### Variable Costs per User = \$3

c) For every user of the pool, we have to add another \$3 in order to cover janitorial expenses, increased use of hot water for showers, etc. These are variable costs.

### Ticket Price = \$10

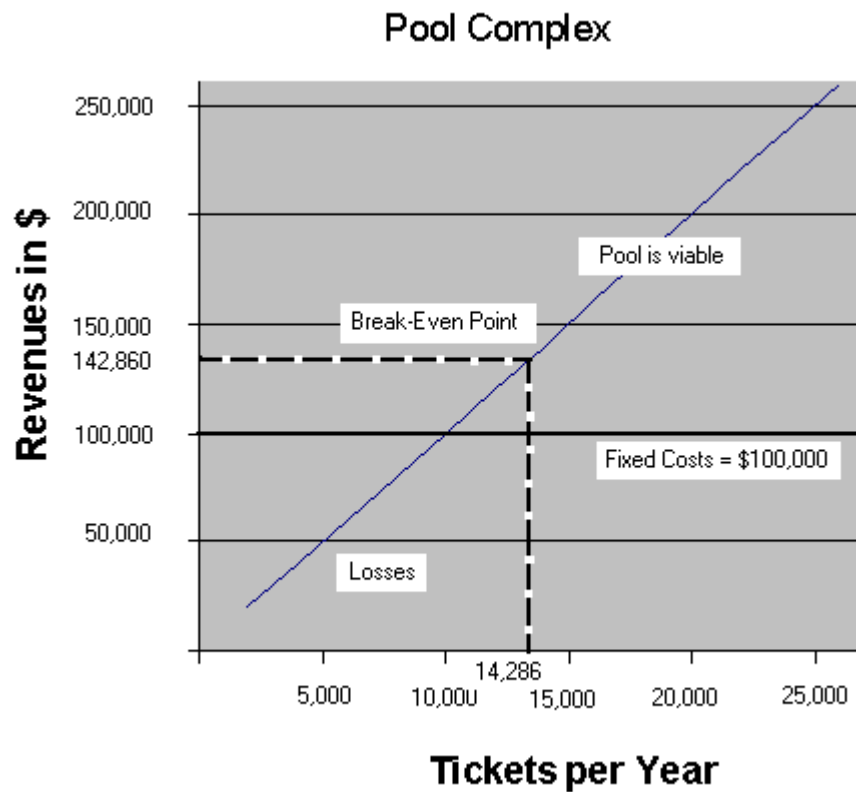
d) And finally let's set the ticket price at \$10 per person.

**Break-Even Calculation** Let's now calculate the number of tickets needed per year in order to cover fixed costs and variable costs.

$$\text{Break-even point (in tickets)} = \frac{\text{Total Fixed Costs}}{\text{Ticket Price} - \text{Variable Cost}}$$

$$\text{Break-even point (in tickets)} = \frac{\$100,000}{\$10 - \$3}$$

$$\text{Tickets per year} = 14,286$$



The Pool Complex needs to sell at least 14,286 tickets just to cover operational costs. In our example, for simplicity's sake, we have not included debt servicing costs, contingency funds, and other costs that would be incurred in real life.

If we assume, that the average sport enthusiast will use the Pool Complex at least twice a month (or 24 times a year) then it will take 595 paying users per year to cover operational costs.

$$\frac{\text{Tickets per Year}}{\text{Times per User}} = \frac{14,286}{24} = 595$$

The final calculation is based on statistical data that indicate how many Canadians are habitual swimming pool users.

We may assume that Valemount has a higher average of swimmers. That is, 20% of the total population would regularly use the Pool Complex. In this case the total population needed to support the Pool Complex would be 2,976.

However, more realistic, but still optimistic, assumptions would consider 15% of the total population as active swimmers. In this second case the total population needed to support the Pool Complex would be 3,968.

<b>Users needed to support the Pool Complex</b>	<b>Percentage of Total Population</b>	<b>Total Population Needed to Support Pool Complex</b>
595	15%	3,968
595	20%	2,976

## Overall S.W.O.T. Analysis

Valemount's current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats relative to growth and change are as follows:

### Strengths

- Although Valemount is still based on forestry, some service sectors such as tourism are becoming important in the local economy.
- Valemount's residents and leaders show a positive attitude toward change.

### Weaknesses

- Valemount is still a supply region based on the extraction of raw materials.
- Timber industry produces only dimensional lumber. No value added industry in the wood manufacturing sector.
- Diversification efforts need large economies, Valemount is too small.

### Opportunities

- Thanks to new telecommunication tools location has become less relevant and thus supply regions may look for alternatives.
- If diversification cannot be achieved, Valemount should focus on becoming a specialty community.
- Raw commodities are not the most important export to the cities, the rural economy is more highly valued as a natural playground, whether in the form of cottage alone or tourist destination.

### Threats

- The Information Revolution will happen within a lifetime and it will happen almost everywhere at once.
- Change may cause distress to many people, because they do not have the skills or attitudes necessary to cope with change.
- Governments may no longer assist small rural communities, and a larger tax base will be needed to support local services.

## Change and Growth Strategies

### Survey Results

- Over 90% of respondents support some kind of population growth. The vast majority (44.3%) supports a population growth up to 4,000, and 47% supports a population growth up to 5,000 people.
- 93.3% of respondents support growth with an adequate strategy.
- 93.5% support a growth strategy if that results in benefits such as improved services.

### Goal

Increase the area population to 3,000 – 4,000 people within the next 10 years.

Valemount must try to attract businesses and people who are active in expanding sectors such as tourism, travel, silviculture, value added manufacturing, information and knowledge, high-technology, personal services, and leisure.

### Impacts and Benefits

A larger population base would bring many benefits to Valemount and Area: sufficient revenues to improve and maintain the local infrastructure, efficient public services (e.g. 24 hour, 7 day a week basic health care services provided by at least two alternating physicians), a considerable internal demand for local wood value-added products (log-homes, cedar homes, wood floors) generated by relocating people, and new work opportunities for local unemployed or underemployed people.

Key Initiatives	Responsibility
• Develop a growth Strategy	EDC
• Improve Public Infrastructure	Village of Valemount
• Improve Telecommunications Infrastructure	Valemount Internet Society, Telus, and Private Sector
• With the assistance of Local Government, Provincial and Federal Agencies, initiate a fundamental change concerning land use regulations.	Village of Valemount, Regional District of Fraser Fort George
• Identification of Tourism Projects	EDC, Village of Valemount, and Private Sector
• Development of Major Tourism Projects	Private Sector
• Development of College of New Caledonia Soft Tourism Program	CNC Valemount Learning Centre
• Downtown Beautification	Village of Valemount Private Sector
• Market Valemount as attractive community	Village of Valemount EDC
• Support relocating businesses	Chamber of Commerce Community Futures EDC
• Support local business formation and expansion	Chamber of Commerce Community Futures EDC

Valemount and Area Economic Development Commission

# Technology and Information

## **Strategy Plan**

**2000**

## Situation Analysis

### **Technology as a Change Factor**

No job is immune to technology. Even garbage collection will change. Garbage trucks will become one-person vehicles with on-board computers that sense where the waste container is, pick it up, scan its contents, weigh it, calculate the cost of trucking it away, and print out a disposal bill [Feather, 1996:62].

As with all technological inventions, also the use of the information superhighway will really be defined some time after its invention. When Ice Age hunter-gatherers noticed that burned sand and limestone residues in their hearths formed something glassy, they could not predict that a series of accumulation of discoveries would lead to the first Roman glass windows (around AD 1). [Diamond, 1997:246]

### **In Valemount, 40% of Households have Access to the Internet**

However, nowadays the acceptance rate of new technologies has increased considerably. In the past, once an inventor had discovered a use for a new technology, the next difficult step was to persuade society to adopt it. Innumerable technologies were either not adopted at all or adopted only after prolonged resistance. [Diamond, 1997:247]. Valemount and the Robson Valley have totally accepted the Internet with an average penetration rate of 40% (Sweden registers 46% of households connected to the Net).

### **Information as New Commodity**

Information is the new economy's main commodity. It represents the overwhelming source of economic input (raw material) and output (products and services) in all economic sectors. Info-based technologies will be the key source of economic prosperity during the next long-wave and well-paying information/knowledge-oriented jobs will be plentiful everywhere. [Feather, 1996:29]

**Consumption of Information**

In 1995 40% of Canadians had a PC at home and by 2005 it will be 90%. [Feather, 1996:24]

The education and information industries are the twin pillars of Canada's new economy. The new emphasis is on the consumption of information and knowledge, not commodities. Information (not time) is money, and money can be created nonstop, 24-hrs/day, 365-days/year.

That's the magic of information –and the key to our future prosperity, both individually and as a nation. [Feather, 1996:34]

**Ideas Become Wealth**

The coming transformation caused by the Information Age may liberate individuals as never before. For the first time, those who can educate and motivate themselves will be almost entirely free to invent their own work and realize the full benefits of their own productivity. The greatest source of wealth will be the ideas and services that one can provide based on those ideas. [Davidson, 1997:16-18]

*“We need to create visions for the regional economy...look at new ideas, metaphors, themes and strategies. The resource economy of the past will not carry us indefinitely. The new resource of the future is the resource of the mind.”* (Michael Goldberg, How to Market Your Business and Your Community, Valemount Conference September 17 –19, 1999)

**Smart Communities Demonstration Project****Smart Communities Demonstration Project**

In July 1999, the Valemount and Area Economic Development Commission conceived a Smart Communities Demonstration Project (SCDP) and submitted a letter of intent to the Federal Government.

**Apply Information Age Technology to Forestry and Tourism**

The SCDP was conceived for the whole Robson Valley with the goal to help to local economy to advance into the 21<sup>st</sup> century by applying information age technologies to forestry, tourism and value added manufacturing.

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<b>A Wireless Wide Area Network</b>	The proposed technological infrastructure consists of a wireless wide area network that would connect homes, offices, businesses, and the whole landbase with a local central server, located in a potential cultural and training centre.
<b>Smart Programs</b>	The centre will host hardware and software servers for a “ <i>smart forestry program</i> ” and a “ <i>smart tourism booking service</i> ”. The centre can also be used for training and conferences.
<b>Forestry Workers as Knowledge Based Workers</b>	The “ <i>smart forestry program</i> ” would be used in forestry operations. Forestry workers would become knowledge based workers by using a wireless smart infrastructure that brings critical market information into the field. Education and training will play a key role in this social and economic transformation. Retraining forestry workers is an exciting prospect. This will enable them to become producers of environmentally certified products.
<b>Optimize Timber Supplies</b>	The “ <i>smart forestry program</i> ” will assist the local Forests District Manager and the local forest industry to record and catalogue all timber in the Robson Valley. Logging contractors, mills and value added businesses will have access to world-wide markets information, and thus optimize demand and timber supplies.
<b>Valuable Information</b>	A logging contractor, for example, will be able to access any information from his workstation in his truck. Thus he will immediately know how many cubic metres of timber are needed for a specific order, where he can find that timber, the potential humidity contents of the plants, and which logging method should be used in order to minimize any environmental impact.
<b>Electronic Approval</b>	Moreover, he will know if and when the specific area was harvested, the conditions of access roads, and the weather forecast. In the meantime the information about the same order will be delivered to local small value added manufacturing plants and to the Forest District Office for electronic approval of regulatory documents.
<b>Optimal Planning and Cost Analysis</b>	The manufacturers will prepare the production line for the specific order by trying to optimize the production based upon the information received from the wood supply database and the market needs expressed in the specific

order. Before accepting the order a smart software package will be used to assess benefit-cost ratios, such as production costs, break-even analysis, costs of lost opportunities, employment and job creation ratios, and environmental impacts. Smart Forestry Services will provide forest companies with sophisticated tools for forest planning, operations management, production tracking, contractor management and woodlands accounting.

**Improved Management Strategies**

Through the proposed data collection and evaluation structure, forest stakeholders, namely forest industries, government offices, and public entities, will be linked to current, readily available information. The framework will provide improved data sharing and communication which, in turn, will lead to better adaptive management strategies.

**Smart Tourism Booking Service**

The same wireless wide area network will also be used by the local tourism industry in order to optimize the supply of services with customer needs, by using a “*smart tourism booking service*”.

For example, a tourist could stop at any local visitor infocentre or use his laptop computer in a motel room and access the *Robson Valley Welcome Web Site* in order to book various activities according to his personal needs and time availability.

Activity packages would be created according to the length of stay and needs of each group or individual visitor. Prebooking will also be available both for summer and winter activities.

**Small Business Incubator without Walls**

Educational smart software packages, access to additional training, and networking assistance will support many Robson Valley entrepreneurs, who, although very resourceful, must still operate in isolation. Some of these services are already being provided by *Community Futures*, the *Valemount Learning Centre* and *CREDA McBride*.

**Local Infrastructure**

There will be a high speed microwave spread spectrum wireless radio connected to each machine. The wireless radio will connect to the wide area network (WAN) via the local area network (LAN) access point - a central hub consisting of a high speed microwave spread spectrum radio point-to-multipoint repeater. A central hub will be required for each community access point in order to provide a 10 km radius of wireless connectivity. In addition, nine point to point repeaters, with a range of 30 km each, will be required in order to connect the outlying communities.

GPS Units, wireless radio hook-ups, and mobile hand held data input units will be needed for the implementation of the smart forest project.

A Central Server for WAN file sharing will handle the Smart Tourism and Smart Forestry software packages.

The infrastructure will essentially consist of a fulltime high-speed wireless WAN for the Robson Valley that would allow the implementation of smart services. With no dialup delay, or associated costs of extra phone lines and modem, this option will be less expensive to operate in the long term.

Technical benefits of this infrastructure include full time connectivity, high speed, increased bandwidth, and local file sharing abilities.

## Overall S.W.O.T. Analysis

Valemount's current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats relative to technology and information are as follows:

### Strengths

- Positive attitude and high receptivity of new technologies. 40% of households have an Internet connection.
- Local individuals with high degree of software and hardware knowledge.

### Weaknesses

- Communication T1 lines are not available.
- Existing communication lines are very expensive.
- Poor quality communication lines in outside areas.

### Opportunities

- Wireless technologies are becoming an alternative to standard telephone communication lines.

### Threats

- Technology will continue to precipitate change as new advances are made in the areas of software and communications.
- The value of information is directly related to its currency, accuracy and relevance. Competitiveness today is based on knowledge now.
- While every industry is dependent on another, the Internet not only supports but radically transforms other industries.

## Communication Technology Strategies

### Survey Results

The support level for communication and internet technology is 78.6%. Valemount residents are aware of the need and improvement of communication technologies.

### Goal

To develop and enhance Valemount's telecommunications infrastructure, and to set the foundations for a smart community.

Key Initiatives	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install wireless wide area network in the Village Area, link Village Office, Valemount Learning Centre, and Valemount Library.</li> </ul>	Valemount Internet Society EDC, Private Sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Setup videoconferencing facility at Village Office.</li> </ul>	EDC Village of Valemount
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare links to Albreda, Dunster and McBride</li> </ul>	Valemount Internet Society and Private Sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to improve Internet Services and Bandwidth capacity</li> </ul>	Private Sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop Smart Booking System for local Tourism Industry</li> </ul>	Valemount Internet Society and Private Sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop Smart Forestry Software</li> </ul>	Valemount Internet Society and Private Sector

Valemount and Area Economic Development Commission

# Forestry

## **Strategy Plan**

**2000**

## Situation Analysis

### **Forestry: the Primary Economic Generator**

The Valemount area was settled at the time of the construction of the rail lines through the Yellowhead Pass in the early 1900's. Since then, the primary economic generator has been the forest industry. During the past 30 years, almost 60% of the economic wealth produced in the area was derived directly or indirectly from the forest industry.

### **High Visual Concerns**

The Land Resource Management Plan (LRMP) indicates that due to the very high visual quality concerns (Rocky Mountain trench, major highway and tourist route, proximity to Mt. Robson Provincial Park and Jasper National Park, etc), and the lack of timber, the annual allowable cut will be reduced over time to less than 50% of the present cut.

### **Timber Supply Review**

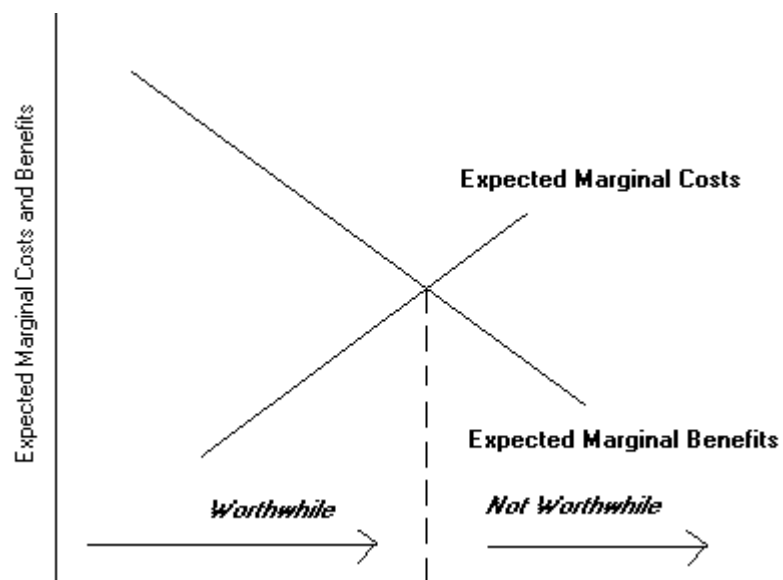
There are many pressures facing the forest industry in the Robson Valley. The 1996 Timber Supply Review of the Robson Valley Timber Supply Area (TSA) suggested that a reduction in the Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) by ten percent per decade to a final long term harvest level of approximately 45% of the current AAC of 602,377 cubic metres (set in 1996) to 351,000 cubic meters. Further reductions would result from recommendations set forth in the Land Resource Management Plan. The Protected Areas Strategy suggests a 7% impact to the timber supply.

In accordance with data provided by the Ministry of Forests, one thousand cubic meters provides 0.82 jobs, including planning, harvesting, processing and silviculture activities.

The LRMP study suggest a "no net job loss" strategy can be achieved by higher use of cedar and hemlock species, and by increasing the use of unsalvaged losses. In addition the study suggests that by an annual attrition/turnover rate of forest workers at 1% per year, an 18% reduction in the workforce (about 90 workers) could be achieved without lay-offs over 10 years.

**Impacts of Annual  
Allowable Cut Reductions**

The Economic Strategy of the LRMP calculates impacts of AAC reductions in gradual and proportional terms. Unfortunately, businesses must make their calculations according to expected marginal benefits and costs, and at a specific point and value it will be no longer worthwhile to run the business. A business can not decrease its activity proportionally. There is a point where production costs, available timber volume, and lumber revenues, cause the business to be unprofitable and not viable.



**Job Loss**

Already the Slocan mill has been reduced from three shifts to one shift, with the result that about 80 mill workers find themselves without employment, with perhaps a similar number in the logging and contracting sector finding themselves without their normal income as well. The result at the present time is that the Valemount area has lost approximately 25-30% of the wage earners, and from the higher income brackets as well.

## Community Forest Project

### Community Forest Initiatives

The Valemount and Area Economic Development Commission submitted an *Expression of Interest for a Community Forests Project* to the Minister of Forests in February, 1998.

In the Business Development section of the 1994 *Strategy Plan*, considerable emphasis was on developing a silviculture initiative to diversify and support the forestry sector.

### Forestry Committee

A forestry committee was struck in 1995. The committee comprised members and representatives of local sawmills, logging and trucking companies, the local IWA section, local environmental groups, representatives of the Robson Valley Forest District and the Ministry of Small Business Tourism and Culture. The committee dealt with alternative harvesting and management operations, with the stewardship function of the forestry sector, the job creation issue for local young people, value added manufacturing and a community forest project.

### High Priority

In addition, over 100 individuals and 10 organized groups were consulted by Peter Robinson, of Robinson and Associates, in 1996/97 with regard to forest sector opportunities. The results of a public forum held on November 7, 1996 and the feedback sheets received from local residents ranked the *Community Forest Project* 2<sup>nd</sup> for Valemount's priorities.

In 1998, the Mayor and Council of Valemount organized with the Village of McBride a steering committee in order to guide and assist a Forest Economic Development Officer with forest related initiatives. The forest community projects for both Valemount and McBride represented a major priority, with the ultimate goal to create a Community Forest Project for the Robson Valley.

<b>Objectives</b>	<p>In 1998, three major objectives were formulated by the EDC Forestry Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Define a Community Forest Project for the Robson Valley. One Community Forest with different areas in the Valley will benefit both Villages and the Regional District by reducing management and operational costs.</li><li>• Define two areas immediately adjacent to the Village of Valemount. One area will be dedicated to watershed protection and enhancement of the main water supply. The second area will be managed for timber production harmonized with increased recreational activities.</li><li>• Identify different legal structures and legal representations for a community forest.</li></ul>
<b>Potential Areas</b>	<p>The Forestry Committee identified two potential areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Swift Creek Area, located in the Selwyn Range of the Rocky Mountains. Crown land bordering to municipal and private land.</li><li>• The West Ridge Area, located in the Cariboo range. Extension: from 8,000 ha to 18,000 ha. Minimum harvest was estimated at 5,000 m<sup>3</sup> annually. The area is accessible by developed roads and in close proximity to timber processing facilities.</li></ul>
<b>Support and Participation</b>	<p>The support for a community forest was and still is broad and strong. Members of the private sector, major mills and small businesses, the Village of Valemount, the Regional District of Fraser Fort George, IWA Local 1-417, and representatives of the Robson Valley Forest District have been active participants in the forestry committee.</p>
<b>Local expertise</b>	<p>Slocan employees, small business owners, EDC members, forestry workers and representatives of the Robson Valley Forest District are willing to actively participate in the planning and management of a community forest.</p> <p>In 1999 the Village of Valemount commissioned Redwing with a feasibility study concerning a Community Forest Projects. Some economic feasibility questions still need to be answered.</p>

## Overall S.W.O.T. Analysis

Valemount's current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats relative to forestry are as follows:

### Strengths

- The area has a history of being a producer of forestry products and consequently has two primary breakdown mills, a few smaller milling operations and, most importantly, a skilled milling and woods labour force.
- A diverse range of commercial species (cedar, hemlock, pine, spruce, sub-alpine fir, Douglas Fir, hardwoods) and high quality fibre offer potential to supply a range of markets and to develop local value-added industry.
- An extensive Small Business Forest Enterprise Program area adjacent to the community offers opportunities for small enterprise in the woods and milling sectors.
- The area is served by rail and highway transportation to markets in Alberta and the Central and Southern Interior of British Columbia.

### Weaknesses

- The local forest economy is largely dependent on a single primary breakdown mill. Hence, when production at that facility is reduced, the local economy suffers significantly. At the present time, economies of scale seem to rationalize the transport of local timber to a distant mill.
- There is little value added manufacturing capacity, which may be due to the uncertainties of investment in value-added production, a short fall in local business expertise, or the lack of a reliable, economical wood supply.
- Small enterprise largely depends on a timber supply from the Small Business Forest Enterprise Program. Sales are often too large for local small enterprises to bid on and volumes surpass their wood supply needs. Local loggers

are often not able to compete against the agents of major licensees, and local small mills are not able to compete against Slocan. A sort yard, which might mitigate the supply problem and stimulate small, value added enterprise, does not exist.

- The approximately 40% reduction in AAC over the next three decades puts downward pressure on the size of the timber economy. The fact that the AAC is fully committed could impair the stimulation of value-added industries and is a potential obstacle to establishing a community forest.
- The cost of logging is increasing because more cheaply logged areas are already harvested, closer sites are being conserved for visual quality objectives, and the Forest Practices Code has increased forest management costs.
- Cedar volumes are low and saw log recovery is low. Hence, cedar harvesting is unprofitable except for small-scale operators.
- Although excellent transportation facilities exist, markets are in general distant and the cost of trucking round wood to them is high.

#### **Opportunities**

- Increased local utilization of the fibre supply represents an immediate and significant opportunity. Processing of more wood at the Slocan mill and a reduction of the 40,000m<sup>3</sup> of Small Business wood that leave the District annually are key opportunities.
- Selective harvesting systems could permit harvesting within the high visibility Rocky Mountain trench in areas currently not contributing to the AAC
- A small addition to fibre supply above the current AAC could be obtained from logs in Kinbasket Lake and from harvesting timber currently classified as inaccessible by helicopters or the long lead cable harvesting system developed locally. Salvage licences and higher utilization

standards offer other ways to increase fibre supply.

- Intensive forest management practices offer a means to increase the long term AAC from its projected 351,000m<sup>3</sup>/yr.
- There is little value added manufacturing in the Valemount area at present, which means there is room for development and job creation.
- A log sort yard would be a first step in value addition and would assist smaller mills to obtain the type of logs they need.
- Woodlots are another way to stimulate local employment and supply small mills.
- There is potential for job creation in silviculture, provided that the jobs can be localized. The Forest Practices Code and the trend toward intensive forest management mean that basic silviculture and enhanced silviculture require more labour. There is also an increased need for silvicultural surveys. The creation of a Community Forest would localize some of the silviculture jobs.
- With a decreasing AAC, using more labour and obtaining greater value from the wood provides an opportunity to maintain employment levels. The shortage of wood across the province should mean industry is willing to go where the wood is. Short term preservation of Small Business Forest Enterprise Program wood for the purposes of attracting value added investment has potential.
- Better utilization of equipment, wood, and wood wastes, i.e. getting the right log to the right mill, has potential to generate greater value from the wood supply.
- Market analysis might lead to strategies that increase the return from local wood and wood products.

- An innovative long lead cable harvesting system being developed locally could permit harvesting of inaccessible and sensitive areas.
- There is enormous potential for recreation and tourism development. An interpretive forest, forest information centre, and Metis heritage site offer other opportunities to attract visitors.
- There is an opportunity to improve the availability and distribution of raw logs to the small wood producers in the Robson Valley, and to utilize some of the 'unrecoverable' timber as a source of supply.

**Threats**

- Forest companies are changing hands rapidly and there is ongoing rationalization and centralization of production. At the same time there is a 40% production over-capacity in the province. This means some mills are going to close. The Slocan mill may be a likely candidate for closure.
- Fluctuations in wood prices create cyclicity in employment levels, and have an especially harmful effect on under-capitalized, smaller logging and milling operations.
- Canada is losing world market share in wood products to international competitors.
- There is a potential conflict between the timber economy and the recreation and tourism economy. The potential of the latter could be harmed by diminished quality of local viewscapes.

## Forestry Strategies

### Survey Results

The Small Business Forestry Program received a support level of 71.1%. The Planning of a Community Forest and Log Sort followed with 61.6% and 53.2% respectively.

### Goal

Improve the industry, by enhancing value added wood processing and create a local, stable, tailored and predictable wood supply by creating a log sort/log yard.

Key Initiatives	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the requirements of the local wood producers in terms of the potential usage of a log sort and the types of logs required.</li> </ul>	Forestry Committee Ministry of Forests
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify one or more pilot projects that can be used to test out the mechanisms and viability of several small log sorts, or a mobile log sort, or one log sort for the valley</li> </ul>	Forestry Committee Ministry of Forests
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete feasibility study concerning a Community Forest</li> </ul>	Village of Valemount Forestry Committee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify opportunities for a log sort</li> </ul>	Village of Valemount Forestry Committee

Valemount and Area Economic Development Commission

# Land Issues

## **Strategy Plan**

**2000**

## Situation Analysis

### Land Management

Currently, many conflicts are caused by rules and regulations that still reflect the agricultural age.

### The Agricultural Age in Valemount

It made common sense in 1917 to provide settlers with quarter sections to ensure their sustainability. But now only 1.7% of the Valemount Area residents are active in agriculture and the majority needs a second income source to sustain their agricultural activity.

Historically, Valemount has always been a logging town and hay for horses was provided from Dunster and McBride. In fact, old residents still call the area from Tete Jaune to Valemount “the starvation flats”.

Agricultural land reserve regulations prevent rezoning and subdivision. For instance, one local resident had to give up his dream of living in the mountains and move back to town. He was not allowed to subdivide his 75-acre property. 15 acres would have been enough for his business and dream. The community lost a valid individual with his family and a very important support service for the local winter tourism industry (small engine repairs for snowmobiles, sled-dogs tours).

### The Industrial Age in Valemount

The zoning of the Village of Valemount reflects the thinking of the industrial age, that is many small town lots for CN and sawmill workers.

The results are that Valemount dwellers are faced with many of the negative aspects of big urban centres, but do not enjoy the advantages of the big urban centres.

### Agricultural Land

Most of the valley bottom land in the Valemount area is within the ALR, notwithstanding the fact that the land is a unique geological area, consisting of pure sand. Crops cannot grow without extreme amounts of irrigation. Historically the area was known as “Starvation Flats” due to the lack of grass and crop-growing ability. No crops are grown other than hay. The fact that so much land is within the ALR makes the process of creating 5 to 20 acre parcels much more difficult if not impossible. To attract significant, new investment capital, one has to “sell” the

lifestyle, beauty and environment of the valley, and the fact that one who settles in the valley can do so on a parcel of land larger than the 70 x 120 residential lots currently available in the Village.

**Outdated Legislation**

Provincial Government Ministries - such as Lands (Environment), Forestry and Highways, all have procedures and policies that to some extent seem rooted in the environment that existed many years ago.

**Amendment of Policies**

Each ministry quite naturally has a tendency to protect its own interests and that of course is their mandate, but there should be some mechanism in place whereby the economic benefit of a specific proposal should be weighed against the policies of the particular ministry. In other words, if it is clear that the economic and social benefit of that proposal vastly outweighs the benefit to the ministry of protecting its own interests, without any danger to the environment, then there should exist an ability for the ministry involved to amend its policies to permit the proposal to proceed.

If the cost of imposing a ministry policy is so excessive that a specific proposal will not proceed, and if the economic and social benefits of that proposal so outweighs the benefits to the ministry of imposing its policies, then the ministry should have the ability to amend its policies to bring the costs down.

In other words, all parties must be committed to assisting in the implementation of the Economic Development Strategy and have the ability and freedom to make decisions from time to time that will enable the locally developed strategy to be successful.

## Overall S.W.O.T. Analysis

Valemount's current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats relative to land issues are as follows:

### Strengths

- The area is appealing to relocating people and businesses.

### Weaknesses

- The Village of Valemount has a very small area, namely 4 square kilometers.
- Agricultural land reserve regulations prevent rezoning and subdivision in the Valemount Area.
- Costs of properties are perceived very high if compared to Edmonton or Calgary.
- Lack of serviced lots around the Village of Valemount.
- The entire land base of Crown Land is allocated to forestry, parks, and some few operators.
- Potential conflict among various backcountry users (snowmobiling vs. heliskiers, horseback-riders vs. hikers, or ATV-riders vs. mountain-bikers)

### Opportunities

- High demand for rural smaller properties.
- Plan specific areas for specific use and shared used: mountain-biking trails and snowmobiling route, backcountry skiing, heliskiing etc.

### Threats

- High development of 5-10 acre properties in the U.S. (Montana, Colorado, Arizona)
- Canada is becoming more a urban society. Percentage of rural population continues to decrease.

## Land Use Strategies

### Survey Results

The support level for Land Use Issues is of 61.3%.

### Goal

With the assistance of Local Government, Provincial and Federal Agencies, initiate a fundamental change concerning land use regulations.

Key Initiatives	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examine current OCP and zoning bylaws to identify what changes could be made to assist in making attractive land available.</li> </ul>	Regional District Fraser Fort George Village of Valemount
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update and revise the Official Community Plan</li> </ul>	Regional District Fraser Fort George Village of Valemount
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Agricultural Land Reserve Issues</li> </ul>	Regional District Fraser Fort George
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rezone and free from obsolete restrictions private properties in the Valemount Area. Apply eventually some rules to reflect the new info-age and to ensure high standards of quality of life.</li> </ul>	Regional District Fraser Fort George Village of Valemount
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop 5-acre, 10-acre and 20-acre parcels with/without underground utilities to be sold to relocating people.</li> </ul>	Regional District Fraser Fort George Village of Valemount BCAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creation of a District Municipality.</li> </ul>	Regional District Fraser Fort George Village of Valemount BCAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist various backcountry user groups in resolving use conflicts.</li> </ul>	BCAL Ministry of Forests Village of Valemount

Valemount and Area Economic Development Commission

# Tourism

## **Strategy Plan**

**2000**

## Situation Analysis

### Facts and Numbers

#### Canada is a Top Destination

Canada plays an important role in world tourism. Canada ranks in the top 10 tourist destinations in the world, according to the World Tourism Organizations.

World's Top Tourism Destinations – 1998  
(International tourism arrivals, excluding same-day visitors)

	Country	Arrivals
1	France	70,000,000
2	Spain	47,749,000
3	U.S.	46,395,000
4	Italy	34,829,000
5	U.K.	25,750,000
6	China	25,073,000
7	Mexico	19,810,000
8	Canada	18,828,000
9	Poland	18,820,000
10	Austria	17,352,000

Source: Canadian Tourism Commission

**International Visitors**

The big majority of international visitors to Canada come from the United States (79%), and Europe follows with almost 12%. International travel generated over \$15 billion, in 1998.

Inbound Trips to Canada - 1998

<b>From</b>	<b>Trips</b>	<b>%</b>
U.S.	14,893,000	79.1%
Europe	2,211,000	11.7%
Asia	1,115,000	5.9%
Other	609,000	3.2%

Source: Canadian Tourism Commission

**Asian Visitors Play  
Important Role in B.C.**

Custom Entries to BC also indicate that the vast majority of international visitors come from the U.S. and that Vancouver is the entry point for most Asian visitors.

Custom Entries to BC - 1998

<b>From</b>	<b>Trips</b>	<b>%</b>
U.S.	3,405,853	74.2%
Asia	749,004	16.3%
Europe	435,036	9.5%

Source: Tourism British Columbia

**Intraprovincial Travel**

Intraprovincial travel accounted for almost 50% of overnight person-trips. Also visitors from other Canadian provinces contribute to a high overnight person-trips percentage to B.C. tourism and accommodation sector (21.8%).

Country of Origin	Overnight Stays	%
B.C.	10,654,000	48.9%
U.S.	4,779,000	22.0%
Canada	4,746,000	21.8%
Asia Pacific	774,000	3.6%
Europe	623,000	2.9%
Other Overseas	142,000	0.7%
Mexico	52,000	0.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,770,000</b>	

Source: Tourism British Columbia

**The Vancouver Region Generates 57% of Room Revenues**

Room Revenues generated \$1.2 billion in 1998. The Vancouver, Coast and Mountains tourism region generates almost 57% of total room revenues.

Tourism Region	Room Revenue	%
Vancouver, Coast and Mountains	683,245,602	56.9%
The Islands	214,980,894	17.9%
Thompson Okanagan	140,576,708	11.7%
Northern B.C.	82,988,353	6.9%
B.C. Rockies	62,965,211	5.2%
Cariboo Country	16,267,067	1.4%
<b>Total Room Revenue</b>	<b>1,201,023,835</b>	

Source: Tourism British Columbia

## Market Trends and Segments

### German Travellers

A high percentage of German travellers to Canada indicated that *nature appreciation* was the most important motivation for visiting Canada. This group enjoys nature by visiting national parks and observing wildlife. They prefer seeing nature in its natural state, as evidenced by their interest in natural ecological sites and protected lands. This suggests that eco-tourism products might be easily and successfully marketed to this group. [Germany Final Report, 1996:118]

### U.K. Travellers

U.K. travellers to Canada fall into six distinct motivational segments based on their general travel motivations. 18% of travellers place exceptionally high importance on nature and the great outdoors, with visiting scenic landmarks, visiting national parks/forests and wildlife observation being popular vacation activities. [U.K. Canadian Highlights Report, 1997:62]

### Japanese Travellers

Outdoor experience and eco-tourism are major draws. As in the rest of the world, the Japanese are increasingly environmentally conscious. Particularly among young travellers, there is a strong interest in eco-tourism vacations, which are usually focused on outdoor experiences with minimal intrusion on the natural environment. Other outdoor activities popular with younger Japanese travellers include hiking, horseback riding, whale-watching, and freshwater or saltwater fishing. [Packaging for the Japanese Travel Market, 1995:6]

### American Travellers

In 1996, only 4.5% of leisure trips taken by Americans were outside of the U.S. and Canada's share of that travel was 24.7%. Market research repeatedly indicates that American awareness of Canada as potential vacation destination remains low (8%). Canada does not compete directly with overseas travel and with sun, sand and surf destinations for American tourists. But these destinations are a formidable presence in the U.S. marketplace at the worst possible time – the peak of Canada's annual advertising campaign. [The American Tourism Market, 1998:11]

Competition for the 4-5% of American travellers who venture beyond their country's borders will be tremendous. Canada would be well advised to concentrate its efforts on persuading American domestic

travellers to come north and experience the adventure of international travel without the risk, cost, and time commitment of going overseas. [The American Tourism Market, 1998:12]

**Avid Travellers**

Baby Boomers have been, are, and will remain avid travellers throughout their lives. This is the largest, most highly educated, best travelled, and wealthiest generation the United States has ever produced. [The American Tourism Market, 1998:6]

**Target the Mature Market Segments**

During the next 15-20 years, goods and service suppliers –especially in the travel industry- should target the middle-aged and mature market segments. These will be the largest, fastest growing and consequently the most lucrative market segment in the U.S. [The American Tourism Market, 1998:7]

**Independent Travel**

Compared to other generations, all Baby Boomers are more individualistic and feel more financially secure. They are less happy with the social status quo than other adults, and they are marked by skepticism and rejection of authority. These traits predispose them to independent travel. Also, those qualities could lead them to make their own travel arrangements – either through a travel agent or, on the internet, as travel services increasingly become available in cyberspace. [The American Tourism Market, 1998:7]

**Education as a Priority**

Education is a Baby Boomer priority. As aging boomers leave stress behind, vacations won't be as much as about relaxation as they will be about new experiences and learning. [The American Tourism Market, 1998:8]

**Natural and Authentic**

Baby Boomers value things that are natural as opposed to synthetic or man-made. For Boomers natural means authentic. The whole green orientation is very much a Boomer phenomenon. This suggests that man-made attractions such as Disney World might not hold much appeal to empty-nesters. If tourism is to capitalize on the Boomer market, operators will need to pay attention to nature and the natural.

- Tourism experiences will need to provide opportunity for self-improvement.
- Sophisticated Boomers will have to be sold an unique experience as opposed to a product.

This represents a tremendous opportunity for Canadian

heritage, cultural and nature tourism. Canada still has the authenticity that boomers deem essential. With careful development and proper marketing, Canadian nature, heritage and cultural products could become major attractions. [The American Tourism Market, 1998:8]

**Boomers Want to Experience Nature**

Boomers want to experience nature in its unadulterated state and they want authentic cultural experiences. American perception is that Canada can and does deliver on both counts. In an ad tracking survey conducted in the spring of 1997, 75% of the respondents rated Canada as an excellent or very good place to experience a spectacular outdoor vacation, to experience nature, or to relax. The great outdoors is one of Canada's most recognized icons. It is so strongly linked to Canada that Canada, itself, is sometimes seen as a symbol of the great outdoors. Discerning Boomers want to get closer to nature. They want to feel that they are part of a grander plan and they believe that Canada can make this happen. [The American Tourism Market, 1998:12]

**Genuine Experiences**

Boomers are secure individuals both financially and psychologically. Their combination of education and life experience has made them self-reliant, independent and self-centered – characteristics until now rarely ascribed to the mature market segment. They want autonomy, freedom and authenticity. They want experiences that are genuine and natural. Most boomers have had their fill of consumerism. Canadian tourism operators who make the effort to understand boomer market behaviour stand at the threshold of a period of tremendous business growth. [The American Tourism Market, 1998:15]

## Local Tourism Issues

### Find a Niche

Valemount has not yet precisely defined its tourism products and position. Tourism businesses must understand market needs and trends and improve existing products.

*“There is no such thing as “eco-tourism” as a separate entity. There is tourism, and it is our job to break it down into specific areas that we want to specialize in. We need to find our ‘niche”* (David Baxter, Demographics, Valemount Conference September 17 –19, 1999)

### Uniqueness

*“Before marketing, you have to define what you are. What’s your vision? You also need to have some sort of uniqueness. A formula is VRIO:*

- Is your product valuable
- Is your product rare (if the answers to the first two questions are no, then you don’t need to go any further with that idea!)
- Is your product imitable, in which case its value may not be as great as you think it is
- Do you have ownership of your product...can you lever it into other areas

*Once you have answered these questions, then you can begin to define what your business is, and which areas we want to pursue.”*

(Michael Goldberg, How to Market your Business and Community, Valemount Conference September 17 –19, 1999)

### The Community as Essential Tourism Component

Many resorts have been designed within a supporting community, or such a community has sprung around the resort. This community is the essence of any resort. If the locals are content, then the guests will feel comfortable too. If the layout of the roads promotes traffic congestion, speeding and road rage, the guest will feel rushed or delayed, pushing the issue of time to the forefront. Understanding what makes the locals tick and what frustrates you personally when the day is done can help identify the positive and negative factors of the resort town. [J. Johnson, Oracle, 99:2]

- Eco-Tourism** There is a clear need for soft adventure tourism products, and a need for a clear product definition and development.  
*“The term ‘eco-tourism’ is often misused. Eco-tourism’s roots are based on conservation. We need to ensure we understand the difference between adventure tourism and eco-tourism.”* (Ross Cloutier, Tourism, Valemount Conference September 17 –19, 1999)
- Soft Adventures** Soft adventures are also easier to develop, market and sell, because there is a broader demographic base and a larger market segment for soft adventures.  
*“‘Hard’ adventures are niche marketing, whereas ‘soft’ adventures are more broad based marketing.”* (Ross Cloutier, Tourism, Valemount Conference September 17 –19, 1999)
- Worldwide Competition** Most of the perceived product strengths such as *outstanding scenery, wildlife and birdwatching, rivers and mountainous areas*, compete globally with Australia and New Zealand.  
*“Valemount adventure/tourism businesses are not competing with other regional businesses. You are competing with the world. People interested in this type of activity will travel the entire world looking for adventure. Your product must be able to compete on an international level, and be attractive enough to make world travellers pick your community over others.”* (Ross Cloutier, Tourism, Valemount Conference September 17 –19, 1999)
- The Strength of Agglomeration** In order to be competitive on a larger scale, the Valemount Area should apply the agglomeration principle to tourism products and services. For instance, a high concentration of snowmobiling services could increase the competitiveness of Valemount as a winter destination.  
*“‘Agglomeration’: if you put two shoe stores next to each other, the two stores will do better business than if you put the two shoe stores apart from each other. This is the principle behind shopping centres, and in fact Cities. Valemount is partly doing this by offering several businesses for accommodation, several restaurants, several services stations, several businesses. You may*

*wish to build on this theme to increase your economy.”*  
(Michael Goldberg, How to Market your Business and Community, Valemount Conference September 17 –19, 1999)

**Quality Products**

Local businesses need to focus on professionalism and quality products. Beautiful scenery alone is not enough in order to be successful.

*“People who spend money as tourists want to buy ‘certainty and security’. They do not want ugly surprises. Your tourism should be like a cruise ship experience...people are welcomed, they know what’s going on and there are a lot of choices, and there is consistency on board in terms of high quality service etc.”*  
(David Baxter, Amenity Based vs. Resource Extracting Communities, Valemount Conference September 17 –19, 1999)

**Quality and Stories**

*“Today’s families are time starved. They want to purchase high quality services and high quality stories.”*  
(David Baxter, Amenity Based vs. Resource Extracting Communities, Valemount Conference September 17 –19, 1999)

**Stories as Value Added**

*“To expand on the concept of people buying stories: the restaurants that charge \$100 for a meal and the restaurants that charge \$5 for a meal both pay the same amount for the food delivered to their establishment. The more expensive restaurants charge more because they are creating a “story”...such as exquisite décor, or exceptional service, or the food was highly decorated, etc. This is an example of ‘value added’.”* (David Baxter, Amenity Based vs. Resource Extracting Communities, Valemount Conference September 17 –19, 1999)

**The Structure of Small Adventure Business is Changing**

*“Small adventure businesses have been the norm in the past (average yearly revenue of \$90,000). These small companies are becoming extinct. The trend is for small companies to amalgamate, to cut down on certain costs, and as a result everyone makes much more money. The future successful companies will be larger, more professional, bigger profits, and able to compete on an international level. There may still be small businesses, however, this is not the trend of the future.”* (Ross Cloutier, Tourism, Valemount Conference September 17 –19, 1999)

*“If you want to attract a travel wholesaler to send people to your business, you will have to be fairly big (e.g. well established, with \$300,000 yearly income or more) in order to be attractive to them. As they only make a small percentage of your business income, the smaller businesses are not attractive to them.”* (Ross Cloutier, Tourism, Valemount Conference September 17 –19, 1999)

**Market Segments**

*“There are two main markets to go after: one is the people between ages 35 – 40 years, and the other is the aging population...people between 55 – 60.”* (David Baxter, Demographics, Valemount Conference September 17 –19, 1999)

**Baby-Boomers**

*“If you wish to market towards the front edge baby boomers (ages 50 – 54), then you must begin marketing today to attract them in 5 years when they are retired. The number of people retiring each year will more than double by the year 2025.”* (David Baxter, Demographics, Valemount Conference September 17 –19, 1999)

**Brand Image**

*“You must create a ‘brand image’, and the image must be the right one for the market. (Think of Banff, Victoria, Jasper, Moose Jaw, etc....they all have an instant image that comes to your mind). Valemount already has an image in people’s minds that have been here. You need to be aware of what your image is, and if necessary, create a new one, or market your current one if it’s effective.”* (David Baxter, Amenity Based vs. Resource Extracting Communities, Valemount Conference September 17 –19, 1999)

## Winter Tourism

### Nature in Winter

Winter products and nature in winter packages have become more popular in the 1990s. Forty percent of leisure travellers want more adventure in their vacations. The old suntan-and-souvenir routine has given way to more involving and creative ways to experience the world. Doing activities like snowmobiling, tubing and dog sledding fulfils this desire. [Winter Tourism in Canada, 1998:3]

### Snowmobiling in Valemount Started in the Early 1970's

Some Valemount residents started to snowmobile to the alpine already in the early 1970's. When more people joined this recreational activity the need for grooming the access trails to the alpine snowmobiling areas also increased. In the late 1980s snowmobiling in the alpine became an attraction for visitors from outside the community, in particular from Alberta.

Now, The Robson Valley and the Valemount Area are home to world class alpine snowmobiling sites. Groomed trails offer easy access to spectacular alpine areas. These represent a real challenge for the biggest and best snowmobiles and the most experienced riders.

### Increased Demand for Snowmobiling Areas

The demand for recreational snowmobiling areas in general and snowmobiling in the alpine in particular is growing due to different factors such as improved machines and equipment, improved riding skills, the aging of the boomers, and a favourable economic outlook in Alberta.

### Competitive Advantages

The competitive advantages of the Valemount Area are the geographic location, relative vicinity to Edmonton, the physical traits of the local mountains with easy access and high vertical, good weather conditions and a very strong hospitality sector with 11 hotels/motels, 334 rooms, 8 restaurants, 1 pub and 1 bar.

Snowmobiling typically begins in mid-November and ends in April. Spring riding may continue through to May. However December through March is the best time for snowmobiling when the mountain trails are abundant of deep fresh powder. In the Valemount Area there are also many family trails that offer a great variety of snowmobiling for everyone.

**Market Segment**

The typical snowmobile rider who visits Valemount and the Robson Valley is on average a 40-year-old male from Alberta, who owns a 500cc machine, his own pick-up truck and a trailer. He will spend 2 nights in a Hotel/Motel per visit and spend \$125 each day on meals, accommodation, fuel and miscellaneous items.

## Marketing Strengths

### Niche Marketing

- *Niche marketing strengths* are areas where Valemount is well rated. Snowmobiling, for instance, could be a marketing strength for the winter tourism.
- *Niche marketing weaknesses* indicate areas that may be tougher to develop, since it may be necessary to invest considerable time and money. For instance, to improve price/quality perceptions of our accommodation infrastructure, or the development of a trail system for hikers and mountain bikers.

### Nature and Wilderness

Canada and B.C. in particular attract international visitors for their natural beauty and scenery. Canada and B.C. are admired for its wide open spaces and endless landscapes, and the opportunity to experience nature in a truly wilderness setting. B.C. is perceived as having a unique identity, due to its outdoor and wilderness image. This image appeals to German, Japanese, U.K. and U.S. visitors.

### Nature and Scenery

Nature and scenery are clear marketing strengths in the sense that they are both important to international visitors and very highly regarded in Canada and B.C.

Perceived general marketing strengths include:

- Outstanding scenery
- Chances to see wildlife, birds and flowers
- Visits to appreciate natural ecological sites
- Lakes, rivers and mountainous areas
- National/provincial parks and forest

[Canadian Highlights Report, 1997:38]

However, Canada's nature product is fairly saturated in many international markets and therefore Canada must develop other products and new marketing strengths. Nature and beautiful scenery alone may not be enough to attract international visitors.

## Overall S.W.O.T. Analysis

Valemount's current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats relative to tourism are as follows:

### Strengths

- Excellent hospitality sector with 11 hotels/motels, 334 rooms, 8 restaurants, 1 pub and 1 bar.
- Excellent location on Hwy 5. Strong traffic counts in the summertime (almost 1,000,000 travellers over 120 days).
- Chances to see wildlife, birds and flowers.
- Proximity to Mount Robson Provincial Park, and to Jasper National Park.

### Weaknesses

- Lack of trails and variety of activity for leisure time.
- Accommodations are perceived to be expensive in the summertime.
- Lack of variety of packages, activities, (poor product line).
- Lack of resort type accommodation (Resort Lodge).
- Distance to a major international or domestic airport.
- Nature alone may not be enough to attract international visitors.

### Opportunities

- Growing interest in nature related activity for the 45+ age group. Birdwatching packages.
- Growth opportunities for outdoor and sports activities (canoeing, rafting, mountain-biking). Fishing packages.
- Growth opportunity for winter activities and non-ski packages (snowmobiling, dogsledding, cross-country, skating)

- Growth opportunity for interprovincial visitors, in particular from Alberta.
- Growth opportunity for intraprovincial visitors, in particular from the Lower Mainland, in combination with train packages.
- Opportunities to improve Via Rail connections from and to Vancouver.
- Develop packages to visits to natural ecological sites (Wildlife Sanctuary, Jackman Flats Natural Reserve)
- Develop unique experiences for the sophisticated Boomers.
- With careful development and proper marketing, Valemount's nature, scenery and outdoors products could become major attractions.
- Multi-activity packages are a new need, and soft adventures are easier to develop for a broader demographic base.

**Threats**

- Exchange rates often determine long-haul travel decisions.
- Greater price sensitivity and price competition emphasize on value vacations.
- Stiff competition with aggressive marketing approaches of other nature destinations, particularly from Australia.
- The United States still has a strong image in the long-haul travel market as a year-round destination.
- The popularity of sun-and-beach destinations, especially in the winter season, make winter product development more difficult.
- Carriers operating to the United States offer travel agents seats on a year-round basis at better prices than carriers operating to Canada.
- Trend of international travellers toward shorter and fewer trips per year.

## Tourism Strategies

### Survey Results

The support level for tourism is 80.3%.

### Goal

To transform Valemount into a destination centre and service centre for backcountry activities, soft adventures and ecotourism.

Key Initiatives	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transform Valemount into a Gateway Community. Gateway Community Pilot Project.</li> </ul>	Gateway Committee Village of Valemount
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop Interpretive Centre "Where The Basins Meet".</li> </ul>	Gateway Committee Village of Valemount
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assist planning and development of major tourism projects <i>Canoe Mountain Gondola, Canoe Hot Springs, Ski Hill.</i></li> </ul>	BCAL Village of Valemount
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trail Development.</li> </ul>	Gateway Committee Village of Valemount
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop strong shoulder season programs.</li> </ul>	Tourism and Recreation Gateway Committee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop multi-activity packaging and partnerships. (Robson Valley Tourism Association)</li> </ul>	PGRDC Tourism and Recreation Gateway Committee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and plan new winter tourism opportunities.</li> </ul>	Tourism and Recreation Gateway Committee EDC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a new Marketing Plan.</li> </ul>	Gateway Committee Tourism and Recreation

# Part 5

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# Appendix

## Canoe-Robson Valley

### A Rural Community Survival Conference

**Help Create our Future**

**Valemount, BC**

**September 17, 18, & 19, 1999**

## SESSIONS

### WELCOMING SPEECH

Speaker: Jeannette Townsend  
Village of Valemount  
Valemount, BC  
Time: 6:00 p.m. - 6:10 p.m.  
Date: Friday, September 17, 1999  
Location: Valemount Community Hall

### ADDRESS TO PARTICIPANTS

Speaker: Lois Boone  
New Democratic Party  
Prince George/Mount Robson, BC  
Time: 6:10 p.m. to 6:20 p.m.  
Date: Friday, September 17, 1999  
Location: Valemount Community Hall

### ADDRESS TO PARTICIPANTS

Speaker: Greg Goodwin  
Director, Community Enterprise Development  
Ministry of Community Development, Cooperatives, and Volunteers  
Victoria, BC  
Time: 6:20 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.  
Date: Friday, September 17, 1999  
Location: Valemount Community Hall

### STEPS IN SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Speaker: Bob Pfister  
University of Northern British Columbia  
Prince George, BC  
Time: 6:30 p.m. - 7:15 p.m.  
Date: Friday, September 17, 1999  
Location: Valemount Community Hall

Economic development?...community development?...sustainable development?...they sound the same. So are not the steps to prosperity pretty much the same? Today, communities are saying "No" to old approaches and embracing strategies created collaboratively by people from all walks of community life. This new approach can be called sustainable economic development (SED) and it stands contrast to conventional development strategies. SED redefines prosperity in terms of community values, quality of life, and the environment alongside economic considerations. Moreover, it advocates the long-term stewardship of community resources, ensuring that present actions do not erode the basis for future prosperity. It values a more inclusive, democratic approach to decision-making, representing community-wide interests over those of an elite few. You may be saying "Sure, sustainable economy sounds like a fine idea, but how do I translate it into something useful for my own community?" This presentation explores that question.

**ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION**

Speaker: Dale McMann  
Prince George Region Development Corporation  
Prince George, BC

Time: 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Date: Friday, September 17, 1999

Location: Valemount Community Hall

This session will address what economic diversification is, what it means, and how one achieves it.

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

Speaker: David Baxter  
Urban Futures Institute  
Vancouver, BC

Time: 8:45 a.m. - 10:35 a.m.

Date: Saturday, September 18, 1999

Location: Valemount Community Hall

David Baxter's presentation will be in two parts. The morning session will be a "foundation building" session, where the fundamentals and issues of demographics will be presented. This session will deal with the demographic factors that will shape the Valemount community's external environment over the coming years. A step-down approach that illustrates the principals and opportunities of demographic change from the world, to the nation, to the province, to the region, will provide the organization for the session. This session may be thought of as a course in demographics.

**TOURISM**

Speaker: Ross Cloutier  
University College of the Cariboo  
Kamloops, BC

Time: 11:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

Date: Saturday, September 18, 1999

Location: Valemount Community Hall

This session will provide an overview of the tourism industry (size and sectors):

- Trends in the tourism industry (profitability, ownership, adventure tourism, ecotourism, tourism communities, corridors, and gateways).
- Operating an adventure or ecotourism business (trends, profitability, lifestyle, corporate structures, staffing, and viability requirements).
- Dealing with competition and forming alliances for Valemount.
- Establishing adventure tourism in Valemount (infrastructure, market accessibility, skilled workers, training, education and standards, political and community support).

**ADDRESS TO PARTICIPANTS**

Speaker: John Backhouse  
 Commissioner  
 British Columbia Northern Development Commission  
 Prince George, BC  
 Time: 1:10 p.m. to 1:20 p.m.  
 Date: Saturday, September 18, 1999  
 Location: The Loose Moose Neighbourhood Pub

**AMENITY BASED VS. RESOURCE EXTRACTING COMMUNITIES**

Speaker: David Baxter  
 Urban Futures Institute  
 Vancouver, BC  
 Time: 2:00 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.  
 Date: Saturday, September 18, 1999  
 Location: Valemount Community Hall

This afternoon session will be in a workshop format where participants can discuss the application of the concepts of demographics to their specific areas of interest. A number of focus topics such as amenity regions, diversity, e-commerce, water resources, niche marketing, consumer life cycles, and tourism will be introduced for discussion. This session will provide the participants with the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of the strengths and limitations of demographics, build applications on the foundations laid in the morning session, and contribute their insights on how demographics does, or does not, relate to issues facing their area of interest.

**VALUE ADDED MANUFACTURING, WOOD PRODUCTS**

Speakers: John Brink  
 Central Interior Wood Processors Association  
 Prince George, BC  
  
 Jim Engleson  
 Canadian Forest Products Ltd.  
 Prince George, BC  
  
 Albert Smith  
 FRBC Fiber Facilitator  
 Prince George, BC

Roseline Ferré  
 Project Coordinator  
 Canadian Wood Council  
 Prince George, BC

Time: 4:10 p.m. - 5:45 p.m.  
 Date: Saturday, September 18, 1999  
 Location: Valemount Community Hall

We do have a future with wood - but what is it and how will we get there? Our forest industry is in transition, and with it, we are feeling the pains of change - uncertainty, economic downturn, and job loss. Times of change are also times of exploration and discovery of new opportunities. This session will explore the following topics as they relate to the wood industry and provide insight as to our future with wood:

- What trends do we see now that will shape the future of the industry?

- What are the employment prospects?
- What is value-added?
- What are the key issues facing the industry now, and what changes are needed?
- Where are the business opportunities now?
- What resources are available to entrepreneurs in this sector?

And when you hear Wood *WORKS!* What does that mean and why should every community in BC "think wood"?

Think...learn...and discover... *Our Future with Wood!*

## EXPORTING

Speaker: Doug Taylor  
Pacific Business Intelligence Ltd.  
Sidney, BC

Time: 6:15 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Date: Saturday, September 18, 1999

Location: The Loose Moose Neighbourhood Pub

Doug Taylor's talk will look at the Why, Who, and How of exporting. Speaking from a practitioner's viewpoint and using real world examples he will present information on the good, the bad, and the ugly of exporting, define the types of products and ideas that have the potential for success in the international marketplace, and provide insights on the tools and actions necessary for entering the exciting world of international business.

## FROM RESOURCE-EXTRACTION TO AMENITY-DRIVEN GROWTH: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY

Speaker: Ray Rasker  
Sonoran Institute  
Bozeman, MT

Time: 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Date: Saturday, September 18, 1999

Location: The Loose Moose Neighbourhood Pub

Throughout the U.S. and Canadian Rockies, communities surrounded by mountains with nearby lakes, rivers, and wilderness are growing. However, the causes of economic growth are diverse. They include a population growth; an aging population, leading to an increase in retirement income; the influx of urban refugees seeking a higher quality of life; a decline in out-migration; the rapid rise in non-labour income, driven in part by the growth of the stock market; increased property values in metropolitan areas, making housing comparatively more affordable in rural areas; an increase in "footloose entrepreneurs" made possible by a number of factors including telecommunications technology and outsourcing of services; and a rise in demand for tourism and recreation services.

Because of changes in how products are manufactured in a modern economy, some people -- such as engineers, software designers, business consultants, financial experts, and others -- have chosen to live in a rural setting. Ten years ago this form of "footloose" employment was anecdotal, written about in magazines and newspapers as human interest stories as a glimpse of what the future might look like. Today they are a major driving force in the economy, particularly in communities that have what it takes to attract and keep entrepreneurs. This form of amenity-driven growth offers greater opportunities than single-industry dependence of the past. It also brings with it a whole new set of problems.

## **ELECTRONIC COMMERCE**

Speaker: Grace Casselman  
Canadian Computer Wholesaler Magazine  
Calgary, AB

Time: 8:30 a.m. - 9:50 a.m.

Date: Sunday, September 19, 1999

Location: Valemount Community Hall

E-commerce, and even more pertinently, e-business is becoming of critical importance to Canadian companies, communities, and individuals. What is really going on in this area? What are the key benefits and pitfalls? How can you market yourself online, and whom will you reach? What are Internet users looking for? Most importantly, how can you local community promote itself online and how can you better support local businesses in their online ventures?

This session will provide an in-depth look from a community perspective at doing business on the Internet.

## **HOW TO MARKET YOUR INDUSTRY HOW TO MARKET YOUR COMMUNITY**

Speaker: Mike Goldberg  
University of British Columbia  
Vancouver, BC

Time: 10:15 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

Date: Sunday, September 19, 1999

Location: Valemount Community Hall

Many energetic communities are now asking themselves how they can be more active in marketing their key industries and strengths. This is particularly true for areas where traditional strengths are being eroded through growing global competition and/or changes in external economic conditions. However, there is a set of vitally important earlier strategic questions that must be answered satisfactorily before one can attack issues of marketing and promotion, since you must first have very clear idea about what sort of strengths you indeed possess before you can develop a marketing and promotion plan designed to make these strengths that much stronger.

Accordingly, the present talk will address these issues, starting with broader strategic questions and then focusing on more specific issues of promotion. The key strategic questions that must be asked include the following: What business(es) are we in or do we want to be in? Do we want to aim for high priced niches or for lower price mass-produced goods and services? Do we want to be diversified or specialized and how do we achieve these?

Having answered these, and additional relevant strategic questions we will then be able to get down to identify a number of likely sectors where The Canoe-Robson Valley might have some real strengths for future development. Armed with these strengths we can move ahead to issues of marketing and promotion; it simply would not be possible to market effectively until we know exactly what it is that is we want to focus on.

The presentation will be highly interactive, setting out some tools of analysis and usable examples and then engaging the audience in how we all can use these tools and ideas to design and create new futures for The Canoe-Robson Valley.

**CLOSING REMARKS**

Facilitator: Andy Beesley  
Andy Beesley & Associates  
Prince George, BC

Time: 11:45 a.m. - 12:00 noon

Date: Sunday, September 19, 1999

Location: Valemount Community Hall

Moving From Talk into Action: Strategies to ensure that your time and energy during this conference have been well spent.