



OMINECA

Beetle Action Coalition

Business Plan

October 1, 2009 to December 31, 2011



Ray Schultz, RPF
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January 8, 2010

Delivered via email Ray.Schultz@gov.bc.ca

Dear Ray Schultz;

I am pleased to submit the following Business Plan for the Omineca Beetle Action Coalition for the period October 1, 2009 through December 31, 2011.

As you are aware, this Business Plan has been developed in consultation with Ministry staff during the past three months. The focus of activities for the Coalition will shift under this plan, from strategy planning to implementation. We propose to focus on achieving results that benefit the region, and the province as a whole, by undertaking a number of small, strategically selected projects.

Implementation of the 42 major recommendations and 246 actions contained in the regional strategies will require a long-term commitment. Therefore, our projects will be selected for their potential to build regional capacity and partnerships, fill critical gaps, and leverage increased benefits from existing programs and policies.

A key aspect of successful implementation of this plan will be our continuing partnership with the Province, including the necessary funding and staff work provided through your Ministry. We look forward to your support in that regard.

Yours truly,

Don Bassermann,
Chair, Omineca Beetle Action Coalition

Cc Minister Bill Bennett, Ministry of Community and Rural Development
Donna Barnett, Parliamentary Secretary for Pine Beetle Community Recovery

Purpose

This Business Plan sets out the two-year implementation objectives for the Omineca Beetle Action Coalition. It describes the proposed projects and initiatives that will be undertaken, in whole or in part, by the Coalition between October 1, 2009 and December 31, 2011. It also describes the resources required for implementation and the methods and measures of success.

Overview

From its establishment in 2005 to September 2009 the Omineca Beetle Action Coalition’s mandate was to make plans for economic diversification and community resilience in the wake of a Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic that has threatened to devastate the region’s timber industry and exacerbated pre-existing trends in population decline and economic uncertainty. The planning work involved a broad range of stakeholders, and resulted in an overarching *Five Year Diversification and Implementation Plan*¹ and nine sector strategies containing 42 recommendations and 246 suggested actions. Following on the strategies, the Coalition has developed action plans to outline the initial steps of implementation. As a result of this planning work, the region has, for the first time, a “blueprint” that sets out what needs to be done to assure a prosperous future. Many of the action items have also been identified by other organizations, and in some cases work is already underway. However, there is a continuing need to communicate and act on priorities as a region, coordinate the use of public resources for best value, and build lasting partnerships that will see the work done over the long-term.

The focus of the Coalition will now shift from planning to implementation. It will participate directly in several small, strategically important projects and initiatives with short-term deliverables, and a significant part of its effort will be in activities that solidify common regional priorities, facilitate implementation partnerships, provide advice to senior governments, and improve the region’s capacity going forward. To achieve this, the Coalition will require funding and resources carried forward from its 2009 Business Plan, plus new funding and resources to be provided by the Province.

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¹ See OBAC Diversification and Implementation Plan, Provincial Government Submission, August 28, 2009

1. Two-year Objectives

As described in the Overview, the Omineca Beetle Action Coalition has completed its initial planning objectives and must now take the necessary measures to ensure the plans serve both the region and the province effectively. Broadly, the Coalition's two-year implementation objectives are ***to work to ensure the sustainable development and resiliency of the region by:***

- **Completing projects that were initiated concurrent with the planning phase²;**
- **Facilitating the implementation of at least one high priority project relevant to each sector strategy while concurrently strengthening delivery partnerships;**
- **Providing leadership that enhances the climate for on-going collaborative implementation of strategies over the longer term; and**
- **Providing advice to the Provincial Government.**

2. Project Selection Guidelines

While to working to see achievement of the broad Vision and Capstone Objectives set out in the Diversification and Implementation Plan, and the many objectives of the sector strategies, the Coalition will undertake a number of small, strategically important projects. The selection of these projects will be based upon the following guidelines:

- 1. Consistency with the regional strategies and the broad input they received;**
- 2. Contribution to building long-term partnerships and benefits that strengthen the region's communities and economy;**
- 3. Value and relevance at the regional level;**
- 4. Contribution to the building of long-term capacity in the region;**
- 5. Linkage to provincial strategies, programs and priorities;**
- 6. Positive impact on the region's economic climate, particularly economic diversification and the growth of small businesses;**
- 7. Improvement to the availability, quality or efficient delivery of services;**
- 8. Opportunity to leverage funding and benefits with other initiatives;**
- 9. Availability of partners to participate in project delivery and funding; and**
- 10. The capacity to show measurable progress within defined timelines.**

² During the latter part of the planning phase opportunities arose to undertake a small number of modest implementation projects (e.g., Piloting community input to the Prince George Timber Supply Review, and development of the Community Transition Toolkit).

3. Project Delivery

a) OPERATING ASSUMPTIONS

The ability to achieve the objectives and carry out the functions identified above, as well as the subsequent budget projections below are based on the following assumptions:

Board Operations

- The Board will retain its present structure, including the availability of three seats (presently not filled) for First Nations. The invitation for First Nations participation will remain open.
- The Board will continue to rely on its Executive Committee for operational oversight.
- The Board will continue to meet regularly, however cost reductions will be achieved through the use of technology to reduce the number of face-to-face meetings. Fewer meetings may be required in the second year of the plan.

Staff and Infrastructure

- During year one, the Coalition will retain an executive assistant to provide project tracking and coordination, financial management, board secretariat, and partnership communications functions.
- The present office facility will be retained for at least six months, following which it may be relinquished in favour of a more cost-effective alternative. The Board will conduct an evaluation of options during the six month period.
- One or more individuals (staff or contractors) will be required to responsibly carry out implementation. The time requirements may change over the life of the plan based on various factors, including the role taken by Provincial Government staff.

Provincial Government Staff Support

- During year one³, the Coalition will receive part-time support from one or more senior staff members (likely located in Victoria) from the Ministry of Community and Rural Development. The nature of this support will include liaison and relationship building with government ministries and direct involvement/management of specific projects or initiatives.
- During year two, the Coalition will be supported by one full-time senior staff person who is located in the region. (It is expected that this appointment will occur mid-way through year one).

Delivery Partnerships

- Regional organizations, including First Nations organizations, will be approached to become partners in project implementation. Local governments, provincial ministries and agencies, and the federal government are also potential delivery partners.

³ For clarity year one means October 1, 2009 to September 30, 2010 and year two means October 1, 2010 to December 31, 2011.

- The preferred model for project delivery will be through a partnership whereby one or more of the partners provides the project management with participation from Coalition or Ministry staff. The Coalition will manage delivery of some projects directly.
- Delivery partners will bring additional funding (i.e. leveraged), and capacity (e.g., in-kind contributions) to projects.
- Delivery partnerships will be developed with the expectation of building long-term capacity for regional economic and community development in the region.

Project Selection / Management Flexibility

- The final selection and disposition of projects will depend upon the outcome of the initial design stage and collaboration with partner organizations. This may lead to some projects being modified to better meet defined needs, and others being deferred and replaced with alternate high priority projects.
- The Coalition will undertake 3-5 modest projects in each of the two years covered by this plan.

Leveraged Funding

- The preferred funding model for projects will be to leverage equal or greater financial contributions from non-coalition sources. These sources may include delivery partners or funding programs (e.g., Northern Trust, Columbia Trust, First Nations Trust, Western Diversification, etc.).

b) PROJECTS

Project Overview Documents

As individual projects are developed and confirmed, each will have a one-page project overview in addition to any more detailed planning that may be required. The project overview will include:

1. Project description
2. Rationale
3. Partners
4. Timelines
5. Resources (people and \$)
6. A summary of intended activities, outputs, and outcomes

Project overviews for active projects and a sample of pending projects for year one, are included in Appendix 1. Pending projects may be changed as partners and funding are confirmed and more detailed implementation requirements are identified.

Strategy Implementation Projects and Partnership Building

A number of small projects (typically <\$10,000) will be undertaken to address specific opportunities to ensure follow-through on the regional strategy work done over the past three years. Examples of these projects include:

- Creating an efficient web-based mechanism for existing funding organizations (e.g., NDI), economic development agencies (e.g., Community Futures Development Corporations), provincial ministries and others to use the strategies for project planning, assessment and approval purposes.

- Tracking and reporting on accomplishments relative to the strategies as work is carried out by governments and the private sector.
- Preparing information and analysis to support regional implementation of provincial programs and policies (e.g., the “rural lens” work).
- Working with First Nations organizations to identify projects that are suitable for joint implementation.

Completion of Active Projects

As of October 1, 2009 the OBAC has two active projects arising from the regional strategies:

- Pilot Project for Community Participation in Forest Management Decisions (Prince George Timber Supply Area).
- Implementation of the Community Transition Toolkit.

Projects Pending

As of the date of submitting this plan, work is underway with potential partners on a number of pending projects. A final implementation decision has not yet been made on pending projects however the concept and feasibility work is well advanced. Two or three of these projects will be undertaken in each of the two years of this plan. Examples of pending projects include:

- Linking Resources for Community Forests
- Accelerate Growth of the Alternative Energy Sector
- Small Airport Improvement
- Minerals and Mining Business Climate
- Social Services and Supports Synergies Pilot
- Forest Sector Business Diversification

Potential Projects

The 246 actions identified in regional strategies could lead to several hundred projects, however most can occur without the direct involvement of the OBAC. A short-list of potential projects for OBAC involvement was submitted with the August 28, 2009 Diversification and Implementation Plan, and is included in Appendix 2 for convenience. For several of these potential projects some work has been done on concept and tactical planning, however they have not yet reached the stage of a “project pending”. As other projects are completed, and depending on capacity, additional projects may be selected from this list for implementation.

Measures of Success

General

- Completion of projects on time and budget.
- Number of projects with multiple delivery partners and leveraged funding sources.
- Overall uptake of strategy recommendations.

Specific

- Each project will provide a final report within 60 days of completion that describes the following results:
 1. Project description and documentation of activities
 2. Participating partners
 3. OBAC funding, leveraged funding, and in-kind contributions
 4. Results / outputs
 5. Relevance of the Results to broader objectives.

Appendix 1

PROJECT OVERVIEWS FOR ACTIVE AND PENDING PROJECTS



PROJECT OVERVIEW

TITLE: *Ensure On-going Implementation of the Community Transition Toolkit*

Date: December 2009

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

This project involves taking the necessary steps to ensure the Community Transition Toolkit is available and useful on an on-going basis in the region. The toolkit was developed concurrent with the OBAC's strategy work. It was a project undertaken jointly with the Community Development Institute (UNBC), actively supported by the Ministry of Community and Rural Development and partially funded by Western Diversification. The toolkit is a series of guides, best practices, check-lists, contact information, and templates that help a community prepare for externally caused change. All local governments in the OBAC region have copies of the toolkit and have been provided with information about its use. It was piloted successfully in Mackenzie during its development.

The next step (this project) is to develop an updatable data base.

RATIONALE:

Public investment has already been made in the toolkit and it has demonstrated its usefulness. However, it is not yet fully implemented and the present version cannot be readily (efficiently) updated and maintained. The true value of the toolkit will be in the ability of local governments to use it as a working document / tool in ongoing planning and response to change. For this to happen the information must be easily updatable, and one or more entities need to be accountable for the updating.

PARTNERS:

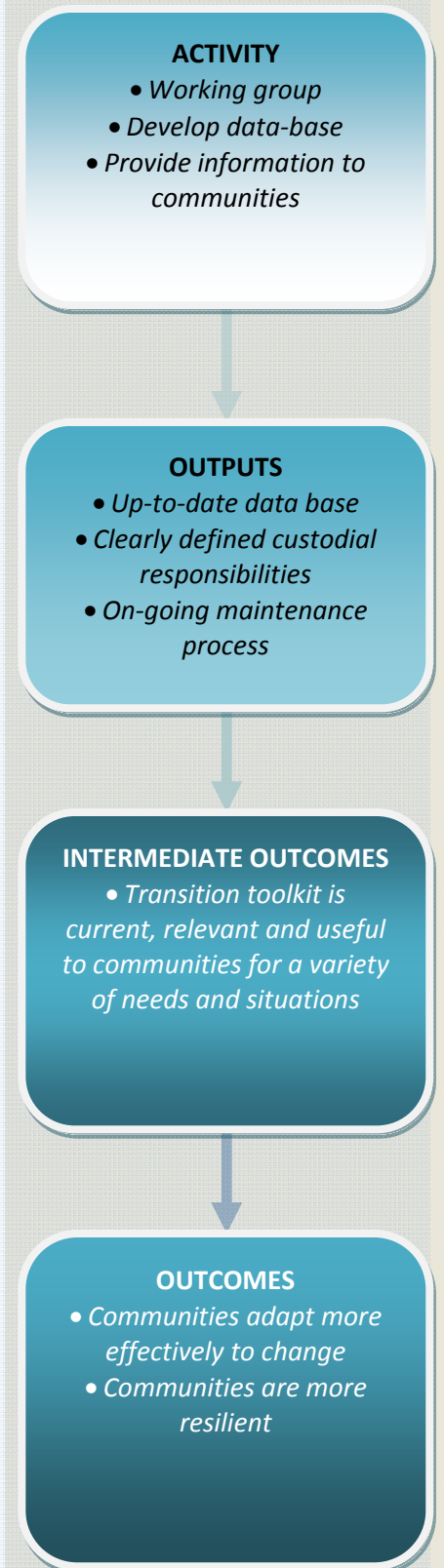
University of Northern BC - Community Development Institute, Regional District of Fraser-Fort George, Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako, Ministry of Community and Rural Development.

TIMELINES:

Completion during 2010

RESOURCES:

OBAC will invest up to \$5,000 in staff/consulting time to facilitate the project, and is prepared to cost-share (\$TBA) in the development of an easy to maintain data base.





PROJECT OVERVIEW

TITLE: *Pilot Project - Improving Community Input to Forest Management Decisions – PG Timber Supply Review*

Date: December 2009

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The project is taking advantage of timing for an updated Timber Supply Review and Allowable Annual Cut (AAC) determination for the Prince George Timber Supply Area. Using a working group of local government representatives supported by a consultant, the OBAC will work collaboratively with the MFR to test a new approach to advising the Chief Forester about the *social and economic objectives* that need to be considered in the determination of the AAC. The pilot project will produce:

1. One or more reports to the Chief Forester setting out the interests of communities in the region, as expressed by local governments,
2. A report to the Minister of Forests and Range and the OBAC directors describing the results of a joint post-determination assessment of the pilot project, including.

RATIONALE:

Legislation requires the Chief Forester to “...consider the economic and social objectives of the government, as expressed by the minister, for the area, for the general region, and for British Columbia...” The most recent expression of the government’s objectives says that “You should also consider important local social and economic objectives expressed by the public during the timber supply review process...” The regional strategies are an expression of the objectives by local governments for the region. The forest strategy refers directly to improvements to communities’ role in decision making and provides the basis for input to the timber supply review process. For the purposes of implementation, both the OBAC and the MFR would like to determine how the local governments’ objectives can best be considered in the Chief Forester’s decision, and what improvements (process or legislative) should be considered in future.

PARTNERS:

Ministry of Forest and Range, local governments

TIMELINES:

Based on MFR schedule for Timber Supply Review and AAC determination – should be complete in mid 2010

RESOURCES:

OBAC will incur approximately \$15,000 in staff and consulting costs plus \$3,000 for working group meetings. The MFR will incur (un-quantified) in-kind costs.

ACTIVITY

- Working group
- Information briefings
- Documenting interests
 - Submissions
 - Debriefings

OUTPUTS

- Written submissions to Chief Forester
- Analysis report and follow-up recommendations to Chief Forester and Minister

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

- Improved methods for including regional community interests and priorities in the AAC determination process (and possibly other decisions)

OUTCOMES

- Better decisions
- Increased likelihood of long-term economic sustainability for affected communities



PROJECT OVERVIEW

TITLE: *Linking Resources for Community Forests*

Date: December 2009

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

This is a multi-region, multi-agency project that will create information and systems to facilitate value-added forest products producers and community forests to develop fiber supply arrangements. It will also identify specific opportunities to expand the business opportunities and viability for community forests and value-added manufacturers. The project will involve the collection and analysis of information on supply of fiber available in community forests, and demand from the many small and medium-sized businesses doing value-added production. The project will also identify and describe opportunities to improve fiber flow and coordination, and enhance profitability. The overall project cost is estimated at \$200,000. The OBAC would participate in the final design and implementation of the project. A Phase 2 project will be considered in order to add woodlots.

RATIONALE:

This proposal is consistent with the OBAC region's *Future Forest and Fiber Use Strategy*, including recommendation 1 "Increase the benefits that communities can rely upon from forest resources and forestry" and a number of recommended actions. Small manufacturers often have little access to information about what raw material is available, and where. Conversely, community forest managers are challenged to optimize the value of their timber by getting wood to the market for which it is most suited and most valuable. By closing the information gap and putting an on-going system in place, both sectors of the industry will be more viable.

PARTNERS:

Community Futures of Cariboo Chilcotin (lead), UBC Alex Fraser Research Forest, BC Community Forest Association, Ministry of Community and Rural Development, Northern Development Trust (pending), Community Futures REDI (pending), Regional Beetle Action Coalitions (pending), Ministry of Forests and Range (role to be confirmed).

TIMELINES:

Target – confirm partners and begin detailed project design by late January 2010. Project completion in approximately one year.

RESOURCES:

OBAC would be required to contribute \$10,000 in funding toward the total project budget, plus approximately \$5,000 in staff/consulting time during the life of the project.

ACTIVITY

- Information gathering about fiber supply and demand
- Identify and pre-feasibility analysis of opportunities

OUTPUTS

- Information system usable by community forests and manufacturers
- Information for industry on supply chain opportunities

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

- More efficient and profitable fiber transfer
- Better returns for community forests
- More dependable wood supply for manufacturers

OUTCOMES

- A more diverse and viable forest sector
- Greater benefits to communities



PROJECT OVERVIEW

TITLE: *Accelerate the Growth of Alternative Energy Sector*⁴
Date: November 2009

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The project will provide capacity in the region to accelerate growth of the alternative energy industry by establishing an “Alternative Energy Office”. The office will work with the senior governments, local governments, First Nations, research and business. It will be staffed by 1-2 people with the expertise to initiate pilot projects, conduct technology transfer and business information exchanges, and provide a contact point for potential new enterprises. The office will be overseen by a partnership of contributors, and may be housed independently or within an existing organization. An example pilot project is a “net zero” housing development in the region.

RATIONALE:

Growth of the alternative energy sector is a strategic priority for the province and the region. The options, feasibility, technologies and programs impacting the development of the industry are varied and complex. A number of government and non-government organizations are active in the sector. In this region the bioenergy sub-sector is particularly active because of the connection to utilization of beetle-killed timber. What is lacking is the dedicated capacity to work with economic development officers, communities, and businesses to ensure that they have the information they need, when they need it, and to follow-up on leads and broker growth opportunities.

PARTNERS:

The project will be carried out in cooperation with the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, Ministry of Forests and Range, Natural Resources Canada, the Community Energy Association, the Northern Bioenergy Partnership, Resources North Association, as well as energy business organizations.

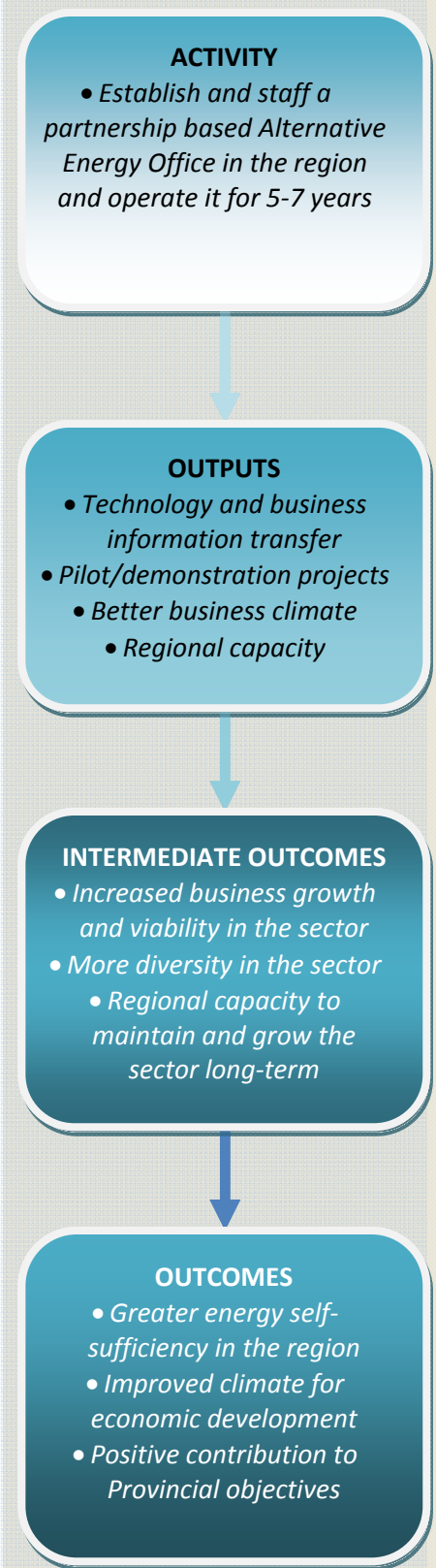
TIMELINES:

The objective will be to have the office fully operational and providing services by December 31, 2010.

RESOURCES:

The OBAC will act as a catalyst for the project and will contribute up to \$(TBD) in matching funding. The total OBAC contribution is expected to be \$(TBD). In-kind and cash resources from partners, including possible applications to NDIT, WD, and Provincial funds will be pursued in the amount of \$(TBD).

⁴ **Alternative energy**, for the purposes of this project is defined as: wind power, small and micro-hydro power, biomass power, biogas, solar PV, geothermal power, solar thermal, geo-gas exchange systems, biomass heat, waste-to-energy, and landfill gas.





PROJECT OVERVIEW

TITLE: *Small Airport Improvement*

Date: November 2009

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The project will build on existing work done by the Federal and Provincial Governments and local airport authorities. It will take into account community and regional plans and priorities for economic diversification. Existing airports (excluding Prince George and Smithers), will be assessed for their real potential to support economic growth and diversification. Assets, limiting conditions and upgrade opportunities for physical infrastructure and services will be analyzed and reported along with recommended priorities.

RATIONALE:

Airports are an important link in the region's infrastructure, and have been identified as key aspects of the economic growth and competitiveness strategies for the mining and tourism sectors. They also play a key role in the ability of communities to attract and retain skilled workers. The business climate for the service sector is improved considerably by dependable air transportation, as are emergency response services. Improvements to airports increase the capacity to handle larger aircraft, operate under adverse weather conditions, accommodate freight and passengers, and generate spin-off business.

PARTNERS:

Work will be carried out in conjunction with the appropriate organizations, including Transport Canada, the provincial Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, local governments and airport authorities, the airline industry and user groups (including business sectors, health and emergency service providers, and local economic or community development groups).

TIMELINES:

Target - completion by October 31, 2010 to inform infrastructure investment and business decisions in subsequent years.

RESOURCES:

The OBAC will provide project support to act as a catalyst for the project, and will contribute up to \$(TBD) in matching funding to carry out the project. The total OBAC contribution is expected to be \$(TBD).

In-kind and cash resources from partners, including a possible application to the NDIT (Feasibility Studies or Marketing Program and Economic Diversification Infrastructure Program) and/or Western Diversification are expected to be up to \$(TBD).

ACTIVITY

- *Beginning with Vanderhoof and Mackenzie, document assets, needs and feasibility analysis for upgrades to small airports in the region*

OUTPUTS

- *Information for business*
- *Identified regional priorities for investment in upgrades*
 - *Business analysis and rationale for investments*

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

- *Cost-effective investments in airports*
- *Increased viability of airline industry*
- *Better access for emergency services*

OUTCOMES

- *Improved competitiveness for all sizes of business*
 - *Improved workforce attraction and retention*
- *Mining and tourism business growth*

Appendix 2 - List of Potential Projects

Note: The OBAC Interim Implementation Plans address all 42 recommendations and 246 action items contained in the nine sector strategy documents. This table is a summary of selected projects that the directors have identified as high priority work to be done by OBAC in order to maintain momentum and ensure the necessary implementation partnerships are established. It is organized according to the Key Priorities for Action identified in the OBAC Diversification and Implementation Plan. A small number of these projects will be selected for implementation based on the Project Selection Guidelines in Section 2 above.

KEY PRIORITY	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	SOURCE STRATEGY	REQUIRED OBAC ACTIVITIES	POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND RESOURCES	INTENDED RESULTS	CURRENT STATUS
1. Create mechanisms and capacity that will enable community leaders (both Local Government and First Nations government), practitioners and businesses to work together as a regional community to achieve shared interests and priorities.	1.1 Develop a stronger alliance between Local Governments and First Nations leaders at the community and regional level.	Minerals and Mining (also reflected in several other strategies).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake an initial dialogue about common interests identified in strategy work. Establish a joint regional forum on community and economic sustainability. Design and implement a program to support community-level capacity for joint projects. 	<u>Partners:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Nations and Local Government leaders in the region. Province: (MEMPR) Industry organizations <u>OBAC Resources:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Director participation Contract support to help organize and facilitate 	Initial focus will be to have an on-going, respectful and well informed dialogue on minerals and mining, however when combined with other initiatives this is expected to support a much broader working relationship between Local Governments, First Nations Governments, and resource industries.	Initial contacts and information exchanges have taken place between OBAC and First Nations. Discussions have been held with senior MEMPR officials. Tactical plans have been approved by the OBAC Board to guide further work.
	1.2 Establish the capacity to promote the use of alternative energy technologies in the region.	Alternative Energy (also closely linked to the Future Forest Products and Fiber Use Strategy).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the Omineca Alternative Energy Office Encourage and support pilot projects that promote learning and innovation applicable to communities 	<u>Partners:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Province Federal Government First Nations and Local Governments Industry Assn. / Business Education institutions Research organizations <u>OBAC Resources:</u>	A small partner-based organization that serves to accelerate the growth of, and benefits from an alternative energy sector in the region.	A concept paper and tactical plan have been approved by the board. A number of organizations partnered with to submit a funding proposal (Federal).

KEY PRIORITY	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	SOURCE STRATEGY	REQUIRED OBAC ACTIVITIES	POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND RESOURCES	INTENDED RESULTS	CURRENT STATUS
			across the region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Contract project support • Contribution to start-up \$ (leverage) • In-kind local government participation 		The initial proposal was submitted on short notice and did not succeed, so the partners need to regroup.
	1.3 Work with senior governments and others to develop and implement a mechanism for regional coordination of social services.	Community Social Services and Supports (also strongly linked to Attraction and Retention).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to develop a detailed concept paper and funding options. • Leverage existing resources for implementation. • Possible pilot projects. • Provide coordinated input to the Province on the implementation of a “rural lens” for policy and program development. 	<u>Partners:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Province (various agencies) • Local Governments and First Nations • Regional organizations • Providers and United Way • UNBC (Community Development Institute) <u>OBAC Resources:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Contract \$ to contribute to detailed concept and business plan development • In-kind local government participation 	<p>A working model that achieves more effective, efficient and equitable use of resources within the region = greater value for dollar.</p> <p>This is expected to lead to an overall improvement in services over time.</p>	<p>An initial meeting has taken place with senior officials from the provincial government (ADM).</p> <p>The United Way has expressed interest in exploring the initiative in conjunction with their services.</p>
	1.4 Encourage implementation of the transition toolkit.	Community Social Services and Supports.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and maintain a website. • Carry out periodic updates. • Training and orientation sessions. • Determine applicability to First Nations and follow-up accordingly. 	<u>Partners:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNBC (Community Development Institute) • Province (Ministry of Community and Rural Development) • Possibly First Nations (to be determined) <u>OBAC Resources:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • In-kind local government participation • \$ to leverage additional funding 	<p>Toolkit continues to provide a valuable resource to communities in the region and possibly beyond.</p> <p>Communities are more prepared and equipped to adapt to externally imposed change.</p>	<p>Toolkit has been developed and provided to local governments.</p> <p>Follow-up has been discussed with senior provincial government officials (ADMs).</p>

KEY PRIORITY	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	SOURCE STRATEGY	REQUIRED OBAC ACTIVITIES	POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND RESOURCES	INTENDED RESULTS	CURRENT STATUS
	<p>1.5 Work with senior governments, regional organizations and the private sector to develop options for the establishment of a regional economic development agency.</p>	<p>Attraction and Retention (strongly linked to several other strategies).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene a discussion with partners to refine the concept and develop a solid proposal for implementation. 	<p><u>Partners:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Province (various agencies) • Federal Government • Regional and local economic development organizations (e.g. CFDCs) and practitioners • Local Governments and First Nations <p><u>OBAC Resources:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Participation of directors • In-kind local government staff participation • Contract project support \$ 	<p>A working model that achieves more effective and efficient use of resources within the region and is able to work on behalf of the region as a whole.</p> <p>This is expected to lead to an overall improvement in the regions capacity to grow and diversify its economy over time.</p>	<p>Community Futures Development Corporations have expressed in interest in using their organizations to help achieve this.</p> <p>The concept has been raised with senior provincial government officials (ADMs).</p>
	<p>1.6 Work with senior governments to ensure that funding for services remains in place for a transition period following the MPB epidemic.</p>	<p>Attraction and Retention (strongly linked to Community Social Services and Supports).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a dialogue with senior governments. • Assist with the analysis and presentation of data to ensure grants accurately reflect the number of people relying on services. • Provide coordinated local government input to the provincial and federal governments. 	<p><u>Partners:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Province (various agencies) • Federal Government • Local Governments • Service providers <p><u>OBAC Resources:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • \$ to participate in data collection and analysis 	<p>Grants to communities from senior governments accurately reflect the population relying on services.</p>	<p>The matter has been raised in an initial meeting with senior provincial government officials (ADMs).</p>

KEY PRIORITY	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	SOURCE STRATEGY	REQUIRED OBAC ACTIVITIES	POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND RESOURCES	INTENDED RESULTS	CURRENT STATUS
	<p>1.7 Work with the Northern BC Tourism Association (NBCTA) to establish a Tourism Advisory Working Group that will help identify and provide leadership on implementation of key regional tourism development and marketing priorities, and collaborate with others on tourism related economic development.</p>	Tourism Sector Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with the NBCTA to develop the concept (e.g., draft terms of reference) further. • Identify a list of potential participants and consult with them. • Confirm a “host” or sponsoring organization as necessary. • Convene an initial meeting 	<p><u>Partners:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism associations, including First Nations tourism interests. • Province (Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts) • Marketing and development interests (TBA) <p><u>OBAC Resources:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff to work with initial partner(s) • Minor contract \$ to help the group conduct initial meeting(s) 	<p>Regionally based tourism marketing and development priorities.</p> <p>Beneficial relationships amongst stakeholders, leading to sector growth.</p>	Very preliminary discussions have occurred with NBCTA.
	<p>1.8 Implement the BC Emergency Response Management System (BCERMS) as a standard for all communities in the region.</p>	Regional Emergency Management Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make Local Governments and First Nations aware of the recommendation and get their agreement. • Survey communities to determine the current status and gaps across the region. • Develop a work-plan and identify the resources needed to fill gaps. • Secure resources and implement. 	<p><u>Partners:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Governments and First Nations • Province (Provincial Emergency Program) • First Nations Emergency Services Society (FNESS) • Other response organizations <p><u>OBAC Resources:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • In-kind local government participation • Funding for initial gap analysis and project management (leveraged) 	<p>All communities in the region have a high standard of emergency response preparedness (BCERMS).</p> <p>Inter-community support systems are identified and documented for use when needed.</p>	No action to date.

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2. Encourage the growth and expansion of focused training and certification opportunities in the region to develop, attract and retain the workforce needed to diversify the economy.	2.1 Initiate and support technology transfer events.	Alternative Energy Sector Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update detailed needs analysis. Organize and deliver at least two technical information sessions or business opportunities analysis sessions. 	<u>Partners:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal and Provincial Governments Research organizations Colleges and Universities Other regional organizations <u>OBAC Resources:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Small amount of project support funding 	Communities, investors and entrepreneurs in the region are well informed about the opportunities.	<p>Initial discussions with NRCan and other potential Federal partners, as well as with senior provincial government officials (ADMs).</p> <p>Initial awareness sessions being undertaken by Resources North Assn. /UNBC and FORREX this fall.</p>
	2.2 Initiate service enhancements that assist self-employed.	Attraction and Retention Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners to identify gaps and opportunities. Work with partners to develop the necessary program proposals to address the gaps. 	<u>Partners:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provincial and federal governments. Local/regional education and service providers (public and private). Employment organizations, including First Nations organizations. <u>OBAC Resources:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Minor contract support to convene initial work. 	<p>Programs available to provide high quality, accessible training for self-employment.</p> <p>Longer-term: growth in the number and success of small businesses in the region.</p>	<p>Identified in initial meeting with senior provincial government officials (ADMs).</p> <p>OBAC needs to further develop a tactical plan to move this ahead.</p>
	2.3 Work with the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands (MAL) and regional partners to increase extension and technical support to agricultural	Agriculture Sector Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a solid rationale and business case for increased MAL staffing dedicated to farm activity and technical support. Support the 	<u>Partners:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Province (Ministry of Agriculture and Lands) Agriculture associations in the region <u>OBAC Resources:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff 	<p>Short term: more capacity for on-site training.</p> <p>Mid –term: farmers and other agriculture sector employees are more knowledgeable</p>	No action taken to date.

KEY PRIORITY	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	SOURCE STRATEGY	REQUIRED OBAC ACTIVITIES	POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND RESOURCES	INTENDED RESULTS	CURRENT STATUS
	businesses.		province in approaching the Federal Government for support if requested.		and aware of new methods and technologies. Longer term: more productive and competitive sector.	
3. Ensure the region's new and existing transportation infrastructure provides for safe, cost effective, and expeditious movement of people, goods and services.	3.1 Reduce barriers to transportation infrastructure at the local level.	Regional Integrated Infrastructure Strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate with local governments throughout the region to recommend that they review local planning documents to remove any unnecessary barriers to transportation infrastructure development. Follow-up survey to assess results and impact. 	<u>Partners:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Governments <u>OBAC Resources:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff 	Short term: More streamlined local plans and fewer local barriers to transportation infrastructure development. Longer term: More efficient and cost effective development of infrastructure.	Initial information available through strategy. Follow-up is required to make the specific request.
	3.2 Develop regional information needed to support infrastructure planning and inquiries.	Regional Integrated Infrastructure Strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and maintain a list of regional priorities for transportation infrastructure development and improvement, including rationales. Develop a small airport strategy that identifies physical 	<u>Partners:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Governments and First Nations Provincial Government Federal Government Utilities/Authorities/Service providers Existing advisory organizations <u>OBAC Resources:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Contract support / project management funding 	General agreement on regional priorities. Improved input to decisions from the regional community. Infrastructure better meets regional needs and supports growth and diversification.	General issue has been communicated to senior provincial officials (ADMs), and follow-up is needed. Some regional discussions have occurred. Specific issues have been addressed

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			<p>infrastructure and service improvement requirements, including rationales.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide regional input to the Province's Resource Roads Strategy, Federal Rail Services Review, and BC Utilities long-term plans for electricity transmission. • Promote removal of the highest priority highway "bottlenecks". • Communicate with governments on priority needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-kind participation from Local Governments 		<p>(e.g., Smithers Airport).</p> <p>The strategy document includes some examples of specific priorities.</p>
	<p>3.3 Improved transportation services between communities within the region (especially between small communities and larger centers).</p>	<p>Integrated Regional Infrastructure Strategy</p> <p>Tourism Sector Strategy</p> <p>Community Social Services and Supports Strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a more in-depth needs assessment and gap analysis. • Develop options and innovative models, including the business case and/or funding requirements for preferred models. • Communicate the options and analysis to public 	<p><u>Partners:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Governments and First Nations • Sector associations and authorities (health, tourism, transportation, agriculture, etc.) • Transportation providers • Provincial and Federal Governments <p><u>OBAC Resources:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Funding (preferably leveraged) to manage the 	<p>Innovative models suitable for implementation.</p> <p>Improved awareness of multi-sector needs and benefits.</p> <p>More efficient use of regional services and goods.</p>	<p>Part of initial communication with senior provincial officials (ADM's). Follow-up required.</p>

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			and private sector organizations.	project and undertake the activities.		
4. Remove impediments for access to, and encourage more diverse use of natural resources.	4.1 Promote the diversification of fiber use, including the opportunities identified in the Alternative Energy Sector Strategy.	Future Forest Products and Fiber Use Strategy (strongly linked to the Alternative Energy Sector Strategy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with the existing and emerging industries to identify opportunities and constraints. Work with the Province and BC Hydro to identify options to improve the regulatory and fiscal environment. Work with NRCan, FPInnovations, UNBC and others to encourage innovation in the region. Work with the province to identify industry information needs relative to fiber availability. 	<p><u>Partners:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Province BC Hydro Existing and emerging forest industry (associations and individual companies) Federal Government Research organizations (e.g., FPInnovations, UNBC) <p><u>OBAC Resources:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Small amount of contract \$ Support through Alternative Energy Office (project 1.2) once established 	<p>Short-term: improved regulatory environment for non-traditional forest products businesses.</p> <p>Longer term: more diversity and resilience of the region's forest products industries.</p>	<p>Initial communication with senior provincial officials (ADMs).</p> <p>Initial communication with NRCan.</p> <p>The province has made some changes to legislation and has work underway.</p>

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	4.2 Engage local governments, industry and CN Rail in a dialogue.	Integrated Regional Infrastructure Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate and facilitate initial discussions on behalf of local governments. Document regional needs and issues, as well as possible solutions. 	<u>Partners:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local governments Industry Associations CN Rail (possibly MOT and Transport Canada if required) <u>OBAC Resources:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff In-kind participation of local governments 	<p>Short-term: CN and its regulators are fully aware of regional interests and issues.</p> <p>Longer term: Regional needs are better met.</p>	Follow-up required.
	4.3 Initiate one or more projects that will improve relationships and mutual benefits for tourism and forestry tenure holders working on a common land base.	Tourism Sector Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow-up with industry associations / sector participants to do a problem analysis and identify potential pilot projects. Play a facilitation /catalyst role to get establish terms of reference and get pilot projects underway. 	<u>Partners:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourism and Forest sector tenure holders and associations Province (Tourism and Forests) Resources North Association <u>OBAC Resources:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Contract project management support 	<p>Short-term: policy and practice recommendations for both sectors and their regulators.</p> <p>Longer-term: better integration and greater overall benefits from the shared landbase.</p>	Follow-up required.

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5. Undertake public information, awareness and information programs to help citizens contribute to, and benefit from opportunities.	5.1 Work with the Province and others to undertake a public information program that provides a fair, balanced and realistic picture of mineral exploration and mining. Document a common community perspective on mine development and regulatory processes.	Minerals and Mining Sector Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene a small advisory group and develop a project terms of reference. • Develop information materials. • Carry out an information program for community leaders. • Provide regional feedback to regulators. 	<u>Partners:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Province • Industry Associations • Local Governments • (Potentially First Nations) <u>OBAC Resources:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • In-kind participation of local governments • Project management funds 	Short-term: increased awareness and better informed community input to sector activities. Longer-term: Strong regional community/industry partnership with lasting mutual benefits.	Initial discussions held with MEMPR at ADM level. Draft tactical plan developed.
	5.2 Encourage and support initiatives to test new models for communities to benefit from forest management.	Future Forest Products and Fiber Use Strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the PG/Lakes TSA Pilot Project underway with the Ministry of Forests and Lands. • Work with the province and communities to identify opportunities and pilot new approaches. 	<u>Partners:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local governments • Ministry of Forests and Range <u>OBAC Resources:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • In-kind local government resources • Contract project support funding 	Short-term: Improved approaches to community involvement AAC decisions and recommendations. Longer term: improved community participation in and benefits from forest management policies and decisions.	Pilot project underway with MFR on Prince George AAC determination. Need to identify further opportunities.
Performance tracking and reporting	Establish a regionally based process for tracking and reporting on achievement of sector strategy	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key indicator, measurements and information sources. • Develop a reporting format. 	<u>Partners:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Province • Sector working groups and other regional organizations • UNBC (CDI) 	A credible feedback and accountability tool for strategy implementation and adaptation.	Template proposed in interim action plans. Some existing indicators may be suitable for

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	objectives.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a progress report. 	<u>OBAC Resources:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Contract funds for development. • Contract funds for report 		adaptation (e.g., Fraser Basin Trust)
Full Implementation of Strategies: Interim Action Plans	Follow-through to ensure all OBAC strategy recommendations are communicated and fully considered for implementation.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications plan. • Briefings, letters and reports • Meetings with implementation organizations 	<u>Partners:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Province – Ministry of Community and Rural Development <u>OBAC Resources:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff • Directors’ participation • Contract support funds • Meeting and travel funds 	All recommendations and actions contained in the strategies are addressed.	Interim Action Plans have been completed for all OBAC strategies. These plans guide OBAC’s role in implementation. Initial “immediate opportunities” are included in the above project list.

Appendix 3 - Background

RETROSPECTIVE OCTOBER 2005 – OCTOBER 2009

The Pine Beetle epidemic's alteration of our region's landscape, economy and social fabric is being felt and will be witnessed for years to come. In 2005, Federal Mountain Pine Beetle Recovery dollars were conveyed to the Omineca Beetle Action Coalition for the member local governments to begin building a diversification plan for the region's communities – a response plan that would enable the forest dependent communities of the OBAC region to work together and to work with senior governments and others to build resilience and diversify the region's economy for the future. In their July 2005 proposal to government, the local government leaders of the OBAC region noted the circumstances and committed to the following:

“Rather than leave the degree and consequences of the post-epidemic economic bust to chance, members of the Interim Coalition propose to focus on the first objective in the Province's Mountain Pine Beetle Action Plan 2005-2010: “Encourage long-term economic sustainability for communities affected by the epidemic”. Economic development and diversification takes time and concerted effort. By acting now, we expect to make the best of the short-term increase in forestry activity, while at the same time preparing for the future challenges. By acting collectively we can be more effective.

Despite the urgency, the Interim Coalition proposes a deliberate and measured approach. We propose to first broadly consult with our communities, including First Nations, and to then formalize the Omineca Beetle Action Coalition as a legal entity designed to address regional interests. Throughout this process we wish to communicate factual information about the situation we face, and establish a realistic and positive outlook. The coalition will be designed to ensure inclusiveness, transparency and fiscal responsibility.

Once established the coalition will immediately begin work on an overarching strategic plan for economic development, and on the business plans and work plans necessary to ensure orderly and timely implementation of the first two years activities. During the same period we will work with the province to establish a trust fund to support future work. The objective will be put the necessary actions in motion over the next five years in order to mitigate the negative economic impact in the following period.”

Between October 2005 and October 2009, the OBAC communities have worked together to:

- Identify priorities, challenges and opportunities for at the regional scale for inclusion in the strategy development
- Established and undertaken a robust planning process to create 10 strategies that present 10 sector specific vision statements and objectives, assess opportunities and challenges and recommendations and actions that are widely supported as credible, appropriate measures and are reasonable for implementation.
- Built working relationships with external organizations that have vested interests in the outcomes of implementation of the ideas in the strategies.
- Built an overarching framework for diversification of the region's economy and resilience building across the region's communities and a pragmatic, collaboration-based delivery mechanism for implementation that are widely supported.

CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES

The trend of declining population continues across the OBAC region. The resident population is down 7% between 1996 and 2006 compared to a 10% increase in the province as a whole. While significant strides have been made by many organizations and across sectors to diversify the region's economy, the region's economy continues to be heavily forest dependent (1/3 of the province's forest products manufacturing). Also, the heaviest Mountain Pine Beetle impacts provincially are found in the core of the OBAC region (based on the percentage of pine in the timber supply, direct employment and, level of dependency on forestry income). Additional pressures from the depressed global and U.S. economy and U.S. markets continue to make the operation our region's lumber manufacturing sector a losing proposition with forecasters projecting that this will continue for the foreseeable future.

Despite these circumstances, OBAC is confident that a diverse forest sector will be a strong part of this region's economy and livelihood. OBAC supports the industries and businesses that are already in the region to continue to be a part of the region's future prosperity. But the signals are clear, without new industries, businesses and markets and without engaging new people in generating new wealth in this region, we may erode our ability to continue to generate and contribute to the province's well being. The communities and leaders of this region are committed to investing their maximum effort to ensure that a different future is realized.

OBAC has met the commitments that it made back in 2005 and in some cases has exceeded its initial commitments and expectations. With a comprehensive set of regional strategies integrating across 10 priority topics presenting 42 recommendations and 246 actions, OBAC is now ready to immediately enter into priority implementation activities with implementation partners that will deliver value. These strategies and the overarching Diversification and Implementation Plan along with the strong and growing relationships built during the strategy development phase will be the foundation for action on reconfiguring this region's future. Achieving a new level of prosperity is a very real possibility, but it will take the efforts and ingenuity of us all and a heightened level of coordinated activity.

To this end, OBAC has presented a 3-5 year implementation phase with a focused proposal for the first year. The 3-5 year period enables the coalition to build capacity and momentum on projects and, establishes a horizon to assess performance. A commitment to the first year enables implementation relationships and action to begin immediately. The 1 year term will be from October 1st 2009 to September 30th 2010 with a work plan and budget allocations that focus on: 1) Maximum project leveraging and delivery; 2) Relationship building with existing and prospective implementation partners; and, 3) Support for Board operations and communities' delivery capacity.