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**RESOURCE COMMUNITIES IN TRANSITION:  
PLANNING FOR RURAL COMMUNITY SURVIVAL  
ZEBALLOS, BRITISH COLUMBIA**

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## *ABSTRACT*

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Exploring planning methodology for BC's resource-based communities, this paper investigates rural community transition and proposes a planning framework based on enhancing the survival capacity of communities facing the pressures and challenges of economic and social change. Utilizing both primary and secondary research methods (including a review of relevant literature, government publications, and a pilot of the proposed method in Zeballos, British Columbia), this analysis is intended to contribute to the practicing planner's tools for working with rural communities in economic and social transition. The study first examines the context of British Columbia's forestry-dependent communities. It explores the literature around successful community development efforts and also around stable and resilient communities and identifies Fourteen Characteristics of Surviving Rural Communities. It then proposes a planning method that is responsive to these characteristics, with a goal to both build awareness of the community's inherent survival capacity and to foster it through a 'learning-by-doing' process. It also examines the role of the planner in working with these communities. Working with the community of Zeballos, the pilot process revealed several insights about planning with transitioning communities. These communities are not alike, they are shaped by a range of factors and face diverse influences. Yet all require a willingness to accept and embrace change and they require support in managing change. Best efforts to plan for an achievable transition strategy requires considerable forethought in preparing a planning methodology that serves the community's needs and enables the community to shape goals toward achievable outcomes. For communities in transition, enhancing local capacity to survive and manage change may be as important as selecting any specific transition outcome, for it has been shown that it is in the way that communities determine and implement their transition strategy that determines success in the effort.

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## **Chapter One Introduction**

*In response to emerging pressures, communities and local governments are beginning to explore new options that lie outside of traditional planning practice. Included on the new menu are methods and processes that have little to do with land use and much more to do with such holistic considerations of place as ecology, sociology and economics.... As well, the public is seeking greater control over decisions that affect its quality of life, while communities are reconsidering their roles within the national framework and attempting to balance internal and external pressures and needs... ”*  
(Witty, 1994; 153).

### **1.1 Introduction**

British Columbia's rural resource-based communities are currently undergoing significant economic, social and structural transition as a response to significant changes in the province's resource industries. Heightened environmental protection sensibilities, globalization in resource markets and increasing need for market competitiveness have altered resource extraction practices and, in turn, placed the future of numerous resource-based communities in jeopardy. Many fisheries, forestry and mining towns are being forced to reconsider their *raison d'être* and look for new ways to ensure stable foundations for their community and livelihoods for their citizens.

The planner's role is also changing as the public seeks greater involvement in community decisions and the realm of concern broadens from land use to social, economic and environmental well being and sustainability. Moreover, public agency support is moving in the direction of community "grass-roots" determinism, rather than continuing a history of top-down decision-making in rural community development. In this new economic and policy realm communities are requiring new tools and processes by which to determine their own strategies for survival.

This paper analyzes literature on the stability and resilience of rural communities and on successful community development efforts, in order to identify the factors that

contribute to a community's ability to foster development and to survive, or thrive, in times of change or crisis. Utilizing these themes to inform methods for a planning process, the project considers the role of the planner, elements of the public decision making process, and methods by which communities can shape and implement plans in times of transition. It describes a pilot process and makes recommendations for the role of the planner when working with transitioning communities.

The interest in the project arises out of an experience the author had working with the small community of Sayward over the summer of 2000. The village had contracted a team of planners to undertake a community plan. What became immediately apparent was a lack of a vision as the community prepared for the imminent loss of its major employer and industrial land user, the forestry company. The community planning process evolved, serving the needs of the Sayward community, to include a broad exercise in examining future development opportunities and means to approach the challenges of the economic and social changes the community was facing. Several questions went unanswered as the planning team worked with the transitioning community. This project takes that experience further, looking to the theory behind communities in transition and exploring ways and means to assist resource-based communities like Sayward.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Today, British Columbia's small, resource-based communities are facing unprecedented pressures to evolve. They are requiring planning tools and methods that can assist them to shape new directions and ideally support a transition to an improved economic, social and ecological environment. Where local government planning policy in British Columbia has historically focussed on land use and growth management, there is a need for a comprehensive planning strategy that recognizes that it is economic,

social and structural change and not only population growth or decline that present challenges. It must consider the economic, social, physical and ecological issues that require management in community transition. With the Province's recent review of allowable content in community plans, there is now room for an unlimited range of issues that can be included in the community vision<sup>1</sup>. Communities have the ability and the challenge to articulate the future it would like to realize through its transition.

Gill and Reed (1997) point out the lack of research and knowledge around ways citizens are involved in community development and planning in rural communities. Planning and economic development research has often focussed on urban areas or on rural development at the regional scale, with little to offer around the challenges and experiences of small, resource-based communities. Community development and planning are also often considered as separate initiatives, whereas for communities in transition, they are entirely linked (Bryant and Preston, n.d.). In development of appropriate planning strategies for communities in transition, the long term economic, social and environmental goals of the community, the inherent support available within the community and the opportunities to build on the communities strengths must be identified. Communities must articulate a community transition strategy and plan for land use and community development along with requisite policy accordingly.

Because rural resource communities, while so long defined as the homogeneous hinterland (Reed and Gill, 1997), are diverse and are becoming increasingly so as they evolve in transition, a planning strategy is required that recognizes each community's unique requirements and assists them to identify local strategies toward a secure future. Furthermore, the consequences of realizing short and long-term goals in the transition strategy must be carefully considered within the local context.

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<sup>1</sup> With the recent British Columbia provincial election, it remains to be seen what the powers of BC's local governments will be under the new Community Charter.

### **1.3 The Case Community: Planning for a Diversified Future in Zeballos, BC**

The small Vancouver Island community of Zeballos, BC (Pop. ±300) is currently facing the impacts of massive changes in timber harvesting practices in the region. As a consequence, the population of the community is declining, reliable resource-based employment is available for fewer and fewer people, and the provision of community services is in jeopardy as the tax base and local market declines. Nevertheless, the community is committed to its long-term survival and is actively investigating ways and means to diversify the local economy and create a stable community environment.

Zeballos, a historic mining community with charming old-time character, does not have zoning bylaws in place although it does have an official community plan. The community plan, currently under review, focuses on protecting existing community values but has little to offer around the community's future vision. The OCP review offers an opportunity to discuss vision, to broaden the content of the OCP to encompass transition goals and to investigate the issues that will require management throughout its transition efforts.

### **1.4 Planning and Community Transition**

In the complex environment of transitioning communities, planning can no longer be confined to issues of regulating land use or mediating difference in land and resource allocation. There is a broader agenda for planners with increasing expectations within communities to get involved in public decisions. Research into the planner's role in Canadian communities suggests that "planners must take a more assertive role in the details and quality of everyday life as they affect the well-being of communities and

resource applications. Notions of utilitarian planning should be rejected in favour of wise land use, careful husbandry, community self-sufficiency and social justice” (Witty, 1994, 157).

Moreover, Boothroyd’s (1993) work on community development acknowledges the philosophic decisions communities must make when planning for future development. Choosing to focus on economic development, community development or social justice necessitates trade-offs in the distribution of limited resources and in outcomes. The planner has a role in identifying options and trade-offs and helping a community recognize the implications of development choices they are making. This thesis focuses on the development and assessment of a planning method for Zeballos with a goal to assist the community to consider its starting point and propose viable goals for the transition process and to identify issues that will require careful management as the goals within the vision are pursued and realized.

## **1.5 Research Goal and Objectives**

The primary goal of this thesis was to investigate and contribute to the body of knowledge about community transition and the planners’ role in assisting communities to identify strategies that will increase their inherent security and stability. It also sought to broaden the discussion of community planning from land use to include a community analysis, indication of a vision that embraces economic and social objectives along with physical and ecological goals, and an analysis of the implications of following through on the vision. It provides process and policy recommendations for the Zeballos community which can be extended to other areas undergoing economic transition and restructuring.

The project also sought to assist the community of Zeballos in considering its capacity to support transition goals, to shape strategies that are feasible for the community and to take into consideration the economic, physical, social and ecological

aspects of its strategic direction. Finally, through developing and piloting a planning method for communities in transition, the project worked to contribute to the body of knowledge and experience in planning for British Columbia's rural resource-based communities.

## **1.6 Research Questions**

The primary questions of this project are "What is the nature of a planning method that can assist communities undergoing transition?" and "How can this method be utilized by the planner and the community?" These questions create the basis for an analysis of community planning in rural and transitioning communities. The investigation includes an examination of:

- the characteristics of stable and resilient rural communities,
- the planners' role in assisting resource communities undergoing transition, and
- ways a community planning process can build awareness of, and foster, community stability and resilience.

## **1.7 Methodology**

Both primary and secondary research methods were utilized. Secondary research included a review of journal articles, books, government publications, and informational interviews. This investigation allowed for an understanding of the nature of community transition in British Columbia and a broader understanding of the features and challenges that characterize BC's rural resource-based communities. It also provided insight into the realm of community development and the planner's role in today's community planning processes. The project undertook an analysis of three studies on rural community survival, successful community development, and

community resilience in order to identify common themes that contribute to community stability and success at initiating development and managing change. These themes were then utilized to inform the objectives and method of a planning process intended to enhance a community's stability and ability to manage change.

Primary research involved the pilot study- applying the planning method in the community of Zeballos. The pilot process was reviewed with respect to process tasks, time frames, and outcomes, provides recommendations and reflections on the process and its application with communities in transition. While the process outcomes were dependent on the participation and input of the Zeballos group, certain generalizable recommendations for planning in transitioning communities have been made with respect to the process goals, activities and expected outcomes.

This project does not propose to offer one substantive strategy for working with communities in transition. Instead, it takes from the literature certain insights into the nature of community transition, rural community survival and community development in order to inform planning principles such as who to involve, what kind of process to engage in, and what variety of exercises to include.

## **Chapter Two    The Theoretical Context**

*“...The changes affecting British Columbia’s hinterland... over the last 15 years can be interpreted in different ways. From one perspective, they can be viewed as the unraveling of British Columbia’s very way of life... But from another, they are the harbinger of something better, not necessarily yet realized but in the offing; a future in which communities are no longer critically dependent on the vagaries of markets and resource supplies...”*  
(Barnes and Hayter, 1997b, 9).

### **2.1    Introduction**

British Columbia’s resource communities sprung up in the hinterland, at locations convenient to resource extraction but often far removed from urban centres. Today, these communities are experiencing profound pressures to change and adapt, to become self-sustaining where they were once servants to a resource industry based elsewhere. How communities respond to this challenge will influence outcomes for communities and citizens. This chapter explores the characteristics of BC’s resource based communities, the factors influencing their ability to transition and the role of the planner and the challenges inherent in assisting these communities to shape transition strategies toward a stable, secure future.

### **2.2    British Columbia’s Rural Communities in Transition**

At last count there were about one hundred rural resource communities incorporated in British Columbia holding about one quarter of the province’s population. BC’s rural resource towns typically share common features of small size, isolated location, reliance on a single industry, and economic and social instability due to the boom and bust cycles typical of dependence on single commodities.

Communities with a history of reliance on a single industry, even with one ‘parent company’, have been arguably described as suffering a lack of leadership, having a

limited skill-set among the population, low levels of entrepreneurship and poor preparedness to cope (Barnes and Hayter, 1994). The historic single-function of these towns presents challenges around flexibility, particularly when local skills are considered, and difficulty considering a new direction. Reed and Gill's study into community development in transitioning communities (1997) suggests that rural communities are not so easily characterized and encompass a dynamic range of resources and capacities on which to draw for assistance in transition. Their work indicates that a variety of factors influence the ability of the community to cope with the challenges of transition. These factors include:

- the measure of distance from major centres,
- the type of resource being utilized,
- the degree of labour force stability,
- the quality of local leadership,
- the quality and number of links to other communities, and
- the existence of other networks and other functions.

It has been found that some communities are more proactive than others are when facing change. It is the inherent capacity of local residents to address challenges, identify opportunities and lead the community through implementation that determines outcomes. Barnes and Hayter suggest that, ultimately, it is in "the way that individuals [and agencies] connect, and the balance that exists between them" (1994, 292) that determine outcomes. Due to these dynamic circumstances, "there can be a marked...variability in local development strategies and outcomes among different places even within the same region" (ibid.). As each community faces the need for change, they are turning to different solutions. Some are choosing economic

development such as tourism or secondary manufacturing, others focus on community development promoting education, health services, transportation, housing, yet others look to alternative economies to improve access to needed resources (Boothroyd, 1991).

A rapidly changing population base may characterize transitioning communities. Some towns face shrinking tax bases due to outflow of industry and residents (Zeballos, Gold River). Both economic and social sustainability are challenged in these circumstances and it becomes increasingly difficult to attract new residents as services are lost. Other communities are facing rapid growth (Squamish, Chemainus) which places demands on community infrastructure and services. In either case there may be competing requirements for land and disparate visions for the future as newcomers face off with long-time preservers of the status quo (Reed and Gill, 1997).

Exploring the transition efforts of a handful of communities demonstrates the variety of experiences. The District of Squamish, located an hour by road from Vancouver, has focussed on developing its role in the tourism corridor between Vancouver and Whistler. This historic secondary function for Squamish became the foundation of a new community development strategy. Chemainus, a small village on Vancouver Island, had a fortunate location between Victoria and Nanaimo, strong leadership and vision to branch into both tourism and value-added wood manufacturing at a critical time (Barnes and Hayter, 1994). Clearly, those communities with vision, leadership and a willingness to accept that change requires new direction are those that are coping best in this era of transition. The way change is consciously defined and managed contributes to the impact on people and community.

This section's overview of the characteristics of resource communities and transition suggests that communities may need to overcome challenges beyond land use, such as economic and social instability. It also demonstrates that communities are becoming increasingly diverse as they move into alternative economic functions.

Therefore, planning that continues to focus on the development of a conventional community plan, one that proposes reaching a vision using land use regulation may no longer best respond to a changing community's needs. Indeed, no single planning strategy will serve these communities in transition. Instead, a planning approach that looks to identify the unique characteristics, goals and opportunities for each community is necessary while considering all aspects of the community in developing the plan.

### **2.3 Movements from Top-Down to Bottom-Up Determinism**

This section investigates forces that are acting on communities as policy and philosophy shift from top-down, government initiated programs to bottom-up community generated programs. It also investigates the planner's responsibility and broadening role in this shifting context.

Rural development policy in BC was for many years governed by staples theory<sup>2</sup>, and a heartland/hinterland understanding of community roles. According to staples-theory, rural communities were developed because they were primary sites of resource extraction. Rural regions were considered "the stuff of national development" and failure to develop the hinterland was considered a failure to exploit development opportunity (Walter, 1997). Staples theory and subsequent policy generated the minority status of BC's resource communities and their dependence on government and corporate policy from the moments of their founding. Decisions were not made for the long-term social or economic interests of the community (Ministry of Community Development, Cooperatives and Volunteers, 2000). Needless to say, many of the province's rural resource communities still experience the disadvantage of lack of control over local

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<sup>2</sup> Staples theory, developed by Harold Innis, purported that Canada's economic development and income per capita gains were dependent on the successful exploitation for export of natural resource products. Central to the theory was the notion of a dichotomous framework of underdeveloped, periphery supporting the industrialized, control center of the core.

resources and have few facilities to do more than export raw materials to distant locations for processing.

The failure of top-down regional policies to generate economically sustainable communities spurred the rise of local development in British Columbia. During the 1980s, communities and senior government became interested in community-based development. Communities were involved in regional planning through advisory groups, resource boards, round tables or co-management initiatives (Reed and Gill, 1997). While such means of community-based involvement were promising, from a community development perspective, the manner of local participation was criticized as overly prescribed by the senior levels of government (Boothroyd, 1991). Moreover, such community participation wholly depended on the province's willingness to include it.

Boothroyd questions the validity and desirability of universal goals and standardized means, suggested by senior agencies, to pursuing rural development (1991). True bottom-up planning is not likely to manifest in similar ways for any community. Planning for rural resource communities within a community development perspective thus recognizes that each community, in a true bottom-up process, will determine issues and priorities unique to the local context.

The challenge for the planner, which Boothroyd and Davis recognized in their work on small town development, is to "not only assist the community to be effective in the approach to community development it takes, but also to help it think about why it is choosing that approach, and consider the consequences and the alternatives" (1993, 238).

If comprehensive development is the goal, the planner's role becomes to help the community find win-win strategies. One way to contribute to 'winning' is to ensure that local community development efforts crosscut the social, economic and environmental realm, which are defined in part by policy around land use planning, social service

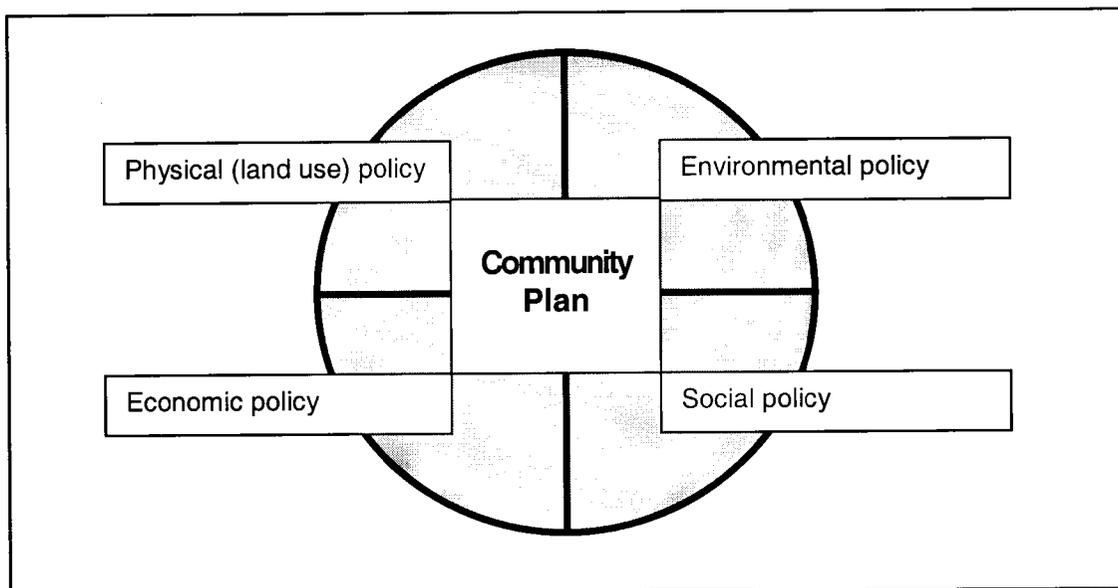
planning, and economic development planning. The following section discusses the broadening mandate of the planner in response to the increasing complexities of today's transitioning communities.

## 2.4 The Planner's Role

As communities are forced to adjust in the complex environment of a rapidly changing economic and industrial structure, planning can no longer be confined to issues of regulating land use or mediating difference in land and resource allocation. There is a broader agenda for planners.

Community planning thus becomes an opportunity to unite the concerns for social, economic, ecological and physical (land use) security and development within the community.

### Illustration 2.1 The Community Plan: a model for integration of four policy areas.



The fact that land use is integral to the success of community development and visioning policy has not been dismissed by planners, but too often land use planning and

community development are separate initiatives, guided by independent plans and understood by only those whose mandate it is to prepare and implement the plan (Bryant and Preston, n.d.). Bryant and Preston advocate an integration of a broader scope of activities into community planning. They suggest that it is not very effective, for instance, for a community to be involved in land use planning but not to have some form of local economic planning and policies, because the two are so intertwined (ibid.). It appears that a closer integration in policy and plans between all dimensions of community development, including land use and infrastructure planning, social services planning, educational planning and economic development planning, is becoming the work of the community planner (ibid.).

## **2.5 Challenges for Planning**

While planners are struggling to understand the shifting community context, the public's attitude and appreciation for planning appears to cycle. Tom Gunton describes the susceptibility of planning practice to economic highs and lows. During times of crisis or development pressure there is heightened interest in planning but, during times of recession, lack of interest in and motivation for planning reduces the status of planning (in Witty, 1994).

Harry Harker, General Manager of Development Services for the Regional District of Comox-Strathcona has witnessed decreased interest in planning in this era of economic transition. He has noted that some small communities in BC today, rather than embracing planning as a means to assist in their transition, are looking to abort their community plans and land use regulation in the interest of removing any potential barriers to new development (Harker, 2001). They view their plan as a reactive and regulatory tool, not as a proactive or strategic document that can assist in moving them to the future they would like to see.

Thus, the planner must be aware that while examining the community context and measuring the community's ability to cope and capacity to change, local attitude may resist planning approaches of any kind. It becomes imperative for the planner to not only understand the sensitive context of the small and transitioning community, but also the need to strengthen the case for community planning in this context.

Understanding that the planner's role is in helping the community to understand the breadth of issues that contribute to community planning and where it may want to focus its efforts, the question becomes "What are we planning for?" The following chapter suggests that a worthy focus may be in fostering qualities that have been demonstrated by stable and resilient rural communities and found in communities that have launched successful community development projects. Rather than suggesting a definite outcome, this research identifies qualities that appear to enable communities to support change and development.

*"...All communities have within them characteristics that can either enable or constrain their ability to adapt and change. Bringing these characteristics to conscious awareness is an important step in moving communities towards taking intentional action to influence their circumstances."*

*(Centre for Community Enterprise, 2000, 1-5)*

### 3.1 Introduction

Chapter Two included an examination of the nature of transitioning communities, changing philosophy and policy directions and the role of the planner, showing that each appears to be moving in the direction of bottom-up, community-based planning and development strategies. Relying on this grassroots approach, communities that have long relied on a single industry and often a parent-company dictating the community's fortune, have to decide their own course of action. In order to do so, citizens have to shape a number of priorities about the kind of communities in which they wish to live. This chapter proposes that community efforts to determine future direction will be enhanced by an awareness of what makes other communities successful in implementing community development, fostering change and remaining stable when facing pressures to evolve.

Research in rural communities in both Canada and the United States has identified a number of factors that seem to enable some rural towns and villages to continue to exist, even thrive, in the face of uncertainty and external stress. The quality that allows communities to remain stable is now being called community resilience or the inherent ability of a community to survive crisis, influence change and become healthy, vital places for their citizens (CCE, 2000). Experiences of other stable rural communities can provide insight into possible directions in which decision-makers and planners can encourage change and development in BC's communities. This chapter will investigate

how these insights can inform planning responses in order to assist British Columbia's rural resource communities when managing change and shaping future goals.

### **3.2 Characteristics of Surviving Rural Communities**

Results from studies and projects undertaken in British Columbia, across Canada and in the United States provide insight into the characteristics that contribute to stable rural communities. The American study points to indicators of successful community transition, in Canada to indicators of successful community development efforts, and in BC, to qualities of community resilience. Each of the studies shows that success in transition or community development efforts, or inherent resilience depend not on the specific goal or the kind of resource on which the community has historically depended, but rather on the nature of community decision-making and the attitudes the citizens hold about their ability to support change. This review will identify the common characteristics within these successful communities and use them to inform principles for a planning process to guide in developing its own bottom-up, community-based transition strategy.

#### ***Heartland Center for Leadership Development: Twenty Clues to Rural Community Survival***

Looking for "clues to rural community survival", the Heartland Center for Leadership Development in Nebraska asked the question why are some rural communities coping with fundamental restructuring when others seem to have surrendered to crisis? (1989). Studying a number of communities in rural America, researchers at the Heartland Center found that some small towns, with populations from 450-6000, appeared to flourish regardless of greater economic and regional forces whereas other communities appeared very vulnerable to global and regional shifts

(ibid.). The ability to successfully transition appeared to have little to do with the location of the communities and instead depended on the actions taken and attitudes held by citizens in these towns. Briefly, the identified clues to survival are:

- a strong sense of community pride and self-reliance,
- respect for traditional institutions,
- a willingness to get the entire community involved in problem solving and goal setting,
- an ability to take some risks while managing resources carefully and,
- when necessary, seeking help and information from outside sources.

Heartland's twenty identified clues to rural community survival are noted in Table 3.1

#### ***Heritage Canada: Twelve Principles for Community Economic Development***

The findings of the Heartland Center were echoed by the Heritage Canada research into successful community development efforts in one hundred different Canadian communities (Lauer, 1993). Where the Heartland group were studying the ingredients of rural survival, Heritage Canada was looking for key principles of successful community development. While the intent of the studies was different, there are a number of similarities in their findings.

The Heritage Canada principles demonstrate that successful community development depends on the decision processes taken, commitment of the community and feasibility of the strategy, rather than on any one action. The research identified that these factors contribute to the success of community development programs:

- broad participation and involvement of key interests,
- development of a locally-generated entrepreneurial initiative that builds on a strategic plan, and

- local management and evaluation of efforts.

The twelve principles are described in full in Table 3.1.

### ***Centre for Community Enterprise: Twenty-three Aspects of Community Resilience***

The Heartland Center and Heritage Canada studies point to process principles, attitudes and actions that contribute to successful community initiatives and a stable social and economic environment. The third, the Community Resilience Manual, describes factors that contribute to a community's resilience. Resilient communities are defined as those that "take intentional action to enhance the personal and collective capacity of its citizens and institutions to respond to, and influence the course of social and economic change" (CCE, 2000, 1-5). The twenty-three factors that make up the profile of a community's resilience are grouped into four dimensions:

- people in the community,
- organizations in the community,
- resources in the community and
- community process.

The attitudes and behavior of the people and organizations, awareness and use of the resources along with strategic thinking, wide participation and action in community processes are important factors within resilience. The twenty-three characteristics of resilience are included in Table 3.1.

### **3.3 Fourteen Characteristics of Surviving Rural Communities**

Identifying common features within each of the studies, this analysis selects fourteen characteristics that communities have or can foster that contribute to survival capacity. By enhancing or utilizing the factors within the community, communities will also be fostering their ability to transition, to support community development efforts and

to remain resilient in the face of external shocks and stresses. For the purposes of this study the common factors are called the Fourteen Characteristics of Surviving Rural Communities. The characteristics have been grouped into the areas of:

- issue identification,
- public involvement and leadership in the decision process,
- utilization of a strategic plan,
- use of local resources, and
- community attitude.

### **Issue Identification**

1. Issues are managed as they arise out of the community; community members are involved in defining issues and in creating goals and strategies to manage issues.

### **Public involvement and leadership**

2. Community-stakeholders and representatives of each demographic group are involved in public decision making.
3. Leadership is representative of the community profile, elected leadership is visionary, shares power, and builds consensus.

### **Use of a strategic plan**

4. A comprehensive plan is in place that considers economic, cultural, social, physical and ecological values.
5. Communities take action according to a strategic community development plan.
6. Time frames are established for incremental goals toward a long-term vision.
7. Methods are developed to monitor and evaluate progress toward the vision, and the vision is routinely reviewed.

### **Use of local resources**

8. The community relies on local knowledge, resources and capacities to support development initiatives.
9. Local organizations and institutions actively manage community development initiatives. Full-time management of economic development is available.
10. Resources are used carefully to their best advantage.
11. There is awareness and utilization of positioning and linkages to the broader economy and other communities.
12. Outside agencies are utilized for assistance when necessary.
13. The economy is diversified, businesses are locally owned or plans are in place to enhance local ownership.

### **Community Attitude**

14. Citizens have optimistic, cooperative attitudes and self-help initiative.

Table 3.1 below details the analysis and selection of fourteen characteristics of surviving rural communities. In the upcoming chapter these characteristics are used to direct the goals and objectives of the planning method.

Table 3.1 Identifying Fourteen Characteristics of Surviving Rural Communities

<p><b>FOURTEEN CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVIVING RURAL COMMUNITIES</b></p>	<p><b>TWELVE PRINCIPLES FOR SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT</b></p>	<p><b>TWENTY CLUES TO RURAL COMMUNITY SURVIVAL</b></p>	<p><b>THE TWENTY-THREE CHARACTERISTICS OF RESILIENCE</b></p>
<p><b>Issue Identification</b></p> <p>1. Utilize a community-driven, bottom up, participatory process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans arise out of a bottom-up, community-driven process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participatory approach to community decision-making.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community members are involved in significant community decisions.</li> <li>• Citizens are involved in the creation and implementation of community vision and goals.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Public Involvement and Leadership</b></p> <p>2. Involve all interests and representation from across the population.</p> <p>3. Increase local capacity for leadership.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When a broad range of community interests is represented in planning.</li> <li>• When development strategies expand the local capacity for leadership.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliberate transition of power to a younger generation of leaders.</li> <li>• Acceptance of women in leadership roles.</li> <li>• Sophisticated use of information resources.</li> <li>• Strong belief in and support for education.</li> <li>• Problem-solving approach to providing health care.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobilize key sectors of the community around priorities.</li> <li>• Leadership is diversified and representative of age, gender and cultural composition of the community.</li> <li>• Elected community leadership is visionary, shares power and builds consensus.</li> <li>• Strong belief in support for education at all levels.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Utilization of a Strategic Plan</b></p> <p>4. Use a comprehensive plan that considers economic, cultural, social, physical and ecological values.</p> <p>5. Take action according to a strategic community development plan.</p> <p>6. Clarify time frames for incremental change that the community finds feasible.</p> <p>7. Monitor and evaluate progress.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When development involves a comprehensive plan.</li> <li>• When development is guided by a strategic plan.</li> <li>• When the time frame for development is years rather than months. When development results from incremental change.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an <b>economic development</b> program.</li> <li>• <b>Realistic appraisal of future</b> opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The community adopts a development approach that encompasses all segments of the population.</li> <li>• Organizations use CED to guide their actions.</li> <li>• There is on going action towards achieving the goals in the CED plan.</li> <li>• There is regular evaluation of progress towards the community's strategic goals.</li> </ul>

### Use of local resources

8. Rely on the community's own knowledge, resources and capacities to support development initiatives.
9. Use and create local organizations and institutions to actively manage community development initiatives.
10. Use resources carefully to the best advantage.
11. Be aware of positioning and linkages to broader economy and other communities.
12. Utilize outside agencies for assistance when necessary.
13. Encourage local economic activity

- It is self-help in nature.
- Knowledge of the physical environment.
- Attention to sound and well maintained infrastructure.
- The community is self-reliant and looks to itself and its own resources to address major issues.
- Uses local organizations to implement and evaluate initiatives.
- Where there is full-time CD management.
- There are a variety of CED organizations in the community such that the key CED functions are well served.
- There is ongoing action toward achieving both long and short term goals.
- Overarching goal: maximize the use of limited time and resources in areas that will yield greatest overall benefit.
- The community is aware of its competitive position in the broader economy.
- When development initiatives are entrepreneurial in nature.
- Careful use of fiscal resources.
- Awareness of competitive positioning.
- When communities are part of a larger network.
- Willingness to seek help from the outside.
- When development is not guided by outside agencies.
- The community looks outside itself to seek and secure resources (skills, expertise, finance) that will address areas of identified weakness.
- Employment is diversified, beyond a single large employer.
- Major employers are locally owned.
- The community has a strategy for increasing independent local ownership.
- There is openness to alternative ways of earning a living and economic activity.

### Community Attitudes

14. Optimistic attitude that the community can work together cooperatively to help itself.

- The community feels a sense of pride.
- People feel a sense of attachment to their community.
- People feel optimistic about the future of the community.
- There is a spirit of mutual assistance and cooperation in the community.

## **Chapter Four**

## **Informing a Planning Method**

*"...Good community planning results from common sense and an orderly, open approach to finding out local needs, setting goals and priorities and taking action" (Daniels et al, 1995, ix).*

### **4.1 Introduction**

A planner's challenge is to generate planning methods that respond to the needs of the communities we serve (Fielding and Couture, 1994). Planning theory suggests a variety of planning approaches, such as the planner providing intellectual leadership in addressing urgent problems (Jacobs in Fielding and Couture, 1994) or assisting with problem solving by opening up debate in the community (Forester in Fielding and Couture, 1994), or by helping with opportunity identification and ways to maximize their benefit. Canadian planners have suggested that it is opportunity identification that will "bring about real improvement in the community, the economy and the environment" (Fielding and Couture, 1994, 150). With its focus on enhancing community stability and survival capacity, this planning method seeks to improve the community's ability to steward itself through its transition while identifying the strengths and opportunities it can utilize in shaping its future direction.

Learning from the successes of other communities, this chapter investigates ways to build awareness of, and foster the characteristics of, surviving communities through the development of a planning method that is responsive to these goals. This chapter explores the development of a planning process, while the following chapter will describe the pilot of this process in Zeballos and offer reflection and discussion on the utility, challenges and benefit of using the method.

## 4.2 Process Goals

Utilizing the Fourteen Characteristics of Surviving Rural Communities to direct process goals and actions, the goals of the planning method include to assist the community to build awareness of the community's survival characteristics, to 'learn survival by doing survival' in the process, and to shape a transition vision and understand its implications. Further goals include to build awareness of the role for planning in community transition, and to promote the attitude that the community plan is a valuable part of achieving the community vision, not simply a regulatory and restrictive tool.

The planning process is proposed to fit into a short, intensive time period, not unlike the design charrette, in order to maximize the community's input over a few days around the issues of community transition and visioning. A variety of planning exercises have been planned over three workshops to assist the community in undertaking a situation analysis, shaping a future vision and considering policies that could support this vision. The process may not serve all communities, the pilot may show it to be overly ambitious, time consuming or too costly for communities of larger sizes, or it may prove to be a straightforward starting place for a community undergoing transition and looking to plan for a more stable future.

In Table 4.1, below, the fourteen characteristics of surviving rural communities have been extended into goals and actions for the process.

**TABLE 4.1 Informing process goals and action.**

<b>Process Goals</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>Issue Identification</b>	
1. Communities should be involved in defining issues and creating goals and strategies to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiate planning discussion with an opportunity to define issues that are current concerns in the</li> </ul>

manage issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>community.</li> <li>Do not facilitate processes that the community does not initiate, understand or have interest in.</li> </ul>
<b>Public Involvement and Leadership</b>	
2. Include input from the variety of interests in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strive to involve a group of citizens that is representative of the demographic profile of the community.</li> <li>Work to involve the various interests in the community including industry, business, services and government.</li> <li>Establish a workshop schedule and goals that enables the community to participate.</li> </ul>
3. Increase local capacity for leadership. Support leadership that is visionary, sharing of power and works to build consensus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the planning process as a place to educate and inform citizens on issues of planning and implications of their choices.</li> <li>Create opportunities for participants to lead discussion, and volunteer resources and knowledge.</li> <li>Include opportunities for participants to make commitments to furthering the planning action.</li> </ul>
<b>Utilize a Strategic Plan</b>	
4. Ensure that the discussion considers the economic, social, environmental and institutional context of the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide these areas of focus within the discussion.</li> <li>Examine implications for these contexts when making community planning policy and decisions.</li> </ul>
5. Utilize a strategic plan to guide action toward specific goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define policy goals and objectives that support the community vision.</li> </ul>
6. Time frames are established for incremental goals toward a long-term vision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss time frames for reaching both short and long term goals as set out in the community vision.</li> </ul>
7. Methods are developed to monitor and evaluate progress toward the vision, and the vision is routinely reviewed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish implementation steps and monitoring tools. Identify timeframes to evaluate the fitness of the plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Use of Local Resources</b>	
8. Rely on local knowledge, resources and capacities to support development initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examine ways community policy can assist in the development of its vision that utilizes identified community resources and capabilities.</li> <li>Undertake an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints regarding the economic, social, physical and ecological environments as a starting point.</li> </ul>
9. Ensure plans can be supported by existing organizations and institutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop plans that can be affected by the community through its established organizations and planning jurisdiction.</li> <li>Review with the community powers and capabilities of its planning jurisdiction.</li> </ul>
10. Maximize use of limited resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate process with clear goals for outputs.</li> <li>Avoid the 'do another study' solution to generating change (Lauer, 1993).</li> <li>Invest in strategies that the community can support and implement.</li> </ul>

11. Understand positioning and linkages to broader economy and other communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examine how the plan will affect the relationships to surrounding areas.</li> </ul>
12. Utilize outside agencies for assistance when necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify areas where further expertise is required and where needed assistance or information can be obtained.</li> </ul>
13. Encourage local economic activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look to ways community policy can assist local enterprise.</li> </ul>
<b>Community Attitude</b>	
14. Foster cooperation, shared understanding and an optimistic attitude that allows the community to work together to help itself.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilize a participatory and cooperative process.</li> <li>Explore participants' attitudes toward their perceived ability to establish community goals, foster change, and to work cooperatively toward stated goals.</li> </ul>

Several actions are proposed in Table 4.1 to generate a planning method that contributes to a community's survival profile and encourages discussion around the community's ability to best manage its transition.

### 4.3 The Planning Method

The pilot process has been developed as a series of three workshops:

- One, to undertake a community analysis of the community's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints and map the results.
- Two, to use scenario building as a tool in visioning and use the outcomes to inform community plan policy.
- Three, to review the policy outputs from the process, discuss qualities of surviving communities and have participants evaluate the process.

The method is outlined in Table 4.2. There are some necessary preparatory steps that are not included in this outline of the three workshops. These include:

- ensuring that the process is initiated by the community and that the community understands and supports it;

- seeking representation of the various stakeholders and demographic groups in the community when inviting participation in the process; and
- establishing a schedule and meeting times that maximizes opportunities to participate in the process.

**Table 4.2 Defining a Planning Method**

**Workshop One**

	Activity	Objectives
Introduction 15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions.</li> <li>• Discuss goals for process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To establish comfort in the discussion.</li> <li>• To ensure people know whom they are working with.</li> </ul>
Exploring the context. 20 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have participants brainstorm issues and concerns they would like to address in the process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that issues are generated by the community.</li> </ul>
Examining the SWOC 60 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints the community perceives as it considers future development.</li> <li>• Facilitate group in-put across the social, economic, physical and ecological realms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that local resources, capacities and opportunities are addressed in the process and can be utilized in visioning.</li> <li>• Use this local awareness to support viability of future scenarios.</li> </ul>
Mapping the SWOC 40 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To explore on the ground the physical context and relationships of community issues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To increase local awareness and explore links to other communities using mapping.</li> </ul>
Introduction to scenario building. 15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce task and purpose of Workshop Two scenario task.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To have participants explore scenarios for Zeballos' future direction. Have them ensure that scenarios are feasible and grounded in the SWOC</li> </ul>

Wrap-up and next steps 10 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe next steps in process.</li> <li>• Final inputs, comments</li> </ul>	analysis.
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### Workshop Two

	Activity	Objectives
Introduction 15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Briefly explain goals for the workshop.</li> <li>• Offer opportunity for comments on Workshop One.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that participants generate discussion on topics of their concern.</li> </ul>
Scenario building 45 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have participants share their scenarios for the future of Zeballos.</li> <li>• Gather themes and have group select their preferred feasible themes for a vision.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To gather input toward strategic vision.</li> <li>• To identify themes that characterize the social, economic, ecological and physical goals of the community.</li> </ul>
Directions for policy 45 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select themes that can be facilitated by policy.</li> <li>• Identify tradeoffs that are arising among the themes.</li> <li>• Have group select preferred aspects of the visions to pursue in community policy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To use the planning process as a place to educate and inform citizens on issues of planning and implications of their choices.</li> <li>• To define policy goals and objectives that support the vision.</li> </ul>
Wrap-up and next steps 15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite further comments.</li> <li>• Prepare for next steps, preliminary policy review.</li> </ul>	

### Workshop Three

	Activity	Objectives
Feedback on workshop two 10 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite any comments from previous workshops.</li> <li>• Introduce tasks.</li> </ul>	
Review of draft policy inputs 60 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and revise policy inputs.</li> <li>• Review issues and recommendations for management and implementation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify short and long term goals in the process.</li> <li>• To inform of implications of strategic choices, issues that will require management and means to manage.</li> </ul>

<p>Discuss time frames for plan evaluation and implementation 15 minutes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have community identify time frame for activities, milestones and plan review.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To have community recognize progress is incremental and plan should be evaluated to determine its continual fitness.</li> </ul>
<p>Have a 'commitment ceremony' 15 minutes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have group make personal and collective commitments to furthering the community vision.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To foster leadership.</li> </ul>
<p>Evaluation of process and outcome 20 minutes</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To get feedback on process.</li> </ul>

#### 4.4 Workshop Exercises

The three workshops utilize several planning exercises including SWOC community analysis, asset mapping, scenario development, policy development and implementation planning. They are described here with a discussion from the literature on their typical application and also a brief outline of how they will be used in this process.

##### **SWOC Analysis**

SWOC stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Constraints. It has been adapted from the term SWOT, in which Threats were included in business strategizing around competition. For the purposes of the community planning exercise Constraints will be the operative term. Essentially a situation analysis, SWOT analysis has been popular since the 1980s in business strategizing and is now being adapted for other purposes.

As a situation analysis of the community, the SWOC will be undertaken around the question of the current condition of the community's economic, social, ecological and physical context. In planning for the future, the community should first understand the

conditions at this point in time, both as a point from which to monitor change, and as a means to evaluate the resources it can utilize and issues it must consider in taking any future action. From the business perspective and a community planning perspective, “the purpose of strategy is to be really clear before you take the direction. The point of a [SWOC] analysis is to have the best shot at a grounded plan” (Glazer in Collett, 1999), the benefit of grounding the vision in the present is to increase the feasibility of future goals.

SWOC analysis is valued as a means to learning about an issue because, through looking broadly at a problem, it helps to challenge common assumptions, to assist in re-thinking the systems and forces at play in any situation (Slocum Jr. and McGill, 1994). The goal of using the SWOC in Zeballos is to enable the participants in the workshop to gain an overview of the physical, ecological, social and economic context with specific attention paid to perceived strengths, weakness, opportunities and constraints the community faces as it looks to the future of the village, in order to focus the discussion and assist in the visioning steps of the process.

Of course, the SWOC format only allows for discussion of issues the community is aware of and can articulate during the process. For this reason there are limits to using SWOC in community analysis. A more comprehensive analysis, proposed by the Centre for Community Enterprise in its Community Resilience Manual (2000) may be appropriate for communities needing or willing to invest more time in community analysis.

### ***Asset Mapping***

The Zeballos participants will be asked to map the results of the SWOC analysis over four map sheets, one each for the economic, social, ecological and physical

environments. They will be working with a cadastral base map and trace paper. These materials will allow the sheets to be overlaid and enable the group to see the relationships between the four contexts and offer a deeper understanding of forces at play in the community. This technique is taken from the bioregional mapping movement.

Giving the Land a Voice: Mapping Our Home Places (Harrington, 1999), outlines several opportunities when mapping a region, a site or a community, such as enabling the community or citizens to:

- Keep records, creating a ledger of a place in time.
- Create a visual display of specific data and abstract ideas.
- Gain a bird's eye view-guiding our direction of travel.
- Reveal a broader perspective of relationships in a region.
- Understand the dynamics of a community, using maps to plan for sustainable change.
- Pass on maps of parcels or neighbourhoods to future landowners.
- Plan development with knowledge and sensitivity to local habitat, culture and other community values.
- Protect specific areas through covenants, easements or other legal means.

The mapping exercise is intended to assist the community in creating a visual presentation of their understanding of the area, gain an overview perspective of the community and the way it is functioning, reveal the spatial relationships at work, and plan for development with knowledge and sensitivity to the local habitat, culture and community values. Whether or not the maps become a part of the community archive depends on the enthusiasm of the participants and the quality of the outcomes produced.

### ***Scenario Building***

Another tool borrowed from business and military strategies, scenarios are now being used in other disciplines to assist in making plans in an unpredictable world (Kleiner, 1999). Rather than attempt to predict or forecast future activities based on the present, scenarios enable groups to “visualize a series of futures that can arguably be considered equally possible...” (ibid. 76). Scenarios are not meant to prescribe a future

but are a visioning tool that relies on the imagination to produce a means to understanding future possibilities.

Scenarios are often used for problem solving or strategic planning in a business environment. In these cases, various plot lines are selected and scenarios are developed according to the plots. Common plots include winners and losers, in which resources must be divided among competitors, or challenge and response, in which obstacles must be overcome. There are also plots based on evolution, in which long-term change is predicted to occur in an established direction or revolution, in which dramatic change comes about unexpectedly. Scenarios are used in these cases to look at future possibilities to determine action plans for whatever outcomes may arise, and then to set a monitoring system in place to gauge which of the scenarios is actually occurring and how the group can best respond.

In the community planning process the scenario builders may not necessarily choose such problem-solving plots (unless in the SWOC problematic issues arise that the group feels must be dealt with) but will more likely choose an evolution of change from the present situation. In the absence of priority issues, the participants will be challenged to determine their own scenarios of a desirable future for the community, discover the themes and values that are driving the scenario and bring these to the group as part of the visioning exercise.

Although there is no single method for shaping scenarios, there are some basic rules (Robbins, 1995). First, it is important to respond to a genuine question. In this case the question will be "What is the future you would like to see in Zeballos over the next twenty years?" It is important to establish a working time frame that is meaningful to the context of the question. For the people of Zeballos a two-year time frame may not be very revealing, but looking ahead one or two decades may enable them to envision some significant changes in the community. Scenarios must also be grounded in an

understanding of the starting point, ideas of what could occur in the future should be feasible, based on the identified strengths and weaknesses of the community and the external opportunities and constraints that are acting upon it. The SWOC analysis will provide this starting place for the scenarios.

The Mayor and Council will be asked to consider scenarios away from the group after the SWOC mapping exercise. In order to use the scenarios as a visioning tool, they will be asked to consider such questions as: What do we want to bring about? What difference do we want to make? What do we aspire to? What legacy do we wish to leave behind? They will then come together to share their scenarios and out of these will emerge themes and values.

Once a list of themes and values is compiled from all participants, the group will have to consider them for future policy direction. If there are some ideas that cause concern or unease, they will have to be discussed. If necessary the group may be asked to select their preferred visions, they can do this with the red dot/green dot technique by selecting three likes and three dislikes. In this way those ideas that have most support can move into policy making and those ideas that have little support can be discarded.

### ***Policy Development***

Policy directions will be drawn from the scenario themes and values that are endorsed by the group. They will be considered within the contexts of the economic, social, ecological and physical realms. These themes and values will be drafted into policy objectives by the facilitator and presented to the group for their review and comment. Taking this task from the group does not suggest they are not involved, simply that in the interest of saving time the delicate work of choosing words will not be a group task. The draft will then be distributed for their consideration, revision and final

endorsement. Due to the participatory nature of this process and the intense involvement of the group members, it is wholly expected that they will feel complete ownership over the final policy objectives. These objectives will then be fed into the greater community process that will take place concurrent to these workshops.

### ***Implementation Planning***

There is always concern that plans and good intentions go no farther than the planning process and instead become nice looking documents put on a shelf and not revisited until another enterprising group decides to review them. In describing the challenges of implementing a healthy communities initiative, Weaver (1997) explains some necessary steps to take when planning for implementation. First, the group must be aware of two intersecting tasks: short term projects that work toward long term change. Having small goals to work toward is essential to marking progress, keeping people engaged with the overall vision and ensuring the success of initiatives. Moreover, new projects and initiatives should be regularly checked for consistency with the long-term goals to ensure that the community is working together toward the values articulated in the community plan. Finally, the community must recognize that the plan is not unchangeable, but that it is a living statement that can be reviewed and revised to grow and change with the changing needs of the community.

The following suggestions may help the community make the transition from planning to implementation. First, marking the end of the planning process with a ritual or celebration is important. The group may also wish to resume after a short break to undertake a transitional planning exercise in which it is determined who will implement and govern certain activities required to carry out the plan. Some leadership should be determined in order to steer each small project from start to finish.

It is important that at the finish of the planning process, all stakeholders are involved in implementation or, if they do not have a role, they should receive appropriate communication about the implementation. Weaver suggests that stakeholders be involved in periodic workshops as required in order to continue to involve them in problem solving and learning, and to re-engage them with the process.

Finally, determining priorities and identifying leverage points for funding may be necessary in order to support the implementation of some tasks. Weaver recommends developing relationships with community organizations and institutes of higher learning and look to where needed training and research can be supplied. The community must organize its own funding plan that includes its support in financial and in-kind contributions and a plan for focussing on obtaining outside funding.

Utilizing this method, the community should gain an awareness of its survival capacity, ways to foster characteristics that contribute to its stability and resilience, and build on the cooperation and capacity required to contribute to community stability. The next chapter describes the case community and discussion on using the method and proposed exercises.

## **Chapter Five Piloting the Planning Method in Zeballos**

*“As people are brought to feel a sense of community and to adopt goals that serve their growing concept of community, the conviction that they are able to contribute to [community] improvement seems to increase in them” in Small Towns and Small Towners  
(Biddle and Biddle, 1966 in Swanson et al. 1979, 31)*

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes the case community of Zeballos and relates the experience of piloting the planning process in the Village. First, the section provides a description of the community, with reference to the functions identified in Chapter Two (Reed and Gill, 1997) that contribute to its ability to cope with transition. Second, the chapter provides an overview of the pilot process as it was applied. The complete outcomes of the pilot process in Zeballos have been prepared as a report for the Mayor and Council, which is included in Appendix One.

It is important to note that while this process was being piloted with the small group of the Mayor and three councilors, the broader community was at the same time participating in a community plan update. Both processes were planned for an intense five-day period, to suit the Village's budget and time frames, with the outcomes of the pilot process to be fed into the community's public process as additional policy inputs. The community plan revision has since been adopted by the community, including the implementation recommendations made in this process which are included in full in Appendix I.

### **5.2 The Case Community: Zeballos**

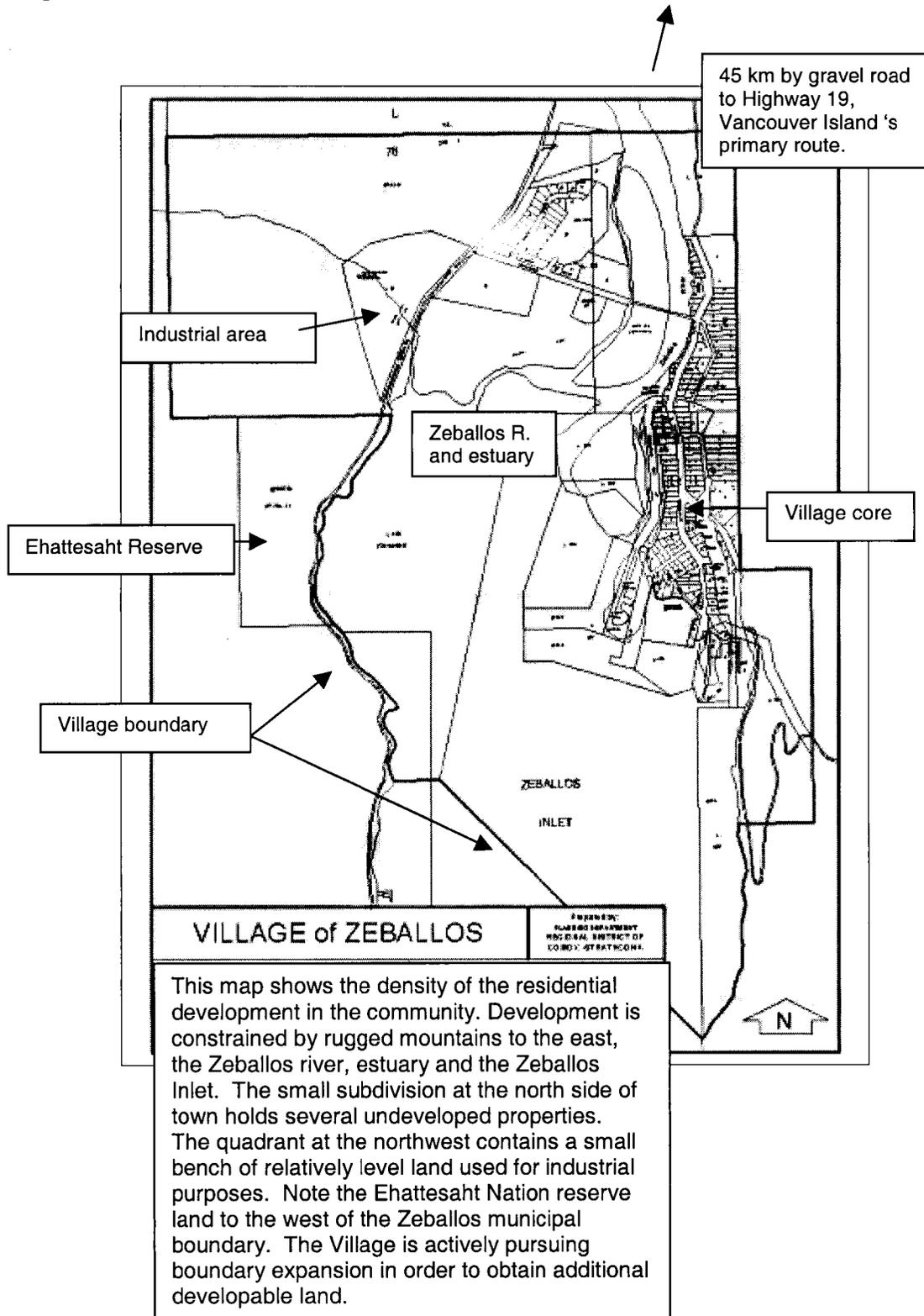
The small community of Zeballos (pop. ±300), located on the west coast of Vancouver Island, is in most respects a classic resource-dependent community, although the village has a number of distinguishing features. It is located at the head of

the Zeballos Inlet, a calm water harbour off Nootka Sound on the west coast of Vancouver Island. The area has a beautiful mountain and ocean-side setting. It has a historic main street and village core area that contribute to a strong sense of place in the community.

The community faces a number of environmental and physical challenges. Boundary expansion is a current goal, yet is severely constrained by rugged mountains and bodies of water. Most of the community is within a rock fall hazard zone. The community has considerable flood risk due to seasonal high flows of the Zeballos River and the possibility of tsunami in an earthquake event along the coast. The community is already struggling with a shortage of industrial land. It has about twenty undeveloped residential sites and, along with the current housing stock, it expects to meet demand for housing over the coming decade.

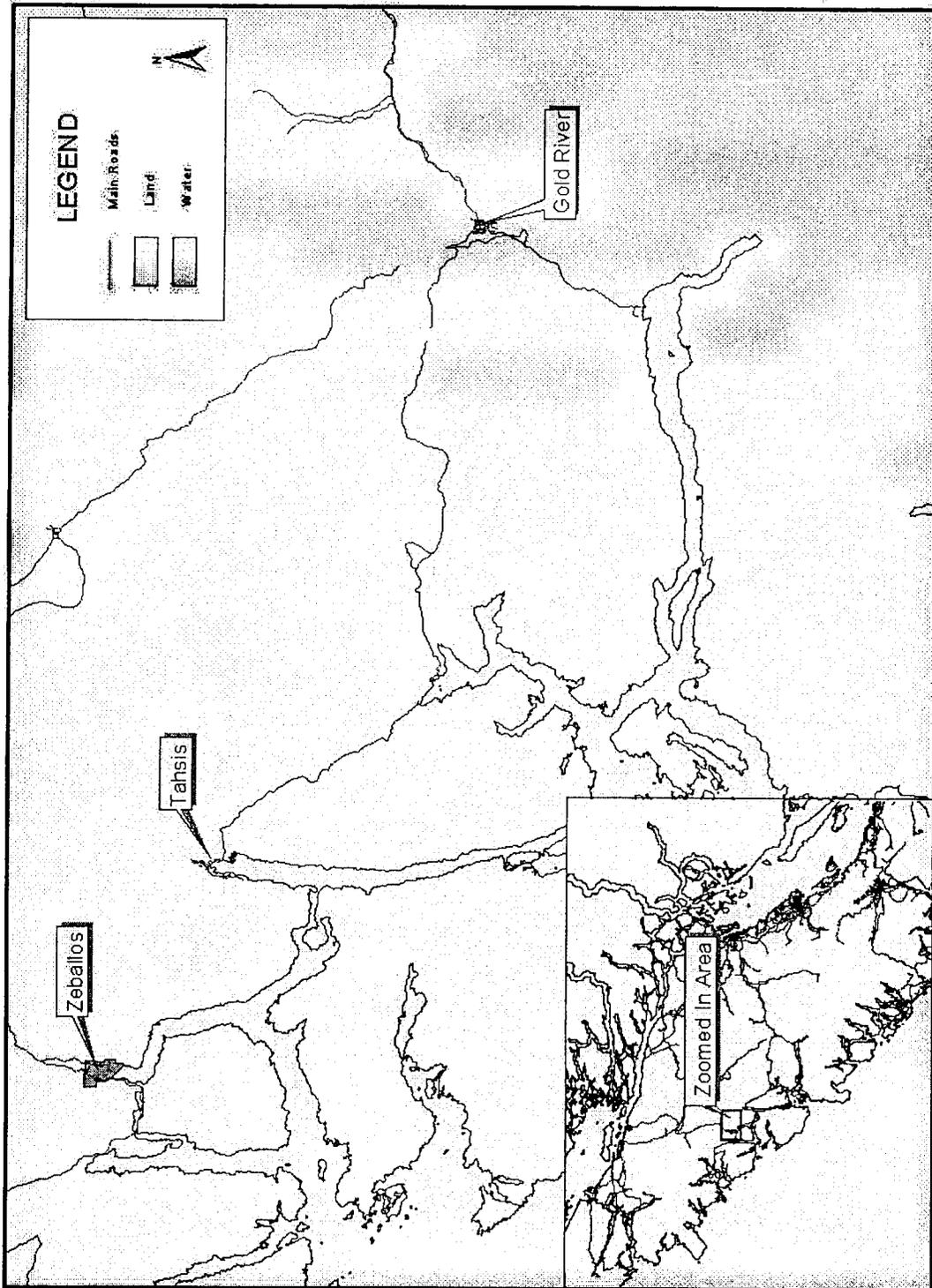
Examining the community against the factors that Reed and Gill (1997) indicated affect community transition experiences reveals a community that is severely isolated. It is struggling due to its reliance on the forest industry but is also actively diversifying into other industries, it experiences labour force fluctuations due to timber harvesting cycles that are beyond community influence and a significant degree of weekend transience among labourers. But along with these weaknesses, it has strengths such as capable leadership, strong connections to the neighbouring municipalities and established regional networks. It would be well served by strengthening its relationship with neighbouring First Nations, and could extend its networks into other economic centres and markets. To a small degree it is becoming more than a single-function community as it attracts retirees and tourists, yet this is a burgeoning phenomenon. Each of the influences is more fully discussed below.

**Figure 5.1 Zeballos**



**Figure 5.2 The Regional Context**

Zeballos is located 45 kilometres from Highway 19 and another 150 kilometres to Campbell River, the southerly urban service centre. The community is actively seeking construction of a Zeballos/Tahsis connector route (approximately 25 kilometres), which would also provide an alternate connection to Gold River. The community feels these links are critical to its economic development prospects.



***the measure of distance from major centres***

The village is located 45 kilometres by gravel road from Highway 19, Vancouver Island's north/south route and at least two hours travel from the northern communities of Port McNeill and Port Hardy, which offer most necessary retail services and three hours from Campbell River where most supplies and services are obtained. At present there is only one route to and from the village, although residents are hoping that in the near future a long pursued connector route to Tahsis (10 km) will be developed. Tahsis is another small forestry dependent community on a nearby inlet, linked to the Town of Gold River (63 km), which has excellent highway access.

***the type of resource being utilized***

Zeballos has a more varied history than many of Vancouver Island's forest communities. It has experienced the boom and bust of two mining industries before it became a 'forest company' town. It's economy relies on the harvest of timber in the region and log sort facilities located within the community. It holds the regional offices of Western Forest Products, known locally as 'the company'. With renewed interest in one local gold mine, Zeballos may witness a resurrection of the mining industry.

Observation in the community revealed that while many village residents are involved in the forestry industry, a considerable number of new and active residents have moved to the area within the past decade. There appears to be several semi-retired professionals, young entrepreneurs and established business people operating outside of the forest economy in the community. These people appear to be working hard to sustain the community through entrepreneurship and volunteerism.

### ***the degree of labour force stability***

The village has lost residents due to the forest industry transition over the past two decades. From a high in the early 1980s, the population has declined until recently, and over the last five years there has been overall growth. Much of this population growth is attributed to the resettling of the Ehattesaht First Nation on the neighbouring reserve although other community members are returning and there is some inflow of new residents, including retirees. The population is currently at about 274 full-time residents, with several additional workers living in temporary quarters through the week and leaving for homes elsewhere on the weekend. Transience in the population causes some problems for the community, especially with respect to size of the tax base and ability to provide and maintain community services.

### ***the quality and number of links to other communities***

The Ehattesaht First Nation community is located to the west of the municipal boundary and limited sharing of services occurs between the communities. Interestingly, while the community decision-makers participating in this process felt that the relationship with the Ehattesaht community was an open one, with lines of communication available when needed, conversations with the band indicated that the First Nation would like improved communication. Treaty negotiations do encompass the area of the municipality and surrounding region, including areas in which the municipality would like to extend its boundaries in order to obtain more developable land.

### ***the quality of local leadership***

Working with the Mayor and Council, it became apparent that the community has strong leadership at this time. The Mayor is experienced with local government and is a relative newcomer, offering experience from her work in a larger community. The

councilors have had varying tenures in the community, each one actively engaged in some variety of business activity. These leaders are focussing on the community's need to diversify and are looking to secure additional village lands and construct new infrastructure in order to assist the community's move into value-added processing and tourism.

***the existence of other networks and other functions***

The community has several value-added wood product operations, a few hotels and several shops providing local services. It also attracts seasonal tourists for water recreation, camping and newly promoted rock climbing. The Board of Trade is active in promoting tourism development in the village.

Zeballos has established links to other communities and is part of three significant networks. The Tri-Council association between the communities of Zeballos, Tahsis and Gold River works together on issues of joint concern. The Nootka Resource Board is a consortium of local governments, First Nations and senior government agencies in the region, working together on issues of forest and land use management. Moreover, the Community Forest, jointly managed between Tahsis, Zeballos and Gold River through the Nootka Sound Economic Development Corporation is a first for Vancouver Island community forest management.

The village has recently been included in another important link as a scheduled stop for the Uchuck, a pocket cruise and supply ship that transports visitors and goods around the North Island's west coast ports. The potential for new tourism development exists if the community can sustain the interest of the Uchuck operators and visitors.

The above review describes Zeballos with respect to factors that are believed to influence its ability to transition. The above factors can be characterized as circumstantial factors, or how the community exists at this time, and do not consider the factors that influence the community survival as revealed in Chapter Three, such as how

the community determines its planning issues, makes decisions, sets priorities and examines issues that will need management. The following section describes the experience of piloting a survival-based community process in Zeballos.

### **5.3 Engaging in a Pilot Process**

The Village of Zeballos had elected to review its official community plan and, as part of this process, the Mayor and three members of Council agreed to participate in this pilot process while the broader community is undertook a SWOC, a charrette<sup>3</sup>, and policy review. The following section reflects on the process, the outcomes of the pilot process with Mayor and Council and reviews how the process goals were met.

The process was planned from a theoretical perspective, using the planning goals and actions as described in Chapter Four, to utilize and build on the community's own capacities to use survivor-like methods while undertaking a visioning process. The process was designed as three two-hour workshops, to take place over a five-day period. The process was planned to imitate the intensity of a charrette, using short intense time frames to gain a great amount of input, in order to generate interest and energy and, through engaging collectively in the process, to use the group's synergy to produce innovative and creative ideas for the community's future vision.

### **5.4 Reviewing the Workshops**

#### **Workshop One**

The community analysis provided an opportunity for a thorough discussion of community issues (see Appendix I for a summary of the findings of the workshops). The

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<sup>3</sup> A charrette is the French term used in architecture and urban design to describe a short, intense design exercise, often used for problem solving or idea generation, and usually done in a group format.

two-hour facilitated discussion allowed the Mayor and Council to contribute information regarding the physical, economic, social and ecological concerns of the area. The SWOC enabled the group to articulate their concerns and thoughts about the village in its present state. It was an excellent tool to share a great number of issues in a short period of time.

With its review of strengths and weaknesses the SWOC offered insight into the resources available in the community and the areas where outside agency support was required to assist the community. It provided an overview of the committees and associations operating in the community and offered information about the intra-community networks in place. This, along with a review of the opportunities and constraints affecting the community began to identify where challenges and trade-offs might occur in a transitioning strategy. The group was very enthusiastic about the SWOC and keen to continue the process.

Mapping the results of the SWOC proved to be impractical as the workshop time frame was too short and the majority of issues raised were global, such as having a "pristine natural environment" or "too few active volunteers", that are not easily attached to geographic location. In a community of this size, it became clear that the Mayor and Council are very aware of the issues affecting the community and the physical location of, and relationships between, issues in the community. It was not clear what value they might have gained over and above the situation analysis provided in the SWOC by mapping the results, aside from creating an interesting visual archive of the village at this time.

Because the group had not asked for mapping as part of their planning objectives, and the time had not been allocated to educate them about the broader contributions of the map in building community awareness and creating an archive, it was not made a priority. Had it been a priority, mapping would have required far more

time than the one hour allotted in order to educate on the mapping method and work through its production. Workshop One wrapped up very satisfactorily with the SWOC discussion recorded and a brief discussion to prepare the group for the following scenario session.

## **Workshop Two**

The scenario exercise did not generate the wide variety of possibilities for future development as was expected. While it did serve to illuminate a number of issues that might arise and require effective management, the ideas did not alter significantly from the opportunities already identified in the previous meeting's SWOC analysis. The following observations suggests opportunities to improve the scenario exercise:

The activity might have generated a bit more thinking "outside-the-box" had it not been separated from the SWOC activity. The group, which seemed to have much momentum and enthusiasm in Workshop One, lost some of this over the two-day delay between exercises. They did not appear to desire to look beyond their already conceived expectations about the future as suggested in the 'opportunities' discussion in the SWOC. More intense facilitation of the scenario exercise would be necessary in order to move the group into considering a significant evolution, or revolution, in the community with respect to possible future development. The scenario exercise could have been more successful as part of a more comprehensive workshop, such as a combined Workshop One and Two.

Scenarios might have been easier to develop, or more meaningful for the participants had they been based on certain assumptions, rather than simply relying on an open imagination of possibilities. Taking a lesson from business strategy, where scenario building is typically around a stated problem such as managing competition in

business, this community would have had more success building scenarios around certain goals, such as the opening of the Tahsis connector, ways to maximize benefit of the new pocket cruise visits, or building support for value-added enterprise. Facilitation of the discussion around a stated goal could have achieved more specific inputs.

Much facilitation was required to focus the group on the implications of proposed future actions and to generate issues that would need careful management if the community were to develop as envisioned. A clearer description of desired inputs in scenario development may have assisted the participants in generating these outcomes. Policy development was quite straightforward as the scenarios generated a manageable number of possibilities that the earlier SWOC analysis showed to be feasible and likely to occur. Thus a prioritization of these outputs for policy development was not undertaken and all of the contributions were considered in the subsequent policy development.

Between Workshops Two and Three scenario inputs were organized into short term and long term goals. Issues were identified that might arise if these goals were pursued, along with recommendations for action and suggested means for implementation.

### **Workshop Three**

This workshop involved discussion and review of the major issues revealed in the SWOC and scenarios that would need careful management. It included discussion of the recommendations drafted by the facilitator for action and implementation steps to manage the issues that might arise. The Mayor and Council offered their recommendations for additions and amendments to implementation policy content and wording. The implementation steps were then contributed to the overall OCP revision. The workshop concluded with five recommendations to assist the community in

strengthening its survival capacity. A summary of the fourteen characteristics of surviving rural communities was also included with the package. A lack of time left the discussion of these characteristics incomplete and, in retrospect, this could have been the most meaningful part of the exercise for the community.

Table 5.1 presents an overview of the planning method outcomes against the specific actions that were proposed in Chapter Four.

**Table 5.1 Following Up on Proposed Actions and Respective Outcomes**

Process Actions	Process Outcomes
<b>Issue Identification</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiate planning discussion with an opportunity to define issues that are current concerns in the community.</li> <li>• Do not facilitate processes that the community does not initiate, understand or have interest in.</li> </ul>	<p>SWOC discussion included an overview of community issues and concerns as a starting place in order to ensure the community felt that their main concerns and issues were being acknowledged in the process.</p> <p>This group did not initiate this process but instead were informed of its intent and method and agreed to participate as part of the community-initiated community plan review.</p>
<b>Public Involvement and Leadership</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strive to involve a group of citizens that is representative of the demographic profile of the community.</li> <li>• Work to involve the various interests in the community including industry, business, services and government.</li> <li>• Establish a workshop schedule and goals that enables the community to participate.</li> </ul>	<p>Working with the Mayor and Council, the group was not representative of the community demographic. Children, house-makers, forestry workers, First Nations, or marginalized citizens were not involved. The workshop schedule was revised at the first meeting to better suit the schedules of the participants. This was simple due to the small group.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the planning process as a place to educate and inform citizens on issues of planning and implications of their choices.</li> <li>• Create opportunities for participants to lead discussion, volunteer resources and knowledge.</li> <li>• Include opportunities for participants to make commitments to furthering the planning action.</li> </ul>	<p>Issue identification and implications of pursuing aspects of the vision were discussed in the third workshop. Participant input generated the content of both workshop one and two and contributed to the outputs of workshop three.</p> <p>A 'commitment ceremony' had been planned for workshop three but time constraints interfered. Overall implementation recommendations were</p>

	made but leadership was not established.
<b>Utilize a Strategic Plan</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the discussion considers the economic, social, environmental and institutional context of the community.</li> <li>• Examine implications for these contexts when making community planning policy and decisions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion was structured around the economic, social, physical and ecological contexts of the community.</li> <li>• Implications of achieving the vision were included in workshop three.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize a strategic plan to guide action toward specific goals.</li> <li>• Define policy goals and objectives that support the community vision.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The community will have to undertake more work to draft a strategic direction for its transition. The variety of goals will need prioritizing and leadership.</li> <li>• The workshop report presents short and long-term goals along with implementation steps; these were included in the revised OCP.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss time frames for reaching both short and long term goals as set out in the community vision.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This was planned in the third workshop but not completed due to time constraints.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish implementation steps and monitoring tools. Identify timeframes to evaluate the fitness of the plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was recommended that the community determine some indicators to measure progress toward the short and long term goals and establish measures to manage the impacts of this change as necessary.</li> </ul>
<b>Use of Local Resources</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints regarding the economic, social, physical and ecological environments as a starting point.</li> <li>• Examine ways community policy can assist in the development of its vision that utilizes identified community resources and capabilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed in the SWOC. The community provided input into local resources and resource constraints. A more thorough investigation would be required to understand the finer details of financial resources.</li> <li>• Building the scenarios on the foundations of the SWOC resulted in viable possibilities the community was able to support. The realization of the Tahsis connector and expansion of the municipal boundary are dependent on the support of outside agencies.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop plans that can be affected by the community through its established organizations and planning jurisdiction.</li> <li>• Review with the community powers and capabilities of its planning jurisdiction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What the community cannot determine itself, such as the Tahsis connector, or redistribution of stumpage revenues, it does have avenues to press for such change at the provincial level.</li> <li>• The community was made aware of what it can achieve with its community plan and zoning bylaw.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiate process with clear goals for outputs.</li> <li>• Avoid the 'do another study' solution to generating change (Lauer, 1993).</li> <li>• Invest in strategies that the community can support and implement.</li> </ul>	<p>This was not as well articulated as it should have been at the outset. Policy input is too general a goal and discussion would have better focussed on particular issues. Further studies were not recommended although it was recommended that the community undertake social development and economic development planning. Implementation recommendations could be carried out by community effort.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine how the plan will affect the relationships to surrounding areas.</li> </ul>	<p>The community was advised to carefully consider the impacts of the vision on relationships with neighbouring communities and engage in dialogue on shared interests with the Ehatesaht Nation.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify areas where further expertise is required and where needed assistance or information can be obtained.</li> </ul>	<p>It was recommended that the community follow-up flood risk discussions with the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks and also seek to hire an economic development coordinator for additional expertise.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look to ways community policy can assist local enterprise.</li> </ul>	<p>Support for local businesses through appropriate policy included utilizing the waterfront for low-impact commercial activity, expanding the local industrial area and protecting the heritage appeal of the village core as a means to protect and foster local business.</p>
<p><b>Community Attitude</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize a participatory and cooperative process.</li> <li>• Explore participants' attitudes toward their perceived ability to establish community goals, foster change, and to work cooperatively toward stated goals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The process involved full participation of the Mayor and Council. Issues rarely required negotiation, and issue prioritizing did not occur so it remains to be seen whether the process contributes to these members' ability to cooperate. With this small elected group cooperation may not have been an issue although differences of opinion of some issues was apparent.</li> <li>• A survey at the outset and finish of the process was inconclusive with respect to change in attitudes during the process but all participants agreed to greater or lesser degrees that the community could foster positive change.</li> <li>• Whether the process of community analysis and visioning undertaken in these workshops contributes to the self-help attitude of the community would require a unique study.</li> </ul>

## **5.5 Reflections on the Process**

Table 5.1 outlines how the proposed process goals and actions were realized in the pilot process. The most critical element in realizing the goals of the process was time. Working to achieve these objectives within the span of three two-hour workshops was not feasible.

### ***on expectations***

Expecting to easily move through the agenda of the three workshops in order to cover what was an ambitious agenda overall was not realistic. Due to a very busy weekend there were distractions for most residents. While the Mayor and Council did succeed in fitting in three meetings over a busy five days, one councilor missed all three meetings due to a household problem, one councilor was missing for the scenario building and the others had had little time to consider their scenarios before they got to the second workshop. Moreover, two meetings were held in the home of one councilor who generously served meals to our group and the remainder of the planning team. I had not anticipated these distractions and rather than adjusting my agenda to suit the reality of working in the community, I forged ahead and worked through the exercises. Being more responsive to the environment and the people could have provided more satisfying facilitation. Whether or not the outcomes would have been improved by an altered agenda cannot be known through this project.

### ***on intended outcomes***

The final outcomes had not carefully been outlined before embarking on the process. It was thought that the policy directions and issues would become clear in the scenario building and that the final report would flow directly from the scenarios. This led to a lot of struggle on the final day when preparing the final document. A closer discussion with the Mayor and Council at the outset of Workshop One to identify the

support they felt was important at this time in the community would have been appropriate and would have assisted in outlining the desirable final outcomes.

A survey that asked similar questions both before and at the close of the process had been prepared and was administered (see Appendix II). It was hoped that the participants' responses would reveal changes in their attitude about the community and its capacity for survival as a result of learning through the process. Instead, no great changes in responses were indicated, this would have required a stronger engagement in exploring the community's characteristics of survival than was facilitated in the three workshops. A careful reflection, not at the last minute but after some time, by each participant would be required to determine if their own capacity to understand and enhance the community's survival characteristics had increased through participation in the process.

### ***on flexibility***

Because the intent was to pilot a process, there was a view that it was necessary to accomplish the goals as they were set out in the three workshops. This presented difficulty in being flexible and was a lesson learned in knowing more about the community and people you are working with. More time spent before going to the community in contacting the Mayor and Councilors in order to better understand their interests and time constraints throughout the workshop period would have allowed adjustments to the process before applying it in the community.

## **5.6 Synopsis**

The above analysis shows that while many of the proposed actions were followed through in the process, some, such as mapping or a commitment to implementation session, were not undertaken due to time constraints. A more

appropriate method by which to judge if community survival capacity had been enhanced through completing this process is required.

Moreover, the intense workshop style, inspired by the charrette, is excellent for gaining an overview of issues and exploring possibilities for action but more thorough investigation of the viability of scenario outcomes is necessary. Needless to say, the workshop outcomes offer the community much to consider as it looks toward its transition vision. Ideally this process will inspire the community to undertake a transition study that includes economic and social development, both of which require attention in the village.

## **Chapter Six      Conclusions and Recommendations**

*“Looking back in history, we recognize that every age has, under changing circumstances, been faced with the unexpected, unwelcome challenge of radically adjusting the way it does things. ... Standing on the other side of history, we understand why these revolutions occurred.*

*Change is inevitable”*

*(McGonigle and Parfitt, 1994, 13).*

### **6.1 Introduction**

Research has shown that stable and resilient communities, those able to respond to a changing context and withstand external pressures, demonstrate a variety of actions and attitudes that contribute to the ways issues are identified, decisions are made, goals are prioritized, and resources are used in the community. The inherent ability to support change and remain stable is being called resilience. Resilience is not a static phenomenon, it can be fostered and strengthened within communities (CCE, 2000). For communities in transition, enhancing capacity to survive and manage change may be as important as selecting any specific transition outcome, for it is in the way that communities determine and implement their transition strategy that will primarily determine the success of the outcome.

This project has utilized the literature on community transition, surviving rural communities and successful community development efforts in order to inform a planning method that contributes to a community's survival capacity while planning toward a future vision. It identified Fourteen Characteristics of Surviving Rural Communities and used them to shape the objectives and actions of the planning process. The goals of the process included increasing the survival capacity of the participating community members in a 'learning-by-doing' process, using the characteristics as a point of discussion for Zeballos and offering further recommendations to build on them. The project methodology drew on the value of

successful past experiences in other communities because they not only offer motivating examples but also provide opportunities for experienced community leaders to learn from each other (Luther, 1990).

This chapter revisits the research questions posed in Chapter One, reflects on the experience of working with the Zeballos community, provides further considerations for the planner, and offers strategies to enhance the community survival capacity of Zeballos.

## **6.2 Reviewing the Research Questions**

The primary questions of this project are “What is the nature of a planning method that can assist communities undergoing transition?” and “How can this method be utilized by the planner and the community?” The investigation included an examination of:

- the characteristics of stable and resilient rural communities,
- the planners’ role in assisting resource communities undergoing transition,
- ways a community planning process can build awareness of and foster community stability and resilience.

### **1. “What is the nature of a planning method that can assist communities undergoing transition?”**

The goal to enhance a community’s survival capacity through a planning process can be successful if both the process exercises and the outcomes contribute to the community’s understanding of their survival capacity and are committed to improving this capacity while making transitioning decisions. The positive feedback received from the Mayor at the close of this pilot demonstrated appreciation for the opportunity to discuss a broad agenda of community issues and propose feasible implementation steps.

The pilot process showed that the SWOC analysis was an excellent starting point, revealing a breadth of issues and concerns, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints that contribute to the community's ability to support its economic and social transition. Moving into visioning on the foundation of this analysis encouraged planning and development ideas that appeared realistic and achievable for the community. Topical discussions around identified issues or opportunities would have provided more specific input into incremental efforts to realize the visions, instead these steps were brought out by the facilitator as more global and long term visions were suggested by the group.

While this method was drafted for work over a short time frame with an intense meeting schedule, other methods may be better suited to communities that have more time to invest or issues requiring deeper investigation. The broader community analysis undertaken in this project is valuable in understanding the community's economic, social, physical and ecological environments. A 'survival inventory' style of analysis specific to the Fourteen Characteristics of Surviving Communities will clearly assist in focussing a community analysis. The 'survival' inventory, along with a gap analysis (undertaken to show where further support or knowledge is needed to pursue development and planning goals) would further assist a community in its transition planning.

## **2. "How can this method be utilized by the planner and the community?"**

The planner must choose his or her role as is indicated by the needs of the community. For this, an assessment of community needs and goals for a planning process must be undertaken before the process method is developed than was undertaken prior to engaging in the pilot process. This can be achieved through informational meetings with major stakeholders and decision-makers. The planner can

then better facilitate, offer information and professional knowledge as necessary, and ensure that recommendations serve the purposes of the community and its community planning policy. The following section offers four areas that assessment should involve in order to best understand the community's needs.

**2.a. Planning and the process of accepting change.**

One of the most rewarding discoveries of this study and the earlier work in Sayward that inspired the project investigation was the observation that communities, while considering change, are working through a process similar to grieving. Grieving a loss has been identified as a process having five stages (Kubler-Ross, 1969; James and Cherry, 1988), denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. The Sayward community, mentioned in the introductory chapter, was actively denying the eventual loss of its forestry employer when the 2000 planning process began. It took considerable effort, including frank meetings with the forestry company, before the community accepted that this loss was going to occur. Then, due to its many years of dependence, the community was angry that it was being abandoned and looked for ways to seek restitution from the company (bargaining). Throughout the process, community members were obviously at varying degrees of acceptance of the eventual change, yet it was clear that until the citizens accepted the facts, they would not be able to plan for the future.

In Zeballos, the leadership appeared to have reached acceptance of their economic transition before the planning process. They were actively seeking transition opportunities and looking for ways to diversify the economy. This demonstrates that the planner has a task in assessing the community's point in this 'grieving' process. The quicker a planner can assist the community in moving from denial, through anger, to acceptance, when a community is facing change such as the loss of a major employer or

revenue supplier, the quicker the community can begin to envision a different future and plan for it. The methodology proposed here will clearly be most useful for those communities which have reached the point at which they are accepting change and ready to look ahead.

## **2.b. Assess the Requirements of a Unique and Flexible Approach**

With research showing that a community's ability to transition is influenced by several factors, including the measure of distance from major centres, the type of resource being utilized, the quality of local leadership, among others, and that communities are becoming more diverse as they move through transition, a single planning method is not desirable. Instead, relying on principles such as a goal to strengthen the capacity to transition successfully and to choose directions that the community can pursue with their own resources and efforts will be more appropriate than reliance on a standard planning method.

There is a requirement for flexibility in delivering any prepared planning method. Responding to new issues and priorities or to shifting schedules or general distractions requires a willingness to move away from planned goals and to reshape the process as necessary with the input of the participants in order to respond to emerging issues and changing contexts.

## **2.c. Assess the Benefit of Working with Different Groups Within the Community**

Working with the community leaders and the general community in different groups, as occurred in Zeballos over the course of the pilot, offers the advantage of shaping processes that serve differing points in the 'grieving' process and different levels of preparedness in planning for a different future. The leaders of Zeballos, as noted above, were clearly accepting of the conditions of change within the community and

were ready to plan ahead. The general community, on the other hand, may have required more work in understanding the nature of their economic transition, the impacts on the community, their role in the change, and reaching acceptance. There may be several different approaches to work with different groups in the community, observation in Zeballos showed that the local entrepreneurs were preparing for economic transition, whereas some members of the public seemed resigned to the village becoming a ghost town. The attitude toward change held by the community and the experience of participating members in community planning efforts are critical factors that must be considered by the planner.

#### **2.d. Assess the Need for Education on Community Survival**

It cannot be overstated that community participants should be explicitly discuss the opportunity to include community survival as a goal in community planning, especially when undergoing the economic and social transition that BC's resource communities face today. An overview of survival and discussion that would occur around a 'survival inventory' is recommended as a useful step in this kind of planning method. While it may be ambitious to expect each planning method to embody all of the goals and actions suggested by the Fourteen Characteristics of Surviving Communities, a process that does so as carefully as possible will have better success in fostering a transitioning community's capacity to survive and to support the unavoidable changes that will occur. It cannot be denied that the community's attitude, political environment and readiness to look ahead will affect the experiences and outcomes of any planning process.

### **6.3 Strategies for Community Survival in Zeballos**

The following recommendations were made during the pilot process to bring attention to aspects of survival capacity that appeared to require immediate consideration in Zeballos in order to strengthen the village's ability to realize its visions. These are the facilitators reflections of specific actions the community can take as a result of considering participants' inputs into the planning process.

#### ***involve the community and stakeholders in decision making***

A small group of leaders and decision-makers cannot shape and carry the community development vision. A broad base of community involvement in setting planning and development goals as well as defining and acting on implementation strategies is a necessity. Involvement of local stakeholders such as Western Forest Products and the Ehattesaht Nation is highly recommended.

#### ***utilize linkages and networks with other communities***

Zeballos is currently utilizing community linkages with the established Tri-council network between Tahsis, Gold River and Zeballos and participation in the Community Forest Economic Development Committee. It is recommended that these networks include the neighbouring First Nations and include discussion on joint economic and tourism objectives.

#### ***be entrepreneurial about community development***

Small communities that continue to thrive exhibit an entrepreneurial spirit and willingness to take some risk in shaping plans and strategies for economic development. Zeballos must support and utilize the ideas and innovation of its many entrepreneurial members in the development of a diversification strategy.

***adopt a long-term strategy to guide physical, economic and social development and ecological management***

Communities that continue to move forward in their development utilize a long-term plan to guide short term, incremental action that takes them toward the vision. Shaping a long-term strategy that has prioritized short-term goals and milestones that can be reached and celebrated is critical.

***create an economic development coordinator position***

Most small communities that have successfully diversified or achieved economic development goals have had a full-time economic development coordinator (Becker, 1999). Small communities typically do not have leaders with enough time to dedicate to the many initiatives required. It is advised that Zeballos, alone or in partnership with neighbouring communities, look for creative ways to fund a full-time economic development coordinator.

**6.4 Further Considerations For Transitioning Communities**

Broadening the planning agenda to include transition challenges such as economic, social and ecological stability is necessary and now achievable in Official Community Plans. Nevertheless, communities have few tools to affect outcomes around social and economic development. Communities wish for and require increased ability to affect these outcomes (Ministry of Community Development, Cooperatives and Volunteers, 2000) and increased ability to foster economic development in their communities.

The goal to build bottom-up strategies grounded in the local context introduces the need for a requisite level of skill, knowledge and leadership within the community. It necessitates access to resources (human, natural, fiscal, educational) to seed initiatives

and sustain them. It requires organizational capacity, skilled administration and constant monitoring within a flexible framework so that the inevitable changes in the global and local environment can be catalysts for improvement, not set-backs. Moreover, grass-roots community determinism continues to require support at the professional and political level to foster resilience in communities.

The recent government change in British Columbia leaves much speculation about senior agency support and strategies that will assist transitioning resource-based communities in the province. Past government research (Ministry of Community Development, Cooperatives, and Volunteers, 2000) identified a number of areas in which rural communities have identified need for support, including:

- Diversifying the local economy.
- Encouraging greater local control and ownership of businesses.
- Building the overall capacity of the community to manage and direct change.
- Greater access to Crown resources and more say in their management.
- A single-window for communities to access government programs and services that relate to community development.
- Equitable access to programs and partnerships with government that are flexible enough to adapt to the unique needs of each community.

A reconsideration of assistance strategies for small resource-based communities will need to occur at the senior policy level.

## **6.5 The Value of a Community Plan Revisited**

This project continues to advocate that a community plan is a critical tool for a transitioning community. Through shaping the plan in a public process, residents gain the benefit of working together to articulate issues, to understand the community context, and moreover, to generate a collective vision by which to measure the desirability of future land use, along with the economic, social and environmental development choices within the transition strategy.

## 6.6 Concluding Thoughts

When working with transitioning communities, the planner's role may best be considered one that generates discussion of the context and attributes of the community in the present, what it wishes to become, how it plans to get there, what resources it has to offer, who is going to steward the effort, what outside support it needs, how the community will know when incremental and long term goals are met and how often the goals should be revisited.

When utilizing a process with an intent to build survivorship capacity, the planner's goal should be to become ultimately unnecessary as the community learns to cooperate and rely on itself to the fullest extent possible in order to support change. If indeed the planner's role is to bring about change that will result in real improvement and if the community grows in its self-help attitude and willingness to determine local solutions because they first engaged in a 'survival-capacity' process, then planners will know that "they left the village better than they found it" (Translation from Sun Tze, The Art of War, in Fielding and Couture, 1994).

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## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Mayor and Council OCP Review Workshops 2001**

#### **Synopsis of Community Analysis, Future Visions Recommendations for Action**

##### **Introduction**

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This report details the outcomes of three workshops held in the rural Vancouver Island community of Zeballos over June 1-5, 2001. Mayor Pearl Myhres and Councilors Ken Brook, Cristina Lepore and Joan Monk participated in these workshops while the broader community engaged in a public process around the review of its Official Community Plan (OCP), first prepared in 1996.

Part of the goal of the OCP review and update was to add additional future vision to a community plan that already well addressed the current context of the community but offered little guidance with respect to future development. These workshops were developed in order to assist the community in identifying its 'benchmark' or starting point for future community development, to encourage the development of feasible strategies with respect to diversifying the economic base and strengthening community stability and to lend some insights to policy and implementation that would assist the community in moving toward its goals.

The first workshop focussed on community analysis. A "SWOC" exercise assisted the Mayor and Council in discussing current issues and concerns and then more specifically the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints that the community of Zeballos can utilize or manage as it looks to the future. Sharing this task in a group discussion provides opportunity for common understanding of the issues from which the community can initiate its future visions. The input gathered in the workshop has been organized in this report according to its contribution to the economic, social, ecological or physical environment of Zeballos.

Workshop two involved sharing of scenarios developed using the benchmark of the community analysis. It was recommended that scenarios utilize a future focus of a couple of decades. These questions guided scenario development:

- What do we want to bring about?
- What difference do we want to make?
- What do we aspire to?
- What legacy do we wish to leave behind?
- What specific issues or problems do we wish to address?
- What theme is guiding this scenario?

The synopsis of the group's vision is grouped according to the implications on the physical, economic, social or ecological aspect of the community. The issues and visions that arose from the scenarios are listed in the report close to verbatim.

The third workshop reviewed the analysis of earlier inputs. The summary identifies the short and long term goals and examines specific issues that may arise as short and long term goals are pursued. Finally, it suggests action and implementation in order to assist the community in moving toward its goals while maintaining the integrity of the Village's character and values.

In addition, the work of the Mayor and Council in community analysis and visioning provides an excellent starting point for examining the community's resilience (the community's ability to withstand shocks and stresses, sustain livelihoods and protect valued community assets) and ways that it might improve its resilience. A list of recommendations have been drafted that can be utilized to build on the community's capacity for resilience.

These workshops were developed, facilitated and reported on by Deana Grinnell, a graduate student at the UBC School of Community and Regional Planning, as part of completing the Professional Project requirement toward a Master of Arts (Planning).

## **Workshop One      Community Analysis**

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This section provides a synopsis of the discussion held around the community analysis. It outlines the Mayor and Council's expressed current issues and concerns and then more specifically the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints that the community of Zeballos faces as it looks to the future.

This overview provides a point of common understanding of the issues from which the community can initiate its future visions. Input has been organized according to its contribution to the economic, social, ecological or physical environment of Zeballos.

### **Issues Overview**

#### **Economic**

- Sudden work shutdowns create an uncertain economic climate, leaving people unwilling to invest in the community.
- There is too much reliance on the forest resource, the community needs to diversify.
- Small businesses are challenged by a small population base, not enough to keep as a full time job.
- The community should look at diversifying into aquaculture, tourism, value-added processing and try to establish greater control over local forest resources.
- The number of shake and shingle mills is probably nearing a maximum.
- Aquaculture faces problems because the government is shutting down operations by declaring unsubstantiated red tide conditions.
- The inter-relatedness of industry means that changes in one affect others. For instance wood supply needs and changes must be balanced with needs to protect view corridors.
- Instability due to native lands claims and sense that some decisions are simply on hold.
- Need to increase housing supply to increase the tax base yet these expansions are dependent on improved sewer services.

#### **Social**

- Health care is excellent with nurse and doctor but need for dentist, optometrist etc.
- Must manage the differing needs and ideas of old-timers and newcomers.
- Limited school programs cause loss of enrollment as students or whole families move elsewhere to find desired programs. The cost associated with boarding students is high for local families who can't get government support for students in grades 7 to 10.

- Community “want-list” and classified ads facilitate community connections; i.e. sharing costs of bringing in contractors for services has been a great benefit.
- Policing response time is very long, need local policing.
- Need policing to enforce drinking and driving laws.
- Increase in vandalism is reducing ability to fund other programs.
- Few opportunities for the youth and recreation.
- Opportunity to create a trail network for mountain biking, hiking etc. done in an environmentally sensitive manner.

### **Water**

- There are environmental concerns regarding well water supply, lack of testing, and concerns that waterfront may be contaminated. Water supply needs to be assessed.
- Need water services to light-industrial lands and remainder of subdivision.
- Need to replace communities water reservoir.

### **Sewerage**

- Need to provide sewerage to light-industrial and remaining subdivision lots.
- Liquid waste management plan needs to be completed for the west side, its septic field is at capacity and it is suffering from run-off infiltration. The east side septic tanks and fields need servicing, the area is prevented from increased density due to septic constraints.

## **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Constraints**

### **Strengths**

- Pristine natural environment.
- Strong level of volunteerism and community involvement. For example: the flower gardens, planting, slough improvements and other maintenance.
- Excellent clinic and ambulance services.
- West Coast Ranger service involvement in search and rescue and youth programs.
- Has an operating Board of Trade, recently published an interpreted walking guide.
- Heritage Board is small but active.
- Community overall has a respect for the natural environment.
- Small group of local entrepreneurs is willing to try new businesses.
- River campsite is open, but could be better developed.

- Village web site is excellent and provides great exposure.
- Museum attracts numerous visitors and visits have doubled over last couple of years to more than 700 visits. Museum will open a mine portal attraction in 2001.
- Nootka Sound Economic Development Committee and its involvement in community-based forestry.
- Established tri-council network between Zeballos, Tahsis and Gold River.
- Have strong partnerships with First Nations and WFP.

### **Weaknesses**

- Significant transience in population due to high number of contract workers.
- Water supply is not managed well in campsite.
- Repeated vandalism in community and campsite.
- Restaurant operating hours not consistent, mid-day closure is not compatible with tourist patronage.
- Too few people are active volunteers, rely on a small hardworking group.
- Need more members on the Heritage Board and other committees.
- Some residents don't respect the value of the natural environment or they take it for granted.

### **Opportunities**

- Remove culvert on the slough and replace it with a walking bridge; this will increase the natural water flows and improve the safety of the street corner.
- Develop a trail system on the estuary, potential to involve WFP in the funding and implementation.
- Promote great natural harbour provides safe moorage.
- Promote beauty of Zeballos River, its wildlife, especially opportunity to view bird species, salmon spawning, local wild flowers.
- Promote sport fishing.
- Preserve habitat along the river and estuary with stream protection guidelines.
- Develop kayaking as the BEST in BC.
- Network more with other communities to promote tourism.
- Maximize benefit of the return of the Uchuck.
- Support First Nation's Northern Games summer of 2001.
- Foster local business cooperation on operating hours to be sure that any visitors can get the services they want when they are here.

- Develop aquaculture industry.
- Develop high-end tourist lodging and associated service industry.
- Monitor tourist visits and tourist profile.
- Attract visitors destined for Nootka Island.

### **Constraints**

- Government agency regulation inhibits development, i.e. in aquaculture.
- Unresolved native land claims leave some uncertainty that is difficult to manage.
- Too small area of serviced land base to attract investment.
- Limits to sewerage system constrain servicing more land or intensifying development.
- Risk of natural disasters, rock fall, flood, and tsunami hazards.
- Floodplain is not mapped.
- Forest service road is not under Village control, there are issues with who has responsibility during maintenance transitions from WFP to forestry service. Community suffers and tourism income drops due to bad road conditions at times.
- Unpaved road.
- Limited input into forest resource management and implications on view sheds and on aquaculture and other industries.
- High tax rate and high delinquency rate for the small municipality frustrate financial planning.

### **Workshop Two      Scenario Building**

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Workshop #2 involved sharing of scenarios developed using the benchmark of the identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints in this exercise. The issues and visions that arose from the scenarios are listed below. It was recommended that scenarios utilize a future focus of a couple of decades. These questions guided scenario development:

- What do we want to bring about?
- What difference do we want to make?
- What do we aspire to?
- What legacy do we wish to leave behind?
- What specific issues or problems do we wish to address?
- What theme is guiding this scenario?

The Mayor and three councilors contributed their future scenarios, a synopsis of their ideas is listed here and group according to their place in the physical, economic, social or ecological aspect of the community.

## **Scenario Feedback**

### **Physical Visions**

The public will be aware of and support the communities planning guidelines, everyone will support the vision.

The Uchuck pocket tours will bring new visitors and attract potential new residents.

Maquinna Avenue will be a beautiful, green mainstreet through the cooperation of homeowners in the maintenance of private yards.

The road to Highway 19 and the connector to Tahsis will be developed and paved.

The east side of the community will open up with a connection across the slough and opportunity for development of water based industrial along the foreshore.

### **Economic Visions**

Western Forest Products will no longer control the tree farm license for surrounding timber harvesting, instead the community will manage the harvest.

The Village will gain a portion of stumpage revenues rather than all going directly to the province.

Community will keep more resource dollars in local economy through establishment of value-added industry.

### **Social Visions**

Families will wish to remain, they will have good schools, adequate services and infrastructure and secure jobs.

Existing medical services will be supplemented by regular visits by dentists and other specialists.

The community will promote itself honestly in order to attract tourists and new residents who will appreciate the true qualities of the Village.

### **Ecological Visions**

The natural environment will be respected and protected.

The community and Ministry of Forests will work together to preserve the viewsapes and protect the tourist value of the surrounding natural environment.

### **Workshop Three    Looking to the Future and Implementation**

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Over the two earlier workshops, a number of Village goals were discussed. This analysis of earlier inputs identifies the short and long term goals, examines specific issues that may arise as goals are pursued and suggests recommendations for action and implementation in order to assist the community in moving toward its goals while maintaining the integrity of the Village character and values.

In addition, the work of the Mayor and Council in community analysis and visioning provides an excellent starting point for examining the community's resilience and ways that it might improve its resilience. Finally, a list of recommendations have been drafted that can be utilized to build on the community's capacity for resilience.

### **Looking to the future**

#### ***Short term goals:***

##### **Physical**

- improve the water supply infrastructure
- complete and implement a liquid waste management plan
- improve the dependability of the water supply service to local camping grounds

##### **Economic**

- support value-added industry, encourage an education and tourism component to value-added enterprises
- coordinate and develop a tourism services plan to avoid problems with closed shops
- investigate opportunities to gain stumpage revenues from local timber harvesting

##### **Social**

- support and improve the expansion of local education offerings, opportunities for youth and homemakers to encourage families to remain in place
- improve communication and strengthen relationship with the Ehattesaht Nation
- increase local participation in community efforts, committees and volunteerism
- increase youth involvement in development of youth recreation, vandalism reduction
- encourage parental involvement in youth recreation

##### **Ecological**

- investigate water contamination along foreshore
- investigate means to continue local water testing
- look into possibilities for and implications of having Zeballos River declared a heritage river

#### ***Long term visions:***

### **Physical**

- improved road access to Highway 19
- developed road access to Tahsis
- sewerage and septic systems support full development of community properties

### **Economic**

- the Village will be supported by a diversified economy
- there will be a balance of tourism, retirement and industry to support the economy
- there will be an increased municipal land base and increased tax base to support municipal functions
- community will gain income from local forest resource extraction

### **Social**

- there is a productive and mutually beneficial relationship between Zeballos and its neighbouring communities, the Ehattesaht nation, Tahsis and Gold River which includes working together toward economic goals, including tourism
- all members of the community will find services and recreation they require in order to increase the stability and reduce the transience of community-based workers and families

### **Ecological**

- the natural environment is respected and protected

### **Recommendations for Action and Implementation**

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This section discusses the issues that may have to be managed as the Zeballos community considers future development and goals to diversify and strengthen the local economy. First is a summary of proposed implementation steps. These implementation recommendations have been included in the review and update of the Village of Zeballos Official Community Plan. Following this summary is more complete discussion of the selected issues and consideration that led to these recommendations.

#### ***Summary***

- A. Manage traffic and parking conflicts along Maquinna Avenue.
  - Develop a parking and traffic management plan for Maquinna Avenue.
  - Develop protocol for industrial and large trucks in the Village.
  
- B. Preserve the historic character and reducing potential for conflict among users in the Village Core.
  - Implement the Commercial Revitalization Development Permit.
  - Investigate means to increase the intensity of usage on the existing light industrial lands.
  - Investigate the northerly expansion of the light industrial lands.

- C. Improve communication between Village and neighbouring First Nations.
- Establish and maintain a regular meeting schedule between Zeballos Mayor and Council and the Ehattesaht First Nation on issues of joint concern.
  - Include discussion of stumpage revenue return to the community with First Nations.
- D. Maximize experience and minimize conflicts of tourists visiting by sea.
- Develop protocol for tourist and industrial wharf users.
  - Develop a pathway system and signage for tourists through the Village.
- E. Strengthen the community's economy and social structure.
- Along with the community plan, develop and implement a community economic development strategy.
  - Along with the community plan, develop and implement a community social development strategy.
  - Consider volunteerism and public participation in public decisions as part of the social development strategy.
  - Include youth volunteerism and vandalism awareness in the social development strategy.
- F. Protect and respect the natural environment.
- Implement the Ecologically Sensitive Area Development Permit.
  - Seek information regarding flood levels of the Zeballos River from the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks (MELP) Water Management Branch.
  - In the absence of MELP floodplain mapping, use the standard guidelines of a 15.0 metre set-back from the top of bank, and a 1.5 metre elevation for habitable space.

## **Issues to be managed**

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### ***Physical***

**Issue one: The community is looking to a future with a road to Tahsis, an improved road to Highway 19 and increased tourism and industrial traffic, some of which will have to reach the waterfront.**

**Recommendation:** The community will have to consider strategies to mitigate the conflicts among different users on Maquinna Avenue. Parking and safety will have to be considered through parking plans, development of off-street parking for both residential vehicle storage and visitor parking, and perhaps implementing traffic slowing measures on the main street. Because implementing parking restrictions will be controversial and challenging, these

measures should be carefully considered and put in place incrementally as need arises.

Implementation: Develop a parking and traffic management plan for Maquinna Avenue.  
Develop protocol for industrial and large trucks

**Issue two: The community would like to support both industrial and tourism development in the village.**

Recommendation: utilize the Commercial Revitalization Area Development Permit to manage development of lands within the commercial core to support the co-existence of tourism, business and residential and prohibit light industrial uses in the core area.

Implementation:

- Implement the Commercial Revitalization Development Permit.
- Investigate means to increase the intensity of usage on the existing light industrial lands.
- Investigate the northerly expansion of the light industrial lands.

**Issue three: The community is actively working to extend its village boundaries.**

Recommendation: More constructive dialogue with the neighbouring First Nation's community is recommended due to the Village's strong desire to achieve this and in light of the uncertainty of the outcomes of treaty negotiations.

Implementation: Establish and maintain a regular meeting schedule between Zeballos Mayor and Council and the Ehattesaht First Nation on issues of joint concern.

***Economic***

**Issue one: The opportunity to benefit from new visits by the Uchuck will bring increased traffic, both tourist and industrial to the wharf.**

Recommendation: A plan to accommodate the differing needs of tourism and industrial users at the waterfront should be prepared. Moreover, walking tourists will need some introduction and guidance in order to best utilize their time in the community, a marked pathway system will help them. Moreover, a plan to coordinate the opening hours of local businesses should be soon developed.

Implementation: Develop protocol for tourist and industrial wharf users.  
Develop a pathway system and signage for tourists through the Village.

**Issue two: The community is looking for ways to secure some of the monies from stumpage revenues generated by timber harvested in the area.**

Recommendation: The opportunities to achieve this in light of the Ehattesaht Nation's treaty negotiations should be considered.

Implementation: Include this discussion in meeting agenda with Ehattesaht Nation.

**Issue three: The community hopes for a diverse economic base.**

Recommendation: Ways and means to add a tourism and education component to operating industry may assist the community in diversification. Also, the village should look for ways to attract and support high-end value added enterprise.

Implementation: Along with the community plan, develop and implement a community economic development strategy.

## **Social**

**Issue one: The residents would like to see sufficient services to support families through-out their lifespan in order to encourage families to stay in the community more permanently and reduce the numbers of transient workers.**

Recommendations:

- The possibilities of providing additional educational services for both youth through to grade 12 and for providing continuing education and professional development for local residents should be pursued with North Island College or other learning institution.
- Zeballos, Gold River, Tahsis and neighbours should work together to solicit visiting doctors, dentists and specialists to these small communities.
- The community may wish to investigate means by which high school students can gain cooperative education through working with local industries or volunteering on local projects.

Implementation: Along with the community plan, develop and implement a community social development strategy.

**Issue two: The Mayor and Council recognize that most of its volunteer initiatives and committee memberships rely on the same core of volunteers.**

Recommendation: Because this is not sustainable, a strategy to involve a broader group of the community, representing all age groups and interests in community projects and government committees is necessary. Developing a strategy to involve more of the community in public decisions and volunteerism is recommended as a top priority as the time invested will benefit all efforts. It is recognized that this will not be small task.

Implementation: Consider volunteerism and public participation in public decisions as part of the social development strategy.

**Issue three: Vandalism is a large problem and very costly to the Village.**

Recommendation: Creating a civic volunteering program at the school as part of the curriculum to involve students in community projects and offers them a stake and opportunity to be heard may be a strategy.

Implementation: Include youth volunteerism and vandalism awareness in the social development strategy.

**Ecological**

**Issue one: The protection and respect of the natural environment is important.**

Recommendation: Utilize the Ecologically Sensitive Area Development Permit to manage development along the waterways and foreshore.

Implementation: Adopt the Ecologically Sensitive Area Development Permit.

**Issue Two: The Zeballos River is known to flood, risk to properties must be managed.**

Recommendation: Examine the options and implications of establishing a Floodplain bylaw for the Village.

Implementation:

- Seek information regarding flood levels of the Zeballos River from the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks (MELP) Water Management Branch.
- In the absence of MELP floodplain mapping, use the standard guidelines of a 15.0 metre set-back from the top of bank, and a 1.5 metre elevation for habitable space.

## **General Recommendations to Build Community Resilience in Zeballos**

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### **Create an economic development coordinator position.**

Most small communities that have successfully diversified or achieved economic development goals have had a full-time coordinator working on local development. Small communities typically do not have leaders with enough time to dedicate to the many initiatives required. It is strongly recommended that Zeballos, alone or in partnership with neighbouring communities, look for creative ways to fund a full-time economic development coordinator.

### **Involve the community and stakeholders in decision making.**

A small group of leaders and decision makers cannot shape and carry the community development vision. A broad base of community involvement in setting planning and development goals as well as defining and acting on implementation strategies is a necessity. Involvement of local stakeholders such as WFP and the Ehattesaht Nation is highly recommended.

### **Utilize linkages and networks with other communities.**

Zeballos is well on its way to maximizing the use of community linkages with the established Tri-council network between Tahsis, Gold River and Zeballos. It is recommended that this network includes the neighbouring First Nations and includes discussion on joint economic and tourism objectives.

### **Be entrepreneurial about community development.**

Small communities that continue to thrive exhibit an entrepreneurial spirit and willingness to take some risk in shaping plans and strategies for economic development. Zeballos is encouraged to utilize the ideas and innovation of its many entrepreneurial members in the development of a diversification strategy.

### **Adopt a long-term strategy to guide physical, economic and social development and ecological management.**

Communities that continue to move forward in their development utilize a long term plan to guide short term, incremental action that takes them toward the vision. Prioritizing short term goals and setting milestones that can be celebrated upon achievement is recommended.

## **Fourteen Characteristics of Stable and Resilient Rural Communities**

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Examining research and case studies on small towns that appear to survive economic hardship and re-invent themselves as needed, I have drawn fourteen characteristics that these communities usually exhibit, to greater or lesser degrees. I have included them here with a proposal that the community take these factors into consideration when planning their community transition strategy:

### **Issue Identification**

1. Issues are managed as they arise out of the community, community members are involved in defining issues and in creating goals and strategies to manage issues.

### **Public involvement and leadership**

2. Community-stakeholders and representatives of each demographic group are involved in public decision making.
3. Leadership is representative of the community profile, elected leadership is visionary, shares power, and builds consensus.

### **Utilization of a Strategic Plan**

4. A comprehensive plan is in place that considers economic, cultural, social, physical and ecological values.
5. Communities take action according to a strategic community development plan.
6. Time frames are established for incremental goals toward a long term vision.
7. Methods are developed to monitor and evaluate progress toward the vision, and the vision is routinely reviewed.

### **Use of Local Resources**

8. The community relies on local knowledge, resources and capacities to support development initiatives.
9. Local organizations and institutions actively manage community development initiatives. Full-time management of economic development is available.
10. Resources are used carefully to their best advantage.
11. There is awareness and utilization of positioning and linkages to the broader economy and other communities.
12. Outside agencies are utilized for assistance when necessary.
13. The economy is diversified, businesses are locally owned or plans are in place to enhance local ownership.

### **Community Attitude**

14. Citizens have optimistic, cooperative attitudes and self-help initiative.

The community can choose to evaluate proposed community actions, transition strategies or economic development efforts by cross-referencing the initiative with these fourteen characteristics by asking questions around each factor, such as:

1. Has this (action, issue, initiative) been identified by the community at large? Who defined it?
2. Is there or would there be a broad representation of community interests involved in managing the (action, issue, initiative)?
3. Is this visionary? Is leadership looking for consensus or consent in prioritizing and managing the (action, issue, initiative)?
4. How does this (action, issue, initiative) affect the economic, social, ecological and institutional environment of Zeballos?
5. Does this (action, issue, initiative) contribute to the community vision?
6. Have we a clear idea of reasonable time frames for taking action on the (action, issue, initiative)?
7. How can we monitor progress or evaluate success of the (action, issue, initiative)?
8. Can this (action, issue, initiative) be supported with local resources (knowledge, time, funds)?
9. Is there institutional or organizational support for this (action, issue, initiative)?
10. How does this (action, issue, initiative) maximize our use of local resources?
11. How does this (action, issue, initiative) affect our relationship with other communities and what are the implications within the broader economy?
12. Where do we need outside assistance and how can we gain needed support?
13. Does this (action, issue, initiative) contribute to local economic activity?
14. Does this (action, issue, initiative) contribute to the community's positive efforts to cooperate? Does it reflect a self-help attitude?

## **APPENDIX II THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT**

In order to assess the participants change in attitude and understanding of the community planning process, and the community's ability to direct its transition, I asked the following questions. Questionnaire #1 was distributed before the process and Questionnaire #2 at the completion of the three workshops. The responses changed little and I attribute this to the facts that, as community leaders, the participants were more aware and versed in their community planning concerns and capacity, and also that they were fairly broad questions asked when the group was still engaged in the process. In future process I would recommend drafting more specific questions and also allow the group some time to reflect on what they learned and experienced through the process. I feel the answers would have been answered differently had they been posed to a group of average citizens, who may have experienced a greater learning curve throughout the process.

### **Questionnaire #1**

- 1. Have you participated in a community planning process before?**
- 2. Do you feel hopeful for the economic and social future of your community?**
- 3. Do you feel you have a clear vision of what you wish to see for the future of Zeballos?**
- 4. What do you think are the major challenges the community faces as it prepares to plan for the future?**
- 5. Do you feel that you have a role in the growth and change of your community?**
- 6. Do you feel that the citizens of Zeballos have the knowledge, tools and resources necessary to take a self-help approach to determining the future of the community?**

### **Questionnaire #2**

- 1. What are your impressions of the outcomes of the community planning exercise?**
- 2. Do you feel hopeful about the economic and social future of your community?**
- 3. Do you feel you have a clear vision of what you wish to see for the future of Zeballos?**
- 4. What do you think are the major challenges the community faces as it plans for the future?**
- 5. What do you feel is your role in the growth and change of your community?**
- 6. Do you feel that the citizens of Zeballos have the knowledge, tools, resources and attitudes necessary to take a self-help approach to determining the future of the community?**