

Penticton's Economic Development seeks local business success stories

(Penticton BC - May 7, 2018) – The City of Penticton's Economic Development team wants to hear interesting stories from local entrepreneurs and businesses. The call for content is part of a proactive new project that aims to raise the profile of local business both within Penticton and beyond.

At a time when the number of business licences continues to grow in Penticton, the project aims to raise awareness of the multiple sectors driving the economy, positioning Penticton as a prime location for investment. According to City statistics, business licences increased by about 18 per cent between 2016 and 2017.

"Our recent interviews with 100 local businesses highlighted the strength and diversity of our business community," said Anthony Haddad, Penticton's Director of Development Services. "The business community stressed to us the importance of showcasing the economic activity, innovation and development underway in Penticton. We couldn't agree more and are investing in raising the profile of our home-grown success."

To advance the project, the Economic Development division is seeking out story ideas and soliciting submissions from local entrepreneurs and business owners. The articles will be posted to a City blog that will be launched in coming months as well as pitched to both local, provincial and national media.

The initiative is welcomed by other business stakeholders who are collaborating with the City on this project.

Thom Tischik, Executive Director of Travel Penticton said, "We are delighted to be working with Economic Development at the City on this new initiative. It's a great opportunity to support our shared goal of showcasing what Penticton has to offer and help build our stakeholder businesses."

Kim Kirkham, Executive Director of Penticton & Wine Country Chamber of Commerce, said the city is no longer a seasonal town and that local businesses represent multiple sectors. "Penticton's past reputation for being primarily a tourist-based business community is now a thing of the past," said Kirkham. "We have evolved into what we call a diverse group of 'four-season' successful businesses. Penticton offers a beautiful backdrop to a business-friendly climate."

Jonathan Baynes, the recently appointed Chief Executive Officer of Penticton Indian Band Development Corporation, is also supportive of the initiative and highlighted the importance of indigenous values related to economic development and wealth. "In our context, wealth is a lot more than money. It is about economics, but it is also about healthy people, healthy land and healthy culture. We need all of those things. That's the underpinning value of everything we do," said Baynes. "Understanding and seeing the value in everyone is critical to a sustainable partnership and economic development."

Launch celebrates BC Economic Development Week (May 7 – 12)

The launch of the City's new project coincides with BC Economic Development Week, which takes place May 7 – 12, 2018. This provincial initiative, organized by the BC Economic Development Association, aims to increase awareness of local programs that create jobs, advance career development opportunities and increase quality of life.

While Economic Development Week has been growing strong throughout North America, this is the first time it has been celebrated in British Columbia.

Penticton's Economic Development success stories include:

- The Economic Investment Zone (EIZ) program, which was launched in 2010 in a bid to stimulate building development and job creation, has resulted in revitalization of the downtown core. It has created more than \$70 million in construction activity and more than 400 new jobs.
- StartHereOkanagan.com has shown huge success since its launch in 2017, providing a valuable resource for employers and job-seekers including job listings, career resources and recruitment tools. An average of 200 jobs are live on the site every day.
- PentictonWorks.ca, the City's marketing campaign to attract remote workers, recently won the Community Excellence Award for Economic Development at the Southern Interior Local Government Association (SILGA) annual meeting.

Send us your stories

The City of Penticton invites local entrepreneurs and businesses to submit their stories of home-grown success, growth or innovation for consideration. Email: economicdevelopment@penticton.ca

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