

# Planning Our Economy

A vision for the current & future economy of Carcross/Tagish

## Land of Opportunity

The Carcross/Tagish Traditional Territory is a land of opportunity.

We have an amazingly rich combination of lakes, mountains, wildlife, culture and history.

We have a self-governing First Nation that has more powers to make decisions for our community.

And we have our own resources to help us develop our economy and our community.

We also have many tourism opportunities. Each year, over 100,000 people stop in Carcross. They come by bus, train, car or RV. If there was more to do and see, they would spend more time and money here.

We also have opportunities to create new partnerships with businesses that know what they are doing and are interested in investing in successful tourism projects with us.

## It's time to work together

It is no secret that Carcross/Tagish people need more jobs and business opportunities in our territory.

Some of our members work for our own government but it can only employ 40-50 people. However, we need many different types of jobs to help the different people in our community.

Other businesses are taking advantage of what Carcross has to offer. It is time we do the same and become masters of our economic home. And it is time for us to work together to make it happen.

## Long history of Tourism & Trails

Carcross/Tagish people have a long history of working on trails in our territory. Tlingits from the West Coast intermarried with Tagish people, together creating powerful trading lines from the Pacific to the Yukon's interior.

During the gold rush, First Nations people guided and packed for miners hiking the Chilkoot trail.



Later, many of our citizens also worked on the sternwheelers that travelled the lakes to Atlin and Ben-My-Chree.

Patsy Henderson was a young boy when his uncle, Skookum Jim, discovered gold. As an adult, Patsy spent many years telling stories of our history to tourists arriving by train in Carcross.



Johnnie Johns is another example of Carcross/Tagish person who worked the trails, showing people from all over the world the wonders of our traditional territory as they hunted for big game.



And today, some of our youth have been helping to build biking and hiking trails on Montana Mountain.

Work in tourism and on the trails in our territory has been an important part of our culture and our history. It can also be an important part of our future.



# Creating a menu of experiences

People will come to spend time and money in Carcross if there are a number of things to do and see, and places to stay and eat.

It is not enough to just create trails, or develop a good place to eat, or build some shops and a gallery, or provide a decent place to spend the night. We need to develop *all* of these things to bring people here.

## Here's what we mean:

**Mountain-bikers** would come as they are learning there is a network of great trails for beginners and experienced people. But they would like a place to stay and a ride up the mountain to the main trails. Some would rent a bike, while others would bring their own. If their bike broke down, the bikers would like to have bike parts or a repair shop close by. They would likely buy some souvenirs, eat in a restaurant and want something to do in the evening.

A **Whitehorse family** might come for the day to fly kites on the beach or pay for a ride up the mountain to the start of hiking or biking trails. They might buy lunch, a good coffee and treats for the kids. In the winter, they might look forward to staying in a cabin for a weekend and skiing on new trails or dogsledding with the family. Some might want to try snow kiting on our windy lakes!

The **RV traveller** would stay a night or two if they knew there were unique things to do like see a cultural performance, tour an art gallery of First Nation art or take a ride up Montana to see an amazing view and hear stories about the history of the area. While here, they would probably want to buy groceries or eat out. They'd likely buy a souvenir gifts.

**Resort guests** would do a lot of activities at the resort and would like to learn about the area from local people working at the resort. The resort would have beautiful local art that visitors may buy there or they might want to visit the art gallery and other shops in Carcross.

Our spectacular environment has a lot to offer but we need to invest in a number of services and activities if people are going to put Carcross on their list of places to visit and stay.

# Three keys to success

For us to succeed with our vision there are three interconnected things the Carcross Tagish Development Corporation must balance and have in place in order to be successful.

These elements are: opportunity, resources, and the team.



We have many **opportunities** that are available to us right now. For example, there are over 100,000 tourists passing through Carcross each year already that we could start to profit from. There are partners interested in investing with us in a luxury resort. Our bike trails on Montana Mountain are becoming known as a great place to ride.

We also now have strong **resources** to build an economy on. We have control of our own lands and some of our lands were strategically selected because of their economic potential. We have turned the Corporation around financially and are ready to make smart business decisions. We have assets like Montana Services that can be further developed to serve a tourism economy.

Our **team** of people includes people at CTDC, CTFN and community people. This team needs to work together to act on valid business opportunities that will grow our economy. Each part of the team needs to trust and support the others as they do their assigned jobs. If the team doesn't work well together, then many economic opportunities will be lost.

The **team** needs to build good relationships for the long-term. This requires open communications, good will and a commitment to working for the benefit of the whole community.

# Our Economic Vision

***Our vision is to build a private sector economy in Carcross that will create a sustainable flow of job and business opportunities for the community, our First Nation and the region.***

Our vision is that people will have a diversity of job and business opportunities. Youth will feel they have the option to stay in our community and others will return to live and work in our community.

Our vision is that our First Nation will become increasingly self-sufficient and be able to reinvest its earnings in social, health, recreational and educational services in our community.

## How we will reach our vision

- We will focus on economic activities that are respectful of our people, environment, traditions and strengths.
- We will respect market realities, making informed decisions about what will work and what won't.
- We will work to align the political vision with the mandate and goals of the corporation.
- We will strive to achieve principles of good governance which include separating negative political influences from business decisions.
  - We will develop strong partnerships with knowledgeable business partners.
  - We will grow our citizens' business expertise by providing hands-on work in tourism and related businesses.
  - We will communicate openly and frequently with CTFN citizens while respecting the private information of business development decisions.
  - We will follow through on our commitments to our citizens and our partners.
  - CTDC will work as a team with CTFN citizens and the CTFN government, building trust, understanding and good faith.

## Definitions

**Private sector:** This means businesses that can make a profit by selling goods and services. Private sector businesses are not supported by ongoing government funding. Businesses in the private sector need to pay attention to the market and what people like tourists really want and what they will pay for.

**Sustainable:** This means creating a stable, positive economic impact without harming the environment, the community or culture.

**Opportunities:** An opportunity is a circumstance that can be turned into a real benefit, if people take the right steps to make it happen. For example, there is a strong opportunity for Carcross to benefit from a growing number of mountain bikers looking to visit places with great trails. There is also an opportunity for us to partner with experienced business people on the resort. These are real opportunities.



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