



Growing Manufacturing, Technology and Entrepreneurship

Background

MIBI was formed in February 2017 as a not for profit society in response to the City's decision to significantly reduce funding and resources in economic development. To date over 40 local businesses have provided financial and / or in kind support of ~ \$270,000. In 2018 MIBI raised \$60,000 to fund a marketing awareness campaign of the Nanaimo region targeted into the Vancouver market.

Since its creation MIBI has received no investment dollars from any level of government.

VIU	IWCD	Nanaimo Airport	CCCU	RLR
Harris Auto Group	Inuktun	Kristo Zorkin Group	Moss Financial Group	Integral Wealth
MNP	Harmac Pacific	Port of Nanaimo	Seaspan Ferries	Telus
District Properties	Array Web + Creative			

Table showing 2019 MIBI Members

Current situation

Research for the marketing campaign included comparisons of other cities and feedback from industry that identified gaps in Nanaimo's tech community. In the Nanaimo and Central Island Region, seeking information and access to programs, funding, services and support is scattered and uncoordinated. There is a lack of diversity and Indigenous participation. These weaknesses create an environment of lost opportunities, slow and fractured economic development, weaker sectors, and leaves new and emerging entrepreneurs struggling to be seen, disconnected and frustrated.

Challenges identified by Industry

- 1) Small local **Talent Pool**
- 2) Lack of coordinated support and **Access to Information and Resources.**
- 3) Limited **Access to Capital** and other funding sources.
- 4) Absence of tech and entrepreneurship **Community Building Strategies.**

Solution

In 2018 the Mid-Island Business Initiative (MIBI) launched the Manufacturing Technology and Entrepreneurship Council (MTEC) led by Rebecca Kirk to establish a "front door" for companies and entrepreneurs' to access a "one stop shop" to start to address these challenges and establish a thriving and resilient manufacturing, tech and entrepreneurial ecosystem with the heart of the organization being a regional Innovation Centre in downtown Nanaimo.

**MIBI**MID ISLAND
BUSINESS INITIATIVE**Activities to Date:**

MTEC Council established initial members: Rebecca Kirk Makerspace, John Hankins MIBI, David Witty VIU, Chris Beaton Nanaimo Aboriginal Centre, Real Estate Webmasters and Northern Biomass.

Talent Pool: Creation of an Education and Training team to identify gaps and develop initiatives to close these gaps, members include School District 68, VIU, Lighthouse Labs, Intraworks, Real Estate Webmasters, Input Logic and Co-work.

A tech stack survey has been compiled to identify leading tech stacks used by local companies to develop their projects or programs. This information will be used to identify service providers to provide training in response to local sector talent needs.

Community Building Strategies: Industry roundtables hosted and speaker events on new technology.

Access to Capital: Attracted Vancouver based Angel Forum to host their first Island event in Nanaimo, they will return in May, working with other Venture Capital firms to host additional events in Nanaimo.

Next Steps / Year One Deliverables

- **Access to Information and Resources:** Research and Develop the *"Hitchhikers Guide to Technology and Entrepreneurship in the Nanaimo Region"* a comprehensive guide to all resources, infrastructure and support agencies for Technology and Entrepreneurship in the Mid Island. This research will also identify gaps that need to be filled.
- **Talent Pool:** launch tech stack survey, analyze results and through the Education and Training team identify / develop opportunities to meet these needs. Promotion of the opportunities in the sector through social media, coordinate industry related Job Board, coordinate access to recruiting agencies, and facilitate representation at industry job fairs and conferences. Work with stakeholders to identify opportunities to facilitate job shadowing, co-ops, internships and diversification.
- **Community Building Strategies:** Facilitate sector events such as "Meet Ups" host roundtable opportunities with Government, VIP guests, and experts from the Financial/Venture Capital, Legal, Export/Import, IP, and other related sectors. Be the voice of industry to attract Government attention and investment. Through the MIBI initiated "promotional authorities group" and other key stakeholders attract industry conferences and speakers. Develop recommendations to open an incubator space in downtown Nanaimo.
- **Access to Capital:** Continue to work with Angel Forum and Venture Capital to put Nanaimo on the map.

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Investment Opportunity

MIBI is seeking six to twelve months of government investment of \$48,000 to \$117,500 for MTEC to maintain the momentum to fill the identified gaps and better position the Nanaimo region for future success in the Manufacturing and Tech sectors and to develop and attract entrepreneurs.

Expenditure Category	6 Month Budget	12 Month Budget
Full Time Contract Position	\$40,000	\$80,000
Building the Tech Community	\$4,000	\$32,500
Office supplies	\$4,000	\$5,000
Total	\$48,000	\$117,500

The 6 or 12 month investment option is being proposed to align with the roll out and implementation of City's draft strategic plan. Once the City has developed its Economic Development model MTEC can be merged into the new model or the City and industry can decide to maintain it as a standalone entity.

Letters in support of this investment opportunity (attached) have been received from the local employers in the Tech sector being Real Estate Webmasters, Hyas, Inuktun, SRFax, MosiacIT, Coastal Resources Mapping, DR Systems, LDRLY Games (Eastside Games), Input Logic and Co-work.

Best practices for attracting businesses and talent to a region include creating a vibrant central area, engaged elected officials and access to talent (see full article attached).

Inspire Nanaimo a partnership between the City, VIU and the Greater Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce identified that the tech sector should be a 'target' economic engine as Nanaimo has a high quality of life and is a very attractive location for the mobile tech sector workforce. Quite simply, the tech sector workforce is different: it likes funky, open office spaces, biking to work opportunities, easily accessible outdoor recreation opportunities, cultural experiences, interesting social places and spaces, a laid back atmosphere and affordable housing.



Real Estate Webmasters

Real Estate Webmasters 223 Commercial
Street Nanaimo, BC, Canada V9R 5G8 P: (250)
753-9893 F: (250) 753-7209

March 7, 2019

Mayor Krog
c/o Real Estate Webmasters

Dear Mayor Krog

RE: Request for Support of Manufacturing Technology Entrepreneurship Council (MTEC)

As a Tech company in the Nanaimo region, we are writing to thank you for your ongoing support to assist MIBI with their MTEC funding request.

While MTEC has been operating with no funding and only in-kind support for over a year, it has made great progress bringing the industry together and creating momentum around many of the initiatives covered in the proposal. But that volunteer driven effort is not sustainable without government support to ensure that the identified initiatives are fully realized and the Tech Sector is thriving in our region.

It is our view, without government funding for this initiative, our region will lose much of the momentum that has been gained. With that in mind, we urge your support the MTEC proposal.

Yours Sincerely

Vy Luu
Director of Product Development
Real Estate Webmasters
luu.vy@realestatewebmasters.com
(250) 753-9893



2569 Kenworth Road, Suite C
Nanaimo, BC, V9T 3M4, Canada
Toll Free: 1-877-INUKTUN
Fax: 250-729-8077

March 6, 2019

Leonard Krog
455 Wallace Street
Nanaimo, BC V9R 5J6

Dear Mayor Krog:

RE: Request for Support of Manufacturing Technology Entrepreneurship Council (MTEC)

As a technology company in the Nanaimo region, we are writing to thank you for your ongoing support to assist MIBI with their MTEC funding request.

While MTEC has been operating with no funding and only in-kind support for over a year, it has made great progress bringing the industry together and creating momentum around many of the initiatives covered in the proposal. That volunteer driven effort is not sustainable without government support to ensure that the identified initiatives are fully realized, and the technology sector is thriving in our region.

It is our view, without government funding for this initiative, our region will lose much of the momentum that has been gained. With that in mind, we urge your support the MTEC proposal.

Sincerely,

Colin Dobell
General Manager, Inuktun
Eddyfi Technologies



Dear Mayor Krog,

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Entrepreneurship Council (MTEC)**

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Yours Sincerely

Jean-Guy Niquet
LiveOps Lead, LDRLY Games

LDRLY Games
104 Front St,
Nanaimo, BC V9R 5H7
info@ldrlygames.io
(250)668-6895



Dear Mayor Krog

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Entrepreneurship Council (MTEC)

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It is our view, without government funding for this initiative, our region will lose much of the momentum that has been gained. With that in mind, we urge your support the MTEC proposal.

Yours Sincerely,

Christopher Davis
Founder
HYAS Infosec Inc

HYAS Infosec Inc 320-256 Wallace St, Nanaimo, BC V9R 5B3 Canada





D.R. systems inc.

March 11, 2019
Nanaimo, BC
BY EMAIL

Mr. Krogg, Mayor
City of Nanaimo

Dear Mayor Krogg:

RE: Request for Support of Manufacturing Technology Entrepreneurship Council (MTEC)

As you know, D. R. Systems has been a long-term tech company in Nanaimo. We have also been a long-time supporter and participant in collaborative initiatives, such as MISTIC and Innovation Island, supporting development of technology-oriented businesses in the Nanaimo region. In that context, we are writing to encourage you and the City to continue your ongoing support and assistance to MIBI with their MTEC initiative.

While MTEC has been operating with no funding and only in-kind support for over a year, MTEC has made good progress bringing various factors within the tech industries together and creating momentum around many of the initiatives covered in their proposal. But that volunteer driven effort is not sufficient without some level of local government support to ensure that the identified initiatives are fully realized and the Tech Sector is thriving in our region. I know from personal experience that it is an uphill battle against the larger centers of population and commerce to gain and maintain an edge in tech-oriented businesses. However, we also know that not all of the good ideas and initiatives are developed in those larger centres and actually many of the more practical and commercial applications are developed in smaller centres with closer ties to the local industries and opportunities.

It is our view, that without some level of local government support for initiatives like MTEC, our region will have difficulty in gaining and maintaining a level of momentum which can lead to an expanding tech sector and more opportunities for new businesses to locate and grow here. With that in mind, we urge your support for the MTEC proposal.

Yours Sincerely,

Don R. Reimer,
President, D.R. systems inc.



March 6, 2019

Dear Mayor Krog,

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It is our view, without government funding for this initiative, our region will lose much of the momentum that has been gained. With that in mind, we urge your support the MTEC proposal.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Ziemanski", written over a light blue circular background.

John Ziemanski
President
Coastal Resource Mapping Ltd.



March 6, 2019

Input Logic
10 Victoria Crescent
Nanaimo, BC, V9R 5B8
inputlogic.ca

Letter of Support

Dear Mayor Krog,

RE: Request for Support of Manufacturing Technology Entrepreneurship Council (MTEC)

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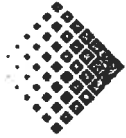
It is our view, without government funding for this initiative, our region will lose much of the momentum that has been gained. With that in mind, we urge your support the MTEC proposal.

Yours Sincerely

Kindly,

Shawn Adrian,
CEO

shawn@inputlogic.ca
250 240 7874



MOSAIC
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

41 Nicol Street, Nanaimo BC V9R 4S7
250-591-1777
email: info@mosasicit.ca
MosaicIT.ca

March 6, 2019

Mayor Leonard Krog
455 Wallace Street
Nanaimo BC V9R 5J6

Dear Mayor Krog:

RE: Request for Support of Manufacturing Technology Entrepreneurship Council (MTEC)

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Yours Sincerely

MOSAIC INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES LTD.

Per:

EVELYN BOEGH, General Manager

/eb



March 6, 2019

Dear Mayor Krog

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Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Charalambous', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mike Charalambous
President

**MIBI**MID ISLAND
BUSINESS INITIATIVE

5 Best Practices to Attracting Businesses and Talent to Mid-Vancouver Island

There are many articles published on how to best attract businesses to your region. Through a combination of experience and a best practices 5 approaches have been identified that other mid-size communities have successfully adopted to attract investment to their respective regions as follows:-

1) A Vibrant Central Area and Creative Community

A vibrant central area enables the citizens of a community to act as natural ambassadors promoting the region to their friends and families as they see and feel the vibrancy. A happening central area appeals to all and especially to the younger demographic 20 to 45 who are looking for central walkable areas and cycle friendly communities where they can meet and socialize.

2) Engaged Elected Officials – Visionary Leaders

Cities that have transformed themselves had visionary leaders. *“Every smart city programme around the world started with a visionary mayor. No smart city programme can even succeed – or begin – without a visionary and smart mayor.”* Uri Ben-Ari (Smart city expert).

Formulating the vision is a Community Engagement Exercise to create buy in and formulate a plan to enable that vision.

Successful cities have engaged elected officials who make themselves available to meet and greet companies to make them feel wanted and welcomed. This was evidenced in 2015 when Tilray shared how much influence the support of the Community played in their selection process choosing Nanaimo over other locations. The following report shows the impact this decision has and continues to have on Nanaimo. *Source: [Tilray Economic Impact 2015](#)*

“Nanaimo welcomed us with open arms and we are delighted that our operations have had such a positive impact on the community,” said Greg Engel, Tilray’s Chief Executive Officer. “We look forward to continuing to invest millions of dollars and create hundreds of jobs in Nanaimo pending necessary regulatory approvals needed for our proposed expansion.”

Source: <https://www.privateerholdings.com/blogmaster/2015/11/12/nedc-releases-tilray-economic-impact-analysis>

3) Access to talented labour pool

A key factor to successfully attract companies is to provide access to a labour force that will meet an attraction company’s requirements. Universities play a big part in providing programs that will result in a good supply of graduates to meet the needs of both existing and future employers. The Nanaimo region has an advantage by having an active and growing University. A Vibrant Community helps to attract and retain the talent.

4) Promotion, Introductions and Economic Indicators

Providing easily accessible and up to date economic information and contacts allows business attraction targets to quickly assess the fit with the community. This is achieved through a combination of publishing and distributing economic data, profiling success stories of successful companies in the region together with easy access to knowledgeable people. A one stop-shop to pro-actively and reactively support business attraction opportunities.

5) A Regional Approach

On the global stage cities are competing against each other from within their own Province, Country, Continent and Globally. Therefore getting noticed is the first step, having a regional promotional approach supports organizations that may still locate close to a city, which will attract attention, as like attracts like as it will be noticed by competing and complimentary organizations.

Summary

Adopting these 5 highlighted attraction approaches will help to get a region noticed by positioning the Mid-Island to attract interest from targeted industries and companies. With a Vision that has been formulated and adopted by the community and the strategy to get there the structure for Economic Development can be created to enable the vision as structure follows strategy.

Select Supporting Links

- <https://endeavor.org/insight/endeavor-insight-report-reveals-the-top-qualities-that-entrepreneurs-look-for-in-a-city/>
- <https://www.grantthornton.global/en/insights/growthiq/five-ways-to-attract-business-investment-to-your-city/>