

Building Opportunities with Business Inner-City Society (BOB): Connector in the Inner-City Annual Report for 2009-10

Message from the Chair: Hendrik Hoekema



I am pleased to serve as Chair of the Board for 2010-11 and extend my sincere thanks to Lee Davies for his leadership as Chair through the fiscal year of 2009-10. Lee has served as Chair since BOB's inception in 2005.

2009-10 was another year of major accomplishments, but despite excellent results I am disappointed that federal core funding for BOB has ended. For 2010-11 we secured limited project funding from the "Western Economic Partnership Agreement" program.

This has challenged us to be resourceful, to be innovative, and to find new ways to make BOB a sustainable organization. Throughout the past year several initiatives have helped to redefine BOB as a unique entity in the community: focusing on green business development, social enterprises, and ideas that bridge local economic development with the sustainable vision of Vancouver's current leadership and their Greenest City Action Plan. Incredible opportunities, determined people, and creative ideas exist in Vancouver's inner-city. As a facilitator, connector and resource, BOB continues to play a vital role in encouraging constructive dialogue around sustainable community economic development in the heart of the city and in helping to actualize opportunities through the bringing together of ideas, people, and resources. Though challenges remain, it is with great interest and hope that I look forward to leading BOB's work into the future by contributing to the social and economic capital of residents and the health and success of the businesses that employ and serve them.

Building Opportunities with Business' Mission and Mandate



Based in Vancouver B.C., Building Opportunities with Business (BOB) is a non-profit organization that is championing an inclusive revitalization process for the inner-city that values existing businesses and residents. BOB is a connector, a resource and a facilitator working to:

- Strengthen the inner-city's community capacity;
- Identify and build on untapped business opportunities;
- Improve employment opportunities and retention; and
- Increase investment and visitors to Vancouver's inner-city.

Industry Clusters

In 2009-10 the launch of the Green Inner-City Cluster brought to 5 the number of industry clusters working collaboratively to achieve together what they could not achieve alone. However, following loss of funding and, hence, our capacity to support and grow the clusters; cluster members were surveyed to assess their commitment to maintain the clusters. From the responses it was concluded that in the new year, BOB would continue to support the Tourism & Hospitality and the Green Inner-City clusters to work towards their objectives and initiatives. The T&H Cluster supports the Dragon Rickshaw pedicabs, introduced on-line ticketing for the DTES and organized FamTours for tourism influencers. The Green Cluster helped initiate the successful development of the SOLEfood Urban Farm by United We Can and spun off a Green Economy and Green Jobs Roundtable.

BOB's cluster strategy is modeled on successful initiatives in American inner-cities and was developed with the consultation of the Initiative for a Competitive Inner-city (ICIC), a not-for-profit agency founded by Harvard University professor Dr. Michael Porter.

Growing success: SOLEfood a business idea with strong roots



While SOLEfood has a strong social and environmental focus on its operations as a social enterprise, it has begun to prove its potential as a sustainable business. From its inception in early 2009 and the build-out in late 2009, the fresh and organic produce grown and harvested in 2010 from an under-utilized parking lot next to the Astoria Hotel has become increasingly popular with locals. From the Green Inner-City Cluster, SOLEfood was aided by BOB to secure the location, negotiate the use of the parking lot, outreach to the community, and bring in organic farmer and author Michael Ableman from Salt

Spring Island to train and support employment of inner-city residents as farm employees. The farm has 2 full-time and 6 part-time workers. Income from the produce covers their wages. *"It's been pretty great"*, attests Seann Dory of United We Can, the Green Cluster member who championed the initiative: *"the immediate feedback from the farmers and the community has been the most inspiring part, with the people from the neighbourhood telling the farmers how great a job they've been doing right there at the site and at the Farmer's Markets"*.

To be economically sustainable, SOLEfood and similar urban farming projects will need increased output, and thus, more space. BOB will continue to aid the growth and development of SOLEfood and is planning to build and support a larger network of urban farms in the future.

Green Economy Roundtable



Another concept that grew from the Green Inner-City Cluster is the green economy roundtable. This is a large and diverse group of leaders from the community, City, labour and trades unions, non-profit and private sector who came together in early 2010 to move the Green Economy agenda forward at the local and regional level, perhaps even provincially if possible. Still in an early stage of development this group shows promise because of its diversity and commonality of vision.

BOB began looking at various roles it could play in green collar job creation and sustainable green business development in the inner-city in 2009-10 as well as the potential for long-term community economic health through fostering such things as urban farming, waste diversion, deconstruction, building retrofitting, and other activities. CEO Shirley Chan has been a member of a specific committee actively investigating the feasibility of implementing deconstruction activities for waste diversion and the green jobs it would create in the inner-city with partners from Tradeworks Training Society, Pacific Community Resources Society, Pacific Labour and Demolition, the City of Vancouver and others.

The emerging green economy presents real opportunities for local residents and entrepreneurs alike. BOB is excited to be a partner in the green economy for the inner-city and to contribute to the larger vision of a sustainable and livable region.

Hastings Corridor BIA Formation Committee

Since April 2009 BOB has been actively supporting the formation of the Hastings Business Improvement Association for the unrepresented area from Richards Street to Gore Avenue and from Chinatown to the waterfront. The BIA could serve as many as 700 businesses and property owners in the Downtown Eastside subject to the final decision on the boundaries. This stretch of Vancouver's urban core is wedged between 4 other existing BIAs and, due to the distinct opportunities specific to this part of the city, City BIA Coordinator Peter Vaisbord has said it could potentially become one of the most innovative and unique BIA models that any city has seen yet. BOB works closely with partners in the BIA Formation Committee which include members of the Vancouver Board of Trade, and local business leaders in the community, including Brian Dodd of United We Can and Heather O'Hara of Potluck Café.

WED Loans Programs help entrepreneurs bring ideas to life

With funding from Western Economic Diversification (WED) and partnerships with lending partners VanCity, CCEC Credit Union, Ecotrust Canada, and Renewal Partners/Tides Foundation, BOB is proud of the success of the Loans and Loan Guarantees Programs thus far. With 10 loans at work to support private business and social entrepreneurs realize their business ideas, we are grateful for the considerable expertise and knowledge of our lending partners whose own funds have put many more private dollars to work on behalf of the inner-city. Their participation has been crucial to the development and success of 7 businesses and 3 social enterprises during the year. The 10 loans range in size from \$5,000 to \$50,000 for a total \$342,000 and leveraged an additional \$733,500 in private investment. In the complex relationships among businesses, social enterprises, and funding partners, BOB actively reaches out to prospective borrowers to connect them with lenders and other contacts or funding opportunities; assists in the writing of business plans and other documents; and works to achieve a successful formula among the various parties. CCEC has taken over responsibility for due diligence from Ecotrust, and is currently managing the Loans Programs portfolio.

Making a difference

Do you wonder what kind of a difference BOB is making in the inner-city community? As of March 31, 2010 Building Opportunities with Business had:

- Facilitated over \$48 million in business for the inner-city;
- Achieved a 85% success rate for inner-city employment retention (included those still receiving support);

- Helped 630 businesses through social purchasing and business development services;
- Supported 5 industry clusters, including Green Inner-City cluster launched in 2009;
- Helped 184 businesses directly (start up, capacity building);
- Facilitated the renewal of 7 building facades on Hastings and Keefer Street and filled more than 10 vacant storefronts;
- Leveraged more than \$1,000,000 of private investment (with our grants and loans to businesses); and
- Directly supported 400 (256 in 09/10) inner-city residents through finding employment opportunities and/or providing on-job support through our Supported Employment Program.

BOB surpasses \$100,000 fundraising campaign target

In 2009/2010 the Board of Directors set a fundraising target of \$100,000. With leadership from the Board and support from private donors and staff, BOB met and surpassed this target.

On March 22, 2010 BOB honoured our donors and partners with a luncheon at Shebeen and the Irish Heather. Beautiful crystal awards from Eclipse Awards International were presented to 11 donors while everyone enjoyed the fantastic food prepared by the Irish Heather's kitchen. The awards were categorized by scale of support starting with the **Foundation Partner Awards** which went to *Bell, Millennium and VanCity Credit Union*, whose generous support provided the foundation from which BOB developed into what it has become today.



The **Leadership Partner Awards** went to *Joe Segal, Michael Audain, Robert and Lily Lee, Vancouver Eastside Educational Enrichment Society (Hendrik Hoekema), VanCity Foundation, Edgewater, VANOC, Alex Lau (Golden Properties)* all of whom expressed their belief in the work of BOB. They were crucial in helping us achieve our \$100,000 fund raising target through their large donations in the final months.

(L-R) Derek, Lily and Robert Lee accept the Leadership Partners Award.

The **Community Partner Awards** were largely comprised of members of our Board. As the first individuals to give to BOB resources in terms of money, as well as time and talent, they play a crucial role in bringing community support to BOB. Their time, knowledge, and financial support make them invaluable and essential partners. Recognition went to *Lee Davies, Linda Coady, Fred Leonard, Chris Gora, Central City Foundation, Michael Geller, Home Depot, Toby Barazzuol, Shirley Chan, Barry and Lynn Fenton, and Maureen Collier*.



Hendrik Hoekema (left) accepts an award on behalf of VEEES from BOB's Board Chair Lee Davis, perhaps foreshadowing the transfer of the Chair from Lee to Hendrik later that summer!

Our government partners provided longstanding support through the Vancouver Agreement and were there with us through all our success. They were also recognized and thanked at this event.

Government Partners who were recognized included *Western Economic Diversification, MHS (The Province), City of Vancouver, members of the Vancouver Agreement*.

Employment partners: London Drugs, Nesters and Simon Fraser University at Woodward's

Nesters Food Floor, London Drugs and Simon Fraser University collectively hired 27 local residents through BOB in late 2009 and early 2010! BOB has maintained an excellent working relationship with the three employers and looks very forward to building on this success.

BOB connects with employers and employees

BOB's Supported Employment Team hosts an array of events to support local residents, employers and community service providers. Some of the events are:

Employer Breakfasts are bi-monthly breakfast events that engage business people interested in contributing to revitalization in the inner-city. The session feature guest speakers and topics that focus on increasing participant's corporate social responsibility. Employer breakfasts are delivered in partnership with Potluck café and are open to anyone that has or is interested in hiring people from the inner-city.

BusinessLinks is a demand driven, customized training program for job seekers referred by an employment agency registered with BOB. BusinessLinks programs range in length and include certificates and information that may help inner-city job seekers bridge the gap to employment. Local employers are engaged in the design and implementation of the program and agree to interview the participants at the completion of the program. Some of the BusinessLinks programs to date include commercial cleaner, customer service, call centre, banquet and event serving and hotel housekeeping training.



BOB Industry Nights are regular events which highlight a particular industry and provide inner-city residents with information about different careers. Employer partners participate by introducing their company and highlighting employment opportunities. Industry Night takes place prior to BOB training programs and promotes a specific BusinessLinks training program in the same field.

SHINE events are a delicious opportunity for people participating in the BOB Supported Employment Program to network and share their wisdom on how to be successful in the workplace. Dinner is provided from Potluck Café or prepared by BOB staff. These events always provide opportunities for people to share their experiences and achievements in the working world with other inner-city residents creating a mutually beneficial environment. Shine events are facilitated by BOB Employment Support Coordinators and gives everyone a chance to reconnect in a supportive and caring environment. Shine suppers are monthly events that celebrate people "shining" in their workplace.

BOB a contributor to 2010 Winter Olympics, in more ways than one



The Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics filled the inner-city with an unmistakable energy, as the electricity of high-stakes hockey matches and other highly anticipated events mixed with numerous art exhibits and shows, all amidst the backdrop of a politically-charged atmosphere. An important part of the Games was the Cultural Olympiad, showcasing hundreds of artists and performers throughout the city's numerous venues. One of those venues was the storefront level of BOB's office at 163 E. Pender. Displayed here during the Olympiad was an innovative and original installation created by the German born and Seattle based artist Gerhard Trimpin. He is a renowned 'kinetic sculptor', sound artist, musician, and composer; his pieces integrate both sculpture and music in some way, many of which make use of computers to play these instruments. The installation displayed in the BOB coworking/gallery space at 163 E. Pender was titled *Sheng High*. The space was chosen by the Cultural Olympiad staff and the artist himself due to being situated in historic Chinatown and having the necessary high ceilings to allow the piece to be displayed and function. BOB was invited by BC Housing to participate in the **DTES Connect** information centre at Woodward's with other community partners who worked to ensure that the Olympic Games were inclusive of the people and businesses in the DTES.



Another Olympic success story in which BOB participated was the launch of W2 Culture and Media house. The first of its kind hub for citizen journalists at an Olympic event, W2 was studied by university researchers from Britain, the USA and other countries for its innovative program of digital multimedia production, social media and collaborative journalism, all with a keen focus on the celebration of community, art, culture, and freedom of expression/exploration within the online multimedia experience. BOB assisted in securing funding, the location, and in the development of the W2 business plan and was acknowledged by Mayor Gregor Robertson (in the photo to the left standing next to W2's Irwin Oostindie) at the official opening. W2 will eventually be housed in the new Woodward's development.

BOB CORE training graduates met by Prince Charles

Mayor Gregor Robertson is not the only public person to show an interest in BOB's contribution to the Inner-City Inclusivity Commitments of the Games. At the City's invitation, Shirley Chan took two thrilled graduates of the CORE Training program who had worked on SE False Creek Athlete's Village, to meet HRH the Prince of Wales while he was visiting Vancouver. Prince Charles, a supporter of progressive urban initiatives and sustainability, toured Athlete's Village which CORE graduates Simone Blakeney and Chester Libo-On helped build. Simone and Chester both met and shook hands with the Prince who engaged them in discussing their experiences in building the LEED Platinum award-winning development.

Building Opportunities with Business was a key partner in helping VANOC meet their inner-city inclusivity commitments as laid out in the *2010 Winter Games Inner-City Inclusive Commitment Statement*, through the training, job creation, business development and procurement BOB oversaw as part of the Olympic Village Community Benefits Agreement (CBA). BOB was later recognized by VANOC for helping to deliver the most sustainable and inclusive Olympic Games ever.



A BIG thank you to all our staff, members of the Board and friends of BOB

The incredible leadership, support, and dedication that our staff and board bring to this organization continue to help make it an effective and positive contributor to the community. We are thankful to have this creative and genuine core of individuals who help BOB to be successful every day, and it is a pleasure to witness their professionalism and passion at work. To our funders, who believe in our mission, and our friends and supporters throughout Vancouver, we sincerely thank you for your commitment and belief in the work BOB does. The value of your support cannot be overemphasized. We look forward to your continued support and welcome your thoughts and ideas. By working together we can achieve healthy and sustainable economic growth for the people and business of the inner-city.

BOB's Board of Directors in 2009-10

LEE DAVIS, Chair

VanCity Capital

CHRISTOPHER E. GORA, Vice Chair

Farris, Vaughan, Wills, Murphy LLP

BRIAN DOLSEN, Secretary Treasurer (served until September, 2009)

2010 Legacies Now

FRED LEONARD

Downtown Eastside Task Force (Vancouver Board of Trade)

HENDRIK HOEKEMA, Secretary Treasurer (from September 2009)

Vancouver Eastside Educational Enrichment Society (VEEES)

JANICE ABBOTT (resigned February 2009)

Atira Women's Resource Society and Atira Property Management Inc.

LINDA COADY

Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games

NORM SILINS

Bell Canada

TOBY BARAZZUOL

Eclipse Awards, Strathcona BIA

BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES WITH BUSINESS INNER CITY SOCIETY
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND FUND BALANCES
(UNAUDITED - PREPARED BY MANAGEMENT)

For the year ended March 31, 2010

	General Fund	Community Loan Guarantee Program Fund	Community Loan Program Fund	2010 Total	2009 Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
REVENUE					
Grants	1,191,539			1,191,539	1,668,023
Projects	123,900			123,900	-
Service and others	4,614		3,030	7,644	17,028
Interest	220	4,203	8,133	12,556	17,547
	<u>1,320,273</u>	<u>4,203</u>	<u>11,163</u>	<u>1,335,639</u>	<u>1,702,598</u>
EXPENSES					
Occupancy charges	91,825			91,825	79,055
Office and administration	168,853	1,145	1,700	171,698	187,787
Program delivery	232,901	18,125	6,534	257,560	595,650
Staffing and consulting	779,503			779,503	818,517
	<u>1,273,082</u>	<u>19,270</u>	<u>8,234</u>	<u>1,300,586</u>	<u>1,681,009</u>
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	<u>47,191</u>	<u>(15,067)</u>	<u>2,929</u>	<u>35,053</u>	<u>21,589</u>
FUND BALANCES, beginning of year	15,052	236,950	272,991	524,993	503,404
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	47,191	(15,067)	2,929	35,053	21,589
FUND BALANCES, end of year	<u>62,243</u>	<u>221,883</u>	<u>275,920</u>	<u>560,046</u>	<u>524,993</u>