

News Release

Business Council of BC and BC Chamber of Commerce Launch New Policy Initiative: BC Agenda for Shared Prosperity

September 20, 2012 (Vancouver, B.C) – The BC Chamber of Commerce and the Business Council of British Columbia have launched an innovative new policy initiative designed to take a fresh look at the economic and social development issues affecting the prosperity of British Columbians called the *BC Agenda for Shared Prosperity*.

“Today’s challenge for business is to not only advocate for policies that will help to grow the province from a business perspective, but to restore a stronger connectivity between economic development and the personal, family driven prosperity that builds a thriving society,” said Greg D’Avignon President and CEO of the Business Council of BC. “This includes taking a new, non-partisan look at the opportunities and challenges facing BC’s prosperity with the intent to elevate and improve the policy conversations happening in BC. This will include exploring the culture and institutional constructs we use to evaluate the ideas, opportunities and challenges in front of us.”

In an effort to bring British Columbia’s economic opportunities forward and re-think how the province considers important decisions about the future, the two business organizations have launched the BC Agenda for Shared Prosperity to generate new ideas for policies and processes that seek to combine the ingredients needed to drive a future of shared prosperity for the province and its people. The initiative will be informed by an Advisory Council comprised of passionate, civic-minded British Columbians and will include a series of regional policy workshops this fall and events through 2013 and beyond.

“The opportunity for developing shared prosperity has often been positioned as a contradiction or a zero sum game of confrontation in BC,” said John Winter, President and CEO of the BC Chamber of Commerce. “However, increasingly our economic opportunities will require a stronger focus on leveraging our strengths and building a common fact base to make decisions. Business needs to reconnect with British Columbians and BC communities to reinforce the link between economic prosperity and the prosperity of one’s family if we are to support and sustain a quality of life most British Columbians envision for generations to come.”

“This is a conversation that is long overdue and one that will continue with leaders from all walks of BC,” concluded D’Avignon and Winter. “Against a backdrop of unprecedented global change, British Columbia has the opportunity, at this time in our history, to elevate the way we think and do things in BC in order to create a stronger sense of shared prosperity – we hope the BC Agenda for Shared Prosperity enables this discussion and looks innovatively at the priorities we should have as a province.”

In addition to the regional workshops, the BC Agenda for Shared Prosperity will release research information on British Columbians perspectives on the BC economy; a policy overview of the foundations for prosperity in BC; and a roadmap report of policy proposals designed to look at different aspects of social and economic development incorporating regional policy workshop recommendations.

The Business Council of British Columbia, now in its 46th year as the premier business organization in BC, represents over 250 leading companies and enterprises in every key sector of the economy. Our member companies and affiliated industry association partners together account for one quarter of all jobs in the province.

The BC Chamber is the largest and most broadly based business organization in the province. Representing over 120 Chambers of Commerce and 32,000 businesses of every size, sector and region of the province the BC Chamber of Commerce is “The Voice of Business in BC.”

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Media Contacts:

Cheryl Muir
Business Council of British Columbia
604-812-5965

Neal Wells
British Columbia Chamber of Commerce
604-638-8114