

**British Columbia's leading business organizations issue final report of
*The BC Agenda for Shared Prosperity***

**Year long process delivers 60 recommendations on creating a more
prosperous province for all British Columbians**

September 25, 2013 (Vancouver, BC) – The Business Council of British Columbia and the British Columbia Chamber of Commerce today released the final report of the *BC Agenda for Shared Prosperity* initiative. For a year, the two organizations have sought expert and community-based answers to the question: “How can BC become a more prosperous province for all British Columbians?”

This report details the results of a year long, province wide, research and consultation process that puts forward 60 recommended actions and policies aimed at improving opportunities for economic participation for all British Columbians.

The *BC Agenda* initiative was launched in September 2012 to take a fresh look at the economic and social development issues affecting the prosperity of British Columbia. The initiative was guided by input from an Advisory Council of distinguished British Columbians from multiple sectors, regions and perspectives within our province. The objective is to provide a relatively unique and new perspective on how the business community can generate ideas for policies and processes that ensure a future of shared prosperity for the province and its people.

“While British Columbia’s economy as a whole has done relatively well in recent times, the reality is that not all British Columbians are sharing in its success and there is an urgency to act so that future generations may realize the economic and social opportunities ahead,” said Greg D’Avignon, President and CEO of the Business Council of British Columbia. “The recommendations and actions emerging from this process are unique for the business community and represent an attempt to draw a stronger, more collaborative, connection between growing the economic pie and the corresponding social and community benefits that come from a robust economy.”

“The result, we hope, is a meaningful contribution for all communities in British Columbia - one that captures the strong links between economic health and individual and family prosperity,” said John Winter, President and Chief Executive Officer of the BC Chamber of Commerce. “This project aims to stimulate further discussion and collaboration on how best to achieve a form of prosperity that benefits as many as possible.”

The BC Agenda report concludes with a set of principles and a series of recommendations that are designed, at a high level, to deliver a stronger sense of shared prosperity for the province. More specifically, the report concludes with insights into further advocacy for the BC business community. It recognizes business leaders’ responsibility to work at the ongoing objective of building a healthy economy, respecting the values of British Columbians and earning the social license citizens extend to the business community.

BC Agenda for Shared Prosperity Overview

The initiative undertook a comprehensive research process, involving British Columbians from across the province, leaders from various communities and subject experts from several key fields. The BC Agenda research process included: an economic overview, public opinion research, consultations in seven communities across BC, a provincial summit of international and national thought leaders, and oversight from an Advisory Council of civic leaders in BC.

The BC Agenda for Shared Prosperity process set out to identify the barriers that prevent BC from enhancing its prosperity and the principles for moving new initiatives forward that would help achieve shared prosperity and enjoy broad support. From the process, three key themes emerged that served as the basis for the recommendations included in the report. These themes were:

1. Creating Prosperity: in order to enable shared prosperity, there is a pre-requisite need to create prosperity through a strong economy that drives investment, job creation and improved living standards.
2. Participating in Prosperity: there is an ongoing and challenging need to ensure the benefits of prosperity have broad reach – benefitting as many as possible with a realistic view towards the policies available to deliver a stronger sense of shared prosperity for the province.
3. Improve the public discourse: to achieve objectives identified through the BC Agenda process, the public discourse – how we arrive at actions to move forward – needs improvements.

The 60 recommendations and actions cover: foundational elements of a strong economy, the ongoing need for fiscal prudence combined with a number of priorities to focus on as the economy strengthens, and the need for more collaborative approaches that move toward outcomes for key challenges.

“British Columbia’s businesses, all types, all sizes and in all communities, stand ready to build a stronger connection between business activities, the economy and British Columbians’ daily lives,” said Winter. “By working together on this unique initiative, we’re looking to better position B.C. to capture future opportunities and expand the prosperity British Columbians enjoy today.”

British Columbia’s business community will gather in Vancouver on November 12th -13th for the first annual summit to look at key economic matters and encourage greater coordination across sectors of the economy. Details of the *BC Business Summit: Building Prosperity through a Competitive Economy* can be found at www.bcbusinesssummit.com.

The full report of the *BC Agenda for Shared Prosperity* can be found at www.bcagenda.ca

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