



Draft Feasibility Study
for
Hagwilget Village Council

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Submitted By:



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COMMUNICATIONS

Summary of Research Findings

The research team found that the proposed concept for the Hagwilget Cultural Village has broad grassroots community support and the necessary components in place to enhance its development. With 50,000 tourists crossing the Hagwilget Suspension Bridge each year, the opportunity to situate a centre below this seems to have a captive audience in place before the ground is broken.

In order for this project to have long-term success, however, it must be built on a profit model. All service must cater to capturing and retaining valuable tourist dollars. From food to retail, and from performance to experience, tourists must be attracted to the village's offerings and have ample opportunity to purchase a variety of unique cultural products and services that will enhance their visit.

Other villages such as 'Ksan have had challenges with limited funding. Using best practices, Hagwilget should plan for this and aggressively market to a global tourist sector, but hedge their bets by chasing after other sectors such as: private corporations, educational institutions, government agencies and individuals to use the village in a variety of ways to train, teach, build, retreat, and experience with their teams. Tourism should be the main stream of revenue, but alternative streams will secure the viability and long-term success of the village. This is something that other centres have not focused on and thus have had difficulties in sustaining their operations.

As future phases are planned for Hagwilget, additional markets and streams of revenue will be realized through development. In the first phase, the challenge will be maximizing day traffic to the centre and keeping tourists in the area by partnering with local accommodation providers. As subsequent phases find accommodations being offered onsite, the village can then become self-sufficient and keep their clientele onsite the entire time for accommodations, meals and activities. Each person that is secured this way is worth a minimum of \$100 per day. As an example, if 10 people came from a company for five days, the village would enjoy a revenue stream of at least \$5,000.00

As resources increase onsite, so too does the potential for increased profitability. By wielding the Internet in the operations of a gift shop and possibly a commercial smokehouse, surplus supplies can be ordered, shipped and paid for online. Individuals enjoying the goods and services from their trip will serve as an established market that can be reached through e-commerce.

Hagwilget has the ability to take on a role held by 'Ksan in the past and be the key anchor for tourism in the area. Due to differences between the cultures of the Wet'suwet'en and the Gitksan, both villages should be able to attract the same market. However, as a result of its advantageous geographical position and additional resources that will be offered onsite, the Hagwilget village should be able to capture the lion's share of tourism dollars. 'Ksan will have bus tours coming to see them due to their reputation. It would be in Hagwilget's best interest to contact these tour companies and suggest that they stop in Hagwilget on their way to 'Ksan.