

SOUTH ISLAND
**PROSPERITY
PROJECT**

Elected Officials' Briefing Package and Key Highlights 2018

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Elected Officials' Briefing Package and Key Highlights

Who is the South Island Prosperity Project?

Together, better jobs, better communities.

The South Island Prosperity Project (SIPP) is the economic development partnership for Greater Victoria, comprised of 45 [members](#):

- Ten local governments
- Five First Nations
- Three post-secondary institutions
- Seven industry associations and non-profits
- 20 major regional employers

Working together to bolster our region's economic and social prosperity, our purpose is to build a more inclusive, sustainable, and prosperous region. In a short period of time, SIPP has earned a reputation for delivering high-caliber work and acting as a catalyst for collaboration around regionally significant initiatives. We invite you to watch SIPP's [video](#) to hear firsthand what SIPP members are saying about our work.

SIPP's **Mission** is to facilitate and promote the development of a strong, regionally diversified economy in South Vancouver Island.

SIPP's **Vision** is a collaborative region that is a vibrant place to live and work for everyone in the South Island region.

Why does SIPP exist?

Creating a more collaborative region and a vibrant place to live and work underpins everything we do.

SIPP was founded in 2016 after several years of economic stagnation in Greater Victoria, Canada's 15th largest city region. Not only was the region nearly last in GDP growth out of Canada's metropolitan areas (27th out of 31 in years 2012, 2013, and 2014), but the region's economic development strategy was uncoordinated and had no mechanism to pursue recovery.

With 13 municipal and ten First Nations governments, collaboration on economic development has been *ad hoc* and not encompassing of the whole region. As our region grows in population and complexity, the public now expects to see a greater degree of cooperation among municipalities.

Who are SIPP's members?

Collaboration is at our core.

Every day our membership grows. Today, we have 45 members, which has grown from 29 in our first year. Visit our [website](#) to see a full list of members.

What are SIPP's objectives?

Our 2018-19 [Operational Plan](#) outlines our strategy and articulates our plans for the year ahead. To summarize, our main five-year objectives are to:

- Increase the median household income
- Increase the number of household-sustaining jobs
- Increase the amount of provincial, federal, and private funding invested locally
- Engage First Nations in economic development initiatives

Why is it important for municipalities to support and participate in SIPP?

We foster a unique collaborative atmosphere where the sum is much greater than its parts.

Municipalities play a vital role in SIPP's work and we could not exist without their support. This means we leverage municipal contributions into higher impact investments from the private sector that would not be possible without a region-wide partnership. Cooperation between the public and private sectors is a marriage that creates powerful impact by tying together the

long-term vision of the public sector with the innovation of the private sector. It also means that Greater Victoria has a resilient, sustainable, and high-impact economic development model – a model that is in fact gaining international and national attention in just three short years. To illustrate the point, without SIPP's facilitative leadership, the region would not have become a finalist in Canada's Smart Cities Challenge, gaining a chance to bring \$10 million to the region for smart and sustainable transportation options.

Playing the long game

We believe that economic development is about playing the long game to ensure that we pass prosperity on to the next generation.

SIPP focuses on tackling the major challenges of our region—and seizing the major opportunities. We need to ask ourselves tough questions: Will what we do today produce economic opportunities that are good for the whole region? Will it be sustainable? Does it respect our values and help us fulfill our mandate? Will it help create jobs of the future, or jobs that are not needed tomorrow?

The power of a regional vision

Seizing new opportunities and addressing the defining challenges of our time

Working together on economic development, rather than individually, enables us to steer the region toward the future we collectively want. Directed by a committee of eleven municipal and First Nation leaders, and two nonprofits representatives, SIPP's [Smart South Island Vision 2040](#) describes where we want to take the region by 2040. It explores who we are, what our aims are, and how we plan to achieve the goals that matter most to our communities. Vision 2040 is aligned with Official Community Plans (OCP) from municipalities and the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) developed by the Capital Regional District. SIPP's Smart Cities Canada Challenge submission is a perfect example of what we can achieve working together.

What has SIPP achieved so far?

It's an exciting time for our region— the momentum is building!

Our 2017-18 [Impact Report](#) outlines our achievements over the past year. We are in our third year of a five-year strategy. Measuring the impact of our efforts and reporting back to our community is extremely important to SIPP. Here are some highlights below from the past year.

Key Highlights

Smart Cities and Economic Development

This burgeoning sector will be a key driver of future economic success

Why do the smart cities projects below matter? How are they tied to economic growth?

Research indicates that the value of smart city technologies could lead to economic growth valued at \$10 trillion in incremental GDP for all cities globally over the next decade, and recurring sustainable growth of 2.8 percent by 2026 (ABI Research, 2017). But to capitalize on this opportunity locally, we need to prepare and invest now. Implementing smart new technologies and enhancing the connections between existing assets will benefit everyone in the region.

Open Innovation Challenges are important for economic growth because they encourage the development of new and innovative ideas through competition. By providing a common platform for entrepreneurs to develop and market ideas, we are encouraging innovation to flourish. By investing in these initiatives, we are building resiliency into the economy and building the jobs of the future.

Smart Cities Canada Challenge

- In June, Greater Victoria edged out more than 126 cities across Canada to be shortlisted as one of ten \$10 million finalists in the federal government's Smart Cities Canada Challenge. This victory is a brilliant example of what can happen with municipalities working together through SIPP with the private sector. The win awarded South Island Prosperity Project (SIPP) with \$250,000 in federal funds to further develop a proposal to compete for one of two \$10 million prizes.
- The proposal includes three initiatives designed to address citizen wellbeing and economic resilience with more convenient, diversified, and sustainable transportation solutions to leverage what is commonly known as 'smart' digital technology and data.
- SIPP's smart transportation proposal has the potential to improve quality of life through the use of technology to create a more networked multi-modal transportation system for South Island residents. The full proposal can be viewed at Smartsouthisland.ca.
- Since being shortlisted, SIPP has gained international attention, such as being hosted and invited to speak at the Shanghai International Artificial Intelligence (AI) Conference in September 2018, for its winning plan to develop smart and sustainable multimodal transportation in the region. Our plans are on track to submit the final federal proposal in March 2019 for a chance to bring \$10 million to the region.

Open Innovation Challenges

- Last year SIPP convened the Open Innovation Challenge, a four-month public competition, to find the best and brightest local innovators. The initiative resulted in 69 submissions and three \$15,000 prizes to catalyze new innovations. As a result, three new businesses were created and are now growing, and one of the winners is now interning at Tesla.
- SIPP is currently preparing to launch the Future Innovator Challenge later this month. This is a new competition giving high school and post-secondary students a chance to help improve the quality of life for citizens of the South Island while competing for prize money.

Smart South Island Vision 2040

- SIPP published the Smart South Island Vision 2040, in collaboration with municipal, First Nations, and non-profit community leaders. It is our community's long-term regional vision that describes where we want to take our future. It outlines our desire to see significant changes made to quality of life through the use of data and connected technologies in five key themes: Transportation & Mobility, Housing & Affordability, Economic Resilience & Inclusion, Environmental Health, and Health & Wellness.

MOU with Shanghai Centre for Smart Cities Promotion

- SIPP has signed an MOU with Shanghai, China to foster two-way economic collaboration with the Shanghai Centre for Smart City Promotion and SIPP, in areas related to smart cities planning. As a result, members of the SIPP team travelled back to Shanghai in September to participate in the prestigious 2018 World Artificial Intelligence Conference. Our CEO, Emilie, was invited to be a guest speaker at the conference to share best practices on smart cities with cities around the world.

First Nations Economic Development

Five of our 45 members are First Nations: Tsartlip First Nation, Tsawout First Nation, Tseycum First Nation, Pauquachin First Nation, and Songhees Nation

First Nations economic growth is one of SIPP's key focus areas

One of SIPP's priorities is to engage First Nations in economic development and support First-Nations-led economic initiatives. The South Island is home to ten First Nations and over 9,940 First Nations people (Census 2016), a rapidly growing segment of our population when compared to the national average. We recognize and acknowledge that First Nations entrepreneurship holds greater significance than simply job creation, but is also about harnessing unique skills, experiences, and assets of First Nations to create a more prosperous future.

IndigenousConnect

- SIPP partnered with the Songhees Innovation Centre to launch *IndigenousConnect*, a monthly peer to peer forum to promote entrepreneurship and leadership development. At these forums, participants share experience and expertise and learn from peers and other experts. *IndigenousConnect* forums are open to all First Nation communities and Indigenous people throughout the South Island.

Songhees Innovation Centre Funding

- With Songhees Nation and Animikii (a technology company that works with leading Indigenous groups across North America, and is based out of the Songhees Innovation Centre), SIPP developed a successful application for \$93,410 in support for the Songhees Innovation Centre through Western Economic Diversification Canada.

Regional Forum

- SIPP is organizing a regional conference in February that brings stakeholders together on the topic of Indigenous Economic Development. More details to follow in the coming months.

Economic Research

SIPP's flagship economic publication provides a holistic view of the current state of the region and its economy. We are becoming a go-to source for unique insight into economic trends.

South Island Prosperity Index sponsored by Coastal Community Credit Union

- SIPP launched its flagship publication, the Prosperity Index, in 2017 to help the region understand key aspects of the economy. By setting up baselines and using statistical analysis, the Prosperity Index provides a holistic view of the current state of the region and its economy in comparison to the rest of Canada. As we work together to develop our plans for the future, it is essential to track our progress on an ongoing basis to have a clear picture of how our region compares to peer cities. These benchmarks provide the context we need to set priorities and champion our strengths so that we can attract more investors, entrepreneurs, and talent. SIPP is in the process of updating the Index for 2018 and will be comparing the results from year to year.

Bringing More Economic Opportunity to the South Island

We showcase the region to the world, but we also help local companies thrive

Business Investment and Attraction

- SIPP strives to attract more business to the region, and also increase the South Island's global connectivity. Our aim is to help the local tax base, create new jobs, and build a concentration of companies that lead to competitive advantages. This helps attract talent and develop other industry capacity. In the short-term, SIPP focuses its recruitment efforts primarily in the Seattle region and the Pacific North-West.

SUCCESS STORY: This fall, SIPP will welcome Daitan Group to the region, a rapidly-growing technology company headquartered in Brazil. Daitan Group expects to begin operations with 10-15 employees in Victoria over the course of 2018, with plans to locate 10-20% of their global workforce in the region over the next two years, representing at least 100 more employees.

BusinessConnect

- SIPP provides mentorship and advisory services to help growth-oriented companies expand their businesses at home and abroad. SIPP focuses on increasing exports and internationalization. We offer one-on-one guidance and workshops on topics such as trade, financial modelling, governance, and growth. Up to 80% of job creation is said to come from growing existing business, so we want to focus on growth-oriented and exporting companies.
- We partnered with the World Trade Centre Vancouver (WTC-V) to bring the renowned Trade Accelerator Program (TAP) to the region. The four-workshop program receives international accolades for helping companies plan their entry into new markets and gain deep knowledge of international business practices.
- A targeted workshop for local value-add agriculture companies is planned for this year to help develop and support this sector. We are currently working with several local agribusinesses and aim to expand our work in this area.
- Last year SIPP organized a business-to-business trade delegation for eight local companies in Shanghai and Shenzhen, China. Beyond the B2B agenda, SIPP's goals for the trip were to assess investment prospects, build relationships, and share knowledge in smart cities practices.

SUCCESS STORY: Three of eight local companies that joined us on the China trip—Limbic Media, CAVU Designwerks, and DreamCraft Attractions— have returned to China for follow-up meetings. Limbic Media hopes to launch their product into China later in 2018. CAVU and DreamCraft have already moved into multi-million-dollar project deals.

Questions? Coffee? We would be happy to meet with you and help you learn more about how SIPP is raising prosperity in our community and why we need your support to thrive.

*Contact **Bruce Williams**, our Director of Engagement,
to set up a meeting by contacting:*

Office@southislandprosperity.ca or 778-265-8128

www.southislandprosperity.ca

