

Mountain Bike Tourism and Community Development in British Columbia:

Critical Success Factors for the Future

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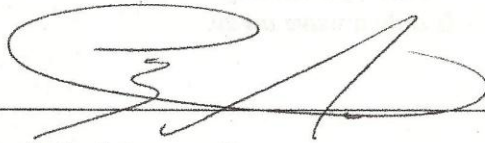
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**Approvals Page**

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### **Abstract**

Mountain bike tourism is developing a critical mass of momentum which may provide significant benefits to communities, if developed and managed effectively. Globalization provides ample opportunity for communities to leverage mountain bike tourism, however; community planners need to be cognizant of the Critical Success Factors (CSF's) necessary to ensure the execution of a sustainable tourism development strategy. This inquiry proposes to explore the critical success factors necessary to build community capacity through the identification, creation and management of salient mountain biking infrastructure, supporting services and amenities, legislative policies and frameworks, and collaborating clustered stakeholders.

The development of a Conceptual Framework for Community-Based Mountain Bike Tourism Development is utilized to guide community planners to more effectively execute a sustainable community mountain bike tourism development strategy (see: Figure 12). Following a review of the secondary literature, a Delphi study, querying expert informants produced data utilizing a mixed qualitative/quantitative research phase to have respondents: 1) identify critical success factors, and; 2) more specifically, identify which resources may be selected as most critical. While consensus may typically be a desirable outcome of the Delphi research method, awareness of unique perspectives may facilitate innovative approaches to problem-solving. Analyzing outlier approaches may assist community tourism planners to appraise a broader range of potential factors (beyond consensus) which may be valuable for consideration, dependent upon specific community environmental factors, including: local politics, policy and legislative

variances, latent or salient stakeholder influence, or other locally significant influences (Jiang, Sui, and Cao, 2008, p. 519).

In order to translate the key findings of this research into a tangible planning framework, the researcher has applied the data collection results to the Conceptual Framework utilizing the Critical Success Factors derived in conjunction with the BC Community Development Assessment Framework (see Appendices G & I; Figure 3). The researcher believes this approach may be effectively replicated in other regions with more mature mountain bike tourism development clusters and strategies (Gajda, 2008, p. 37; Koepke, 2005, pp. 15-21). Lesser developed regions or emerging clusters may need to focus on the more basic elements for mountain bike tourism until they are able to build a sufficient critical mass of momentum to have all of the critical success factors identified in this study come into play (see: Figure. 1; MBTA, 2010). The Conceptual Framework may be beneficial to emerging clusters intent on mapping-out long term objectives, while maturing clusters may use the framework as a planning bridge towards achieving planning and operational efficacy. Despite the growth in mountain bike tourism development, formal research into community mountain bike tourism development is still in its infancy (Tourism BC, 2006, p. 5; Tourism BC, 2008, pp. 12, 15). Utilization of the proposed Conceptual Framework for Community-Based Mountain Bike Tourism Development may assist communities and stakeholders to more effectively execute a successful planning strategy while assisting future researchers to delve further into analysis of the role of Critical Success Factors and the Conceptual Framework.

### **Acknowledgements**

This is a story about trailblazers...when I met my lovely wife, Sally over 25 years ago, little did I know that her love, guidance and support would be the biggest influence in my career and my life. Her understated approach to leadership is exemplified by the respect others hold for her and her subtle tenacity and infectious exuberance has shown me new dreams, paths, and opportunities that I never knew possible. Dr. Brian White's disarming sense of humour and charm is overshadowed by his brilliance and his passion for the people in the Tourism and Hospitality sector. Brian is a true trailblazer in the industry and has been hugely influential in my decision to pursue graduate studies at Royal Roads University and make mountain bike tourism and community development the focus of this study. Dr. Geoffrey Bird's unassuming demeanor is eclipsed by his carefully measured approach to leading adult learners. His introduction of the concept of Critical Success Factors in community tourism has been a catalyst in gaining a broader perspective on global tourism issues and has become the cornerstone of this research and my future career aspirations. There are too many other people for me to mention here, however; I am proud to be a small part of an industry which is supported by so many people who are passionate, considerate, intelligent, and compassionate. And finally, this paper is dedicated to my young son, Cole, who has exhibited patience and maturity well beyond his years while waiting to go for a mountain bike ride with his Dad. The time has come...let's ride!

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CHAPTER ONE

Mountain Bike Tourism and Community Development in British Columbia:  
Critical Success Factors for the Future

**Kalamalka Lake, Cosen's Bay Trail, Vernon, BC**



Photo Credit: S. Freeman

### **Introduction**

The genesis of mountain biking can be tied to the activities of a small group of avid cyclists on Mount Tamalpais, in Marin County, California in the 1970's. This group of aficionados pushed the limits of their skills and the bikes of the day to catalyze the development of a growing mountain bike culture and the technological innovation necessary to advance the sport. Fast-forward to today and we see mountain biking developing a critical mass which may provide significant benefits to communities and a diverse set of participants, if developed and managed effectively. Along this path of rapid growth, the sport has expanded to the point of offering an array of riding styles and experiences attractive to any type of rider. In addition to providing recreational riding opportunities for locals within communities, the last decade has shown exponential growth in mountain bike tourism with many regions becoming global destinations (CRA, 2010. p. 4).

In British Columbia, and more specifically, the North Shore region near Vancouver, a cultural shift occurred in the 1990's when local riders began building structures to traverse difficult sections of mountainside trails. Eventually, the structures themselves became the focus of the challenge. Furthermore, this spurred on the advent of the freeride movement, where riders pushed back the limits of skill, their bikes, and often, their bodies. In these early days, the reputation of the sport often reflected the counter-cultural attitudes of the skateboarding and snowboarding eras of the 1970's and 1980's. Since then, the attitudes and demographics have evolved to encompass a broader state of diversity and main-stream maturity, with riders and their riding styles. Furthermore, the allure of mountain biking culture and lifestyle has fueled this growth even further with the professionalization of the sport as well as the interconnectedness of the Internet and the embracement of Social Media.

Mountain biking is becoming big business. Mountain biking activities tied to tourism make it a part of the largest industry on the planet. The globalization of mountain biking provides ample opportunity for communities and destinations to leverage this growth to the benefit of local riders and stakeholders alike. However; community planners should be cognizant of and analyze the Critical Success Factors necessary to ensure the execution of a sustainable mountain bike tourism development strategy which meets visitor expectations and reflects community values. The benefits to those communities which get the mix and application of factors correct may include: increased opportunities for recreational mountain biking for diverse participant populations, increased destination awareness and tourism visitation, increased tourism revenues, increased taxation revenues, development and improvements of community infrastructure, spin-off benefits to indirect community players, diversity of economic base, support for youth recreation and community social development, programming opportunities for school districts and special populations, promotion of cluster and networking development, creation of community social capital, nurturing of innovation, knowledge transfer, improved competitiveness, promotion of local cultural, historical, ethnic, and geographic characteristics (APEC, 2010, pp. 1-4; BCMJTI, 2011, pp. 3, 5; City of Coquitlam, 2006, p. 8; City of Kelowna, 2007, pp. i-iii; Rockart & Bullen, 1981, p. 5; Scottish Mountain Bike Development Consortium, 2009, p. 13; Surrey Parks, Recreation & Culture, 2007, pp. 1-2).

### **Research Topic**

The recent evolution and growth of mountain biking within communities and as a tourism product comes as a result of the combined efforts of public and private-sector stakeholders who

collaborate to achieve co-developed goals and objectives (Scott, Baggio, & Cooper, 2008, p. 142). In British Columbia and other jurisdictions, there are clear examples of mountain biking and community stakeholders developing a critical mass of offerings which differentiate these regions from other competitive mountain bike tourism destinations globally (Tourism BC, 2008). Collaboration between locally competitive players may at first appear counter-intuitive; however, examples of best practices and evidence from the academic literature show that planning strategies and policy frameworks are necessary for the successful development of competitive clusters of stakeholders within the tourism sector and communities (Porter, 1998, pp. 78, 80).

Nurturing community development through public sector investments and resources, in conjunction with the support of private sector interests can build competitive capacity and create a diversity of product appealing to a wide range of potential consumers, locally and globally (APEC, 2010, p. 3). In addition to supporting the growth of tourism, the development of mountain biking infrastructure, services, and supporting amenities may provide a range of significant benefits for participating communities. For communities in British Columbia, the next challenges will be to maintain the development of mountain biking while ensuring the sustainability of positive social, cultural, environmental, and financial outcomes to the benefit of communities and associated stakeholders.

## Hornby Island, BC



Photo Credit: R. Freeman

### **Purpose of the Inquiry: Goals and Objectives**

#### **Project Audience and Goals**

This inquiry proposes to identify and explore the critical success factors necessary to build community capacity through the creation and management of mountain biking

infrastructure, supporting services and amenities, legislative policies and frameworks, and collaborating clustered stakeholders. Ultimately, the researcher proposes to identify and compile accessible and practical resources and strategies to assist communities to support and leverage the growth in mountain biking to the benefit of the community and for tourists seeking a quality mountain bike tourism experience. The development of a conceptual framework will be utilized to guide community planners and stakeholders to more effectively execute a sustainable community mountain bike tourism development strategy. An example of an emerging cluster used to model the use of the conceptual framework is provided in the North Cowichan case-study (see: Appendix O). Audiences who may benefit from the proposed research include: mountain biking participants, local direct entrepreneurs, local indirect businesses, community organizations and associations (i.e.: DMO's), sponsors, planners, local, regional and provincial governments, and local residents (Wilson, S., Fesenmaier, D., Fesenmaier, J., & van Es, J., 2001).

### **Potential Benefits**

In addition to the activity of mountain biking itself, many tourists who are attracted to this discipline are also interested in experiencing any unique cultural, historical, physical, or social attributes which may be associated with or in proximity to a mountain biking experience in a destination region. By facilitating stakeholder participation and utilizing sustainable initiatives, export-ready product may be created (product quality which is attractive to international tourists) which meets the needs and expectations of select niche target market tourism consumers. The payoff comes collectively to host communities within a cluster in terms of economic, social, cultural, and environmental benefits (Koepke, 2005, p. 21; MBTA, 2006, p.



5; Tourism BC, 2008, pp. 6, 12; Tourism BC, 2010, p. 2). More specifically, benefits to stakeholders and the community may include: increased opportunities for recreational mountain biking for diverse participant populations, increased destination awareness and tourism visitation, increased tourism revenues, increased taxation revenues, development and improvements of community infrastructure, spin-off benefits to indirect community players, diversity of economic base, support for youth recreation and community social development, programming opportunities for school districts and special populations, promotion of cluster and networking development, creation of community social capital, nurturing of innovation, knowledge transfer, improved competitiveness, promotion of local cultural, historical, ethnic, and geographic characteristics (LinkBC, 2009, pp. 6, 10; Wilson, et al., 2001).

### **Research Questions**

The primary research question for this inquiry is: “What are the critical success factors, planning strategies and policy frameworks necessary for the development of mountain biking resources to the benefit of supporting communities (APEC, 2010, p. 4; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003, pp. 63, 71)? Supporting secondary research questions include: “What resources are currently available to support community mountain biking development? More specifically, which resources may be identified as critical, such as: physical resources, legislative (i.e.: land use policy), fiscal/economic, volunteers, political will, social/cultural, and attributes and entities? Why are cluster development and stakeholder networks important and how do primary stakeholders create a competitive cluster (Porter, 1998; Scott, Baggio, & Cooper, 2008, p. 96)? Are there any innovative practices being used to enhance a destinations’ competitive advantage?

## **Research Topic Summary**

Research to date on the rapidly growing segment of mountain biking tourism within the adventure tourism sector is sparse. This highlights the need and presents the opportunity for further research into the area of mountain biking tourism and community development. Qualitative research to query specialized and experienced informants may provide an effective methodology to answer the research questions (Robson, 2002, p. 282). This research proposes to delve deeper into the factor attributes which make cluster destinations attractive to targeted niche market consumers and how cluster participants function within an effective tourism delivery system (cluster). More specifically, the researcher intends to identify the critical success factors necessary to execute community-based mountain bike tourism with an emphasis on providing community mountain bike tourism planners and stakeholder with strategies and a conceptual framework to maximize potential benefits to participants, the community and salient stakeholders.

**Mt. Seymour, North Shore of Vancouver, B.C.**



Photo Credit: R. Freeman

## CHAPTER TWO

### **Literature Review**

Analysis of the literature reveals a paucity of research resources specifically relevant to mountain bike tourism development. Available findings include: regional mountain bike development plans, participant analyses, market potential / development reports, trail development guidelines / standards, case-studies, impact studies (i.e.: environmental, economic),

legislative / regulatory policies, and marketing strategies (Gajda, 2008, p. 12; Mason & Leberman, 2000, p. 102; Tourism BC, 2009, 2010). Conversely, the field of community tourism development offers a broad range of relevant topics, including: community tourism development, experiential tourism, stakeholder integration, marketing / tourism, destination management systems (DMS') / networks / collaboration / clusters, legislation / regulation, globalization / competitiveness / innovation, and rural tourism.

### **Critical Success Factors**

For the purposes of this inquiry, the researcher will endeavour to identify only those community tourism development literature resources which reveal critical success factors integral to the development of mountain bike tourism opportunities, with a specific focus on those factors salient and beneficial to participating communities and associated stakeholders. Critical success factors may be defined as the limited number of areas in which satisfactory results may ensure successful competitive performance for organizations, entities or communities (Rockart & Bullen, 1981, p. 5). Preliminary themes emerging as critical success factors for successful mountain bike tourism and community development include: physical geography / terrain, community champions / stakeholders / political will, legislation / regulatory frameworks, infrastructure / factor amenities, supporting services, and destination marketing / management (Buhalis & Spada, 2000; Cooperrider & Frye, 2009; Erdly & Kesterson-Townes, 2003; Gajda, 2008; Hashimoto & Buhalis, 2003; Hawkins, 2002; Jamal & Getz, 1995; Koepke, 2005; LinkBC, 2009; Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997; Mountain Bike Tourism Association, 2006; Porter, 1998; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003; Scott, Baggio, & Cooper, 2008; Scottish Mountain

Bike Development Consortium (SMBDC), 2009; Tourism British Columbia, 2008, 2009, 2010; Wilson, Fesenmaier, Fesenmaier, & van Es, J., 2001).

The Mountain Bike Tourism Association identifies the following:

**Figure 1. Basic Elements for Mountain Bike Tourism:**

- Sanctioned/authorized and maintained trail system
- Local mountain bike shop/outfitter/club willing to work with the tourism industry
- Qualified mountain bike guides
- Transportation services
- Selection of bike friendly accommodation providers
- Restaurants and entertainment
- Other complementary tourism products and attractions

**Source: MBTA, 2010**

**Physical Geography / Terrain**

As one of the fastest growing segments of the adventure tourism sector; mountain bike tourism, has gained significantly in popularity, however; research into this phenomenon remains relatively limited. The growth of mountain bike tourism may be significantly attributed to the diversity of the activity itself, with a range of riding disciplines and opportunities including: mountain bike touring, “rails-to-trails”, cross-country, downhill, freeride, dirt jump/pump track, and all-mountain riding categories catering to a diverse range of potential participants. Even these categories may be further sub-divided into a larger number of riding variations. The variety of riding styles utilized in a region closely aligns with the available terrain. For example, while the majority of mountain bikers globally participate in cross-country style riding, British Columbia (BC) is known for the genesis of the freeride mountain biking discipline, exercised on

more technically challenging terrain (Dunn, 2001, p. 7; Gajda, 2008, pp. 12, 36; Koepke, 2005, p. 10; Tourism BC, 2008, pp. 6-7, Tourism BC, 2009).

**Table 1. Mountain Biking Products:**

Bike Parks/lift accessed biking	Ski areas and resorts (e.g. Bike Parks BC)
Local trails for freeriding and cross country biking	Trail systems with technical features that are managed and maintained by established groups
Touring and family trails	Moderate grade trails and abandoned railway beds (e.g. Rails-to-Trails projects - Kettle Valley Railway and Galloping Goose Trail)
Epic Rides	Signature and historic trails that offer bikers an extraordinary challenge (e.g. Comfortably Numb-Whistler, the Seven Summits Trail - Rossland, historic Dewdney Trail- Southeastern BC)
Races, Festivals and Events	Community supported events with unique local features (e.g. Test of Metal, Crankworx, BC Bike Race, TRANSRockies Challenge)
Mountain Bike Camps	Programs for beginners to advanced riders (e.g. Endless Biking, Dirt Series, Mad March Racing)
Community-based programs	Youth camps, bike workshops and trail building (e.g. Sprockids)

Opportunities exist to package and partner mountain biking with other tourism products and sectors including: ecotourism, outdoor adventure and cultural/heritage tourism.

**Source: MTBA, 2010**

Mountain bike tourists are drawn to British Columbia “because there are few other places on the planet that offer such an incredible combination of trails, scenery, and adventure” (Tourism BC, 2008, p. iii). The Province (of BC) has a long history of mountain bike innovation and culture, complimenting the inherent terrain diversity which is conducive to the sport, and more specifically, to freeride mountain biking (p. 9). Leading globally competitive destinations,

such as Scotland, may share similarly attractive physical, geographical, and constructed features, providing planners and stakeholders the opportunity to extend development of the sport beyond the inherent natural and constructed attributes by leveraging the growing mountain biking culture and innovative community tourism development initiatives (LinkBC, 2009, pp. 23, 55, 68; SMBDC, 2009, pp. 3, 11).

### **Stakeholders / Community Champions / Political Will**

According to the Scottish Mountain Bike Development Consortium (2009, p. 3), “Scotland’s unique position as a mountain bike destination comes from its outstanding natural environment and its overall availability of constructed and natural routes, coupled with some of the most progressive outdoor access legislation in the world.” While these elements create a foundation for the creation of a tangible tourism product, success and significant community benefit may not be realized without leadership, stakeholder collaboration, and political will (LinkBC, 2009, pp. 13, 33, 35; Yukl, 2010, pp. 10, 153). In Scotland, the Consortium’s sustainable development framework incorporates stakeholder and community values within its mandate with an emphasis on stakeholder integration, access and equity for a broad range of potential participants, and a noteworthy sustainability orientation. The identification of these values is a result of strong leadership, driven by motivated community champions who have been able to garner sufficient political will amongst participants, stakeholders, and government actors (BCMTSA, 2006; Porter, 1998, pp. 78, 80; SMBDC, 2009, pp. 2, 4, 7, 9, 18, 23). Scotland is known internationally as a strong mountain biking destination, exemplified with the creation of the 7Stanes mountain bike destination cluster, a successful collaboration between public and private-sector stakeholders (Hawkins, 2002, p. 3). Significantly, Scotland’s success

since the initiation of the 7Stanes cluster project is also attributed to its access and equity orientation, capitalizing on a larger market opportunity, as well as a track record of hosting large-scale mountain bike competitions and events.

### ***Stakeholder Integration***

Garnering support to create a collaborative community tourism vision and executing a tangible plan may only be achieved once sufficient collective momentum is created, otherwise, the project may never get off the ground. Mitchell, Agle, & Wood (1997, p.867) advise that community planners focus on the dynamic nature of a negotiation process while remaining attentive to potential shifting power influence from the various stakeholder interests. They further suggest that planners of collaborative processes need to be cognizant of the dynamism of stakeholder positioning and the relevant issues on the table in order to ensure that negotiations meet ultimate objectives while ensuring sufficient integration of stakeholder group needs (Savage, Nix, Whitehead, & Blair, 1991, p. 62). Mitchell et al. (p.879) explain dynamism as it relates more to stakeholder positioning: by injecting new information into a negotiation process “latent stakeholders can increase their salience to managers...” essentially increasing their influence in the negotiation process. Hence, the literature reveals that it is imperative that managers of stakeholder integration processes be aware of all potential stakeholder groups and consider the dynamism of salience and how stakeholder groups may adjust their positions and potentially influence negotiations that may already be well under way (Lord & Elmendorf 2008, p. 94). Wagener & Fernandez-Gimenez (2008, p324) quoting Putnam (2003) added: “In the context of Community-based collaborative resource management (CBCRM), social capital is an asset that groups or stakeholders can use to obtain the results they seek and accomplish goals that



are otherwise unattainable”. Therefore, collaboration with synergistic stakeholders to build social capital creates a much stronger collective voice. Reinforcing this, Scott, Baggio, & Cooper (2008, p. 16) state:

A...reason for collective action in tourism is that many of the main resources of a tourism destination that are used jointly to attract tourists are community 'owned'. Such collective action does not necessarily require a network organization but, in a situation with a general lack of resources and where decisions related to tourism are not often seen within the government mandate, the response is often a network of interested stakeholders.

For example, in order to realize their collaborative vision, Scottish stakeholders have produced a mountain biking strategy plan reflective of the values of stakeholders and their communities. More specifically, the plan holds a strong sustainability orientation and consideration for the social and cultural impacts and opportunities of mountain biking on and for the communities. Furthermore, salient stakeholders have been proactive in the development of “constructed and natural routes, coupled with some of the most progressive outdoor access legislation in the world.” Of note is the effort towards making mountain biking initiatives inclusive to broad segments of the population, with a particular emphasis on school-aged and special-needs groups. The Scottish Mountain Bike Development Consortium has been created to leverage the growth in mountain biking by coordinating, funding, developing and managing mountain biking resources, products, and marketing initiatives in an equitable and sustainable manner (SMBDC, 2009, pp. 2-4, 9). To visualize this process, consortium planners collaboratively created the following development structure:

**Figure 2. Scottish Mountain Bike Cluster Development Structure**



**Source: Scottish Mountain Bike Development Consortium (2009, p. 7)**

Consortium collaboration has resulted in development of the 7Stanes seven regional riding centres in Scotland which provide world-class facilities catering to a diverse range of mountain bikers and their needs across the sector. Especially significant is the provision of trails and resources oriented to all abilities, with structured policy frameworks, programs and resources designed to introduce new riders to the sport. This success may be attributed to effective private and public-sector collaboration combined with coordinated interagency communications and functioning, particularly in consideration of the project management efforts of the 7Stanes

project. Much like British Columbia, 7Stanes and Scotland have been successful in creating a growing mountain bike culture, positioning 7Stanes as the top destination in the U.K., and a prominent destination for Continental European mountain biking tourists. (Forestry Commission Scotland, 2007, pp. 11-12; SMBDC, 2009, pp. 6, 9, 11; Tourism BC, 2010, p. 21).

While the 7Stanes project has seen positive progress, project managers have identified the following ongoing issues to be addressed: fragmentation amongst stakeholder groups; project has not yet reached desired milestones towards widening its market base for special social groups (i.e.: low income families); physical access to rural and semi-rural sites is limited by transportation infrastructure; and ongoing availability of human and fiscal resources to ensure trail maintenance and development of new trail product. Opportunities for further market development have been identified by project managers, including: enhancement of international marketing efforts by VisitScotland and other destination marketing channels; expansion of potential stakeholder partnerships; and the enhancement of market reach “to the social, active and education market” (Forestry Commission Scotland, 2007, pp. 11-15; SMBDC, 2009, p. 13).

Conversely, in British Columbia, Donna Green (personal communication, July, 2010), one of the co-founders and a Director with the Western Canada Mountain Bike Tourism Association (MBTA), advises the rationale for the formation of this non-profit organization in 2005 was to create a bridge between community-based mountain bike destinations (represented by MBTA) and commercial resort operations (represented by Bike Parks BC). Developed as a stakeholder model, the mandate of MBTA is to produce a cohesive image for the region, incorporating a wide range of mountain bike tourism experiences delivered through a collaborative marketing strategy, built upon a structured, province-wide community and product development and management framework. In order to obtain stakeholder participation,

sustainable strategies are necessary to create export-ready product (product quality which is attractive to international tourists) which meets the needs and expectations of select niche target market tourism consumers (Arsenault, 2005, p. 2; Erdly & Kesterson-Townes, 2003, pp. 12, 14; Pine & Gilmore, 1998, p. 98). The payoff comes collectively to community and resort destinations within a cluster in terms of economic, social, cultural, and environmental benefits (Hawkins, 2002, p. 3; Koepke, 2005, p. 21; MBTA, 2006, p. 5; MBTA, 2010; SMBDC, 2009, p. 18; Tourism BC, 2008, p. 12; Tourism BC, 2010, p. 2).

Supporting the development of community-based projects in British Columbia, MBTA assists with community product development plans, often in collaboration with Tourism BC (a division of the British Columbia Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Investment), regional districts (a level of government between municipalities and the Province), municipalities, local mountain bike clubs, and other significant stakeholders, such as bike shops, accommodations' providers, tour operators, etc. The production of the Mountain Bike Tourism handbook, under the Tourism BC, Tourism Business Essentials program is an example of a resource available to communities to assist in the development of export market ready product (Tourism BC, 2008). Furthermore, momentum is building in BC with increasing public-sector stakeholder involvement at multiple levels of government in support of mountain bike tourism product development. Despite this positive momentum, the mountain bike tourism sector in British Columbia remains challenged to manage unauthorized trail building activities, successfully mitigate liability and insurance concerns, maintain positive momentum from volunteer trail builders, coordinate disparate stakeholder interests, and alleviate environmental impacts (CRA, 2010, p. 65; Tourism BC, 2008, pp. 27-28).

### *Economic Motivations*

More recently, the profile of the sector has been raised significantly by the release of the 2006 Sea to Sky Mountain Biking Economic Impact Study (MBTA, 2006). The study clearly reveals the economic contribution mountain bike tourism have in the Sea to Sky Corridor (essentially, from the North Shore of Vancouver to Pemberton, including Squamish and Whistler). “The trail systems of the North Shore, Squamish and Whistler, are estimated to have collectively generated \$10.3 million in spending from riders that live outside of the host community over the period from June 4 to September 17, 2006.” Additionally, non-resident visitors to the Whistler Bike Park injected another \$16.2 million into the local economy. Furthermore, non-resident visitors who attended the Crankworx Mountain Bike Festival contributed \$11.5 million to these totals during the study period (p. 1). Overall, the Sea to Sky Corridor cluster has been successful in drawing large numbers of mountain bike tourism participants with a comparatively large economic impact to the cluster communities. While other benefits of tourism may be essential to the success of developing and promoting a tourism product, economic impact and sustainability are a primary motivator for many stakeholders. The emerging importance and positive impacts presented by collaborative tourism product development may be leveraged by exploring innovative partnerships, such as with economic development corporations and complimentary levels of government or other indirect businesses and organizations (Community Futures Crowsnest Pass, 2010, pp. 3-4; IMBACTS, 2011, p. 18; LinkBC, 2009, pp. 4, 6, 10, Tourism BC, 2009).

### *Clusters and Innovation*

British Columbia and Scotland are clear examples of regions which are successfully developing competitive clusters through mountain bike tourism and community development initiatives. The development of a regional cluster promotes local competition while simultaneously “encouraging...innovation, growth and productivity” of organizations within the cluster; therefore enhancing the overall quality of products within the cluster. Porter asserts that by participating in a cluster, organizations and stakeholders can take advantage of economies of scale and maintain autonomy without expending significant individual resources (Porter, 1998, pp. 78, 80). However, overcoming traditional competitive tendencies and building trust across disparate stakeholders within a cluster is a significant challenge, not to understate the point. Stakeholder education and awareness should be the first strategy initiated towards overcoming stakeholder conflict. As a part of this process, highlighting the benefits of collaboration to stakeholders may enlighten those with disparate perspectives. Chinyio & Akintoye (2008, p. 599) advise that among the many benefits of stakeholder integration, gaining commitment, facilitating empowerment, improving communication, resolving conflicts, and developing trust are identified as prominent potential outcomes of a successful stakeholder integration process towards building community social capital.

Jackson & Murphy (2002) provide a comparison of the traditional industrial districts framework with Porter’s 1998 competitive cluster theory, exemplified through the introduction of seven new characteristics making up Porter’s theory. While the industrial districts framework provides a foundation for building destination competitiveness, Porter’s new characteristics identify the need to recognize and emphasize the competitive advantage that may be realized by creating interconnections between heterogeneous actors within a defined geography. This may

be exemplified in the tourism sector through the promotion of “local heritage and sense of place distinctiveness as market attractions” (p. 38). Keeping in mind that Porter suggests that it is dissimilar but complimentary product and services vendors which differentiate a cluster from a homogenous group of similar competitors located in an industrial district. Furthermore, in order to avoid the ubiquity of global commoditization, Jackson & Murphy highlight Porter’s assertion that “Cluster development efforts must embrace the pursuit of competitive advantage and specialization, rather than attempt to imitate exactly what is present in other locations. (p. 39)”

To further address inherent stakeholder issues within the cluster, the concept of identifying opportunity within challenging circumstances presented itself in a number of literature articles with references to Peter Drucker, known as the “Father of management thought.” Earlier in his career, Drucker stated: “(E)very social and global issue of our day is a business opportunity, in disguise, just waiting for the entrepreneurship and innovation of business, the pragmatism, and the capabilities of good management (Cooperrider & Frye, 2009, p. 3).” Therefore, while many organizations and entities are challenged to build trust across disparate stakeholder groups towards achieving collective organizational goals and objectives, Drucker suggests that we should look for innovative means of addressing these issues within the parameters of the challenges; in this case, within the challenges found and amenities available within the mountain biking sector cluster.

### ***Leadership and Community Social Capacity***

The premise of utilizing stakeholder integration as a vehicle towards engaging and empowering cluster stakeholders with the building of trust appears to be an emerging

contemporary approach, in contrast to traditional management strategies. This is predicated on strategic consideration given to encouraging collaboration with others through a more participative approach to support organizational strategy building, policy development, and process implementation. This approach requires breaking with traditional task-oriented management styles (such as utilizing a hierarchal framework) towards incorporating more relations-oriented and participative leadership methodologies (Yilmaz & Gunel, 2009, p. 108; Yukl, 2010, pp. 30, 153).

In support of this premise, Wartzman (2009, p. 1) refers to Porter's construct of "Authentic Engagement" with the concept that organizations and entities may achieve profitability and broader business or organizational success by addressing greater societal issues and challenges, rather than focusing on profit as a primary mandate. Wartzman further reinforces this point by suggesting that in 1973 Drucker recommended organizations view societal challenges as sources of opportunity. Furthermore, Drucker advocates that developing corporate or organizational mandates which incorporate strategies to positively transform society may actually reinforce positive profitability, among other benefits; namely, positive social, cultural, and environmental outcomes; as are the desired intentions of mountain bike tourism cluster stakeholders and communities in BC and Scotland.

By effecting positive societal transformation, social capacity may be created through the development of stakeholder trust (Schneider, 2002, p. 220). Drucker supports his declarations on refocusing organizational mandates by emphasizing: "Corporate social responsibility and business innovation are mutually reinforcing (Cooperrider & Frye, 2009, p. 3)", therefore Drucker suggests organizations develop their mandates on this foundational construct. This is

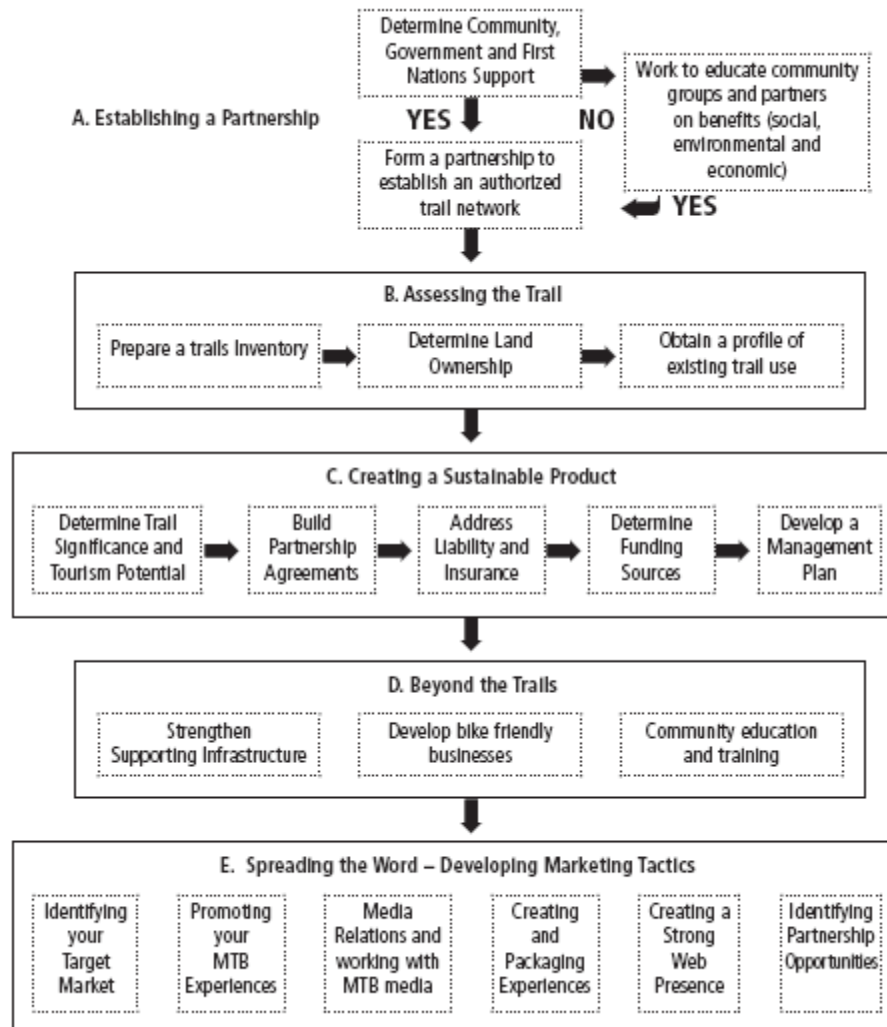


supported by Stein (2009, p. 5) who paraphrases Drucker: “He concluded that in a pluralistic society of specialized institutions, management's task is to make organizations perform, beginning with the business enterprise, for the community and for the individual alike.” This construct effectively supports the mandates of mountain bike tourism cluster stakeholders and communities in BC and Scotland towards developing successful outcomes based on goals and objectives focused on encouraging constructive social, cultural, environmental, and economic results. The challenge remains to build critical mass in cluster formulations by educating cluster stakeholders and potential participants on the collective benefits of collaboration and the value of mountain biking as a tourism product for communities (Forestry Commission Scotland, 2007, p. 7; Tourism BC, 2008, pp. 9, 12, 29; Tourism BC, 2009, pp. 4, 16, 19).

### ***Community Champions and Political Will***

In order to facilitate successful cluster formation, motivated community development leaders (often with personal or professional interests in the mountain bike sector), may become “champions” to act as a mechanism towards catalyzing community development. With guidance and support from public sector agencies; notably Tourism BC within the BC Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Investment, efforts and resources are being increasingly allocated towards effecting community tourism development initiatives. Ritchie and Crouch (2003, p. 143) assert the important role the public sector plays in supporting tourism development: “Where political will creates a supportive environment, tourism entities are more likely to display a progressive and innovative approach towards the development of tourism and the strategic direction it takes.” An example of this support is shown in the Mountain Bike Tourism Handbook; specifically, the following community development assessment framework to assist communities in this process:

**Figure. 3: British Columbia Community Development Assessment Framework**



**Source: Tourism BC (2008, p. 32)**

It is important to understand, however; that the support of public-sector agents should not be utilized in a top-down approach. For example, considering the Marketing Tactics component of the assessment framework, Scott, Baggio, and Cooper (2008, p. 142) advise: "...network power has...been conceptualized as the shared ability of...stakeholders...to influence the process of destination branding towards an outcome (the destination brand) that reflects the values and

business agendas of the largest possible number of tourism destination stakeholders.” This community-based approach effectively flattens hierarchal structures, thus facilitating a more positive stakeholder participation process.

### **Legislation / Regulation / Standards**

The mountain biking sector in British Columbia remains relatively fragmented in terms of stakeholder collaboration efforts. This is particularly evident in consideration of legislative frameworks across various levels of the public sector. While efforts are under way to address public land access issues in BC, many stakeholders remain isolated and independent of collaborative initiatives. Furthermore, cluster development is restrained by a lack of available collective funding, management, and marketing management resources. In light of the progress to date and the inherent challenges evident in the sector, interest and momentum continue to build in mountain bike tourism within BC. As one of the leading destinations in the mountain bike tourism marketplace, BC is well positioned to take and maintain a leadership position in the sector, given the resources necessary to overcome current challenges. Tourism BC, in consultation with stakeholder groups, informs that the potential exists to reinvest revenues generated within the sector towards building regional capacity and getting the word out to target consumer audiences, as long as this is done within a structured framework and in a coordinated approach (BCMTSA, 2006; Tourism BC, 2010, pp. 30-32).

For many years, much of the trail development in the Province (of BC) has occurred without authorization of land managers or public authorities, who have typically been reticent to accept or acknowledge the activity of mountain biking, primarily due to concerns over liability.

In areas of BC where stakeholders have collaborated with land managers and worked to mitigate liability issues, communities have achieved successful outcomes. Mitigation encompasses training for trail-building clubs and volunteers to facilitate the construction of trails which minimize negative environmental impacts while incorporating trail designs appropriate to the various skill levels of riders with the intention of reducing risk and minimizing the occurrence of injury. Examples of trail standards, guidelines and policies designed to address these issues include: Whistler Trail Standards, International Mountain Biking Association trail building and design guidelines, and Australia Trail Standards (BCMTSA, 2006; IMBA, 2010; IMBACTS, 2011, pp. 17, 23; Maierhofer, 2007; RMOW, 2003; SMBDC, 2009, pp. 19, 28; Tourism BC, 2008, pp. 27-28). Access to trails on land which may be owned and/or managed by various entities (private, public, Crown Lands, tenure holders, municipalities, regional districts, etc...) remains a prominent barrier for the development of mountain biking trails, infrastructure, and tourism development opportunities. In order to more effectively overcome this issue, stakeholders need to collaborate to identify local issues and challenges, create a vision, recruit the local mountain bike club and volunteers, build trails to risk-tolerant standards, obtain insurance (often with assistance from the IMBA), and educate trail users on trail challenge levels (BCMTSA, 2008, 2009; CRA, 2010, p. 65; IMBA, 2010, SMBDC, 2009, p. 7; Tourism BC, 2008, p. 32).

### **Infrastructure / Factor Attributes**

A number of prominent regions within British Columbia benefit from a well-developed infrastructure of trails and supporting factor attributes (accommodations, tour operators, resorts,

bike shops, etc...) which include a diversity of product offerings supported by a global reputation as an iconic destination for mountain biking culture and lifestyle. The influence of this culture continues to expand across mountain bike resorts and communities through a marketing matrix enhanced by the Internet and viral social media communications. More specifically, Tourism BC in their 2010 British Columbia Mountain Bike Tourism Marketing Plan identifies the following factor attributes as key strengths for the region, including: diversity in terrain, length of season and climate, the Whistler Bike Park, and a reputation as an innovator in trail design (Tourism BC, 2008, p. 21; 2010, p. 1).

A growing number of international mountain biking regions are gaining prominence as desirable tourism destinations for mountain bike tourists, including Canada, the U.K., Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Spain, France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States; notably in Utah, Colorado, West Virginia and Oregon (Gajda, 2008, p. 37; Koepke, 2005, pp. 15-21). In addition to Moab, Utah, U.S.A., and British Columbia, Scotland is considered one of a handful of top mountain bike tourism destinations globally, in consideration of visitor numbers and revenues generated. This may be attributed to the collection of factor attributes which provide the necessary components and diversity of product offerings and experiences that drive marketing awareness for a region and conversion of niche target market audiences into purchasing consumers (Rod Harris, personal communication, September – October, 2009). More specifically, the cluster of mountain bike resorts in Scotland, known as the 7Stanes, as well as Fort William Leanachan Forest offer a diversity of mountain bike experiences in relatively close proximity to primary niche target markets in large populations, including England and Continental Europe (Gajda, 2008, pp. 45-49).

Wilson, et al. more specifically identify the following components identified as critical success factors for (rural) communities to be successful in their economic development strategies utilizing tourism as the offering:

**Figure. 4: Critical Success Factors**

- (1) attractions: natural and constructed features;
- (2) promotion: marketing of a community and its attractions;
- (3) infrastructure: access facilities, utilities, parking, signs, and recreation facilities;
- (4) services: lodging, restaurants, retail businesses;
- (5) hospitality: how tourists are treated; and
- (6) tourism entrepreneurs.

**Source: Wilson, et al. (2001, p. 133).**

Notably, items 1, 3, and 4 may more specifically designated as critical infrastructure and factor attributes.

**Destination Marketing / Management**

Emerging market trends indicate that those organizations and entities that gain a better understanding of evolving consumer expectations will be better positioned to enhance their viability and sustainability in an increasingly competitive global tourism marketplace (Arsenault, 2005, p. 2; Erdly & Kesterson-Townes, 2003, pp. 12, 14; Michopoulou & Buhalis, 2004, pp. 611, 621-622 Pine & Gilmore, 1998, p. 98; Shaw & Ivens, 2002, p. 207). The development of a unique brand identity for a tourism product and/or destination region challenges Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) to highlight positive tourist perceptions of the destination while striving to enhance and differentiate the brand image in response to evolving marketplace trends and emerging opportunities. In order to mitigate the influences of commoditization while striving to differentiate the destination, planners and stakeholders need to participate in a

collaborative process to create a unique brand identity (Morgan & Pritchard, 2004, p. 60).

However, DMOs typically work with limited budgets, are vulnerable to internal and external politics, and often have a multitude of stakeholders to appease. The diversity of salient stakeholders and their divergent interests requires that DMOs facilitate a collaborative process, which reconciles these interests and encourages the full participation of stakeholders to encourage creation of a marketing strategy to achieve buy-in of participants that effectively represent stakeholder interests. Ultimately, a successful destination branding process which incorporates stakeholder participation, should strive to present a unique competitive positioning message, which sells the differentiated character of the destination and its' tourism products to tourists (Morgan & Pritchard, 2004, p. 62-64).

Many small and medium-sized operators do not understand the benefits of cooperative branding efforts with local “competitors” or “conglomerate allies” within their own region towards building capacity and enhancing the competitiveness of the region against other regions on more global scale. Planners, DMOs, and stakeholders need to encourage a process which facilitates the balanced requirements of all parties in order to achieve success (Buhalis & Spada, 2000, p. 42, 52-54, 56). According to Lovecock & Boyd (2006, p. 144), Timothy (2001, p. 158) argues a collaborative approach for multiple stakeholder and multi-jurisdictional destination planning encourages sustainable efficiency, integration and stability through concerted promotional efforts. Furthermore, Lovecock & Boyd (2006, p. 146) cite Oliver (1990) who identifies a number of ‘critical contingencies’ for inter-organizational relationship formation:

**Figure 5. Incentives for Relationship Formation for Inter-Organization Relationships**

- *Reciprocity*: Organizations seek to facilitate exchange of resources;
- *Efficiency*: Organizations seek to reduce the cost of service delivery;
- *Stability*: Organizations seek to reduce uncertainty and share risks;
- *Necessity*: Where the relationship is mandated by external force;
- *Legitimacy*: Where the organizations concerned seek to demonstrate the norms of cooperation.

**Source: Oliver (1990)**

Further to Oliver's contingencies, Hawkins (2002) suggests, "There has always been strength in numbers" through the encouragement of a "Competitive Cluster Approach" which may achieve: a) conservation of natural and cultural assets, b) community employment and social enhancement, and c) local business viability. Hawkins describes a competitive cluster as a set of strategic "activities and services" conveyed through a supply chain of collaborating stakeholders creating competitive advantage through coordinated strategic efforts (Hawkins, 2002, p. 1).

In order to develop effective destination marketing / management strategy, planners need to incorporate considerations for market analysis, competitive analysis, market segmentation, and product positioning strategy factors which should include input from local stakeholders. The development of a regional marketing program should reflect the community vision while diversify the communities' economic base and maintaining and enhancing the capacity and quality of life within the community. Furthermore, the actions to be taken in the implementation of the program ought to be designed in consideration of sustainable outcomes, including: socio/cultural enrichment, environmental conservation, political/governance capacity-building and economic enhancement (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003, p. 44).



The basis of a marketing strategy should be to identify and highlight the unique array of natural, adventure, and cultural experiences delivered in consideration of the region's natural and constructed character with a focus on evolving trends highlighting experiential tourism opportunities (Arsenault, 2005, p. 2; Oh et al., 2007, p. 119). Utilizing a disciplined marketing process and framework, a community may cost-effectively enhance the reach of their marketing strategy by further leveraging emerging technology trends, partnerships and resources (Harris, 1995, p. 613; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003, p. 173). While striving to effectively identify, target, and reach appropriate and desirable prospective consumer market segments through a disciplined and dynamic marketing strategy, this approach presents the opportunity for successful outcomes if the customer experience is incorporated into the plan (Hanlan, Fuller, and Wilde, 2006, p. 7).

For example, alpine ski resorts in British Columbia already have a long-standing history of strategic marketing collaboration for their ski industry initiatives. Translating those efforts into the development of export-ready mountain bike product for their summer business gives the resorts a lead over similar initiatives from communities and many competitors in the development of their trails (Koepke, 2005, p. 13). While resorts utilize their pre-existing social capital to direct significant marketing resources towards out-of-region consumers, the combined offerings of resorts with adjacent community stakeholders may provide the region and cluster participants with a broader, more diverse set of mountain biking products and experiences, appealing to a wider range of potential consumers. Kelli Sherbinin (personal communication, July, 2010), a mountain bike tour operator based in Vancouver, BC advises major tourism markets for BC mountain bike tourism, beyond domestic consumers, primarily originate from the U.S.A. (more specifically the western U.S.) and Europe, particularly the U.K., with increasing interest coming from Asia, Australia, and New Zealand. Gaining an understanding of these

consumers' travel motivations and expectations can assist destination development planners to successfully connect with those target niche markets (Gajda, 2008, p. 13; Koepke, 2005, p. 21).

The commoditization of tourism products in an increasingly competitive global marketplace makes it necessary for destinations to create a unique brand proposition to facilitate differentiation and stand out from the crowd. However, due to the diversity of product and stakeholder interests within any specified destination region, the development process to produce a unified vision remains a challenge. As leading mountain biking tourism destinations, British Columbia and Scotland share a significant number of common factor attributes, including inherent features (natural landscapes) and constructed amenities (built trails) as well as respectively building a critical mass of community, industry, and public-sector support. This indicates that it is necessary to acquire a number of the important attributes combined with community and political will in order to build critical mass and develop a globally competitive mountain biking cluster and destination. In the case of BC, innovation in riding styles (i.e.: the free ride movement), a diversity of terrain, length of season and climate, success of the Whistler Mountain Bike Park, and BC being viewed as a leader and innovator in trail design and operations creates a unique array of selling features. In Scotland, in addition to landscapes and trails, stakeholders have emphasized community values by crafting conducive legislative and building inclusive objectives and policies, thus affirming the region's unique market position.

### **Literature Review Summary**

The evolution and growth of mountain biking as a tourism product comes as a result of the combined efforts of public and private-sector stakeholders collaborating to achieve co-

developed goals and objectives. In the case of mountain biking destinations, collaboration with locally competitive resorts and communities may at first appear counter-intuitive; however, best practices and the academic literature provide evidence that planning and policy frameworks are available to be used as guide posts towards the development of a competitive cluster of stakeholders within a tourism sector region. As leading global examples, the cases of British Columbia with mountain bike tourism community tourism development projects and Bike Parks BC and Scotland with 7Stanes, planners and stakeholders are successfully developing a critical mass of offerings which differentiate these regions from other globally competitive mountain bike tourism destinations. Nurturing community development through public sector investments and resources, in conjunction with private sector interests can create a diversity of product appealing to a wide range of potential consumers. For British Columbia, the next challenges remain to maintain the building of momentum while ensuring the sustainability of social, cultural, environmental, and fiscal factor attributes and outcomes to the benefit of communities and stakeholders.

## A Mountain Bike



Photo Credit: R. Freeman

## CHAPTER THREE

### Methodology

#### Methodology & Purpose

This research methodology is designed to support an investigation to determine the critical success factors (CSFs) necessary to ensure positive outcomes for communities in British

Columbia planning to develop mountain bike tourism in a sustainable manner and for stakeholder and community benefit (APEC, 2010, p. 4; Porter, 1998; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003, pp. 63, 71; Scott, Baggio, & Cooper, 2008, p. 96). Analysis of the literature reveals a paucity of research resources specifically relevant to mountain bike tourism development, whereas; the field of community tourism development offers a broad range of relevant topics, including: community tourism development, experiential tourism, stakeholder integration, marketing / etourism, destination management systems (DMS') / networks / collaboration / clusters, legislation / regulation, globalization / competitiveness / innovation, and rural tourism. For the purposes of this inquiry, the researcher will query survey respondents to identify and prioritize critical success factors integral to the development of mountain bike tourism opportunities, with a specific focus on those factors salient and beneficial to participating communities and associated stakeholders (Gajda, 2008, p. 12; Mason & Leberman, 2000, p. 102; Tourism BC, 2009, 2010). Critical success factors may be defined as the limited number of areas in which satisfactory results may ensure successful competitive performance for organizations, entities or communities (Rockart & Bullen, 1981, p. 5).

The researcher intends to utilize a Delphi research approach which will entail identifying, qualifying and recruiting a select yet varied group of expert informants across and/or connected to the adventure tourism sector (Brüggen & Willems, 2009, p. 377; Donohoe & Needham, 2009, p. 417; du Plessis & Human, 2007, p. 20; Long, 2007, pp. 35, 39; Vernon, 2009, p. 72). The informants will be asked to identify, prioritize, and comment on choices of salient critical success factors for mountain bike community tourism development beneficial to stakeholders and communities (Briedenhann & Butts, 2006, p. 173; Donohoe & Needham, 2009, p. 427; du Plessis & Human, 2007, pp. 18-19; Vernon, 2009, p. 71-74).

## **Methodology**

The Delphi technique is typically used for forecasting and planning by analyzing the collective responses of a select group of experts as noted by Linstone & Turoff (1975, pp. 3, 10) in order to:

obtain the most reliable consensus of opinion of a group of experts by a series of intensive questionnaires interspersed with controlled opinion feedback... (the Delphi technique is) a method for structuring a group communication process so that the process is effective in allowing a group of individuals, as a whole, to deal with a complex problem (du Plessis & Human, 2007, pp. 14-15).

The research methodology will be focused on deriving data sequentially from three rounds of online survey questions to allow respondents to identify their individual CSF priorities, rate their individual CSF priorities against a more comprehensive list of collated responses from all selected respondents, and comment on individual and group responses and CSF priority ratings (Robson, 2002, pp. 57, 288; Veal, 2006, pp., 231, 234).

Delphi research studies commonly aim to achieve a level of consensus on potential issues, recommendations and/or outcomes. This researcher will utilize an adaptation of the Delphi technique methodology to present qualitative identification and analysis of respondents' CSF priorities, combined with quantifiable analysis of the level of group consensus, if any, derived from individual CSF rating responses (Greenhalgh & Wengraf, 2008, p. 244; Masberg, Chase, & Madlem, 2003, pp. 5-7; Northcote, Diane, Chok, & Wegner, 2008, pp. 269, 271). Subsequently, the researcher will analyze and present significant findings resulting from respondents' final commentaries on CSF ratings and priorities (Wilson & Moffat, 2010, p. 285). Furthermore, the researcher will include a summary of non-conforming commentaries to identify outlier responses, providing a forum for alternative perspectives. This approach may assist

community tourism planners to appraise a broader range of potential factors which may be valuable for consideration, dependent upon specific community environmental factors, including: local politics, policy and legislative variances, latent or salient stakeholder influence, or other locally significant influences (Jiang, Sui, and Cao, 2008, p. 519).

The proposed methodology would primarily utilize a qualitative research methodology, supported by quantitative ratings and analysis using a summated rating Likert scale to confirm the research approach and ensure the design framework is appropriate, comprehensive, and effective (Long, 2007, p. 65; Robson, 2002, pp. 80, 293; Veal, 2006, pp. 54, 99, 196). Robson (2002, p. 43) advocates customizing the research approach in an effort to ensure that the research instrument(s) does not restrict the inquiry, but allows the researcher to adapt the approach and framework towards achieving desired results in real world environments. By following a structured adaptable framework, the researcher can ensure that guideposts provided by the framework are followed towards producing an acceptably structured end product which meets intended research outcomes and rigor. Furthermore, Robson suggests that mixed-methods studies (p. 370) can correlate findings from multiple research tactics to ensure the analysis draws evidence from more than one survey instrument. This approach may capture additional information and provide a more comprehensive range of perspectives which may otherwise be unavailable or limited through use of a single survey instrument. The survey would use a selection of qualitative and quantitative scaling techniques designed to measure perceptions and attitudes (Long, 2007, p. 62; Robson, 2002, p. 298; Veal, 2006, p. 105).

The practical intention of the online questionnaire surveys will be to query the expert informants to identify CSF factors, issues, and priorities from the lens of their individual

perspectives across or relevant to the sector (Long, 2007, p. 244). This sequential, mixed-methods approach will allow the researcher to analyze data collected from each method and phase to support adaptation of subsequent survey instruments to ensure successful outcomes of the overall research strategy. Robson citing Yin (1994, p. 74), informs this approach helps “investigators to refine their data collection plans with respect to both the content of the data and procedures to be followed’, (as) an exploratory function”. Following analysis of the initial qualitative research component, the researcher would have the opportunity to adapt the research approach, if necessary, for the subsequent quantitative and final qualitative research phases of the project.

#### **Figure 6. Key Points of the Delphi Technique**

- The Delphi process allows feedback to be gathered quickly and efficiently from a wide array of geographically dispersed clinicians, managers and academics (or other appropriate and select experts)
- Participants remain anonymous and are free of social pressure, influence and individual dominance
- Careful selection of Delphi participants with the relevant expertise is critical to the credibility of the survey results

**Source: Wilson & Moffat (2010, p. 289).**

#### **Sample Frame and Population**

The sample frame for this component of the study would draw upon the expertise of key adventure tourism sector actors and/or prominent actors connected to the adventure tourism sector specific to mountain biking and/or adventure tourism and/or community tourism development, as key informants through a purposive sampling approach. This approach would



query sector experts to assist in verifying the research questions which strive to determine salient factors necessary to create a critical mass in building mountain bike tourism with community stakeholders. This group would be representative of a purposive sample; essentially a collection of individuals selected as qualified by meeting specific criteria as sector-related experts for participation in this survey (per Figures 1, 2, and 3). The population to be defined as experts through this purposive sampling approach will be “people selected specifically because of what they know” (Long, 2007, pp. 35, 39, 84; Robson, 2002, p. 265; Veal, 2006, p. 295). Selection criteria may include:

**Figure 7. Population for Expert Selection Criteria**

- Position power: getting key players on board who are in a position to influence and build the commitment of colleagues.
- Expertise: ensuring that different points of view (e.g. in terms of discipline, experience) relevant to (the issue) are adequately reflected and that informed and intelligent decisions can be made.
- Credibility: it is essential that the participants have good reputations so that any decisions are taken seriously by others working in (the sector) and beyond.

**Adapted from: Wilson & Moffat (2010, p. 286).**

Experts in the sector in British Columbia have been revealed during the literature review phase of this study by analyzing select resources which have previously attempted to identify critical success factors and/or mountain bike tourism development interests relevant for community tourism development (BCMTSA, 2008, p. 16; LinkBC, 2009, p. 1, MBTA, 2006, p. 4).

Stakeholder group categories identified to draw expertise from may include:

**Figure 8. Mountain Bike Tourism Stakeholder Groups**

1. Mountain Bike Resorts
2. Commercial Tour Operators
3. Destination Marketing Organizations
4. First Nations
5. Industry Groups (Mountain Bike Clubs)
6. Mountain Bike Tourism Services (Accommodation, food retail, rental, transport)
7. Provincial Government Agencies
8. Regional & Municipal Governments
9. Trail Stewardship Groups
10. Private Landowners
11. Event Organizers (Festivals/Races)
12. Educational Institutions
13. Mountain Bike Consultants
14. Insurance Experts
15. Athletes and Professional Mountain Bikers

**Source: Tourism BC (2010, p. 11).**

Opportunities to identify individual sector experts related to the mountain bike tourism sector and/or community tourism development are presented in the British Columbia Mountain Bike Tourism, Sector Marketing Plan (Tourism BC, 2010, pp. 87-90); and the Mountain Bike Tourism, Tourism Business Essentials, First Edition Handbook (Tourism BC, 2008, pp. ii, 70-73), Mountain Bike Tourism Association stakeholder list (MBTA, 2010), as well as personal direct and/or indirect contacts of the researcher through professional connections, and social media networking communications channels (including: LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook).

**Survey Plan**

Survey responses from sector experts would be verified using responses to the primary

survey questions to acquire direct information from individual informants. This would be followed by a more focused query of the sector experts to prioritize collective responses across the sample frame of informants participating in the study. Survey contacts would be approached using professional connections in conjunction with prominent actors identified from research reports revealed during the literature review to facilitate relative access and convenience. Using this structured sample framework approach, the scope, nature, quality of data, design, and method would be considered and executed as exploratory work prior to carrying out the quantitative analysis component of the study (Robson, 2002, pp. 199, 270-271; Veal, 2006, p. 295).

### **Rationale**

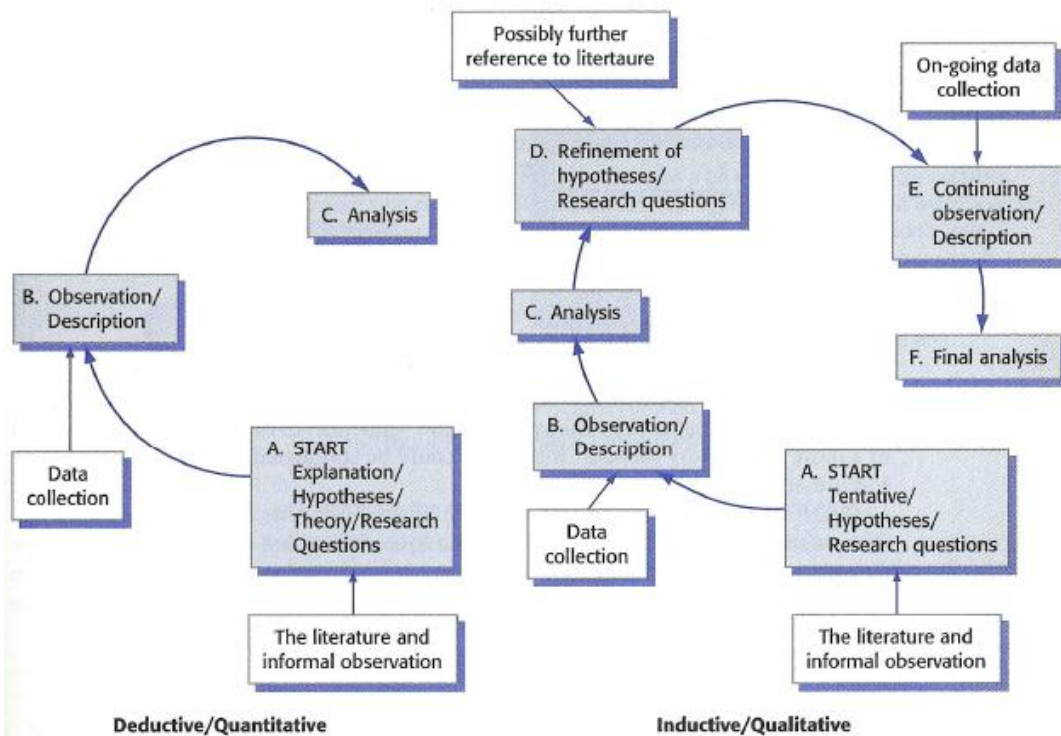
The rationale to utilize a qualitative research phase in addition to conducting quantitative research is highlighted by Patterson (2000, p. 108) who cites Danziger (1985): “Reliance solely on quantitative data can at times result in the development of theoretical models that are in accord with the methodological requirements of mathematical systems rather than the true nature of phenomena.” In support of this argument, Davies (2003, p. 104) advises that qualitative data considers the human context and inherent complex influences in human interactions. This qualitative research approach may identify subjective moments, including non-conforming outlier responses, which may present the researcher with the opportunity to acknowledge and report on interrelationships between the qualitative and quantitative measures (p. 107). As indicated in the sample frame (above), querying the selected key informants may be effective towards identifying potential research framework gaps and allowing for the researcher to adjust the strategy and framework, if necessary, prior to executing the subsequent research phases.

**Instrument Design**

The initial qualitative questionnaire would be delivered utilizing an online survey instrument, such SurveyMonkey®. Following analysis of the initial questionnaire responses, the subsequent quantitative survey may be modified, if necessary, and then distributed to the participating informants. Survey questions will be created using needs assessment best practices following analysis of the literature review research results (Gupta, 1999, p. 166; Robson, 2002, p. 212).

Veal (2006, p. 207) presents quantitative and qualitative contexts in the following circular research model. By undertaking the qualitative research phase first, factors and influences could be identified and analyzed in an exploratory manner (p. 208).

**Figure 9. Circular model of the research process in quantitative and qualitative contexts**



Source: Veal, A. (2006, p. 207)

## **Informant Survey Instrument**

### ***Survey Phase 1:***

- 1) From your perspective, please identify the Critical Success Factors necessary for the development of mountain biking tourism to the benefit of the community and visitors?
- 2) More specifically, which resources may be identified as MOST critical, such as: physical resources, legislative (i.e.: land use policy), fiscal/economic, volunteers, political will, social/cultural, and attributes and entities, and/or other factors?
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
  - 5.
  - 6.
  - 7.
  - 8.

(Long, 2007, p. 60; Robson, 2002, pp. 239,245; Veal, 2006, p. 265).

### ***Survey Phase 2:***

Please rate the following Critical Success Factors identified by survey respondents (including yourself) as necessary for the development of mountain biking tourism to the benefit of the community and visitors. Do you agree that the Critical Success Factor is Very Important, Important, Not Very Important, or Not at all Important:

## Mountain Bike Tourism & Community Development

1. _____	Very Important	Important	Not Very Important	Not at all Important
2. _____	Very Important	Important	Not Very Important	Not at all Important
3. _____	Very Important	Important	Not Very Important	Not at all Important
4. _____	Very Important	Important	Not Very Important	Not at all Important
5. _____	Very Important	Important	Not Very Important	Not at all Important
6. _____	Very Important	Important	Not Very Important	Not at all Important
7. _____	Very Important	Important	Not Very Important	Not at all Important
8. _____	Very Important	Important	Not Very Important	Not at all Important

(Long, 2007, p. 65; Robson, 2002, p. 293; Veal, 2006, p. 262).

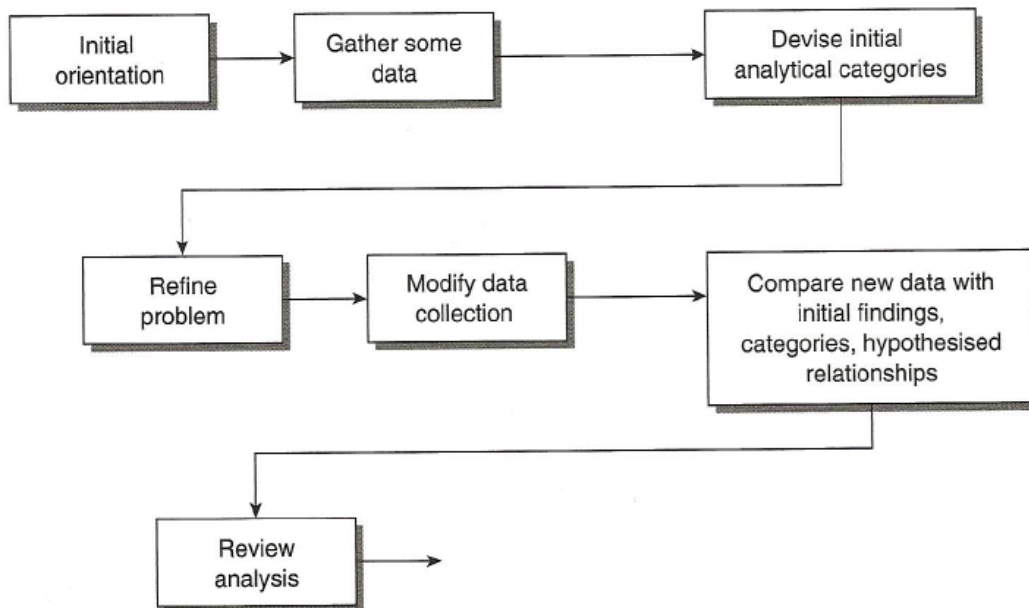
***Survey Phase 3:***

Please comment on the Critical Success Factors identified by the survey respondents. Are there any significant factors missing? Are there any factors listed which need not be on the list? Please feel free to explain.

(Long, 2007, pp. 148, 172; Veal, 2006, pp. 210-213).

**Analysis Approach**

Feedback derived from the initial qualitative online survey would be compiled and disseminated by the researcher to identify and discard any significant discrepancies, deviations, irregularities, extraneous information or irrelevant data. Some of this data may be retained for inclusion in the outlier responses reporting and analysis section of the study. This data reduction activity would assist to address information that does not pertain specifically to the survey needs assessment requirements. The second phase of questioning and analysis would seek to identify recurring themes from the initial qualitative data obtained through the online survey using a content analysis approach. It would be important to correlate and verify conclusions by linking recurring themes across respondents' answers to ensure concluding themes represent a consensus of the respondents. This may be accomplished through quasi-statistical analysis of the online-survey responses in phase two using a summated rating Likert scale. Finally, conclusions drawn from the third phase questionnaire responses would be correlated with the survey responses as a final verification effort through analysis and commentary derived from survey respondents.

**Figure 10. Model for Interactive Data Collection and Analysis**

**Source: Long (2007, p. 148).**

Subsequent outcomes would be presented to identify the critical success factors identified by the expert informants to determine suggested approaches for community planners to consider in the development of mountain bike tourism opportunities. Any significant outlier responses will also be included to ensure that homogenous CSF themes do not exclude non-conforming factors from consideration for planners, as critical success factors may differ for each community (Jiang, Sui, and Cao, 2008, p. 519; Long, 2007, p. 146; Robson, 2002, pp. 289, 458, 479, 507, 511; Veal, 2006, p. 201).

### **Methodology Summary**

The researcher has chosen to draw upon the expertise of sector informants through the use of the Delphi technique with a purposive selection process, utilizing a mixed, qualitative and quantitative questionnaire and analysis methodology. This approach will facilitate convenience,



experience, anonymity, reliability and validity, and expert knowledge towards effectively answering the research questions. Ultimately, this methodology will contribute to determine the salient factors necessary to create a critical mass in building mountain bike tourism to the benefit of communities and salient stakeholders (Briedenhann & Butts, 2006, p. 173; Brüggem & Willems, 2009, p. 377; Donohoe & Needham, 2009, pp. 417, 427; du Plessis & Human, 2007, pp. 14-15, 18-20; Long, 2007, pp. 35, 39, 84; Robson, 2002, p. 265; Vernon, 2009, pp. 71-74, 295; Wilson & Moffat, 2010, p. 289).

### **Shuttle Run, Mt. Prevost, Duncan, B.C.**



Photo Credit: R. Freeman

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Analysis of Results

#### **Quantitative Data Analysis**

The results of this inquiry were analyzed to reveal individual perspectives and the degree of group consensus regarding the identification and prioritization of critical success factors salient to mountain bike tourism and community development. A total of 51 potential expert informants were identified in accordance with guidance from the literature and Delphi technique research study resources, utilizing purposive selection of salient stakeholder groups (see: Sample Frame & Population section; Figure 7. Population for Expert Selection Criteria; and, Figure 8. Mountain Bike Tourism Stakeholder Groups). The inquiry was delivered utilizing an online survey instrument via SurveyMonkey© over a period of five weeks, broken down into three phases. Data collection for Phase 1 / Question 1 resulted in responses from 41 out of 51 invitees with 27 survey response completions resulting in a 65% response rate. In Phase 2 / Question 2, 41 invitations were sent out with 26 survey response completions resulting in a 63% response rate. In Phase 3 / Question 3, 41 invitations were sent out with 18 survey response completions resulting in a 44% response rate. In this single-case analysis encompassing expert informant mountain bike tourism stakeholders within British Columbia, the informants represented the spectrum of stakeholder groups identified in the literature (see: Table 2. Mountain Bike Tourism Stakeholder Informants).

### **Research Question 1 Quantitative Response Analysis**

In Phase 1, the respondents were asked (see: Appendix F.):

- 1) From your perspective, please identify the Critical Success Factors necessary for the development of mountain biking tourism to the benefit of the community and visitors?
- 2) More specifically, which resources may be identified as MOST critical, such as: physical resources, legislative (i.e.: land use policy), fiscal/economic, volunteers, political will, social/cultural, and attributes and entities, and/or other factors?

Responses by individual informants for Question 1 have been quantitatively linked to specific critical success factors (see: Appendix G., Numbers under each CSF represents commentary or mention by corresponding respondent). The Phase 1 exercise resulted in the following significant outcomes when viewed from a quantitative perspective; first, the respondents identified CSF's based upon their respective perspectives; and second, the respondents corroborated the critical success factors identified in the literature (see: Critical Success Factors in Chapter Two, Literature Review). While these responses mirrored the factors derived from the literature (and presented to the respondents in Question 1), the respondents also identified several Outlier factors not included in the Literature CSF list.

Outlier factors identified include: Mountain Bike Culture / Lifestyle / and Events; Funding Sources (Private / Public / In-Kind); and, Mountain Bike Clubs / Schools / Camps / Programs. These outlier factors may underscore the dichotomy between community tourism development factors; as identified in community tourism development literature, and those factors more specifically relevant to mountain bike tourism development, as identified in the mountain bike-specific literature. The Phase 1 research outcomes highlight the broad range of research and resources available for general community tourism research and development, while

emphasizing the paucity of comparable mountain bike-related research and resources, as well as the priorities and perspectives of this representative group of mountain bike sector stakeholders in British Columbia.

### **Research Question 2 Quantitative Response Analysis**

In Phase 2, the respondents were provided with the list of Critical Success Factors identified by the group of respondents from Question 1 and asked:

Please rate the following Critical Success Factors identified by survey respondents as necessary for the development of mountain biking tourism to the benefit of the community and visitors. (see: Appendix I.):

Quantitatively, the levels of consensus among informants across the critical success factors are notable. Every critical success factor was rated by 24 or 25 out of the 26 total participants for Question 2. More significantly, most factors were rated as “Very Important” or “Important”, with the majority rating “Community Champions / Stakeholders / Political Will” as the top CSF. Conversely, “Legislation / Regulatory Frameworks” and “Mtn Bike Clubs / Schools / Camps / Programs” were rated as “Not Very Important”, albeit by a significant minority of respondents (4 and 3 respectively). However, the majority of respondents rated “Legislation / Regulatory Frameworks” and “Mtn Bike Clubs / Schools / Camps / Programs” as “Very Important” or “Important” (21 for each CSF). Therefore, the dissenting respondents for these CSF’s may view other CSF’s as more important from their perspectives or these respondents may require additional information to determine if the lower ratings need to be adjusted upward. Overall, in Phase 2, a general consensus was achieved on the identification, inclusion, and prioritization of the Critical Success Factors.

### **Research Question 3 Quantitative Response Analysis**

In Phase 3, the respondents were asked:

Please comment on the Critical Success Factors identified by the survey respondents. Are there any significant factors missing? Are there any factors listed which need not be on the list? Please feel free to explain.

Responses by individual informants were linked to Critical Success Factors (see Appendix N. Each number represents comment or mention by respondent). While this list facilitates a quantitative analysis of Question 3 responses, qualitative analysis must also be utilized to understand the context of individual informant responses (see: Qualitative Data Analysis section). From a quantitative perspective, the weighting of responses to each Critical Success Factor mirrors the responses from Phases 1 and 2, however; with a smaller sample frame in Phase 3. Outlier responses also appear to mimic priority weighting of those in Phases 1 and 2. Significant discrepancies, deviations, irregularities, extraneous information or irrelevant data were lacking from Phases 1, 2, and 3 (see: Analysis Approach).

### **Summary of Quantitative Data Analysis**

The group of participating informants effectively represented the spectrum of stakeholder groups identified in the literature (see: Table 2.; and Wilson & Moffat, 2010, p. 289) and responses by individual informants have been quantitatively linked to specific critical success factors identified in the literature (see: Appendices H and N). The respondents corroborated the critical success factors identified in the literature and also identified CSF's based upon their respective perspectives, as shown by the introduction of outlier responses. While community

and mountain bike stakeholder CSF's were confirmed, the dichotomy or priorities between community tourism CSF's may differ somewhat from those of mountain bike stakeholders. Some minor dissention was evident, however; a general consensus was achieved overall. There were no significant quantitative discrepancies, deviations, irregularities, extraneous information or irrelevant data identified.

### **Qualitative Data Analysis**

#### **Research Question 1 Qualitative Response Analysis**

Data collection was initiated utilizing a mixed qualitative/quantitative research phase to have respondents: 1) identify critical success factors, and; 2) more specifically, identify which resources may be selected as most critical. Therefore, while qualitatively identifying the CSF's, respondents also made an attempt to quantitatively prioritize their initial lists. Some guidance on CSF's was provided in Question 1 (physical resources, legislative (i.e.: land use policy), fiscal/economic, volunteers, political will, social/cultural, and attributes and entities, and/or other factors?), however; respondents effectively identified and corroborated the comprehensive list of CSF's presented in the literature. Furthermore, respondents also expanded the list to include several outlier CSF's more specifically relevant to mountain bike tourism (see: Appendices F. and G.). This mixed methods approach effectively confirmed the guidance provided in the literature by Patterson (2000, p. 108) and Davies (2003, pp. 104), especially in the identification of subjective moments, including the non-conforming outlier responses, which the opportunity to acknowledge interrelationships between the qualitative and quantitative measures.

### **Research Question 2 Qualitative Response Analysis**

In Question 2, respondents were asked to rate the critical success factors compiled from Question 1 in a quantitative manner (see: Research Question 2 Quantitative Response Analysis), therefore qualitative analysis is not applicable to this phase of the study.

### **Research Question 3 Qualitative Response Analysis**

In Question 3, respondents were provided the opportunity to make open commentary on the research questions and the results derived from Questions 1 and 2 (see. Appendix K.). There were 19 respondents to Question 3 (versus 27 and 26 respectively for Questions 1 and 2), with 4 respondents providing little or no commentary on Question 3, leaving 15 significant responses. Approximately 58% of the respondents made comment that they agree with the CSF's, both as identified and generally as prioritized, with some outstanding exceptions. Conversely, many of the respondents made either a focused or limited commentary.

Discrepancies in the priorities were presented by some respondents with obvious polarized opinions (for example, see: Appendix K., Respondent 6). Interestingly, some respondents expressed surprise or concern that certain factors were rated lower than others, despite the majority of factors being rated as “Very Important” or “Important”. Specifically, these include “Legislation / Regulatory Frameworks” and “Mountain Bike Clubs / Schools / Camps / Programs”, as mentioned by Respondents 2, 11, and 14 who stated that these factors were rated lower overall than they believe they should have been rated. For example, regarding Legislation / Regulatory Frameworks, Respondent #11 stated:

I am quite surprised to see that legislation/regulatory frameworks ranked low(er) on importance ... because without proper legislation and regulatory frameworks a trail network cannot be established and any forward movement of the mountain bike community has the potential to be counterproductive by the risk of having trails closed and riding areas logged...

Whereas, Respondent #19 stated: “Legislation: it is interesting this one emerged as least important. I can see it's of less importance to mountain bike tourists, but I think it is very important to communities (from a liability perspective).” The respondents reaffirm that Legislation / Regulatory Frameworks hold a prominent place amongst the critical success factors previously identified in the literature (Tourism BC, 2009, pp. 46-47; SMBDC, 2009, pp. 3, 11, 13, 39).

Regarding Mountain Bike Clubs / Schools / Camps / Programs, Respondent #2 stated:

...In our experience (Camps / Programs are) one of the most important parts of having a solid mountain bike infrastructure. Programs, whether community or resort operated, build up the base of future riders, be it kids or adults. Programs introduce new riders safely to the sport, insuring long term involvement by those riders...

Whereas, Respondent # 9 stated: “...the existence and support for youth mountain programs is likely directly correlated to the extent of mountain bike culture in the community.” Conversely, Respondent #19 stated: “Schools and camps are great tourism products, but aren't as key to overall success.” Again, the respondents reaffirm that Mountain Bike Clubs / Schools / Camps / Programs also hold a prominent place amongst the critical success factors previously identified in the literature (Tourism BC, 2009, pp. 14, 22-26; SMBDC, 2009, pp. 2, 19, 23-26).

Respondents 13 and 19 made the most concerted efforts towards commenting on the comprehensive list of factors with a relisting of the CSF's, highlighting their beliefs in how the CSF's should be prioritized. However, the majority of respondents (58% as mentioned above) made commentary confirming that the list is comprehensive and that all the factors are



important, if not critical towards the successful development of mountain bike tourism (see: Respondents 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, and 19). Commentary from Respondents 13 and 19 revealed a more detailed approach which could more effectively be utilized towards building a CSF framework for planning purposes.

Overall, Question 3 clearly revealed perspectives in consensus, however; more importantly, highlighted some outlier responses unique to individual respondents. This again reinforces the concept of capturing individual subjective moments, highlighting alternative perspectives (Davies, 2003, p. 107). While consensus may typically be a desirable outcome, as defined by the Delphi research method, unique perspectives may facilitate innovative approaches to problem-solving. Furthermore, triangulating the responses for these critical success factors with the secondary research derived from the literature further correlates the importance of the CSF's identified in this study. Analyzing outlier approaches may assist community tourism planners to appraise a broader range of potential factors which may be valuable for consideration, dependent upon specific community environmental factors, including: local politics, policy and legislative variances, latent or salient stakeholder influence, or other locally significant influences (Jiang, Sui, and Cao, 2008, p. 519).

## **Summary of Qualitative Data Analysis**

Viewing respondents' answers to the research questions from a qualitative perspective readily revealed a general consensus that the critical success factors identified throughout the three survey questions were valid. Furthermore, the respondents universally agreed that most of the CSF's were "Very Important" or "Important" with some respondents questioning why two of the CSF's were rated lower. These relatively small, albeit significant differences of opinion reveal outlier and/or individual perspectives as predicted by the literature and the methodological approach. Significantly, subjective opinions, strategy approaches, and priorities may highlight unique and innovative approaches to community tourism planning. By layering Qualitative and Quantitative methodologies within this mixed-methods study, data derived from the respondents using a Delphi approach have enabled the researcher to align the critical success factors from the literature and other previous research with those of the respondents; present predicted outlier responses, and extract subjective respondent perspectives and priorities (Long, 2007, p. 65; Robson, 2002, pp. 106, 179, 351, 456; Veal, 2006, pp. 54, 99, 196).

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **Discussion**

The intention of this research study is to advance the pool of knowledge available beyond the previous research to better understand the Critical Success Factors necessary for communities to develop a sustainable mountain bike tourism strategy. The core value of the data derived from the informants in this Delphi study reveals the expertise, perceptions and experience of the

respondents. By gathering these opinions from this representative group of sector informants, the achievement of a general consensus amongst these informants has validated the research methodology through the mixed-methods qualitative and quantitative data collection and data analysis approach utilized (Brüggen & Willems, 2009, p. 377; Donohoe & Needham, 2009, pp. 430, 434; du Plessis & Human, 2007, p. 20). In order to effectively translate the key findings of this research into a tangible planning framework, the researcher has applied the data collection results in conjunction with the BC Community Development Assessment Framework to the development of the Conceptual Framework for Community-Based Mountain Bike Tourism Development (see: Appendices G & I; Figure 3; Figure 12). The framework is presented in an example using a case-study approach to a community in British Columbia currently engaged in the emerging stages of mountain bike tourism development (see: Appendix O.; Robson, 2002, pp. 178, 511).

### **Answering the Research Questions**

The informants participating in this research study were selected through a purposive sample frame methodology to draw upon their expertise and experience in mountain biking, mountain bike tourism, community tourism development, community development, and/or a specific knowledge-set relevant to this study. As a result, the informants required minimal prompting to corroborate the critical success factors identified in the literature, while also introducing and/or highlighting those CSF's more specific to mountain bike tourism development. Furthermore, the informants subsequently presented their respective perspectives by prioritizing the CSF's in order, or negating any need for prioritization. Essentially, the

informants achieved consensus on the CSF's they identified, while reaffirming the CSF's identified in earlier findings. While some CSF's were identified as outlier factors and were given a lower priority by some of the informants, the majority of informants reinforced the importance of those CSF as critical for inclusion on the list (see: Research Question 3 Qualitative Response Analysis). Furthermore, the outlier CSF's were triangulated with data derived from the literature as critical for inclusion in the list of critical success factors.

### Summary of Findings

- Research outcomes highlight the broad range of research and resources available for general community tourism research and development, while emphasizing the paucity of comparable mountain bike-related research and resources.
- While the basic elements necessary for mountain bike tourism create a foundation for planning (see: Figure 1.), the more comprehensive list of CSF's revealed in this study are deemed essential to develop a sustainable mountain bike tourism development strategy.
- Expert Informants identified the Critical Success Factors necessary for effective mountain bike tourism development and corroborated these findings with the CSF's revealed in the literature.
- While some CSF priorities may vary amongst respondents, all of the CSFs identified by the informants were confirmed to be "Important" or "Very Important" and were triangulated with the literature as critical. Variability of priorities may depend upon resources available and local circumstances.
- Significant Outlier CSF's identified include: Legislation / Regulatory Frameworks; and, Mountain Bike Clubs / Schools / Camps / Programs (see: Research Question 3 Qualitative Response Analysis). In conjunction with the basic elements and the fundamental CSF's, these factors are important drivers for future growth (SMBDC, 2009, pp. 2-4, 9) and have been confirmed as critical factors.
- More research needs to be done to determine why some of the CSF's received lower priority ratings amongst some respondents, while still being deemed critical by consensus. Specifically, these include: "Legislation / Regulatory Frameworks" and "Mountain Bike Clubs / Schools / Camps / Programs"

- Consideration of outlier approaches may assist community planners to appraise a broader range of potential factors, dependent upon specific community environmental factors (Jiang, Sui, and Cao, 2008, p. 519).
- Outlier factors and/or individual perspectives as predicted by the literature and the methodological approach are significant for consideration. Subjective opinions, strategy approaches, and priorities may highlight unique and innovative approaches to community tourism planning, specifically for mountain bike tourism strategy development.
- The CSF's may support generalizability across relatively mature communities and regions, while the effects of variables may be amplified in lesser developed regions (see: Generalizability below). For example, the Bike Parks BC marketing consortium shows the significance and success of a mature, collaborative marketing cluster as does 7Stanes in Scotland (see: Destination Marketing / Management, in the literature review section). Conversely, Crowsnest Pass provides a representative example of an emerging cluster.

Overall, planners using a strategic planning framework should compare available local assets and resources and apply them to the comprehensive list of Critical Success Factors. Linear planning processes may typically start with the more basic elements and evolve into contingent CSF's. Non-contingent or mature CSF's should also be considered in early planning even if those factors are not exercised in the initial implementation stages. Local conditions and resources will determine which factors will be deemed contingent versus non-contingent, however; through stakeholder collaboration, some non-contingent factors may be reclassified as contingent and become salient in early planning (such as: Legislation / Regulatory Frameworks").

In the case of this study, Legislation / Regulatory Frameworks received a slightly lower / outlier rating in comparison to most of the other CSF's, albeit with some respondents defending the importance of these factors as critical. While it may be difficult to speculate on the reasons that these factors were rated slightly lower by some of the respondents, the literature provides

evidence that Legislation / Regulatory Frameworks have proven critical to planning processes in mature clusters. For example, in the Sea to Sky Corridor encompassing the region from North Vancouver to Pemberton (including Whistler), land use planning and opportunities for trail tenure acquisition need to consider a broad array of land owners, land managers, private and public sector entities. In this instance, these include: Crown Land, Provincial Parks, Municipal Parks, BC Hydro, CN Rail, BC Ministry of Transportation, Private Lands, and First Nations Lands. While addressing multiple levels of government, private sector groups, First Nations, and other salient agencies and stakeholders may be challenging and time-consuming, the Sea to Sky Trail Strategy provides guidance on how planners may approach these challenges (BCMTSA, 2008; Cascade Environmental Resource Group Ltd, 2006, pp. 18-25). This approach is also in evidence in the Scottish Mountain Biking National Strategic Framework, emphasizing the value of legislative / regulatory frameworks (SMBDC, 2009, pp. 3-4). The Scottish example shows the advanced state of their legislative / regulatory frameworks in comparison to British Columbia. This may be attributed to the rapid growth of the sport and the relatively dense population in conjunction to inbound tourism from Continental Europe (SMBDC, 2009, pp. 3-4, 16).

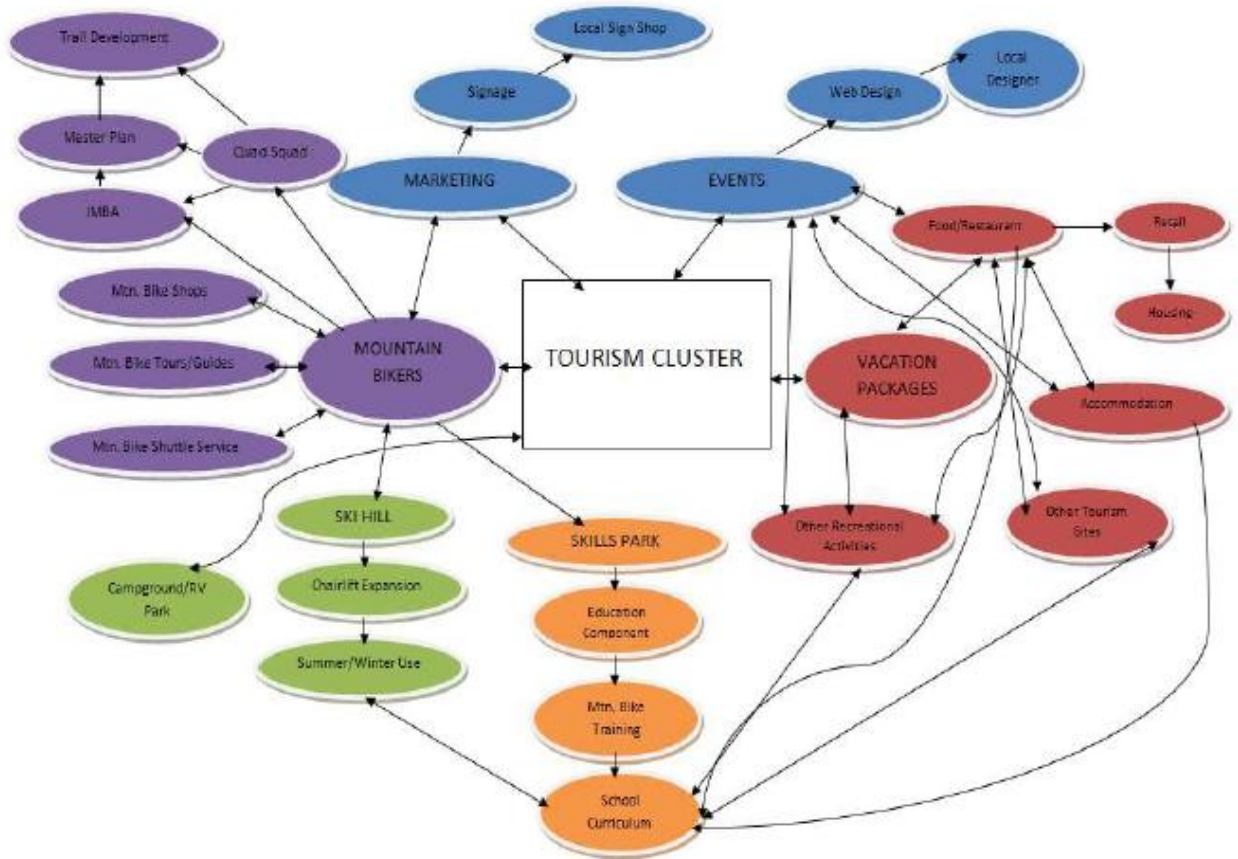
Mountain Bike Clubs / Schools / Camps / Programs also received a similar rating priority by study respondents, however; in British Columbia, a number of local mountain bike clubs have been successful in addressing insurance, risk management, liability, and trail-standards requirements by taking a leadership role to champion a collaborative strategy with local municipalities and regional districts (Tourism BC, 2008, p. 27). Prominent examples include the South Island Mountain Bike Society in Victoria (Scott Mitchell, President, SIMBS, personal communication, March, 2010) and the Squamish Off-Road Cycling Association (Todd Pope, Trails Coordinator, District of Squamish, personal communication, March, 2010). Again, the

literature provides evidence that these outlier factors hold the same stature as other CSF`s in the development and execution of a sustainable mountain bike tourism strategy with mountain bike clubs also addressing trail etiquette, advocacy, and sustainable management (Tourism BC, 2008, p. 27; Tourism BC, 2010, p. 30).

### **Generalizability**

In this enquiry, the rationale for the methodological approach has been to explain and understand activities in the circumstances specific to mountain bike tourism development and communities in British Columbia. “However, this does not preclude some kind of generalizability beyond the specific setting studied” (Robson, 2002, p. 177). Furthermore, Robson cites Sim (1998, p. 350): “Here the data gained from a particular study provide theoretical insights which possess a sufficient degree of generality or universality to allow their projection to other contexts or situations”. The researcher believes this approach may be effectively replicated in other regions with more mature mountain bike tourism development clusters and strategies, including: the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Spain, France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States; notably in Utah, Colorado, West Virginia and Oregon (Gajda, 2008, p. 37; Koepke, 2005, pp. 15-21). Lesser developed regions or emerging clusters may need to focus on more the basic elements for mountain bike tourism (see: Figure. 1; MBTA, 2010) until they are able to build a sufficient critical mass of momentum to have all of the critical success factors identified in this study come into play, as represented in the Crowsnest Pass cluster:

**Figure 11. Crowsnest Pass Tourism Cluster Development Chart**



**Source: Community Futures Crowsnest Pass, 2010, p. 13**

The Crowsnest Pass tourism cluster development chart is an example of an early-stage planning construct intended to address the scope of planning strategy, including short, medium, and long-term time-frames. The chart incorporates essential elements (see: Figure 1) as well as many of the contingent critical success factors, however; select non-contingent CSF's (such as Destination Marketing / Management) may come into play more in the medium and long-term as cluster activities mature and tourism product becomes more developed and the cluster builds a critical-mass of momentum (see: Figure 12, below).



### **Recommendation for Practice**

While results from this research may be potentially useful for communities and planners toward building a sustainable mountain bike tourism strategy, as shown by informant responses to the research questions (see: Analysis of Results), the conceptual framework (see: Figure 12.), and the North Cowichan case-study (see: Appendix O.), each community must carefully assess the critical success factors identified in order to clearly identify how CSF's present themselves in consideration of local circumstances. An inventory of assets, resources, stakeholders, champions, and other CSFs should be compiled along with an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats which may impact the effective execution of a sustainable mountain bike tourism development strategy (LinkBC, 2010, p. 44). A strategy framework may then be developed in a measured application in alignment with available resources, keeping in mind that others have taken this path before and, just like the expert informants who have participated in this enquiry, assistance and resources are available to those communities who leverage internal stakeholders and outside expertise. Neighboring communities often have a role to play and may provide additional resources and networking support to the broader benefit of the region as a whole (Scott, Baggio, & Cooper, 2008, p. 106). This is particularly evident in the Municipality of North Cowichan where the primary cycling and mountain biking strategic focus is on the development of a rails-to-trails infrastructure foundation. In this case, these trails at the perimeters of the community intersect with those of adjoining municipalities and regional districts (see: Appendix O).

The questions answered by the informants in this study were successfully answered, corroborated and reaffirmed by the respondents, however; community planners will need to

delve deeper into their unique community circumstances while seeking local and externally networked resources in order to more effectively build a strategic mountain bike tourism plan. The lines between “internal” and “external” network resources can often be blurred with seemingly external stakeholders often holding a stake and supporting the success of community outcomes. Scott, Baggio, & Cooper (2008, p. 101) explain this construct:

In a global economy with increased pressure on SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises), partnerships and networks of enterprises are inevitable. Innovation, cooperation and collaboration are essential to achieve competitiveness, and these competitive advantages can be found at the local level: knowledge exchange and relationships among stakeholders (Smeral, 1998). Considering that through a cluster, a group of SMEs can compete globally by cooperating locally, networks and clusters in tourism have experienced a dramatic growth, bringing benefits such as flexibility, a share of valuable marketing information, innovation, opportunity to enter other networks and clusters on a national level and across borders, resource development and knowledge transfer between stakeholders (Novelli et al., 2006: 1143).

Essentially, it is all about leveraging collaborative partnerships.

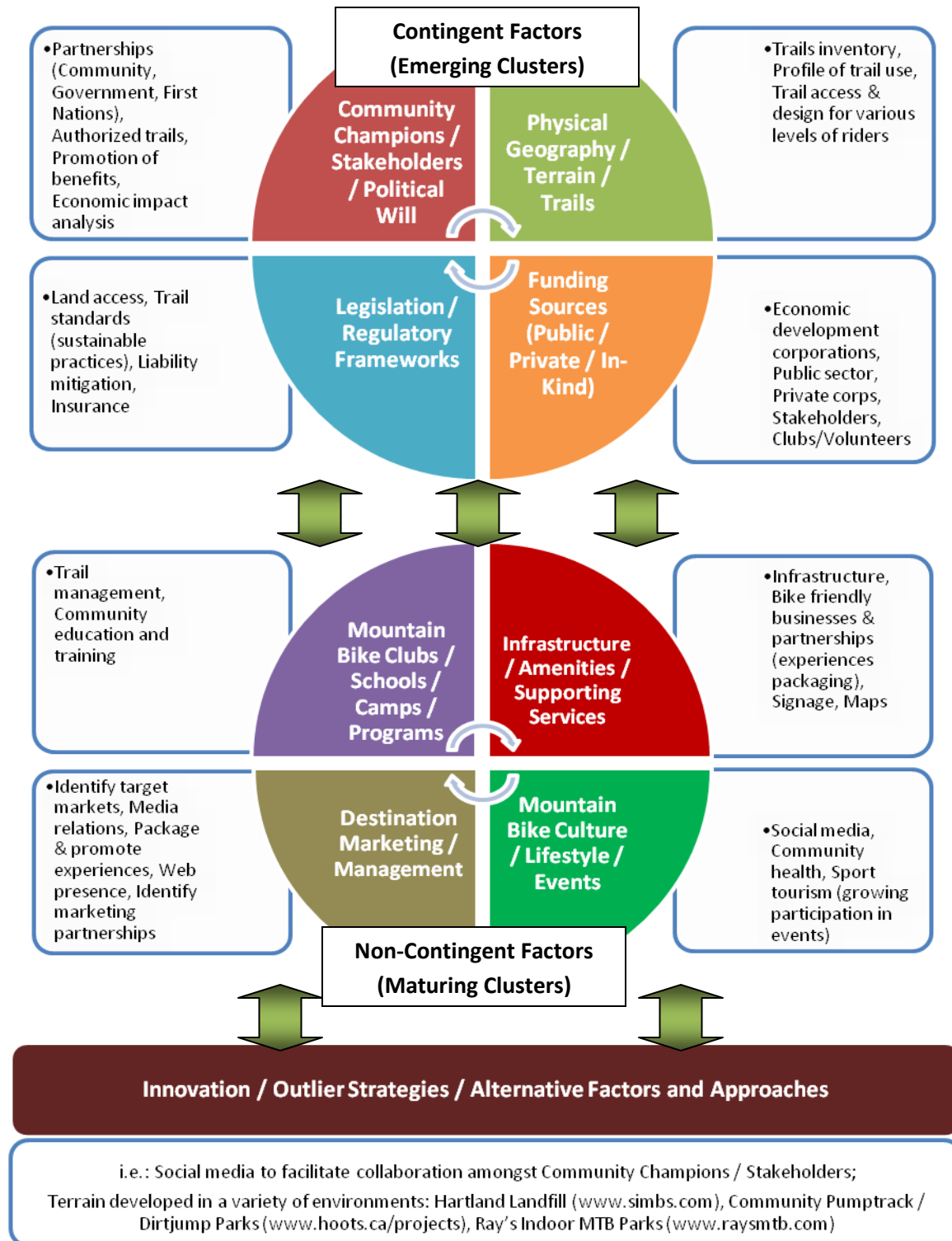
### **Conceptual Framework for Community-Based Mountain Bike Tourism Development**

A conceptual framework for the successful development of a community-based mountain bike tourism plan may be utilized by applying the research-derived Critical Success Factors to the BC Community Development Assessment Framework using the CSFs in a staged approach (see Appendices G & I; Figure 3). Contingent Factors are indicative of the basic elements of mountain bike tourism (see: Figure 1) and may be used as a starting point for emerging clusters, while Non-Contingent Factors may be more prevalent in a maturing cluster. However, all factors may be variable, dependent upon local conditions. This Conceptual Framework may come into play for emerging clusters intent on mapping-out long term objectives, while maturing clusters may use the framework as a planning bridge towards achieving planning and operational

efficacy. For example, the Scottish Mountain Bike Cluster Development Structure (see: Figure 2) may provide some planning insights into the strategies and approaches of a maturing cluster, therefore; a new hybrid model (combining elements of Figure 2 & Figure 12) may reveal the next steps for research and planning development beyond this conceptual framework.

**Figure 12. Conceptual Framework for Community-Based Mountain Bike Tourism Development** (see below):

**Conceptual Framework for Community-Based Mountain Bike Tourism Development**



### **Applying the Conceptual Framework in Practice**

Tangible use of the Conceptual Framework may be applied in a staged approach using a process-oriented strategy to develop a relevant localized planning model. Using the Municipality of North Cowichan as an example (see: Appendix O), the literature and the survey respondents revealed that the primary step in this process would be to review the Contingent Factors relevant to the locale. This would be facilitated by identifying salient stakeholders who may be considered Community Champions to lead the charge in getting motivated players to the table, develop political will, and create a collaborative community vision for the development of a community mountain bike tourism strategy.

Community planners should then compare available local assets and resources and integrate them to a comprehensive list of Critical Success Factors. Linear planning processes may typically start with the more basic elements and evolve into contingent CSF's. Non-contingent or mature CSF's should also be considered in early planning even if those factors may not necessarily be exercised in the initial implementation stages. Local conditions and resources will determine which factors will be deemed contingent versus non-contingent, however; through stakeholder collaboration, some non-contingent factors may be reclassified as contingent and become salient in early planning (such as: Legislation / Regulatory Frameworks”).

Practically speaking, subsequent analysis of existing trails, cycling activities, and infrastructure can assist to reveal current levels of activity, as well as significant issues and potential development opportunities. A simultaneous review of relevant legislation and regulatory frameworks may identify access restrictions, guidelines, and additional stakeholders to integrate into the process. In North Cowichan's circumstance, for example, much of the public

land within community boundaries in owned by the municipality and managed under the community forestry strategy, thus potentially reducing some land management challenges.

Consideration of funding sources may identify readily available local resources, such as in-kind volunteer labour for trail management provided by a mountain bike club, as well as potential community partners for access to fiscal resources (i.e.: Community Futures, Service Clubs). Furthermore, various levels of government and NGO's may have community development initiatives in play which may contribute to funding requirements for infrastructure development or marketing (i.e.: Regional Districts, Provincial Government, Western Economic Diversification). However, financial partners may not be ready to invest in a strategy until the plan has achieved some traction. This does not denigrate the need to incorporate short, medium, and longer-term funding and in-kind requirements in the early planning stages.

Incorporation of contingent factors into a clear planning framework may be enough to initiate the development of a planning strategy, however; early consideration of non-contingent critical success factors may identify resources which could be put into play earlier than would initially be thought. For example, the running of a high-profile mountain biking event (such as the BC Bike Race; [www.bcbikerace.com](http://www.bcbikerace.com), which previously ran through the North Cowichan region) may provide the opportunity to execute non-contingent factors earlier in the process (i.e.: local mountain bike club support, marketing activities, DMO support). Furthermore, a more comprehensive consideration of factors within the conceptual framework may assist planners to build comparative advantage by ensuring that critical resources and infrastructure are in development to meet community needs and visitor expectations. It was also revealed in this study that outlier factors and innovative approaches which may not have normally been

considered in a planning framework may support the development of competitive advantage by highlighting unique attributes which may not be available in competitive destinations.

Later in the planning and execution process (as in the case of a maturing cluster), it will be important for planners to regularly review the plan, assets and state of resources to ensure that the plan is on course. Periodic audit of the strategy will assist planners to check performance measures and integrate medium and longer-term planning stages. Circumstances tend to be dynamic and initial strategies and ongoing tactics may need to be revised in order to accommodate new and emerging issues, challenges and opportunities. Overall, the development of a community mountain bike tourism plan based upon a comprehensive sustainable planning strategy which utilizes the Conceptual Framework for Community-Based Mountain Bike Tourism Development will provide more tangible outcomes for community stakeholders and visitors alike.

### **Limitations and Validity**

Limitations inherent in this research study need to be acknowledged. This is the researchers' first foray into developing a mixed methodology Delphi technique study. Quantitative analysis may have been relatively straight-forward, however; qualitative analysis may be subject to researcher bias, therefore; a mixed methodology was utilized enhanced by detailed data collection and reporting on the evidence in order to reduce validity threats. The researcher also attempted to adhere to "a fairly classic set of analytic moves" including: coding, commenting, identifying patterns/themes etc., presenting patterns/themes "to help focus the next

wave of data collection”, “elaborating... (on and) linking... generalizations to a formalized body of knowledge in the form of constructs or theories” (Robson, 2002, pp. 106, 459). Additionally, the opinions presented by the expert informants, selected through a purposive sample frame approach, are empirically supported through use of the Delphi technique, however; due to the diverse nature of stakeholder interests within a community, expert opinion may not at times reflect the true interests of a latent stakeholder group or a stakeholder group within a community that gains salience (Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997, p. 867). Furthermore, the categorization of qualitative data into specific critical success factors may be open to individual interpretation, as was demonstrated by participant responses in Phase 3 of the survey.

### **Future Research Considerations**

With a dearth of relevant mountain bike tourism specific research resources available, opportunities exist for further research into the area of study considering the salient critical success factors integral to the success of a sustainable community mountain bike tourism development strategy. Evidence exists indicating that the amount of available research into community tourism development and mountain bike tourism is increasing, especially as a result of increasing positive social, cultural and economic outcomes resulting from the growth of mountain bike tourism (B.C. MTSA, 2008, p. 10; Scottish Mountain Bike Development Consortium, 2009, p. 9). The growth in mountain bike tourism development continues to build critical mass in British Columbia with collaborative efforts between mountain bike and community stakeholders using mountain bike tourism to grow and manage positive social, cultural, environmental, and economic outcomes, however; formal research into community



mountain bike tourism development is still in its infancy (Tourism BC, 2006, p. 5; Tourism BC, 2008, pp. 12, 15). Utilization of the proposed Conceptual Framework for Community-Based Mountain Bike Tourism Development (see: Figure 3.) may assist communities and stakeholders to more effectively execute a successful planning strategy while assisting future researchers to delve further into analysis of the role of Critical Success Factors and the Conceptual Framework.

### **Summary of Discussion**

The evolution and growth of mountain biking as a tourism product in British Columbia communities comes as a result of the combined efforts of public and private-sector stakeholders within a community collaborating to achieve co-developed goals and objectives. In the case of mountain biking and communities, collaboration with locally competitive stakeholders and communities may at first appear counter-intuitive; however, the academic literature and results from this research provide evidence that resources, guidance and strategies are available to be used as guide posts towards the development of a competitive cluster of community stakeholders intend on developing mountain bike tourism for the benefit of visitors and residents alike. Nurturing community development through public sector investments and resources, in conjunction with private sector interests can create a diversity of product appealing to a wide range of potential participants. For communities developing mountain bike tourism in British Columbia, the next challenges remain to maintain the building of momentum while ensuring the sustainability of social, cultural, environmental, and fiscal factor attributes and outcomes to the benefit of communities and stakeholders. Consideration of locally prevalent Critical Success Factors and the development and execution of a community mountain bike tourism strategy

using the CSFs with a structured, conceptual framework may assist community planners and stakeholders to achieve successful outcomes for community participants and visitors alike.

**Burnt Bridge, Cowichan Lake, B.C.**



Photo Credit: R. Freeman

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A. Definitions

#### Cluster:

“The “competitive cluster” concept is a strategic set of activities and services organized as an effective ...tourism supply chain” (Hawkins, 2002, p. 3).

#### Critical Success Factors:

“Critical success factors may be defined as the limited number of areas in which satisfactory results may ensure successful competitive performance for organizations, entities or communities.” (Rockart & Bullen, 1981, p. 5).

#### Mountain Bike Tourism:

Mountain bike tourism includes an array of products and packages that appeal to a broad range of biking interests from families seeking safe guided experiences in scenic environments to hard core mountain bikers seeking personal challenge, thrills and adventure.

Mountain bike tourism products should offer unique opportunities and rewarding experiences on authorized trail systems. Products offered must have the ability to capture the imagination and motivate consumers to invest the time and money to travel to the destination. Mountain bike products must also consistently meet the expectations of the participants and adequately meet industry standards for safety and management practices if they are to succeed over the long term.

The...list of possible mountain biking products that can be offered (depend) on what resources and support are available at the local level.

Source: MBTA, 2010

#### Sustainable Tourism:

“Sustainable tourism is tourism that is ‘economically viable, but does not destroy the resources on which the future of tourism will depend, notably the physical environment, and the social fabric of the host community’ (Swarbrooke, 1999, p. 13).”

Source: Ritchie and Crouch, 2003, p. 36

**Appendix B. EMAIL INVITATION – Research Project**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

I am writing to request your participation in a research study to identify the critical factors necessary to support mountain biking and community tourism development in British Columbia. This project is part of the requirement for a Masters Degree in Tourism Management at Royal Roads University.

Your name was chosen as a prospective participant because you meet specific criteria identifying you as knowledgeable, holding expertise in the adventure tourism sector, and/or community development. Experts in the sector in British Columbia have been revealed during the literature review phase of this study from publically available documentation, from previous personal contact, or on the recommendation of others.

If you decide to participate, your participation in this research project will consist of a three-phase online survey.

Your assistance with this research study would be greatly appreciated and is expected to be of benefit to the tourism sector and communities in British Columbia.

Please advise me if you would like to participate in this study or would like to receive additional information on the project.

Thank you,

Ray Freeman  
250-744-5653

Ray.Freeman@RoyalRoads.ca or LeftCoastInsights@shaw.ca  
<http://ca.linkedin.com/in/rayfreeman>

### **Appendix C. Online Survey Preamble**

My name is Ray Freeman, and this research project is part of the requirement for a Masters Degree in Tourism Management at Royal Roads University. My credentials can be established by telephoning Dr. Brian White, Director of the School of Tourism & Hospitality Management at 250-391-2500 ext. 4769 or Brian.White@RoyalRoads.ca

The objective of my research project is to identify and explore the Critical Success Factors necessary to build community tourism capacity through the creation and management of mountain biking infrastructure, supporting services and amenities, legislative policies and frameworks, and collaborating clustered stakeholders.

Your name was chosen as a prospective participant because you meet specific criteria identifying you as knowledgeable, holding expertise in the adventure tourism sector, and/or community tourism development. Experts in the sector in British Columbia have been revealed during the literature review phase of this study by analyzing select resources which have previously attempted to identify critical success factors and/or mountain bike tourism development interests relevant for community tourism development. The type of data to be collected will include opinions and views of subjects relevant to answering the research questions.

My research project will consist of this survey and each phase of the survey is foreseen to require about one hour of your time to complete, for a total of about three hours combined to complete. I am asking knowledgeable, expert industry participants to identify and prioritize critical success factors integral to the development of mountain bike tourism opportunities, with a specific focus on those factors salient and beneficial to participating communities and associated stakeholders.

The data will only be used for the purposes of this research project. The data will be disclosed only in the context of answering the research questions of the research project.

A copy of the final report will be published and archived in the RRU Library. I will also be sharing my final research findings with prospective participants and interested stakeholders, upon request.

The researcher does not anticipate any actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest on the part of the investigator of this study.

The information you provide will be summarized, in an anonymous format, in the body of the final report. At no time will any specific comments be attributed to any individual unless your specific agreement has been obtained beforehand. All documentation will be kept strictly confidential. Raw data will be retained in a secure manner for up to three months following completion and acceptance of the graduate paper by Royal Roads University; afterwards, the raw data will be securely destroyed. Data/information will not be retained pertaining to an individual who has

withdrawn at any time.

In the event that your survey response is processed and stored in the United States, you are advised that its governments, courts, or law enforcement and regulatory agencies may be able to obtain disclosure of the data through the laws of the United States.

You are not compelled to participate in this research project. If you do choose to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without prejudice. Similarly, if you choose not to participate in this research project, this information will also be maintained in confidence.

Please feel free to contact me at any time should you have additional questions regarding the project and its outcomes. Participants will also have the opportunity to request a verbal or written debriefing afterwards by contacting the researcher.

Please contact me at:

Name: Ray Freeman

Email: [Ray.Freeman@RoyalRoads.ca](mailto:Ray.Freeman@RoyalRoads.ca) or [LeftCoastInsights@Shaw.ca](mailto:LeftCoastInsights@Shaw.ca)

Telephone: 250-744-5653

Your completion of this survey will constitute your informed consent.

**Appendix D. Letter of Support – Municipality of North Cowichan**



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7030 Trans Canada Highway, Box 278,  
Duncan, BC  
V9L 3X4  
Telephone: (250) 746-3124  
Fax: (250) 746-3143  
[www.northcowichan.ca](http://www.northcowichan.ca)

February 8, 2011

File: 8810-60 MTB

Mr. Ray Freeman  
1220 Knockan Place  
VICTORIA, BC V9B 1M4

Dear Mr. Freeman

With regard to your letter dated January 2, 2011, please accept this letter as support of your thesis “Mountain Bike Tourism and Community Development – Critical Success Factor for the Future”. North Cowichan’s Forestry Department will support your thesis project by offering:

- In-kind support of the Forestry Department staff and resources.

Please be aware that, at this time, North Cowichan is not interested in a public consultation project on mountain biking within the Municipal Forest Reserve.

Sincerely

Darrell J. Frank  
Municipal Forester

[frank@northcowichan.ca](mailto:frank@northcowichan.ca)

pc Forestry Advisory Committee



**Appendix E. Email Link to Phase 1 Online Survey Question**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for replying to my request to have you participate in this survey.

Please review the attached Letter of Invitation and let me know if you have any questions.

After reading the letter, please proceed to the following link:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ZKKLP5Q>

The password to enter the survey is: royalroads (this is case sensitive...please use all lower case).

If you have any additional questions or problems with the survey, please contact me.

Thank you for participating in the survey!

Cheers,

Ray Freeman

250-744-5653

Ray.Freeman@RoyalRoads.ca or LeftCoastInsights@shaw.ca

<http://ca.linkedin.com/in/rayfreeman>

**Appendix F. Online Survey Phase 1 Responses March 3rd – 27 Responses**

- 1) From your perspective, please identify the Critical Success Factors necessary for the development of mountain biking tourism to the benefit of the community and visitors?
- 2) More specifically, which resources may be identified as MOST critical, such as: physical resources, legislative (i.e.: land use policy), fiscal/economic, volunteers, political will, social/cultural, and attributes and entities, and/or other factors?

1)

1. Product is the most important factor. Trails that are well designed, well built, including signage and mapping, and well maintained/managed. 2. If the trails are to be located on government land they need government support - legislative and financial to facilitate the design and construction of such trails. The government will benefit from the taxes raised by the increased business levels. 3. If the trails are located on private land and are a part of an existing business (resort, bike park) will need financial commitment from the corporation to be able to develop trails that will be financially sustainable. There should be some government funds available for start up of these ventures as they greatly add to the success of tourism in BC. 3. Involvement by local bike clubs (WORCA in Whistler, PORCA in Pemberton, SORCA in Squamish and NSMBA in North Van.) is extremely important as they raise awareness, involve their members in trail work and provide a political medium in lobbying efforts for trail support. 4. Clubs and bike parks should provide programs that introduce new riders and kids to the sport. For that to be successful the locality will need trails that are suitable for those levels of riders (re. point # 1.) 5. Mountain Biking has proven to be an economic engine for many communities by providing revenues, jobs and becoming social attractants. There are people from all over the world that make Whistler their home for the summer because of the bike park. BC is now known worldwide as a premier mountain biking destination attracting riders from around the world. BC Government could do a better job to support this form of tourism through financial support and marketing. A good example of that support was our project in Burns Lake where the government financed the construction of new trails by displaced forestry workers. The trails have facilitated the expansion of their Kids programs attracting more that 50 kids to bike riding. It has also increased the tourism by attracting riders from outside of the region requiring accommodation and associated services. The trails have also served as a marketing tool for the town as the trails have been featured in Bike Magazine and various on line media.

2/21/11 4:44PM

2)

-strong community of trail builders, volunteers and riders -a local club which conducts trail building/maintenance, events, races and group rides -accurate maps and accompanying signage -venues which allow for creative interpretations of a landscape through trail design, generally on publicly owned land or land leased for forestry -commercial amenities nearby, i.e.; a town or village -support from and recognition by local businesses, i.e.; bicycle shops being the hub

around which volunteers and contributors revolve -political support for amenities such as bike paths and skills parks -mountain biking courses offered to students by middle and high schools - affordable overnight accommodations, campgrounds -affordable and healthy food choices available from a variety of restaurants etc.

2/21/11 9:02PM

3)

- A community mountain bike tourism champion - Political will - Provincial Economic Impact Assessment (above and beyond the Sea to Sky Assessment) - Funds for trail development and marketing - Authorization of Trails

2/21/11 10:29PM

4)

Terrain is key. Politicians and a community that view biking as not only a healthy resource but as gateway to eco tourism is a must before anything can happen. Focusing on one local project, bike park or a fitness park as i like to call them and let the local community develop programs around them instead of large grand ideas where the local population does not see the direct benefit. Start small and local and build but do so in multiple regions with one agenda. Following Whistler standards is a must. Work closely with community and land owners to give recognition and to motivate people key to the biking communities' growth. Pin point who these people are and often they are not whom you think but just one guy or group with the right organizational skills to make something happen. Market a community feature abroad to other nations and drive home that Beautiful BC is more than just pretty lakes and beaches, come for a ride. Focusing on Cowichan as an example, how can the ZOO and Prevost be protected and developed to whistler standards then sold to the UK market in a micro study. If you build it will they come? Negatives are ignorant trail users/politicians and land owners. Biggest battle is to prove that biking is not just for kids. To gain their attention and too win the mover you do so by pointing out their beneficial gain. Sad but true. A strong voice needs to be gathered to paint a firm picture of the biking community. Point out who votes and who owns what business and what property. Once a relate-able picture has been painted on who we are and what we are after we can all get along and do it right. I call Freeride BC a fitness park as to not pigeon hole ourselves as a single demographic in biking. It is fitness and pump tracks are for the young and old alike. I hope that made sense, I wrote it in my typical blitz between calls.

2/21/11 10:52PM

5)

-physical geography and topography -land use management i.e. municipal land, crown land, private land -physical infrastructure such as hotels, food & Beverage, bike shops etc. -local bike club - communication with local business'

2/22/11 7:04PM

6)

- Recognition by government as a economic driver. Subsequent promotion must be legitimate and supported by all levels of government. - Liability issues for public use of private land must be addressed. On the island, major landowners such as; Timberwest, Hancock Forest Management, Island Timberlands etc.

2/22/11 11:12PM

7)

-The absolute most critical success factor is support and 'buy in' from local and regional politicians and government. Mountain bike clubs must have the support from local government and when this is evident, support from the local business community often follows. The single factor that the long time successful mountain bike communities have in common is municipal support for trail maintenance, development and promotion. Whistler and Rossland have had this support in place for a long time ant it has led to their success. As Squamish, Burns Lake and Nelson gain local government support, mountain biking in those communities has begun to transition from a social benefit for locals to a tourism product. Local clubs, who are essential to the success of mountain bike tourism, have shown resistance to the idea until they see a clear demonstration from their community leadership that they will support their efforts in real terms. Other success factors include: - Stable and mature mountain bike club or society. - Variety of high quality trails and easily available maps and signage - Champions in the local business community - Regional or local destination marketing organization on board (DMO) As described above, the 2 key factors are strong and broad community support and well built, and signed high quality trail infrastructure. The latter is often already available in many communities in BC, it is getting the support that puts a town over the top. Once these two things are in place all the other factors will readily fall into place or can be addressed, tourism infrastructure such as cafes, restaurants, lodging, bike shops, issues such as land use can be resolved etc. Broad community support more readily draws funding internally (from within the community) and externally (provincial and federal sources, grants etc). Once funding demonstrates benefits, the support grows and a positive feedback loop is established.

2/23/11 4:54PM

8)

- Physical resources (trails). Lots of communities have trails, what makes your community stand out - infrastructure (bike friendly hotels, services, signs, etc) - strategic plan to build bike tourism and measure the impact. Having a baseline and then being able to measure the impact with the assistance of the tourism operators to share data confidentially - local community support (do the locals like to ride, do they support bikes everywhere)

2/24/11 12:46AM

9)

Political Direction - strong political direction and support to develop a tourism mountain biking plan Policy - well thought out policy and procedures to define the role, intent, scale and physical resources to support mountain biking. Funding - formal channels of funding sources need to be clearly identified to support the concept of mountain bike tourism. Local tourism businesses need to work closely with land managers in a partnership model to find sources of funding to maintain the trails and sport. Good Marketing/ Public Relations - good communication to public, user groups, land managers, politicians, environmentalists, and other stakeholders. Public/ Private Partnerships - strong liaison with a core committee of stakeholders that includes a mountain biking group ( i.e. north shore mountain bike association ) that can support and assist the land managers in decision making Planning and Management - well planned, designed and managed trail system that incorporates all the elements such as staging areas, signage, well maintained trails & structures, statement of ethics, environmental protection measures, good risk management Business Plan - mountain bike areas require strong funding in order to maintain and develop trails to a high standard. Tourism benefits should provide some portion of funding back into the trails for maintenance. If mountain bike tourism is benefitting, then an annual contribution of funding (in kind of otherwise) should be built into a Business Plan Environmental Management - built into any tourism plan must be the appreciation of the environmental protection of the trail system. This includes proper construction and design of trails, respect to the land owner to only ride authorized trails, to respect rules and regulations to protect the investment etc.

2/24/11 1:25AM

10)

- Without a world class trail network people will not come to an area specifically to mountain bike. They need to hear about the trails from a friend, read about the trails in a mountain bike magazine, and see pictures of the trails on the internet. The trails are very important. There are many locations throughout the world that have amazing trails and many of these areas are now competing for tourism dollars. So the trail network needs to be special to draw attention. - You can't build world class trails without the correct landscape. B.C. is home to many of the best trails in the world because of the rugged mountain terrain. Rocks, roots, dirt, and hills are all necessary to make excellent trails. I think it would be very hard to build world class trails in Saskatchewan where it is very flat. - Even with the right terrain you need an area to build trails. If the landscape is already filled with housing developments, commercial buildings, and concrete there leaves very little land to build trails to ride on. I think urban sprawl can somewhat be attributed to the local government and their plan for parkland and recreation. If the government does not include plans for outdoor recreation then there will be little chance to develop mountain biking opportunities. From my experience governments are very uneducated about mountain biking. They only see the risks involved with the sport and tend to shy away from developing trails that many riders want to experience. They are risk adverse and this creates a hurdle to

developing world class trail networks. - I see fiscal and economic factors as low success factors but still necessary. Mountain bikers are very community driven and always keen to volunteer their time to benefit their sport. Trails can be developed through volunteer work although it does take longer. I think of ski resorts such as Whistler that pour millions of dollars in to trail development, and advertising. These major resorts seem to have bought success to a certain degree. Mountain biking is also not a cheap sport; bikes can easily run upwards of \$5000. Without a local mountain bike community advocating for more trails the area will not become a mountain bike tourism location. - Advocacy groups help development. Governments seem to always be satisfied with the status quo. Without the mountain bikers asking for more opportunities areas can become stagnant and slip behind the trends of this developing sport. - When I think of cultural factors I think of places like Pakistan where "Extreme sports" are not the norm. How can a place like Pakistan attract mountain bikers without trails and a local biking community?

2/24/11 3:42AM

11)

In no particular order Land ownership / Agreements Signage Market Ready Trails Maintenance Agreements Economic Support Trails need to be subject to budget in the same way a road is. They are infrastructure and need to be treated and planed accordingly Need to Brand Mountain Biking in BC - Starting with Mountain Bike Tourism Association Need to bring the Province together to build on the sustainability - MBTA has started this Showcase the economic benefits of trails with Canadian examples Standards across the board bring the Whistler/Squamish/ IMBA standards and guidelines forward as best practices Highlight best practices in promotion in other communities BC needs to step up to the Global stage as there are other countries and destinations that are already marketing their trails Need to establish a bike friendly criteria for travellers seal of approval on accommodations like a BCAA stamp etc

2/25/11 6:35PM

12)

1. Access to high quality land for trails 2. Support from within the community for this type of adventure traveller 3. Supporting amenities to enable access to and experience of the visitor 4. Awareness within the potential markets

2/26/11 12:35AM

13)

- complete trail network (wide variety of trail styles & ability levels) - trail network is easily accessible (close to town/or easy to drive to staging areas) - local gov't must help maintain and build trail infrastructure - local gov't must help promote trails with local landowners and stakeholders in area - local gov't must help to promote/advertise mountain biking trails as a

tourist amenity - area should have businesses to support the mountain bike activity (bike shops, cafes, restaurants) - community organizations (trail groups, mtb clubs) strengthen the overall mtb presence in area and improves the tourist experience in area

2/26/11 7:58PM

14)

- trails dedicated for cycling (reduces conflicts) this is both a physical and legislative issue - great trails (give people a reason to come here) this requires financial resources in most communities - trail maintenance (volunteer in most cases, but they need finances to operate - trail signage - financial -easy to obtain maps - financial for start up but can easily be used as a volunteer fundraiser later on - representation at municipal/provincial/federal levels depending on the land/park types in the area and existing resistance to mtbing - promotion outside of the local area - financial - a minimal investment in new media and into local resources can produce the highest return here. (Big ads don't convince people to ride in an area; a few well made videos of people riding a sweet trail followed by a well written article on an online site will produce better results)

2/27/11 5:08AM

15)

This may more than you are looking for and not as condensed. In rural areas, mountain biking is often developed by those who are passionate about the sport and not necessarily those who are developing the sector with tourism growth goals. community support and buy-in (residents and local government) - with this will come the much needed volunteer base and support for any bylaw changes, or trail development integrated planning with municipal government's OCP & depending on location of asset regional district planning & OCP (regional districts do not often have a tourism plan in place or a tourism "function" or bylaw so development of a tourism experience is often complicated) comprehensive strategy that incorporates collaboration with governments, regional tourism associations development and marketing activities, and supporting sector service groups, provincial sector marketing activities (Ministry/TBC Experience sector group), chambers of commerce in BC... collaboration with Lands and the Recreation Officer who is responsible for trail system planning and working with stakeholders inclusive communications plan - directed at residents, visitors and government agencies close relationship with business groups to develop appropriate services international view and scope cautious growth which balances experience with services (for instance, the use of social media to capture an audience and increase attendance may not be supported by adequate planning by the service sector) an organization that is the planning body and represents the group at the local level - non-profit so that they are eligible to participate in co-operative marketing programs and represent the voice of the sport at the local level - in other words - "organized"

2/27/11 8:15PM

16)

- maintained trails, which are ideally signed - community support to build, maintain trails and overcome land use issues - adequate tourism infrastructure: accommodation, restaurants, at least one pub - biking infrastructure: a bike shop with helpful staff, maps, and guides

2/28/11 2:41AM

17)

Access to land use agreements Trail development Mt. Bike Club development in each area volunteers - trail building GPS - accurate trail identification Maps/land use information

2/28/11 4:51PM

18)

Access to physical resources cooperative land planning political will consideration of mixed use/user conflict issues

2/28/11 6:23PM

19)

Community buy in money paid staff as project management tourism association to promote the idea marketing cooperation from governments on crown land grants funding for upkeep cooperation from neighbouring communities and regional districts for trail connection

2/28/11 11:16PM

20)

-comprehensive trail network offering trails for all abilities, mapping and signage -land use agreements -non profit organization spearheading events, advocacy, trail building and maintenance -support of the community: ridership, residents, politicians -supporting businesses and activities: accommodation, food and beverage, guiding, entertainment -funding -marketing

3/1/11 4:05AM

21)

-a land use policy that regards mountain biking as a long-term investment -physical and geographic resources -political will to treat mountain biking as a potential revenue source as well as a community building activity -community support and understanding of trail infrastructure

3/1/11 10:22AM



22)

This is not going to be easy as there will be a myriad of things to be addressed. I will form my answers based on my own local circumstances as it would be irresponsible to presume I can speak for the entire province. That said, many of the issues / principles that will be brought forward will have universal application. 'Mountain Biking' in and of itself will likely show to be too small or specific a market segment to have broad benefit. Mountain biking as part of an overall 'Cycling' program has far greater potential for a community. Cycle Touring, Mountain Biking, Trials Riding and other cycling related activities can be embraced by a community or region and utilize all of the roadways, trails, hills, bike paths and whatever other cycling friendly asset may exist. Physical resources are obvious or should be. i.e.: mountains help. But access to those resources are even more important. This takes community buy in at all levels and may even require waivers for liability issues if municipal land is being used. Community 'buy in' may be exactly that. Costly investment in trail infrastructure as well as the service industries to serve the expected market. For example, hotels may want to set aside or build bicycle store areas for their guests to avoid dirt and damage to their rooms. As well, volunteers are worth everything you pay them. Reliance on a volunteer base is doomed to failure. If you can't rely on something, and by definition volunteers are just that, unreliable, how can you build a business model around them? Any plan will have to include paid staff and support, even if it is only in an overview capacity. Ultimately, it will all fall upon their shoulders anyway. Getting a community to embrace what could be a 'healthy' lifestyle can be a draw. Kamloops decided to be the 'Tournament Capital' of BC and did a great job of it. A great deal of money was spent building infrastructure and developing a marketing plan. Of course in Kamloops, they have baseball, hockey, flag football, rugby and whatever else they can jam under the umbrella of a 'tournament'. Kudos to them. Campbell River became the 'Salmon Capital of the World' by way of community will and effort. There are other examples if you look. Demographic reality. Who makes up the market and how much can or will they spend? A good example is the backpacker. Oh how wonderful and healthy and vital and beautiful is the backpacker! They come from places like Sweden and Germany and Quebec and anyplace else that some idealistic soul can strap on a bag full of possessions from home and travel around the world. You will see their pictures in, on and all over tourism publications and the world is a better place for the wholesome toothy smiles as they stand, granola bar in hand staring with vapid wonder at the pristine lakes and majestic peaks that constantly surround them regardless of the angle of the picture, and a great deal of money is spent attracting these social pariahs to our doorsteps and streams. Why? They bring their hotel rooms on their back or find accommodation on websites like 'couchsurfers.com' or some other such place. They have limited cash, if any, and a case can be made that they in fact cause damage to the environment by way of stomping around in it and on it. A quick survey has shown that a large percentage of mountain bikers are merely wheeled backpackers. Yes, it is true that people of all ages like to mountain bike, but the ones who really go for it are, by way of physical requirement, younger and have less disposable income than those well intentioned souls who go touring. It is simply far more demanding to go mountain biking than it is to go touring. There is also bike racing and that can bring big dollars to a community if it becomes used to hosting events. Currently, nobody on the west coast is doing a good job in this arena, and yet it is one of the biggest sports in the world. Assuming you go after the cycling community as a whole, you need to be pragmatic and brutally honest about what you have to offer. If there is nothing really

good to see or cycle to, you will be lost. i.e.: Moosomin, Saskatchewan has little to offer except a 360 degree view of the three local grain elevators and an old Husky station that used to serve kick ass clubhouse sandwiches. Ability to hold a cyclist's interest, 7 minutes maximum. By way of contrast take the Cowichan Valley on Vancouver Island. There are seaside communities like Cowichan Bay that are ideal for cyclists to stop at. Wineries down picturesque country roads. Accessible mountains and riverside trails. Beaches for a salty dip or lakes and rivers for a refreshing swim. Restaurants, cafes and bakeries. The list continues... Ability to hold a cyclist's interest, unlimited. In summary, no community will or perhaps should rationally welcome any group or activity that nets out as a drain on the community's resources. It's sort of like when Uncle Smelly and his unpleasantly cheap family decide to cancel the rest of their vacation and spend it all with you instead. But if Uncle Smelly helps to shop for the groceries and brings nice bottles of wine for dinner and helps to clean the place up a bit, he doesn't seem so smelly after a while. Tourism is sort of like that. Find some goods or services to sell rich old Uncle Not-So-Smelly and keep him coming back for more. Remember, if it doesn't turn a profit for a business or a community, it's just a 'feel good' empty gesture.

3/1/11 5:58PM

23)

- Community partners: DMO/ Hotels/ merchants all working together - proper sponsorship in place, this is critical for the marketing of events and supplementing the economic impact - proper infrastructure; (proper signage, proper maps etc....)

3/1/11 6:00PM

24)

- Education of community members as to the benefits - development of physical resources (e.g. trails, parking, and signage) - promotional materials (video, print, and web) - codes of conduct in materials and on signage

3/1/11 6:15PM

25)

local government support for the development and planning of trail infrastructure Consistent classification system for trails (i.e. level of difficulty, grade, length, time required to complete trail) Consumer focused trail maps and ease of access to information Consistent Trail signage Stakeholder collaboration and participation in trail development and marketing Government land use policies that support trail development Assistance from government gaining access to crown land Best practices for working with private land owners - strategies to develop relationships with land owners Funding to support trail development Business case that effectively articulates the value of trails to the BC economy and quality of life for residents Trails catered to different user groups (i.e. families, advanced and novice riders etc) Reasonable rates for permits and

liability insurance Most Critical: Communities must identify mtn bike tourism as an area they'd like to develop and plan for it appropriately (including tourism in their OCP, economic development and strategic plans) Local government support is critical to the success of any tourism development initiative Planning must be done on a regional scale, ensuring all members with an interest in Mt bike tourism are part of the planning process. A community champion is also a critical success factor

3/2/11 1:16AM

26)

Finding the appropriate property with both physical and geographical attributes to draw attention or attraction to the mountain bike community/user demographic. Securing the land use guidelines for any selected location whether it be public or private and making it a long term commitment. Environmental impact assessment and planning for future land reclamation. Professional consulting and assessment during draft planning for the riding areas. Having a solid plan for both commercial economic factors, and/or working in association with volunteer groups in public land use instances. Identifying benefits for private land holders (revenue generation possibilities or future supporting infrastructure and related business development around the basic plan) Consulting with local user groups for knowledge, input and ideas. Approaching local politicians for perspective and support. Bringing the plan to the province for final approval or funding considerations (more so if public land is being used. Private landholders have obtained grants in some areas, from both provincial and federal funds).

3/2/11 8:20PM

27)

While I don't profess to be an expert in the area of community development, I am happy to share with you what I have seen through my work with the MBTA and Whistler. Also, since my perspective is one of economic impact, my comments are likely biased to that end.

From the MBTA project, it seemed to me that development was a bit of a chicken and egg argument. People were aware that the trail system that was in place in Squamish was important to both the local community and to the tourism industry in Squamish. I think it was hard for them to even figure out how important the trails were to outside visitors and how many people came to ride the trails before we did our study. Once we were able to put some numbers around things, I think it really opened people's eyes as to the value of the trails. This being said, I think the value that we assigned to the trail was far below potential, as without securing proper access to the trails, they were unable to promote the trails as one of the attractions of a destination. Being in Ottawa, I haven't really been following the news in this regard, but my understanding is that riders are now legally able to ride on crown lands, which wasn't the case before. (I could be wrong on this, however).

In addition to having the ability to promote a destination's trail system, I think a critical factor is also hosting specific competitive events or festivals. In my mind, the Test of Metal has been a real anchor for the development of mountain bike tourism in Squamish. The event attracts hundreds of riders to the region, who in addition to racing, come to train on the trails, and I think that in the absence of that event, the Squamish scene would be predominantly locals. This is likely my bias speaking, but the hosting of events is really one of the critical components in creating a successful mountain bike tourism strategy as it acts to raise the awareness of a community as a mountain biking destination as well as providing the necessary incentive to attend.

So, in summary, my critical success factors are:

- Clearly defined land use access that allows for the formal marketing of a destination
- Development of 1 to 3 annually recurring events (competitions or otherwise) that will attract riders to the destination and establish the destination as a mountain bike centre
- Tracking / fact based metrics demonstrating the value of mountain bike riders to the local community

As a side note, one of the ways that I could tell that we were successful in demonstrating the value of mountain biking in Squamish was that shortly after finishing the study, I received a phone call from the Squamish motor-cross association, who wanted to know how much it would cost to have a study of their own done.

**Appendix G. Phase 1 Online Survey Question Respondent Analysis**

Responses by individual informants linked to Critical Success Factors (number represents comment or mention by respondent):

**community champions / stakeholders / political will** (positive impacts, benefits)

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27

**infrastructure / factor amenities, supporting services**

2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26

**legislation / regulatory frameworks / liability / standards**

1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27

**destination marketing / management**

3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27

**physical geography / terrain**

1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 26

funding sources / private / public

1, 3, 7, 9, 10, 11, 14, 19, 20, 22, 25

Mtn Bike clubs, schools, camps, community programs

1, 2, 4, 7, 10, 11, 13, 17

Mtn bike culture / lifestyle / events

10, 22, 23, 26, 27

## **Appendix H. Email Link to Phase 2 Online Survey Question**

Thank you again for your interest and support in this research project. I had a terrific response rate on the Phase 1 question and some great responses (a few surprises)!

I am not tracking individual respondents in order to maintain your confidentiality and the integrity of my research methodology. If you missed out on answering the Phase 1 question, here is your opportunity to participate in Phase 2.

Here is the link to the Phase 2 question (should only take you about 5 minutes to complete):

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HZFGFGM>

The password to enter the survey is: royalroads (this is case sensitive...please use all lower case).

I will keep this phase of the survey open for about one week.

If you have any questions or problems with the survey, please contact me.

Thank you again for participating in the survey and this research! A copy of my final research will be available upon request (in May).

Cheers,

Ray Freeman

250-744-5653

Ray.Freeman@RoyalRoads.ca or LeftCoastInsights@shaw.ca

<http://ca.linkedin.com/in/rayfreeman>

**Appendix I. Phase 2 Question Online Survey Results**

Please rate the following Critical Success Factors identified by survey respondents (including yourself) as necessary for the development of mountain biking tourism to the benefit of the community and visitors. Do you agree that the Critical Success Factor is Very Important, Important, Not Very Important, or Not at all Important:

	Very Important	Important	Not Very Important	Not At All Important	Rating	Response
					Average	Count
<b>Community Champions / Stakeholders / Political Will</b>	<b>84.0% (21)</b>	<b>12.0% (3)</b>	<b>4.0% (1)</b>	<b>0.0% (0)</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Mtn Bike Culture / Lifestyle / Events</b>	<b>29.2% (7)</b>	<b>70.8% (17)</b>	<b>0.0% (0)</b>	<b>0.0% (0)</b>	<b>3.29</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Funding Sources (Private / Public / In-Kind)</b>	<b>33.3% (8)</b>	<b>62.5% (15)</b>	<b>4.2% (1)</b>	<b>0.0% (0)</b>	<b>3.29</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Destination Marketing / Management</b>	<b>32.0% (8)</b>	<b>60.0% (15)</b>	<b>8.0% (2)</b>	<b>0.0% (0)</b>	<b>3.24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Physical Geography / Terrain / Trails</b>	<b>54.2% (13)</b>	<b>41.7% (10)</b>	<b>4.2% (1)</b>	<b>0.0% (0)</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Legislation / Regulatory Frameworks</b>	<b>32.0% (8)</b>	<b>52.0% (13)</b>	<b>16.0% (4)</b>	<b>0.0% (0)</b>	<b>3.16</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Mtn Bike Clubs / Schools / Camps / Programs</b>	<b>37.5% (9)</b>	<b>50.0% (12)</b>	<b>12.5% (3)</b>	<b>0.0% (0)</b>	<b>3.25</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Infrastructure / Amenities / Supporting Services</b>	<b>48.0% (12)</b>	<b>48.0% (12)</b>	<b>4.0% (1)</b>	<b>0.0% (0)</b>	<b>3.44</b>	<b>25</b>

**Appendix J. Email Link to Phase 3 Online Survey Question**

Thank you for your continued participation in this research project!

Here is the survey link for the Phase 3 (Final) Question:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/H58RRFT>

The password to enter the survey is: **royalroads** (this is case sensitive...please use all lower case).

I have attached a summary of survey responses from Question 2: *Prioritizing the Critical Success Factors*, for your reference.

Phase 3 Question: *Please comment on the Critical Success Factors identified by the survey respondents. Are there any significant factors missing? Are there any factors listed which need not be on the list? Please feel free to explain.*

If you have any additional questions or problems with the survey, please contact me.

Thank you again for participating in this research! This concludes the data-collection portion of the project. A final version of my graduate paper will be available upon request.

Cheers,

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250-744-5653

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<http://ca.linkedin.com/in/rayfreeman>



**Appendix K. Phase 3 Question Online Survey Results**

Please comment on the Critical Success Factors identified by the survey respondents. Are there any significant factors missing? Are there any factors listed which need not be on the list?

Please feel free to explain.

Respondent 1)

Critical success as outlined seems accurate. I would only add that the promotional end of things would seem to be most critical in the early operating stages. Getting the word out that there is a safe and well thought out ride destination with good amenities is the key to draw your clientele. That's all! Very interesting the responses and it looks like a lot of like-minded thinking.

3/20/11 7:11AM

Respondent 2)

It is pretty much as I would have expected. I'm a little surprised about the programs numbers that 12% is in the not very important column. In our experience it is one of the most important parts of having a solid mountain bike infrastructure. Programs, whether community or resort operated, build up the base of future riders, be it kids or adults. Programs introduce new riders safely to the sport, insuring long term involvement by those riders. In our experience, bike parks that do not offer programs are not nearly as successful as the bike parks which do offer these programs. Same goes for communities. Burns Lake is a great example with their kids programs. So is the Women's Wednesdays at the Whistler Bike Park. But before any of the above is possible there has to be adequate trail infrastructure to support these programs - beginner, intermediate and advanced trails. We know of one European bike park that spends whole bunch of Euros on marketing and virtually nothing on trails. Bad news! Trails are like the foundations of a house.

3/20/11 8:04AM

Respondent 3)

A core executive committee with a strong chair person who leads the various stages of development, marketing and lobbying efforts.

3/20/11 10:46AM

Respondent 4)

looks good

3/21/11 12:30AM

Respondent 5)

Governance and industry relations are 2 other critical success factors Governance at the local level at the very least needs to address mutual objectives shared by the club, DMO and land manager. Provincially, there needs to be a widely representative body that can address broader issues, develop effective communication tactics for the sector and advocate for legitimacy and funding. Industry relations helps bring many new resources to the table through sponsorships and media attention. It creates a stronger brand through a more unified sector approach. The other critical success factors identified are all very relevant.

3/21/11 2:12AM

Respondent 6)

It is interesting to see that the absolute requirements of Physical Geography / Terrain / Trails is somehow rated below Community Champions / Stakeholders / Political Will. You don't need Community Champions or Stakeholders or even Political will if you have the right place ride a mountain bike. The very nature, the almost counter culture mentality of the sport cries out to all who will listen: "Hey, see that mountain, we're going to ride on it whether you like it or not, forest fire season or not because we can go under the forest service gates, nyaa, nyaa, nyaa..." In order of importance: Do you have the right place to ride. Do you have facilities such as lodging? It must NOT fall to the public sector to build infrastructure to house and hold the visitors. That must come from the private sector. Community buy in and asset / resource management. If nobody is looking after what has been built, the riders simply ride to someplace else or damage that which should not be damaged. The community needs to determine if it has the will to maintain its marketplace position with continual efforts. If it does not, another place down the road will simply copy what is done right and then do better, and steal what little you have. Everything else. There is no number five.

3/21/11 2:24AM

Respondent 7)

Your list of CSF's looks great! This item likely falls under Infrastructure/Amenities/Supporting Services but is important to have on your radar since it can play a role as it relates to getting liability insurance coverage for trails. The Whistler Trail Standards are adhered to by a lot of trail builders.

3/21/11 10:08AM

Respondent 8)

My suggestions for missing factors: 1. Who carries out the maintenance of the infrastructure (trails) to ensure they are safe, and reduce the environmental impact of this land use on the landscape? How are they compensated for their time? 2. With additional users i.e. tourists on the

infrastructure there comes more conflicts from other users, local residents, and neighbors. There needs to be some way to deal with these conflicts in timely manner. Who becomes the go to group to referee these conflicts? 3. How do the land owners receive compensation for this use of their land?

3/22/11 12:20AM

Respondent 9)

I might suggest that Mtn Bike Culture/Lifestyle / Events could be grouped with Mtn Bike Clubs / Schools / Camps / Programs. I realize the second group is focused primarily on youth but the existence and support for youth mountain programs is likely directly correlated to the extent of mountain bike culture in the community. If you add these two groups together, you see that 67% of your respondents feel it is very important. As with sport tourism events, the most successful have the support of the local sport club. It is more difficult to organize and host a successful sport tourism event if that sport is not part of your local community's culture.

3/22/11 1:15AM

Respondent 10)

No comments

3/22/11 11:40PM

Respondent 11)

I am quite surprised to see that legislation/regulatory frameworks ranked low on importance compared to mtb culture/lifestyle/events and destination marketing because without proper legislation and regulatory frameworks a trail network cannot be established and any forward movement of the mountain bike community has the potential to be counterproductive by the risk of having trails closed and riding areas logged. Without proper legislation and regulatory frameworks, mountain bike clubs and trail builders are putting the cart before the horse and limiting their long-term sustainability.

3/23/11 12:31AM

Respondent 12)

From what I can see they are ranked with champions first, terrain/trails and infrastructure in terms of importance. This seems to fit my thoughts... Not sure if you wanted to know specific thoughts or questions? The categories are fairly generic and wide, so likely encompass the nature of factors that influence the development of trails.

3/24/11 3:14AM

Respondent 13)

I would tend to agree with the respondents however perhaps rework the response rating a bit 1) Community Champions / Stakeholders / Political will 2) Legislation / Regulatory Frameworks 3) Funding Sources (Private / Public /In-kind) 4) Physical Geography / terrain / trails 5) Infrastructure / Amenities/ Supporting Services 6) Destination Marketing/ Management 7) Mtn Bike Culture / Lifestyle / Events 8) Mtn Bike Clubs/ Schools/ Camps/Programs The reason that I see the reworking of the priorities in this way is firstly you need to have the Political will and community champions in order to have the greater community buy in. That also follows closely with having the trail system / network legitimize by the regulatory bodies. Then you need to have a source of funding to be able to maintain and build the network. However if you do not have the terrain varied enough to support a first class trail network then funding will aid in building infrastructure and amenities. Then once this is in place a vibrant mountain biking culture will be born and people will flock to your destination as a lifestyle of choice and want to host events and races within your community which is grown and supported through your local and regional clubs.

3/24/11 5:41AM

Respondent 14)

You have captured community champions/ stakeholders/political will which may or may not include the mountain bike clubs. In every community there is a mountain bike club, but I think the reference to political will and champions refers to a group (local politicians, business leaders) outside the clubs (although they may be mountain bikers and club members themselves). Therefore one thing that may be missing from your list is a strong, viable and well supported club. Looking at the communities that have this-Whistler, Squamish, Rossland, Burns Lake, this is a critical success factor.

3/24/11 7:50AM View Responses

Respondent 15)

I did not notice missing elements.

3/24/11 1:36PM

Respondent 16)

looks good to me

3/25/11 5:18AM

Respondent 17)

1. The mix of terrain catering to the breakdown of the mountain bike marketplace reflecting the fact that approximately 20% of the market will be beginner, 60% intermediate and 20% expert is absolutely critical. 2. The quality of the trails has to be excellent. 3. The trails have to be well maintained.

3/25/11 6:57AM

Respondent 18)

I think most has been addressed. I firmly believe that a local audit of recreational sites like soccer, baseball, tennis courts and so on should be compiled along with costs of construction / land versus actual users and then compare the costs towards developing skill parks. Something to rationalize how we currently spend our public tax dollars and help ease the pain when a bike park is announced. This way in my opinion people will support a high use low cost project in their community. This can extend to trail networks and the low overall costs in comparison to paved road ways, it is much cheaper when we go into the bush in a organized manner and create a healthy outlet. I have one comment on the survey phase 2. I found some of the questions unless I had a computer glitch, only let me select one as highly important and when I selected another with the same rating it wouldn't let me do so. I found it hard to favour one or the other because a few are highly important in my eyes. Regardless, the survey was great.

3/25/11 7:38AM

Respondent 19)

I've gone through the Critical Success factors. The challenge you're going to have is the similarity in ratings - really the Community Champions followed by Infrastructure are the real standouts and Legislation is seen as being of lower importance.

When I look at the results, I think you've nailed them all and they are roughly in order that I see them. They are all inter-related, so it's hard to quibble much with them.

Maybe I'll just add my comments to each one in the order of importance according to respondents. You can use any comments you see as fit:

1) Community Champions/Stakeholder/Political Will: I agree this is most important. If there is no person/group pushing for mountain bike tourism, it wouldn't happen, no matter how great the trails and supporting infrastructure are. Having political support is key to getting funds for trails.

2) Infrastructure/Supporting Services: presumably, this means bike shops, bike friendly accommodation, pubs etc. I agree this is important from a tourism perspective. However, I would actually say #3 trails are actually more important to actual mountain bike tourists.

3) Physical Geography / Trails: from the research I did with IMBA about 8 years ago with destination mountain bikers (they travel to ride), respondents told me trails - both the variety and # were extremely important in their choice of destination. Also scenery was really important to them, which I suppose also falls under this category.

4) Mountain bike culture and funding sources (tied): I agree that mountain biking culture is very important. I suppose funding is right up there too, although I think communities have to be creative in finding funds – like Squamish was by putting a small levy on residents' taxes to cover trail development.

5) Mtn bike clubs/schools/camps: I'd actually argue that these are somewhat different. A community needs strong and engaged clubs to advocate, build, and maintain trails and they are instrumental to a community's success. Schools and camps are great tourism products, but aren't as key to overall success.

6) DMOs: I see them as very important, but really they are a stakeholder and perhaps a funding source (or help to find funds).

7) Legislation: it is interesting this one emerged as least important. I can see it's of less importance to mountain bike tourists, but I think it is very important to communities (from a liability perspective).

3/27/11 10:34PM

**Appendix L. Table 2. Mountain Bike Tourism Stakeholder Informants**

(Note: specific identifying information has been modified to ensure informant confidentiality and privacy).

- Mountain Bike Component Manufacturer
- Municipal District Park Planner
- Mountain Bike Retail Shop Owner
- Social Media Marketing Director
- Community Destination Management Organization Marketing Manager
- Provincial Government Sector Development Manager
- National Destination Management Organization Experiences Manager
- Resort Accommodation Property General Manager
- Provincial Government Tourism Development Officer
- Alpine Resort Public Relations and Promotions Director
- Mountain Bike Retail Shop Owner
- Regional Economic Development Organization Tourism Administrator
- Senior Research Consultant, Sport Tourism
- Municipal Economic Development Organization, Destination Marketing Coordinator
- Municipal Forester
- Village Chief Administrative Officer
- Hostel Owner
- Regional Mountain Bike Association Executive Director
- Resort Planning and Development Consultant
- Provincial Government Manager, Trails
- Mountain Bike Park Development Consultant, Professional Mountain Biker
- Regional Destination Management Organization Industry Services Coordinator
- Mountain Bike Park Development Consultant, Co-Founder
- Regional Mountain Bike Association Director
- Regional Mountain Bike Society President
- Regional Destination Management Organization Community Development Director
- Mountain Resort Destination Management Organization Coordinator
- Mountain Bike Component Manufacturer Marketing & Brand Development Director
- Mountain Bike Event Director
- University Tourism Program Professor
- Provincial Government Manager, Community Partnerships
- Regional District Trails Coordinator
- Mountain Bike Park Development Consultant
- Hotel Accommodations Property General Manager
- Mountain Bike Tour Operator
- Community Development Corporation General Manager
- Regional District Section Manager Parks Planning
- Professional Mountain Biker, Sector Media Development Personality
- University Tourism Program Professor
- Regional Economic Development Organization Director
- Municipality Manager of Sport Tourism
- Environmental Consulting Firm Principal Consultant

## **Appendix M. Critical Success Factors Analysis and Triangulation**

CSF's Identified in the Literature:

- community champions / stakeholders / political will
- physical geography / terrain
- legislation / regulatory frameworks
- infrastructure / factor amenities
- supporting services
- destination marketing / management

Question 1 CSF's Identified by Survey Respondents (this list was used for Question 2):

- Community Champions / Stakeholders / Political Will,
- Mtn Bike Culture / Lifestyle / Events
- Funding Sources (Private / Public / In-Kind)
- Destination Marketing / Management
- Physical Geography / Terrain / Trails
- Legislation / Regulatory Frameworks
- Mtn Bike Clubs / Schools / Camps / Programs
- Infrastructure / Amenities / Supporting Services

Outlier Responses (CSF's) Identified by Survey Respondents:

- Mtn Bike Culture / Lifestyle / Events
- Funding Sources (Private / Public / In-Kind)
- Mtn Bike Clubs / Schools / Camps / Programs



**Appendix N. Phase 3 Online Survey Question Respondent Analysis**

Responses by individual informants linked to Critical Success Factors (number represents comment or mention by respondent). While this list facilitates a quantitative analysis of Question 3 responses, qualitative analysis must also be utilized to understand the context of individual informant responses (see: Qualitative Analysis and Discussion sections):

**Community champions / stakeholders / political will** (positive impacts, benefits)

3, 5, 6, 8, 12, 13, 19

**Infrastructure / factor amenities, supporting services**

1, 6, 7, 12, 13, 19

**Legislation / regulatory frameworks / liability / standards**

5, 7, 8, 11, 13, 19

**Destination marketing / management**

1, 13, 19

**physical geography / terrain**

2, 6, 12, 13, 17, 19

**Funding sources / private / public**

8, 13, 18, 19

**Mtn Bike clubs, schools, camps, community programs**

2, 8, 9, 13, 14, 19

**Mtn bike culture / lifestyle / events**

6, 9, 13, 19

## **Appendix O.**

### **The Municipality of North Cowichan, British Columbia: Mountain Bike Tourism and Community Development – A Suggested Framework towards Applying Critical Success Factors.**

The Municipality of North Cowichan has kindly agreed to participate in this research study through the provision of in-kind administrative resources and access to supporting legislative / regulatory documentation. The intention and potential benefit of having North Cowichan participate would be to apply the critical success factors to the current economic, environmental, social, cultural, and political circumstances existing in the community and identify progress, successes, challenges, and potential opportunities for the community for further cycling and mountain bike tourism development. The following analysis shows the current state of critical success factors as they apply to the Municipality of North Cowichan at the time of writing this report.

#### Community Overview:

#### **THE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY OF NORTH COWICHAN**

The District Municipality of North Cowichan is located in the Cowichan Valley. It is a growing community with a current population of approximately 29,500 and offering a lifestyle amidst magnificent forests, mountains, lakes, rivers and ocean inlets. Its 5,000 hectare community forest provides hiking, mountain biking, hang gliding and nature viewing.

Forestry is North Cowichan's main industry along with farming, and forest lands create North Cowichan's rural atmosphere. There are 3 distinct communities within the District. Chemainus is located in the northeast corner of the municipality and is famous for its murals. South of Chemainus, along the coast, is Crofton which is a unique and hospitable community. Further south along the coast is the community of Maple Bay whose marina operations welcome boaters from around the Pacific Northwest. The largest component of the District's population is in the Mount Prevost area on the north border of the City of Duncan (Municipality of North Cowichan, 2011f, p. 1).

“The people of the Cowichan Regional value and wish to secure in perpetuity a network of Regional Parks and Trails to provide a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities, protect natural ecosystems, feature representative landscapes, link our communities and enhance livability within the Region” (CVRD, 2007, p. v).

The Cowichan region is located just north of the Provincial Capital of Victoria, British Columbia; a major International tourism destination (approximately 45 minutes driving time) and is readily accessible from Vancouver, BC and Seattle, Washington by ferry and air, both major cities holding large population bases. Furthermore, the Province of Alberta provides many visitors to Vancouver Island with one-hour flights originating in Edmonton and Calgary. Additionally, the Cowichan Region is situated within a strong regional marketing cluster, with significant resources available amongst existing and potential marketing partners, including: Tourism Cowichan, City of Nanaimo Economic Development, Tourism Victoria, Tourism Vancouver Island, Vancouver Island Sports Tourism Council, BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism & Innovation, and the Canadian Tourism Commission.

### **Trails Development:**

North Cowichan currently holds a strong focus on developing “rails-to-trails” and other community cycling opportunities, primarily to provide local residents and regional participants with alternative commuting options as well as enhanced recreational and community health and wellness prospects. In addition to trail linkages within the community, various initiatives are currently ongoing which will facilitate cycling and bicycle-touring opportunities with interconnections being developed with neighboring communities and regions. These include the Cowichan Valley Trail Corridor: “The Cowichan Valley Trail Initiative is a 120 km multi-use trail route linking communities throughout the Cowichan Regional District, including planned

extensions to the Galloping Goose Trail in the Capital Regional District and Nanaimo Regional District's Trans Canada Trail" ([www.islandcoastaltrust.ca/.../Cowichan\\_Valley\\_Trail\\_News\\_Release\\_October\\_16\\_2008.pdf](http://www.islandcoastaltrust.ca/.../Cowichan_Valley_Trail_News_Release_October_16_2008.pdf)); rebuilding of the Kinsol Trestle (the highest remaining timberframe bridge in the British Commonwealth; [www.kinsoltrestle.ca](http://www.kinsoltrestle.ca)); and development of the TransCanada Trail system ([www.tctrail.ca](http://www.tctrail.ca)) within this region.

### **Tourism Development Opportunities:**

The North Cowichan community vision with a focus on community cycling and rails-to-trails development is showing the realization of this vision with potential benefits embracing community health, recreation and environmental sustainability. However, cycling infrastructure of this magnitude also provides a strong attraction for potential visitors from outside the region, including tourists originating from International markets. Furthermore, a diversity of cycling product and experiences has been shown to draw a broader range of tourists to a region. In addition to the activity of cycling and mountain biking itself, many tourists who are attracted to these disciplines are also interested in experiencing any unique cultural, historical, physical, or social attributes which may be associated with or in proximity to a cycling and mountain biking experience in a destination region (Arsenault, 2005, p. 2; CRA, 2010, p. 4; Erdly & Kesterson-Townes, 2003, pp. 12, 14; Koepke, 2005, p. 21; MBTA, 2006, p. 5; Pine & Gilmore, 1998, p. 98; Tourism BC, 2008, pp. 6, 12; Tourism BC, 2010, p. 2). This may be attributed to the collection of factor attributes which provide the necessary components and diversity of product offerings and experiences that drive marketing awareness for a region and conversion of niche target market audiences into purchasing consumers (Rod Harris, personal communication, September – October, 2009).

### **Cycling Product Diversification:**

Nurturing community development through public sector investments and resources, in conjunction with the support of private sector interests can build competitive capacity and create a diversity of product appealing to a wide range of potential consumers, locally and globally (APEC, 2010, p. 3). The growth of mountain bike tourism may be significantly attributed to the diversity of the activity itself, with a range of riding disciplines and opportunities including: mountain bike touring, “rails-to-trails”, cross-country, downhill, freeride, dirt jump/pump track, and all-mountain riding categories catering to a diverse range of potential participants. Even these categories may be further sub-divided into a larger number of riding variations. A number of prominent regions within British Columbia (notably, the Sea to Sky Corridor) benefit from a well-developed infrastructure of trails and supporting factor attributes (accommodations, tour operators, resorts, bike shops, etc...) which include a diversity of product offerings supported by a global reputation as an iconic destination for mountain biking culture and lifestyle. While North Cowichan is progressing with community cycling and rails-to-trails initiatives, a broader array of cycling and mountain biking activities are occurring and expanding within the region, in some cases, with some negative user-conflict and environmental impacts occurring.

The influence of cycling and mountain biking culture continues to expand across mountain bike resorts and communities through a marketing matrix enhanced by the Internet and viral social media communications. A significant example of media success in mountain biking may be attributed to a BC based film crew who produced local segments of their film on North Cowichan’s Mt. Prevost with subsequent global distribution (<http://www.thecollectivefilm.com/seasons/>). Local rider, Stevie Smith was profiled showing his

meteoric climb to the top of the professional mountain biking downhill racing circuit (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fIPk4aYZDkE>). Furthermore, the cumulation of marketing activities combined with social media endeavours focused on mountain biking (i.e.: [www.nymb.com](http://www.nymb.com); [www.pinkbike.com](http://www.pinkbike.com)) continue to expand the level of international awareness of British Columbia and communities within the Province as a premier mountain bike tourism destination. By expanding the diversity of cycling and mountain biking opportunities within the region, North Cowichan would be well positioned to the growth in this tourism sector.

### **Cycling and Mountain Bike Tourism Development Strategy:**

Community planners should be cognizant of and analyze the Critical Success Factors necessary to ensure the execution of a sustainable mountain bike tourism development strategy which meets visitor expectations and reflects community values. The benefits to those communities which get the mix and application of factors correct may include: increased opportunities for recreational mountain biking for diverse participant populations, increased destination awareness and tourism visitation, increased tourism revenues, increased taxation revenues, development and improvements of community infrastructure, spin-off benefits to indirect community players, diversity of economic base, support for youth recreation and community social development, programming opportunities for school districts and special populations, promotion of cluster and networking development, creation of community social capital, nurturing of innovation, knowledge transfer, improved competitiveness, promotion of local cultural, historical, ethnic, and geographic characteristics (APEC, 2010, pp. 1-4; BCMJTI, 2011, pp. 3, 5; City of Coquitlam, 2006, p. 8; City of Kelowna, 2007, pp. i-iii; Rockart & Bullen,

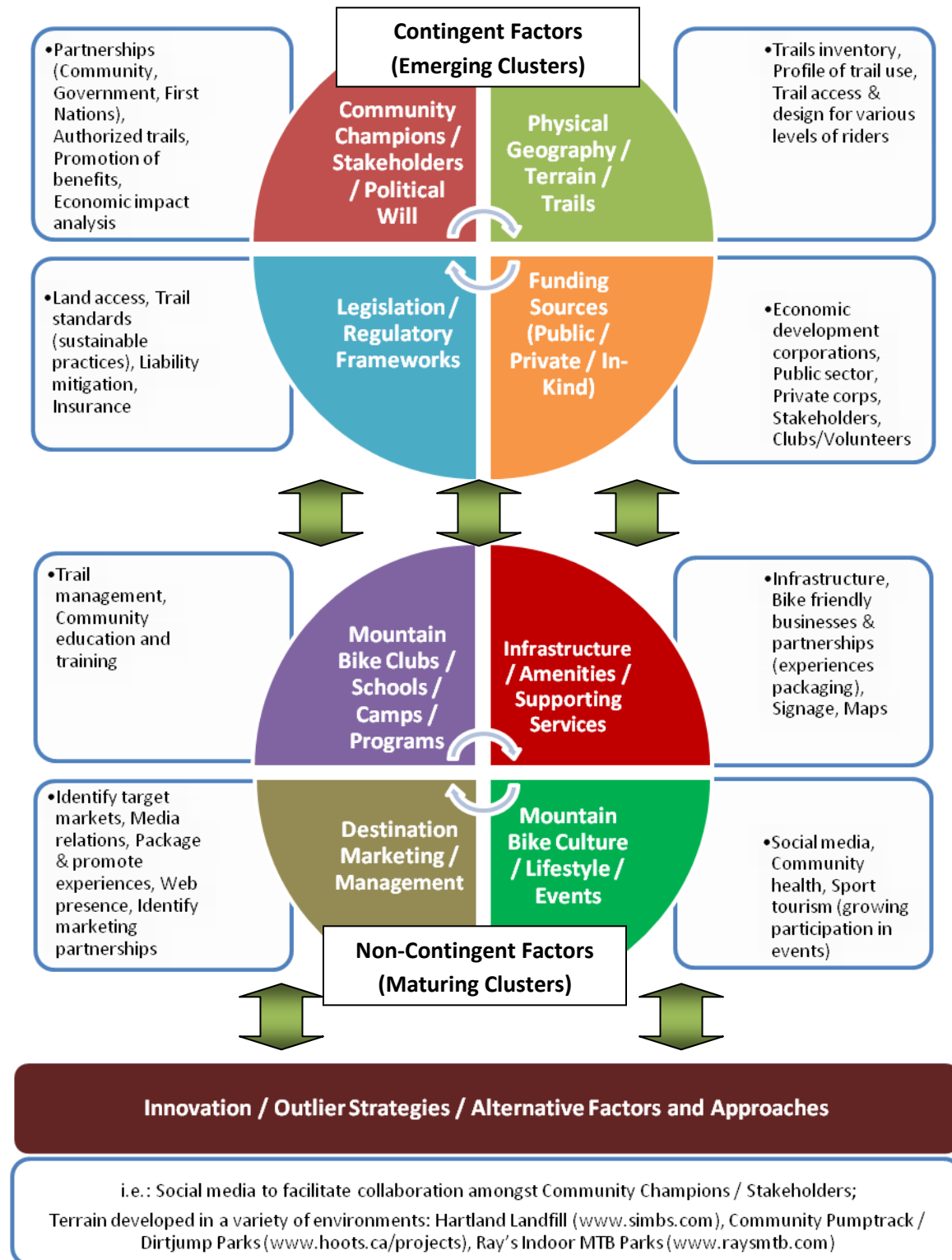
1981, p. 5; Scottish Mountain Bike Development Consortium, 2009, p. 13; Surrey Parks, Recreation & Culture, 2007, pp. 1-2).

By identifying and analyzing local Critical Success Factors, North Cowichan planners may compile and execute an inventory of assets, resources, stakeholders, champions, and other CSFs along with an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats which may impact the effective execution of a sustainable mountain bike tourism development strategy (LinkBC, 2010, p. 44). A strategy framework may then be developed in a measured application in alignment with available resources, keeping in mind that others have taken this path before and assistance and resources are available to those communities who leverage outside expertise. Neighboring communities often have a role to play and may provide additional resources and networking support to the broader benefit of the region as a whole (Scott, Baggio, & Cooper (2008, p. 106).

### **North Cowichan - Critical Success Factors and the Conceptual Framework for Community-Based Mountain Bike Tourism Development**

The approach utilized in this community case study is designed to analyze and identify issues, factors and resources relevant to each critical success factor. Consideration of locally prevalent Critical Success Factors and the development and execution of a community mountain bike tourism strategy using the CSFs in conjunction with a structured, Conceptual Framework for Community-Based Mountain Bike Tourism Development may assist community planners and stakeholders in North Cowichan to achieve successful outcomes for community participants and visitors alike.

**Conceptual Framework for Community-Based Mountain Bike Tourism Development**





**North Cowichan Objectives:**

- Identify the scope of bicycle-related activities currently in the region
  - Categories: mountain bike touring, “rails-to-trails”, cross-country, downhill, freeride, dirt jump/pump track, and all-mountain riding
- Identify current issues / challenges / conflicts / demographics / trends
  - Unauthorized/unsafe trail developments, user conflicts, liability, environmental impacts, growth in sport, missed opportunities
- Identify range of potential development opportunities & positive impacts
  - Economic, Social, Community Health, Environmental
    - Second hand bikes for underprivileged
- Create awareness among stakeholders
  - Identify potential stakeholders, identify concerns, identify commonalities, create advisory group, create vision and strategy
- Alignment with OCP and Community Vision
- Encourage Spin-Off benefits
- Compare with Kelowna, Coquitlam, Surrey

**North Cowichan Critical Success Factors:**

▪ **Community Champions / Stakeholders / Political Will**

To establish Partnerships (community, government, First Nations), management plan (authorize trails), education on benefits (social, cultural, environmental, economic), economic impact analysis (low-cost infrastructure)

- NC Municipality Stakeholders (Official Community Plan)
  - Forestry, Economic Development, Parks & Recreation, Cowichan Valley Regional District, BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism, & Innovation
- Lacking Bike Club(s) – introduce SIMBS chapter (Cobble Hill in progress)
- Economic Development – Community Futures
  - Employment & Business Opportunities
- First Nations
- Form Regional Advisory Group

▪ **Physical Geography / Terrain / Trails**

Trails inventory (see North Cowichan maps below), land ownership, profile of trail use, trail access for various levels of riders...particularly entry-level participants. Trail planning collaboration with adjacent communities and Public Sector Partners.

Potential Land Management Partners:

CRD – Victoria, CVRD, City of Nanaimo, Regional District of Nanaimo, BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism & Innovation, Vancouver Island Sports Tourism Council, BC Hydro, BC Ministry of Forests, Provincial Parks, Ministry of Transportation, Federal Agencies, Other regional Municipalities, Private Land Owners, First Nations, CN Rail.

Inventory, Assets, and Potential Riding Demographics/Disciplines:

- Mt. Prevost
- Mt. Tzouhalem
- Regional Rails to Trails
- Kinsol Trestle
- Burnt Bridge
- Extensive GIS / Mapping
- Trail Ratings / Signage
- Land Ownership / Management
- Trans Canada Trail
- Pump track / Dirt jump park
- Technical Skills Park
- Gravity / DH
- Cross-Country
- All Mountain

▪ **Legislation / Regulatory Frameworks**

Land access, trail standards (sustainable practices), liability mitigation, insurance

- NC Official Community Plan
- NC Parks & Recreation Long Term Needs Analysis
- Cowichan Valley Regional District – Regional Parks & Trails Master Plan
- Land Ownership / Management / Legislation
- Insurance – IMBA / Local Bike Club
- Risk Management
- Trail Standards

▪ **Funding Sources (Public / Private / In-Kind)**

Seeking non-traditional funding sources (economic development corporations, various public sector, private corporations, local stakeholders, clubs/volunteers, identify economic investment outcomes)

- Municipality trails development / maintenance
- Bike clubs / volunteers
- IMBA Canada
  - <http://www.imbacanada.com/resources/fundraising/canadian-grants>
- Community Futures
- BC Provincial Government (program examples)
  - Bike BC
  - ACT Now BC
  - LocalMotion
- Island Coastal Economic Trust
- Cowichan Valley Regional District
- Cowichan Tribes
- Other Government
- Corporate Sponsors
- Trans Canada Trail
- Other NGO's
- Service Clubs

▪ **Mountain Bike Clubs / Schools / Camps / Programs**

Trail management, community education and training

- School District 79
- Local Bike Clubs
- Local Bike Camps (External Operators)

▪ **Infrastructure / Amenities / Supporting Services**

Strengthen supporting infrastructure, develop bike friendly businesses and partnerships (heterogeneous experiences packaging...bike shops, component manufacturers, restaurants, coffee shops, accommodations, tour guides, other experiences), signage, maps

- Transportation (BC Ferries, Airlines, Highways, Public Transit, Tour Operators,

- Shuttles, Self-Guided, Bicycle Tourists)
- Accommodations (Hotels, Motels, Campgrounds, B&B's, Friends & Family)
  - Secure Bike Storage, Gear Drying / Cleaning
- Bike Shops, Retail, Repairs, Rentals
- Restaurants, Grocery Stores
- Trailheads, Parking, Washrooms, Refuse, Air Stations, Drinking Water, Bike Wash
- Signage (Sponsorship)
- Trail Maps (Sponsorship)

### ▪ **Destination Marketing / Management**

Identify target markets, promote MTB experiences, media relations, creating / packaging experiences, web presence, identify partnership opportunities (heterogeneous experiences packaging)

- Tourism Cowichan, Tourism Vancouver Island, BC Ministry of Jobs, Tourism & Innovation, Vancouver Island Sports Tourism Council
- IMBA, Mountain Bike Tourism Association (MBTA)
- Local Communities
- Pinkbike, NSMB
- Bike Media
- Inbound Tour Operators

### ▪ **Mountain Bike Culture / Lifestyle / Events**

Social media, community health, sport tourism (growing trend for participation in events)

- School District 79
- Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA)
- Cowichan Valley Regional District (Health Initiatives)
- First Nations
- Bike Clubs
- Tour Operators
- Events
  - Races
  - Festivals
  - Demo Days
  - Tours
  - Community Fund Raising Events

- IMBA Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day
- Skills Camps
- Conferences
- Local Bike Shops

▪ **Innovation / Outlier Strategies / Variable Factors and Approaches**

i.e.: Social media may be used to facilitate collaboration amongst Community Champions / Stakeholders; Terrain may be developed in a variety of environments: Hartland Landfill ([www.simbs.com](http://www.simbs.com)), Community Pumptrack / Dirtjump parks ([www.hoots.ca/projects](http://www.hoots.ca/projects)), Ray's Indoor MTB Parks ([www.raysmtb.com](http://www.raysmtb.com)).

- Unique attributes of North Cowichan
  - Mt. Prevost, Steve Smith, Seasons / The Collective
- Develop marquis / signature / or epic trail(s)
- Develop marquis event(s)
- Variety of experiences
  - Complimentary partnerships / experiences
    - Culinary tourism, kayaking, etc...

▪ **Short / Medium / Long-Term Objectives**

- Short: advisory group, asset inventory (resources, trails), initiate master planning, develop mtn bike club local chapter.
- Medium: decommission priority unauthorized trails, redevelop priority authorized trails, utilize sustainable trail standards, stakeholder collaboration
- Long: tourism packaging partnerships, destination marketing / management, marquis events, local community programs

Relevant references for this section: BCMTSA, 2006, 2008, 2009; Community Futures

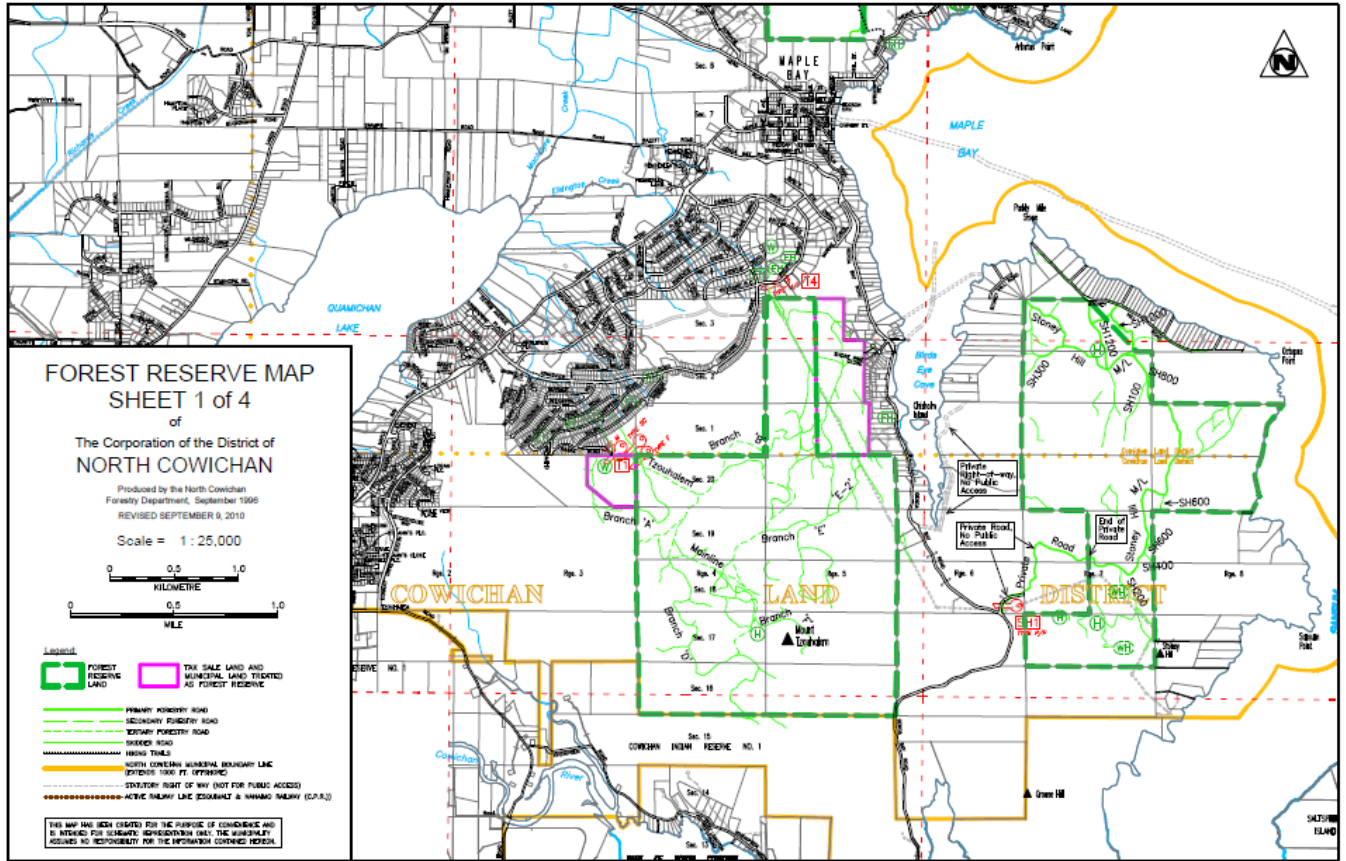
Crowsnest Pass, 2010; CRA, 2010; CVRD, 2007; Dunn, 2001; Forestry Commission Scotland,

2007; IMBA, 2010; Koepke, 2005; LinkBC, 2009; Maierhofer, 2007; MBTA, 2006, 2010 April;

Municipality of North Cowichan, 2011 (multiple); RMOW, 2003; Scottish Mountain Bike

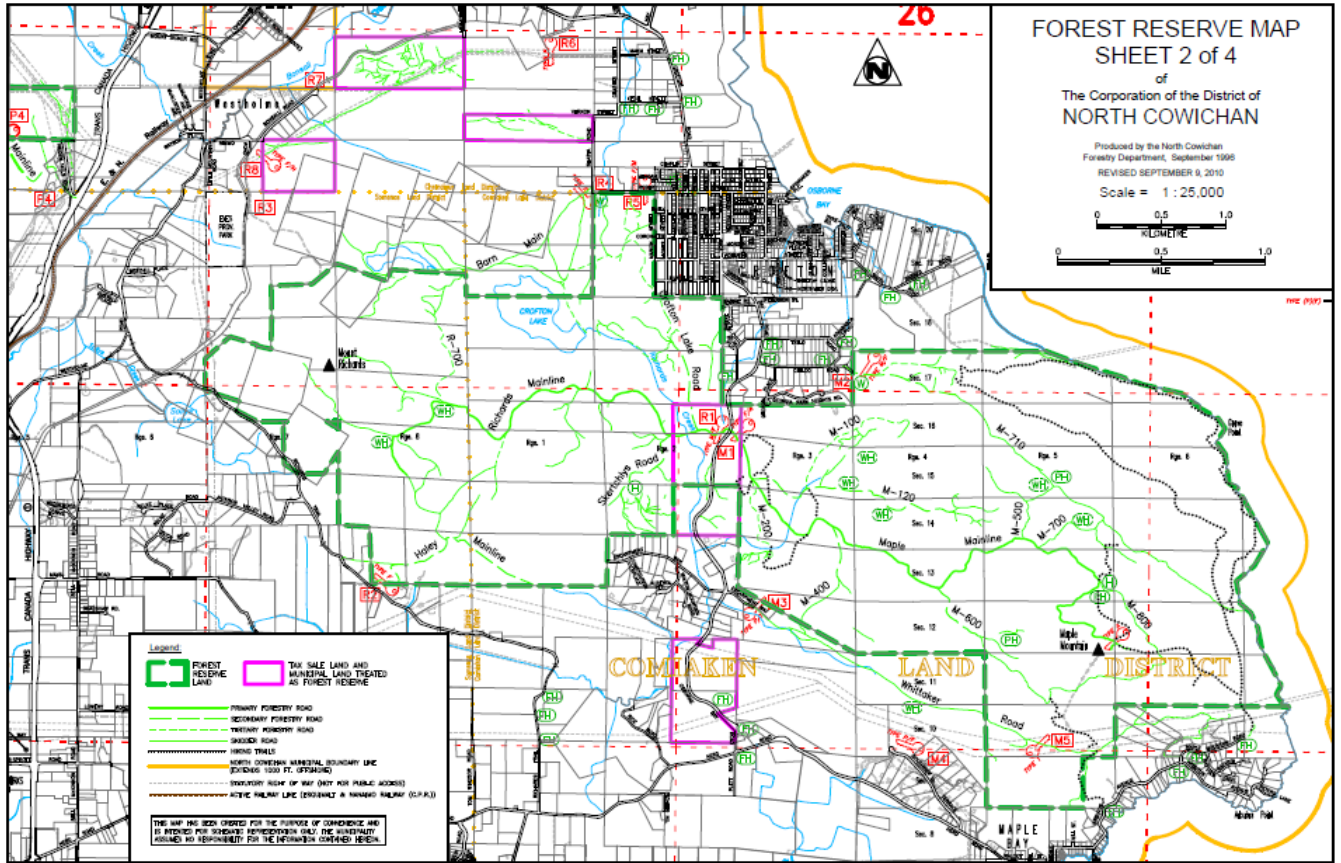
Development Consortium, 2009; Tourism BC, 2008, 2009, 2010.

Forest Reserve Map Sheet 1 of 4:



Source: Municipality of North Cowichan

Forest Reserve Map Sheet 2 of 4:

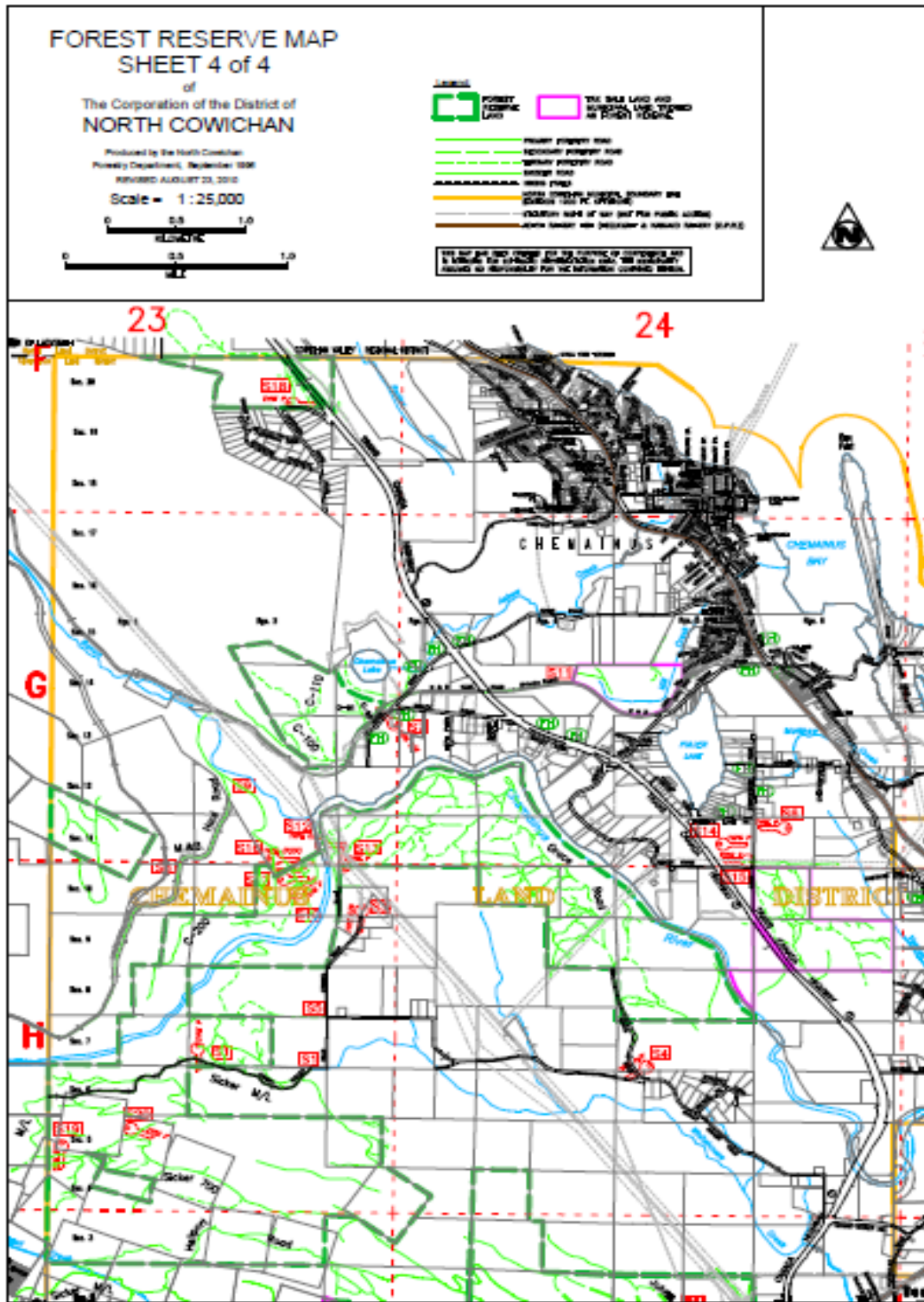


Source: Municipality of North Cowichan



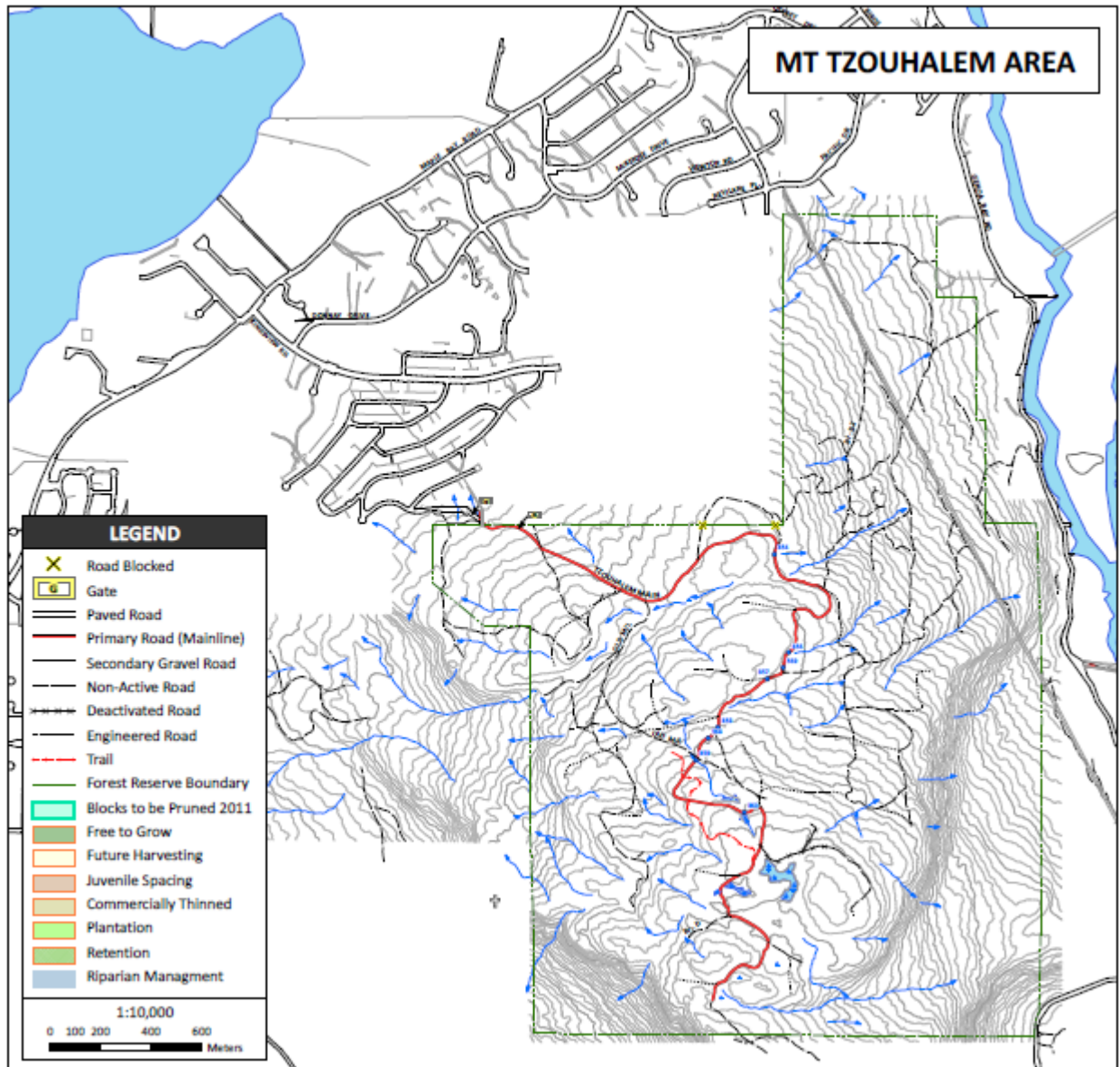


Forest Reserve Map Sheet 3 of 4:



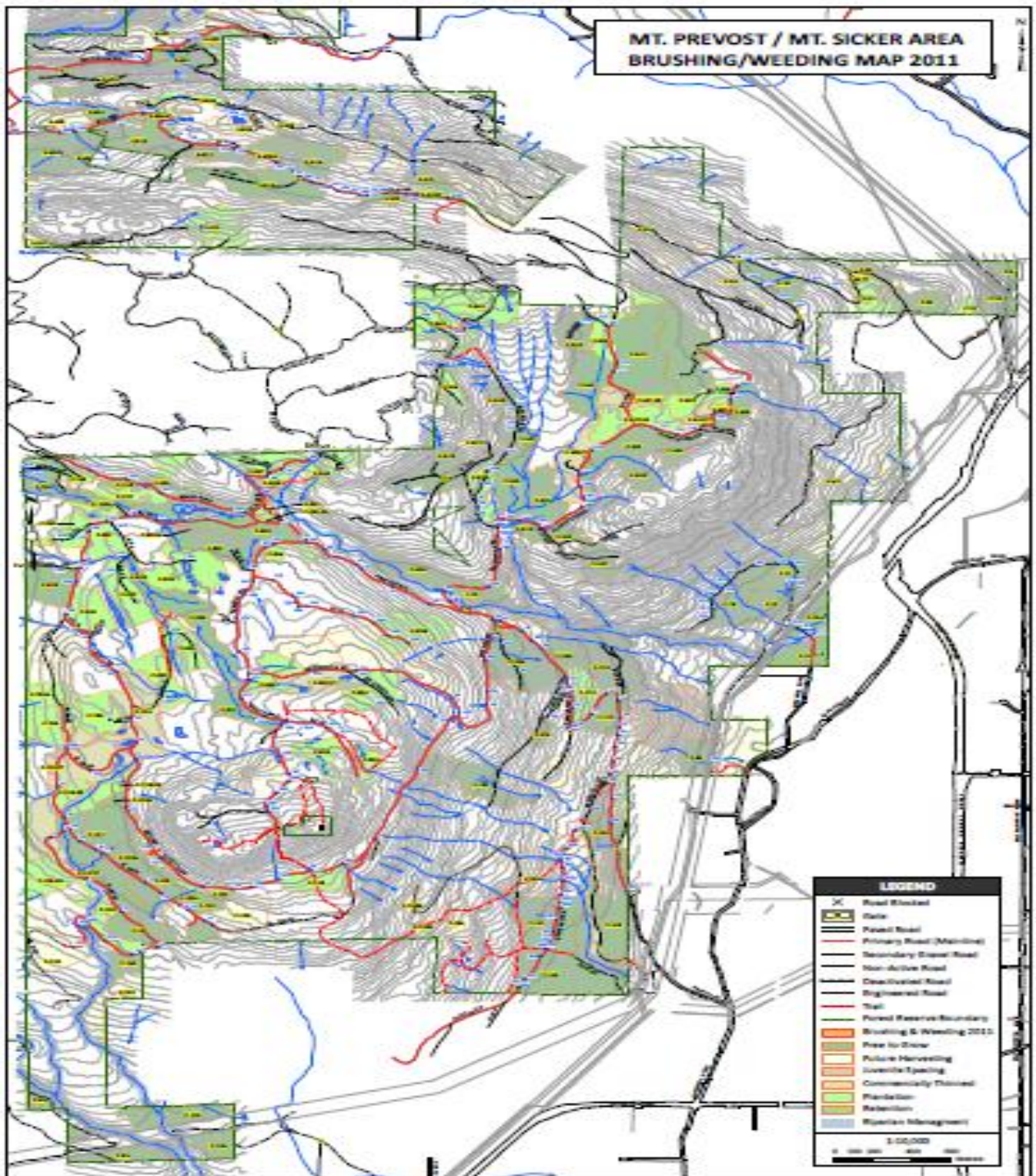
Source: Municipality of North Cowichan

**Mt. Tzouhalem:**



**Source: Municipality of North Cowichan**

**Mt. Prevost:**



Source: Municipality of North Cowichan

**Super-D Race, Hartland, Victoria, BC:**



**Photo Credit: SIMBS**

