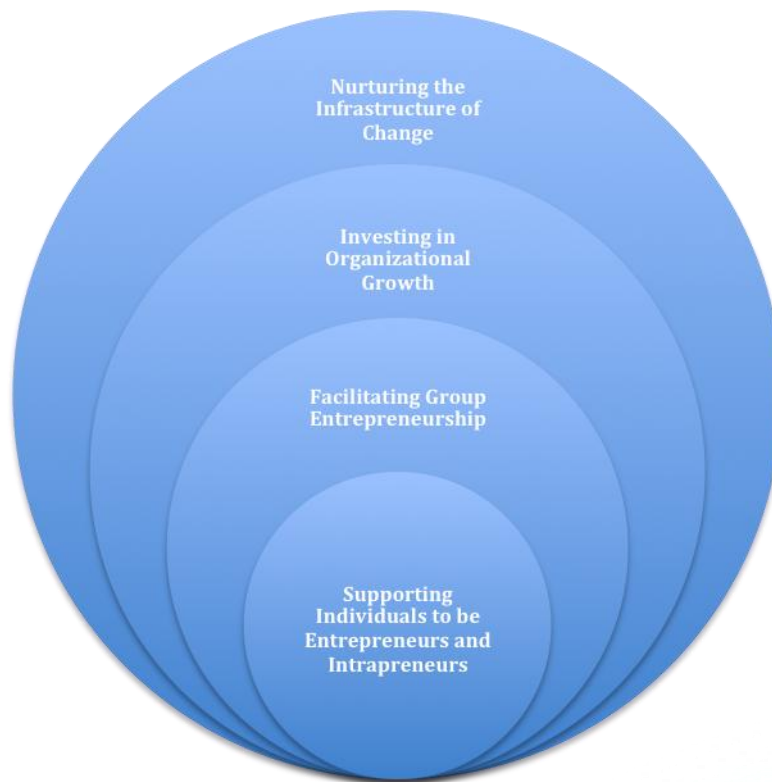


# Social Enterprise Planning Paper, March 2008

Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion  
Social Enterprise Working Group



## **Preface to this Plan**

For the past year a group of BACI people have engaged with the intention to deepen their knowledge of social enterprise and begin to apply their keen interest in developing social enterprise projects that will benefit BACI into the future. This process has been successful and continues to grow as BACI embraces this new way of thinking, being and doing.

The BACI Board of Directors and senior management have declared social enterprise as a priority for the future of BACI. Thus, in addition to a permeation throughout the organization, the social enterprise committee will continue to work on projects and initiatives that slowly but surely shift BACI in the direction of new revenues streams, new programs and business ventures that both fit with BACI's Mission while advancing its impact.

This document offers a handful of reflections on the Social Enterprise undertaking thus far and identifies strategies for BACI to explore and implement over the coming years.

## **Reflections on SE at BACI in 2007**

### The SE Group

The SE Group is comprised of roughly 10 people whom include staff, parents, managers and individuals. This group has been enthusiastic throughout the year, coming to meetings consistently, responding to opportunities and engaging their minds and hearts in the project development process. The group can and should serve as an anchor point for BACI's social enterprise aspirations.

### The Current Projects

There are four new projects currently under development. The selection of these projects included a process of: criteria development, brainstorming, vetting, pre-feasibility studies and now business planning. Throughout the process these and other projects have been strictly scrutinized by the working group to ensure that they fit with BACI's Mission, aspirations and ethical guidelines. The projects include:

1. Waste Not Want Not: A paper recycling operation.
2. Seniors Buddy: Provision of services to seniors who want to age in place.
3. Gift Boxes by BACI: Custom or themed boxes of gift goods.
4. Diversitas: Consulting services on diversity.

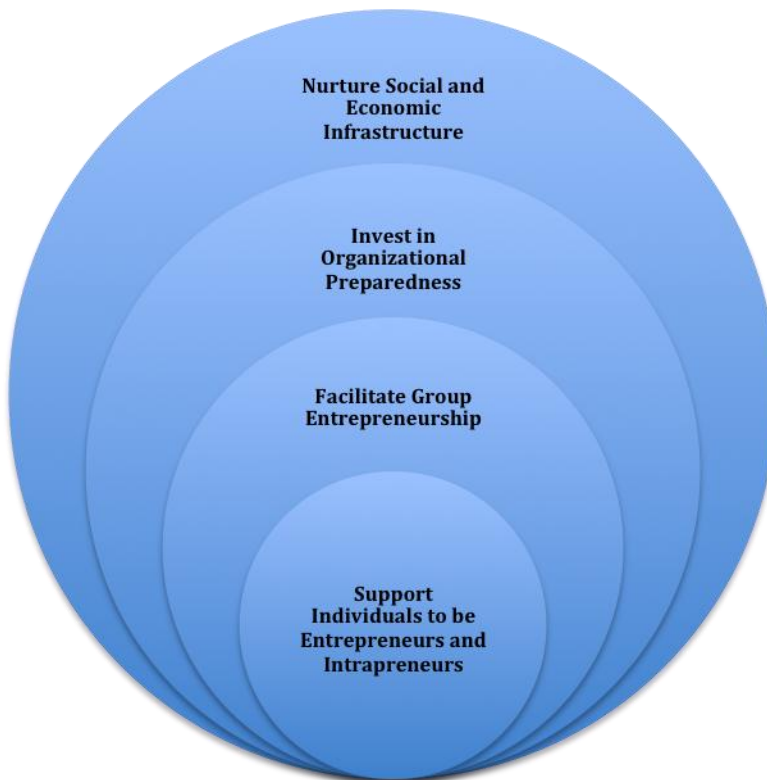
Each of these projects has merit as a business concept and is being further developed by the working group. As these develop and launch they will continue to need the staff support as well as support from management.

Along with these four projects, BACI is also reviewing two Day Programs (Action Packaging and the BACI Woodshop) to determine the potential for transformation to either stand alone Social Enterprises or as part of the development of Gift Boxes by BACI. There will be dialogue with the families and caregivers of the individuals involved and a feasibility study is to be completed by August 2008.

### The SE environment beyond BACI

Social enterprise, as an approach and methodology, to changing the world and sustaining social innovations is burgeoning across the globe. International organizations such as the Skoll Foundation and Ashoka are excellent indications that this approach applies meaningfully within differing contexts. Successful examples and models of social enterprise abound. BACI is on the right track taking up these approaches and has the support of local social entrepreneurs, entrepreneurial organizations and companies, even financial institutions on which they can lean through this transformational period.

## **Strategies to Generate Capacity and Possibilities at BACI**



### Examples of BACI's Leadership

- Collaborating with the Burnaby Board of Trade
- Allocating board, staff and financial resources.
- Facilitating a social enterprise working group.
- Opportunities to engage, learn and develop peoples' entrepreneurship.

## Individuals to be Entrepreneurs and Intrapreneurs

“Everyone a changemaker,” is the tagline and mantra of Ashoka. The sentiment is simple, foster the application of peoples’ creative energies and the change we seek will follow. The underlying assumption that applies as much to BACI’s local constituency as it does to Ashoka’s global community, is one of abundance. The assumption that people are wealthy with creativity, ideas, ingenuity, innovation and resilience.

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Individuals, including people with disabilities, staff and other members of the BACI community can contribute to BACI’s growth as entrepreneurs. With the support of BACI, people will be able to take risks they couldn’t before, they can think creatively about problems that are otherwise stuck and they can unleash their assets for the betterment of all.

People that make up BACI’s “internal” community can also be intrapreneurial. Intrapreneurship fosters change from within, by encouraging entrepreneurial characteristics, attributes and strategies to be applied to internal structures, programs and processes. In other words, this is about looking at the way BACI is and asking oneself, “what if...?” Staff, board members, volunteers and individuals with disabilities can be encouraged to ask this question over and over. Eventually, BACI will find itself taking greater risks, adjusting its operations through with creativity and establishing its resilience and sustainability through the engagement of its people.

### *Education*

A learning organization fosters learning from within and learning from outside. BACI can develop and/or institute educational programs within its walls to help staff, volunteers and individuals learn about social entrepreneurship and apply their learning. As well, BACI can work with local educational institutions and organizations to contribute to the general public’s mutual learning process, thereby raising awareness as well as knowledge.

BACI is implementing this method with the programs being developed in collaboration with Kwantlan College. Individuals with disabilities and staff of BACI will have the opportunity to spend time in a post-secondary education learning environment and thusly, encouraged to bring their new insights and knowledge into their relationship with BACI.

### *Opportunities to Engage*

Key among strategies to support individuals as entrepreneurs and Intrapreneurs is engagement. Underlying the concept of engagement is trust and opportunity. If people are trusted to put their assets to work and have meaningful opportunities to do so, they will engage and BACI will feel it.

## Group Entrepreneurship

Margaret Mead said, “A small group of thoughtful people could change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.” She was talking about BACI’s Social Enterprise Working Group as much as any group of people. The social capital that is generated by a group of people working in concert is itself an asset that can be leveraged.

**Underlying the concept of engagement is trust and opportunity.**

### *Gatherings*

The SE Working Group has talked about specific events designed to bring people together to learn, explore, and foster possibility. These kinds of events are relatively easy to organize and BACI’s community is nothing short of enthusiastic about coming together. These events will build common understanding and social cohesion while generating ideas and potential initiatives and future undertakings for BACI to consider.

### *Collaborative Competitions*

The concept of having people compete while communicating even collaborating for the benefit of all, has great potential. We know that competition gets people excited and drives them to contribute the best that they have to offer in terms of ideas, solutions, energy, etc. As well, we know about the social capital that is generated when groups of people are working together. Thus, the concept of collaborative competitions, whereby groups of people are encouraged to enter their best ideas/solutions into a contest, leverages both friendly competition and collaboration. For examples of collaborative competitions see Ashoka’s Changemakers.net.

### *Asset Mapping and Inventories*

John McKnight and John Krentzman introduced a community development concept known as Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) – for more information see <http://www.sesp.northwestern.edu/abcd/>. The idea is simply to take an account or inventory of the assets that individuals, organizations and the community on whole have to offer. Often, this approach highlights assets and opportunities that were previously unrecognized and under-utilized.

As part of a “discovery” process, BACI is already beginning to work with individuals to identify their assets and interests as well as their needs. This process should be seen as an exercise in community economic development as much as a program development strategy.

## Organizational Readiness

Does the environment exist to allow for change at BACI? If BACI as an organization and community is not ready to allow, moreover encourage change, then the

strategies of supporting individuals and facilitating group entrepreneurship will fall short of their original intentions. Elements of organizational preparedness can include, yet are not limited to:

- *Board and membership understanding and engagement.* The Board of Directors, staff, membership and immediate community of BACI should have at least a basic understanding of the concepts of social enterprise. Better yet has them intimately involved in the respective initiatives. The Strategic Plan clearly reflects an interest in Social Enterprise by the Board.
- *Staff Resources.* When activities which demand time, attention and dollars are situated on the edge of staff desks, they tend to fall off. Dedicated human resources that have autonomy, flexibility and the trust of senior management are key to advancing riskier entrepreneurial initiatives.
- *Financial Resources.* Social enterprises might be well served to think of themselves as conduits through which money flows, as opposed to money makers and spenders. Thus, to expect revenues from social enterprise requires investment.
- *Current Initiatives.* A logic model has been developed for BACI Day Services and a new position has been created for Community Development. BACI has an involvement involved with AccessWorks. A partnership has been formed with Kwantlan College and 6 other organizations to train staff around employment for people with disabilities. The second phase of this program will include training on the development of Social and Micro Enterprises.

### Social and Economic Infrastructure

BACI is already a leader within the community living movement. Herein lies yet a further opportunity to lead. Social enterprise is a cutting edge approach to address insufficiencies in resources and lack of inspired innovations. BACI's experience will be fodder from which other not-for-profit organizations and agencies will learn. Being a leader in this field will result in both opportunities and challenges. Nevertheless, BACI should consider how it can affect change at the political and community level in order to pave the way for others to follow.

The early work to develop relationships and future collaborations with the Burnaby Board of Trade is an excellent example of BACI's leadership. BACI's own entrepreneurial aspirations will benefit from those relationships and the Board will benefit from the insights and awareness that BACI brings to light.

## **Challenges and Opportunities**

Over the next few years, it is important BACI meet challenges as opportunities, capitalizing on its assets and abundance, building on its relationships in the community and private sector and working toward outcomes not merely processes.

Communication across an organization can, all by itself, lead to transformation. Financial and human resources will lead to changes, but transformation requires communication and learning. The organization-wide communications necessary for transformation necessitates open-minded, yet focused participation at all levels of the BACI community.

Collaboration beyond the BACI walls can include the private, non-profit and public sectors. BACI is comprised of people that each have social networks which connect BACI to power, place, and prominence. BACI can get better at unveiling those connections and get better at leveraging the connections it is aware of.

Outcomes versus process is a challenging concept for not-for-profits to grapple with. Being resolute to start an enterprise or other revenue generating revenue stream is different from supporting a process to develop options for alternative revenue streams. Processes are about engagement. Outcomes are about accomplishment. BACI can find a balance that both engages people through process and accomplishes its goals through social enterprise. Outcomes have been and will continually be developed that are both measurable and achievable. Some of these outcomes have already been achieved.