

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

BC Economic Development award winners for 2024 announced

PENTICTON, B.C., May 10, 2024 - The British Columbia Economic Development Association (BCEDA) announced the winners of the 2024 BC Economic Development Awards at the BCEDA's annual awards presentation held at the Penticton Lakeside Resort and Convention Centre in Penticton during the BC Economic Summit.

These awards recognize BCEDA members for outstanding work in supporting their local economies and making a meaningful difference in their communities. For over 30 years, the BCEDA has given these awards to individuals and groups who have dedicated their time to community-based economic development. BCEDA is pleased to recognize partnerships, agreements and activities that advance shared reconciliation and resiliency.

Congratulations to the following 2024 BC Economic Development Award winners:

Economic Development Marketing Innovation Award

The BCEDA Marketing Innovation Award recognizes achievement in marketing initiatives that support economic development.

Winner (community less than 20,000 population): The Robson Valley Region for *Robson Valley Economic Development Marketing Program*

Winner (community more than 20,000 population): Greater Vernon Chamber of Commerce for *Work and Invest Vernon*

Economic Reconciliation Award

The BCEDA Economic Reconciliation Award includes submissions for partnerships, agreements and activities that advance shared economic reconciliation work.

Winner (community less than 20,000 population): District of Kitimat and Haisla Nation for *CEDI Partnership*

Winner (community more than 20,000 population): City of Victoria for *South Island Indigenous Business Directory*

Community Project Award

The BCEDA Community Project Award recognizes an organization that has implemented various economic development initiatives that provide economic benefits to a community or region.

Winner (community less than 20,000 population): Tkemlúps te Secwépemc Business & Economic Development for *Sweláps Market*

Winner (community more than 20,000 population): City of Langford for *The Langford Station*

Community Resiliency Award

This category includes submissions for programs, activities, and projects that represent a successful recovery initiative from natural and man-made disasters, including the loss of a major employer, housing and labour shortages as well as submissions that represent replicable measures undertaken to promote long term resiliency and/or sustainability from future disasters.

Winner (community less than 20,000 population): City of Prince Rupert for *Watson Island*

Winner (community more than 20,000 population): City of Surrey for *Economic Strategy 2024*

Chair's Award

The Chair's Award is presented annually to recognize a member of BCEDA who has made a significant contribution towards the profession of economic development as well as the function, goals and/or mandate of the BC Economic Development Association.

BCEDA Board Chair Brian Coombes, presented the 2024 Chair's Award to Colleen Bond. Colleen has been a member of the BCEDA since 1998, and since 2008 has contributed significant time in developing and delivering training programs, assisting at conferences, and playing a major role in developing Canada's first economic recovery and resiliency program.

People's Choice Award

BC Economic Summit delegates were asked to vote for one of the above winners as the People's Choice and the selected project was Tkemlúps te Secwépemc Business & Economic Development for *Sweláps Market*.

"Economic developers are the unsung heroes of our communities. They help provide jobs, revenues, and make every corner of B.C. a great place to live," said Roly Russell, Parliamentary Secretary for Rural Development. "These awards recognize the incredible creativity, ingenuity, and partnerships that people work hard to deliver every day. Congratulations to all the winners, and thank you to everyone who does this important work."

"We are incredibly proud to celebrate the exceptional achievements of Local and Indigenous leaders and BC's Economic Developers," stated Dale Wheeldon, President and CEO of BCEDA. "The multitude of nominations from communities reflects the creative approaches being implemented to bolster local economies. The theme for this year, 'Transforming Industries; Empowering Communities,' was vividly represented through all the submitted projects, underscoring the collaborative efforts essential for advancing BC. Our deepest thanks go to each participant who entered their projects, as our judges faced a challenging selection process. We commend all nominees for their dedication to enhancing local economies and for their commitment to economic resiliency and economic reconciliation."

For more information about the BCEDA and the summit, visit: bceda.ca.

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About BCEDA

The BC Economic Development Association (BCEDA) is the leading professional association of economic development practitioners in the Province of BC. BCEDA currently has over 450 members from communities throughout the province. BCEDA provides services that help member communities grow and expand new and existing businesses, attract new business investments, and work towards strategic infrastructure investment, land use planning, and community enhancement. BCEDA services include an annual summit and networking event, educational and professional development opportunities, public relations, advisory services and resources and partnering with communities and the Province of BC to market British Columbia for business investment.