

2023 Annual Report



Lower Columbia
Initiatives
Economic
Development

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Message from the Board Chair
2	Message from the Directors
4	About the LCIC
5	Goals & Values
6	LCIC Summary of Accomplishments
8	Investment Readiness
9	MTA Summary of Accomplishments
11	Investment Attraction
12	MTA Testimonials
13	Regional Collaboration
15	Looking Ahead
17	Contributors
18	Staff & Board Members

A Message from the Board Chair

Hello Everyone.

2023 was a great year of progress inside and out for the LCIC. The vision and leadership throughout the years of this great organization has again been recognized both locally and internationally. Initiatives such as, Metal Tech Alley, Battery Hub, Circular Economy are all very much The Future, the technology is here and that excitement is shared by all levels of government.

Land development, market housing and commercial traffic access initiatives combined with this team's dedication to disciplined reporting signal a clear direction going forward.

Thank you to the LCIC Board for the dedication and support that you continue to give to economic growth in this region. Thanks to the impactful participation of the communities we all serve and to our local governments assistance and understanding of regional service as a key element of success and ability to address regional concerns. And of course, thank you to our directors and administrative staff.

We all feel the potential of this fantastic region and now the LCIC momentum is being realized by those around us as well.

All the best.



Brent Anhel
Board Chair

A Message from the Directors

2023 was an eventful year at the LCIC. Interest in Metal Tech Alley continued to grow nationally and internationally. We have clarified the direction and target of Metal Tech Alley to best suit the region's needs and capture the greatest potential for growth. This means batteries! The metallurgical nature of battery production and recycling are ideal for our region which is home to extensive expertise in this field. And, with electrification, the market for batteries is exploding. Metal Tech Alley is poised to help our region benefit from this growth this helps Canada by moving the country closer to circular economy targets.

Metal Tech Alley's battery hub ambitions have attracted considerable attention and traction. This year Metal Tech Alley was featured in the National Post's special edition on circular economy, and in Canada's Circular Economy Action Plan produced by Circular Economy Leadership Canada as a priority for federal support. Jacomien was a speaker at the Circular Economy Summit in Toronto, and Rebecca attended Natural Resources Canada's Critical Minerals workshop in Ottawa. In addition to these engagements, the focus for Metal Tech Alley was the Battery Hub this Feasibility study is expected to be completed in March 2024.

Investment readiness activities in 2023 dug into the details on topics such as land use and commercial traffic corridors. We conducted these activities in the spirit of finding out what's happening, identifying what's needed, and determining what is possible. This important work brings us closer to realizing the ambitions of Metal Tech Alley by addressing current economic needs of the region and anticipating the demands of the future.

The first of these projects in 2023 was to integrate the commercial and industrial land inventory with GIS mapping software to make the inventory accessible and versatile. We built on this topic by conducting a land development strategy which examined what improvements and other actions can be taken to make use of industrial and commercially zoned land. Finally, on commercial traffic flows an assessment considered cross border trade and whether border infrastructure improvements would be reasonable.

In 2024 we are looking forward to continuing our work and moving ahead on some new topics like housing. With Battery Hub action plans in hand we can expect new projects from Metal Tech Alley to get us closer to our dreams!



Rebecca Richards, LCIC Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Richards".



Jacomien van Tonder, MTA Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Mander".

ABOUT THE LCIC

Our History

Incorporated in 2010, the LCIC was created to take action on economic development needs and opportunities in our communities. We've tackled many different topics in our 14 years including workforce and business retention. We've received several awards for our work and we continue to be highly innovative in meeting the needs of the communities and businesses in our region!

What is economic development?

Economic development can cover many different activities. At the LCIC we work in two areas of the field. The first area is called "investment readiness" and this means that we prepare the area able to support new businesses. For example, a new business will need enough employees so we work on activities that will increase the skilled labour population. The second area is "investment attraction" which means we're promoting the area as a place for new businesses to start, marketing it outside our region as well as helping local entrepreneurs get started.

Our Approach

At the LCIC, we're not afraid to tackle the big stuff. We dream big about what our region can be and we are looking at the big picture to see where our economy is being held up. This means that we're often working with partners in the economic development field here in Trail and around the Kootenays. We know that by working together, the whole Kootenay region benefits and we can be more effective at addressing complex problems.

GOALS & VALUES

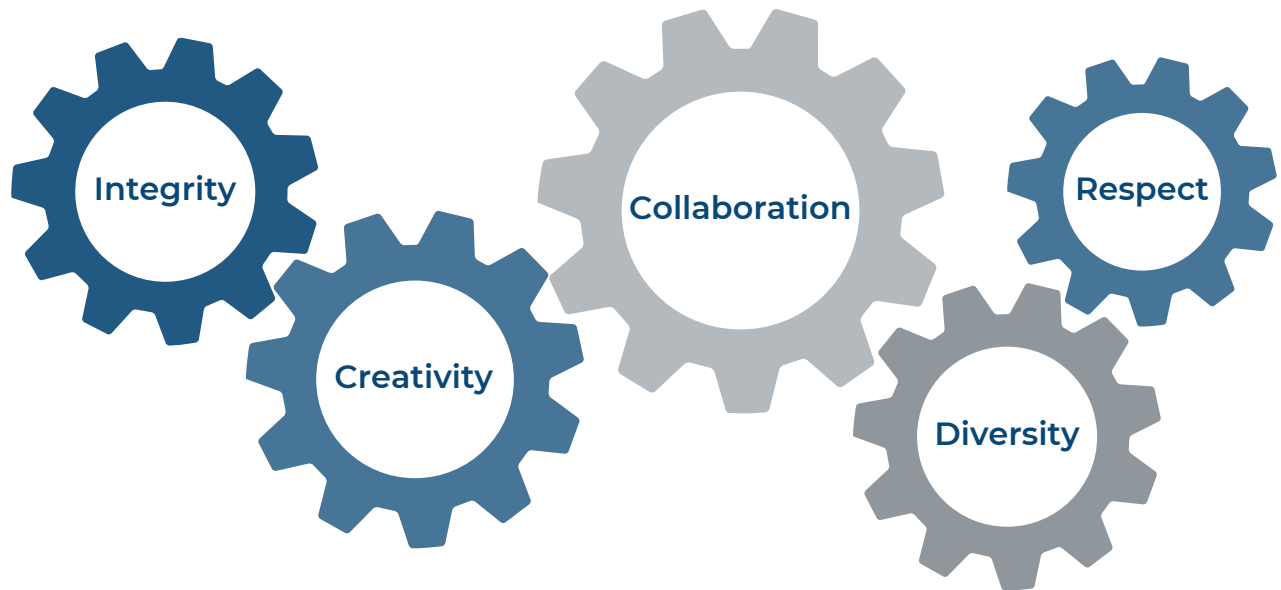
Our Purpose

To increase the well-being of residents here in the Lower Columbia by meeting local needs and to progress the economic status of the area and the success of local businesses.

Our Goals

- Remove barriers to economic growth
- Identify and promote opportunities for investment
- Support existing industry growth and resilience

Our Values



2023 LCIC HIGHLIGHTS

→ West Kootenay Recruitment Feasibility Study

Rebecca joined the steering committee for this project which is providing important labour market data for the West Kootenay and examining whether a recruitment agency is a viable solution for employer challenges.

→ 2023 BC Economic Summit

The LCIC is a member of the BCEDA which provides us with access to professional development resources and tools for economic development activities. Rebecca attended the Summit which was a great opportunity to network with economic development practitioners from around the province and discuss hot topic issues impacting the economy.



→ Data Presentation with ETSI-BC

Rebecca presented in the series Sharpen Your Skills, Learn from Peers – Continue to Use Data to Your Advantage from ETSI-BC. In Using Data for Economic Impact & Planning, Rebecca talked about Mapping It Out: The Power of Visualizing the Data with GIS Technology. The presentation encouraged great discussion and it was a fantastic opportunity to share knowledge with other economic developers.

→ West Kootenay Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot

Rebecca participated in the West Kootenay Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot selection committee. This year we've recommended 166 people for Permanent Residency, supporting 36 employers in the Lower Columbia.

2023 LCIC HIGHLIGHTS

→ Modern Living Show

Metal Tech Alley represented opportunities for the circular economy at the region's first modern living show. Rebecca spoke to these opportunities as part of Metal Tech Alley's local outreach and education efforts.

→ Basin Food and Buyers Expo

Rebecca attended the Basin Food and Buyers Expo in Creston to continue promoting the Food Supply Chain Modelling project, also known as the "Food Map". She participated in two speaking engagements about the current challenges of food distribution in the Basin with input from carriers and food producers. This effort was successful in spreading the word about the Food Map and creating interest in the future of the project.



→ Annual EDPN Dialogue

Rebecca attended the Annual EDPN Dialogue event which brings together economic development practitioners from around the Columbia Basin. Topics covered included transportation research, infrastructure development and the circular economy.

→ MLA & MP Holiday Open House

Rebecca and Jacomien attended the MLA & MP Holiday Open House hosted by Richard Cannings and Katrine Conroy.

INVESTMENT READINESS

What is Investment Readiness?

Reducing barriers to economic growth, filling gaps in the local economy and supporting businesses through project-based activities. The goal is to create a regional economy that is ready for investment.

Land Inventory GIS Integration

As a follow up to the 2022 commercial and industrial land inventory we created a GIS map on lcic.ca where the entire inventory can be viewed with parcel details. The GIS map has searching and filtering tools available which makes it versatile and easy to use when investment inquiries are received!

Land Development Strategy

Building on the land inventory, we engaged a consultant to create a strategy on how to develop land in our communities. The strategy assesses the regulatory environment for development and makes recommendations that promote development that is compatible with community priorities.

Commercial Trade Corridor Assessment

Building on the work of years prior, the LCIC engaged a consultant to examine cross-border commercial traffic flows in the region. We sought to understand the impacts on our communities and whether a low-elevation crossing at Waneta would improve community well-being and the economic prospects of the region.

Food Map Continued Development

LCIC continued to support the food map created in 2022 by identifying a new caretaker and applying for grants for future development.

Market Housing Exploration

In 2023, we spent time learning about the housing development process from developers, realtors and planners. These activities have positioned us to take action on projects in 2024.

2023 MTA HIGHLIGHTS

→ Top 10 Thought Leaders of the Year

Kootenay Business put together their 2023 Top 10 Thought Leaders of the Year and Metal Tech Alley made the list!

→ Canada's Critical Minerals Workshop

On behalf of Metal Tech Alley, Rebecca Richards attended Natural Resources Canada's Critical Minerals Processing Workshop hosted by CanmetMINING. This workshop brought together researchers on the cutting edge of metallurgy, industry and government to exchange ideas and work towards implementing Canada's Critical Minerals Strategy. "It was an inspiring and educational event! We have learned a lot about how Metal Tech Alley can play an essential role in the execution of the strategy for the benefit of Canada's future in this sector."

→ Interview with 99.3 The Goat Radio

Metal Tech Alley Director, Jacomien van Tonder, was interviewed by 99.3 The Goat radio about her efforts to make our region a battery recycling hub for Western Canada.

→ Ottawa

Jacomien van Tonder, Director of Metal Tech Alley, and Rebecca Richards, Director of LCIC, travelled to Ottawa to meet with Richard Cannings and his colleagues. The purpose of this trip was to continue raising awareness about Metal Tech Alley activities. It was a great opportunity to promote the importance of investing in Canada's battery sector and prioritizing the circular economy.



→ National Post

Metal Tech Alley is in the National Post! The discussion focused on the Western Battery Hub Feasibility Study and what it would mean for our region.

metaltechalley

Trail, British Columbia, CANADA

Timing is everything.

2023 MTA HIGHLIGHTS

→ On Tour with Google and Teck

Jacomien met with Paul McKay of Teck Metals, Bryony Clear Hill of ICMM, Mike Werner of Google and Deborah Chan-Yan of Teck to discuss the battery recycling process, circular economy practices and the potential expansion of battery recycling in our region. They toured Selkirk Technology Access Centre and K-C Recycling Ltd to see current practices in action.

→ Canadian Circular Economy Summit in Toronto

Jacomien presented at the Canadian Circular Economy Summit about Scaling Innovation: Community-based & Living Lab Model Best Practices and co-hosted the Energy Storage & EV Battery Workshop. The CES showcased Canadas leading accelerators in Circular Economy innovation.



→ Cambridge Course

Jacomien van Tonder achieved certification in Circular Economy and Sustainability Strategies from University of Cambridge Judge Business School Executive Education!

→ CWMA 2023

Jacomien attended the Coast Waste Management Association Conference in Victoria. She was a speaker on the panel Bold Moves in Waste Diversion in BC

→ Circular Economy Action Plan

Metal Tech Alley, one of 2 communities, is included in the Circular Economy Action Plan issued by Circular Economy Leadership Canada and Circular Innovation Council. This 2 year priority action, is an important step for MTA in the hopes of getting future federal funding for the amazing circular economy work that we do.

INVESTMENT ATTRACTION

What is investment attraction?

Marketing the Lower Columbia to outside audiences and highlighting existing economic assets and opportunities for development, especially as they relate to the circular economy.

Investment Attraction in 2023

In 2023 Metal Tech Alley was busy keeping the Lower Columbia in the limelight on the national stage. June was an auspicious month as Jacomien was invited to speak at the Canadian Circular Economy Summit in Toronto. It was a great place to promote our region and its potential to a diverse audience of industry and government staff. Metal Tech Alley continues to be a leading example of circular economy in Canada.

Around the same time Metal Tech Alley featured in a special edition of the National Post on circular economy in Canada. The publication resulted in Metal Tech Alley reaching the entire audience of the National Post - that's a lot of exposure for the Lower Columbia!

The recognition of Metal Tech Alley as a leader in circular economy is paying off. This year, Circular Economy Leadership Canada released a report with recommendations to the federal government on how to support more circular development in Canada. One of their recommendations was to fund regional efforts such as Metal Tech Alley. Being specifically mentioned in such a report is the best kind of recommendation and we hope to see federal investments in the Lower Columbia to support our work.

And we are ready for investment! This past year has been spent investigating economic opportunities in the battery sector for our region. We have identified new targets for Metal Tech Alley development, and we have action plans for how to achieve them. Doing this investment attraction groundwork is crucial for success. We have a vision for the Lower Columbia and Metal Tech Alley is a big part of how we get there!



MTA TESTIMONIALS



Your presentation and technical feedback were well received, and we are incredibly grateful for this valuable contribution



Amanda Lindstrom
Senior Policy Analyst, Circular Economy



On behalf of the organizers, we would like to extend to you our utmost thanks for joining us last week at the Canadian Circular Economy Summit. Your participation added significant value to the event, and we hope you found the experience valuable as well!



Kiana Klassen
*Program & Communications Coordinator
Circular Economy Leadership Canada*



I wanted to take a moment to express our appreciation for your participation at the BCEDA BC Economic Summit. Your insights and expertise were truly inspiring and provided an invaluable contribution to the success of the event. Once again, thank you for your exceptional presentation and your commitment to advancing economic development in British Columbia.



Dale Wheeldon
*President & CEO
BCEDA*



Honestly, I consider your presentation a highlight of the entire event. Everyone was blown away by what you are doing.



Christina Allen
EDPN Coordinator



Metal Tech Alley is famous for Circular Economy practices in Canada.



Robert Sinclair
*Canadian Minerals and Metal Plan Secretariat
Lands and Minerals Sector - Natural Resources Canada*

metaltchalley

Trail, British Columbia, CANADA

Timing is everything.

REGIONAL COLLABORATION

When and how we work with others

The LCIC works with other economic development agencies locally and regionally across the Columbia Basin. Working with these organizations is important to ensure that the Lower Columbia is receiving a full array of economic development services.

Community Economic Development Information Session

In February 2023, the Lower Columbia Community Development Team Society, the Trail & District Chamber of Commerce, Community Futures Greater Trail and the LCIC held a community economic development info session. It was open to elected officials and municipal staff to educate them on economic development services in the region. The presentation covered each organization's mandate, activities, and funding model.

Rural and Northern Immigration Program (RNIP)

The LCIC continued to play a supporting role in the delivery of RNIP as the Chair of the Steering Committee. Since it began in 2020, RNIP has helped 109 immigrants and their families in the Lower Columbia achieve permanent residency. This program has helped 50 businesses across the region hire employees, especially during the pandemic and the ensuing labour shortage.

Economic Development Practitioners Network (EDPN)

Rebecca is currently the vice-chair of the steering committee of the EDPN which brings together economic development practitioners from across the Columbia Basin. This group fosters collaboration for regional projects, helps with information sharing and provides elements of professional development. This year the EDPN hosted 2 dialogue events and several educational collaboration calls.

REGIONAL COLLABORATION

West Kootenay Recruitment Agency

The West Kootenay Recruitment Agency Feasibility Study is led by Community Futures Central Kootenay with support from economic development partners across the West Kootenay. The purpose of the study is to determine the need for recruitment services in the region to support employers and what business model would be viable to provide these services. The LCIC is a member of the steering committee which provides oversight and advice for the project. In November 2023 we hosted one of several focus groups for employers to get their detailed input.

West Kootenay Local Immigration Partnership

The West Kootenay Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) is led by Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy and is intended to support immigrant settlement in the West Kootenay by undertaking initiatives to create welcoming communities. We feel that the LIP will be very valuable in increasing the skilled labour force of the region through immigration. Helping immigrants feel welcome in our region will increase retention and make the area more attractive for prospective immigrants. Both LCIC and Metal Tech Alley are currently represented on the LIP.

ETSI-BC Data Series

ETSI-BC provides some programming to support the professional development of economic development practitioners in the Southern Interior. The Data Series was intended to teach people how to effectively collect and analyze data. Rebecca was invited to participate as a presenter in a session on visualizing and using collected data. She presented on the industrial land inventory map and the food supply chain map as examples. It was an honor to have LCIC projects represented as great examples of how to visualize data!

Imagine Kootenay Strategic Planning

The Lower Columbia is currently not part of Imagine Kootenay, but it has been historically. In August a strategic planning session was held to determine a potential new way forward for Imagine Kootenay and we attended to provide perspective as a former member. We are hopeful that the Lower Columbia will one day rejoin the Imagine Kootenay initiative.

LOOKING AHEAD - 2024

Lower Columbia Initiatives Corporation

Food Map Expansion & Distribution Pilot

Based on the work done in 2022 to create a distribution map for local food, we are planning to expand the map to include new geographic regions and new types of businesses (such as restaurants & retailers). We plan to use this expanded version of the food map to run a distribution pilot based on routes identified through the map. This project is dependent on grant funding which will be decided in early 2024.

Residential Land Inventory

Similar to the industrial and commercial land inventory, we will pursue an inventory focused on residential zoned land and derelict sites that have potential for redevelopment. This inventory will be GIS integrated to create a convenient map displaying these opportunities. The project will also include brief assessments of sites for potential and barriers to development.

Regional Growth Strategy

More housing will mean a greater demand on regional service provision and we want our region to be prepared! We will begin the process of compiling information and gaining support for the creation of a regional growth strategy. Such a strategy will also signal to developers that the region is interested and prepared for more housing.

Market Housing & Rental Demand Study

To complement the promotion of sites ready for development, we need to demonstrate the demand for housing and rental units in the region. This will assure developers of Return on Investment (ROI). In 2024 we will pursue a detailed local market demand study to gather the relevant data and promote the region to developers.

Regional Investment Data Site

Currently the Lower Columbia doesn't have a high-profile website containing commonly sought after data on demographics and the local economy. One of our goals is to create a user-friendly up to date site that will provide all the relevant info that prospective businesses and residents might need.

LOOKING AHEAD - 2024

Metal Tech Alley

Battery Hub Implementation

2024 is going to be an exciting year for MTA – After the successful completion of the Metal Tech Alley Battery Hub Feasibility Study, we will analyze and investigate avenues to pursue the recommended outcomes of the study. We believe that this is a great economic development opportunity for the region. By focusing on our strengths and the opportunities identified in the feasibility study we will attract new businesses to the region.

Many different projects are identified in the feasibility study. The plan for this year is to identify the priorities and obtain funding on different level in order to bring these projects to fruition.

Circular Economy Projects

Metal Tech Alley will investigate and implement various circular economy projects in order to reiterate this regions leadership as an industrial circular economy area. We will continue to represent Metal Tech Alley as a leader in industrial circular economy on a Provincial, National and International level. Jacomien hopes to attend the World Circular Economy Forum in Brussels this year – this will be a great opportunity to showcase Metal Tech Alley on the International stage.

Metal Tech Alley is also working with the Provincial Government to build BC's Circular Economy strategy that will hopefully be finalized this year.

Education

Jacomien finished her course through the University of Cambridge in Sustainability Practices. In 2024 Metal Tech Alley will be able to assess companies for circularity and assist them on improvement of their circular economy practices. This knowledge can also be used in the development of a circular economy course at Selkirk College – focused on this regions industry needs for circular economy and start training the next generation of business leaders.

metaltechalley

Trail, British Columbia, CANADA

Timing is everything.

CONTRIBUTORS

Canada 



Columbia Basin **trust**

Teck

etsi BC Economic Trust of the Southern Interior



Regional District of **Kootenay Boundary**

CITY OF 
ROSSLAND




Village of Warfield



City of Trail

STAFF & BOARD

Board Members



Brent Anhel
CEO & Founder
Ten Four Optics



Chris Legler
CEO & Founder
Axios Growth Consultants



Thompson Hickey
General Manager
Teck Metals Trail Operations



Michele Cherot
Retired



Dave Diplock
Principal
Bear Environmental Ltd



Pete Stamper
CEO
KC Recycling



Don Thompson
President & General Manager
RED Mountain Resort



Dino Dorazio
Owner
Canadian Tire



Dan Ashman
CEO - President & Dealer Principal
AM Ford

Staff



Jacomien van Tonder
Co-Director



Rebecca Richards
Co-Director



Jessica Lindon
Administration



1499 Bay Ave Trail, B.C.



250 364 6461



www.lcic.ca
www.metaltechalley.com



Lower Columbia
Initiatives
Economic
Development



metaltechalley

Trail, British Columbia, CANADA

Timing is everything.