

**posAbilities Social Enterprise  
Gardening and Maintenance Services  
Business Plan Executive Summary**

posAbilities is a registered charity, assisting persons with developmental disabilities to lead meaningful and healthy lives. The organization is currently developing a social enterprise, to launch in Spring 2011, which will provide meaningful employment to persons with developmental disabilities, while providing a funding stream to advance the charity's social mission. The enterprise will operate, according to CRA's definition of a social business, under the parent charity, and will build on the charity's work experience programs, which have operated under Aegis Employment Development Program, EcoRangers and Lady Bug Art Gardens.

Under a common brand name (TBD), the business will provide home and garden services to customers in the Lower Mainland. Initially, there will be two divisions: a gardening services division, providing lawn cutting, planting, trimming and weeding, and a home maintenance services division providing outdoor maintenance (power washing, window washing, etc.), moving services, rubbish removal, recycling services, winter maintenance (snow removal, hanging Christmas lights) and, in future, indoor house cleaning. Until a new name has been created, for the purposes of this business plan we will refer to the divisions as ABC Gardening Services and ABC Home Maintenance Services.

The objectives of the enterprise are threefold: social, financial and environmental. By the end of FY2012/13, the social objectives of the business are to employ 24 part-time in the gardening services division, 22 full or part-time in the home maintenance services division, and introduce 12 to community employment opportunities. The financial objectives by the end of this same time period are to cover all direct costs of the business and fund at least 3% of the supporting overhead costs. The environmental objective is to provide products and services that respect the environment, and minimize the impact on the landfill wherever possible.

Market research indicates there is opportunity for growth in all aspects of this business. The business will focus on small and medium-sized jobs at residential houses in higher-priced areas of Greater Vancouver, as well as strata properties, with an aim to secure monthly maintenance contracts. Cross-marketing between the two divisions will help develop a customer base. Initially, recycling services will continue to service the customer base developed under EcoRangers. However, there could be great potential to develop this into a third division, through opportunities under the BC Recycling Stewardship Program.

To distinguish itself in the marketplace, the social enterprise will first and foremost have to provide excellent value for money and excellent customer service. The overall marketing

message is to hire our garden and home maintenance service business for triple impact – to provide environmentally responsible, quality services at a reasonable price, and, by doing so, promote a social good (provide meaningful employment to developmentally disabled individuals). Long-term success will require managed growth over the first year or two to ensure that the crew is properly trained and the operation running smoothly. Word-of-mouth will likely be the number one source of marketing leads, so taking the time to build a great reputation is essential. Business development will begin with posAbilities' own properties, current customers developed through the work experience programs, posAbilities' network of staff, client families, friends, etc., before marketing to the wider public. A detailed marketing plan will be implemented throughout this time.

The operations plan requires a full-time Business Coordinator, who will be responsible for customer service and coordinating all operational aspects of the business. Initially, two Job Site Supervisors will be brought on and will be responsible for crew supervision and support, as well as some operational aspects. In order to minimize start-up costs, other Support Workers will be loaned from posAbilities, as required. However, to guarantee success, it is imperative that the social enterprise operate as independently as possible from the charity, to remain customer and market focused. Head Office will provide administrative support, at least during the start-up and early phases, and the contract Business Developer will assist in implementing the business and marketing plans.

Crew will undertake training through posAbilities' programs prior to employment, and will be paid minimum wage and receive full employment benefits. Performance assessments and ongoing training will assist them in furthering their employment potential.

The key to success is to develop a solid reputation for delivering quality services.