

Mayor's Message - February 2016

Small wonder that the first objective stated in our strategic plan is **excellence in community engagement and leadership**: when we engage with residents of our community, and hear what matters most to them, we stand the best chance of delivering the kind of leadership and fostering the kind of community collaboration on which the success of Gibsons depends. That is why we continually strive to enhance ways of communicating in person and on line, as we formulate plans and decide upon actions to move from 'goal' to 'achievement', and why we recently asked our community to provide input on the most important and achievable actions available to us as we work towards our strategic objectives.

As well as creating plans, and determining our courses of action, we know it is vital to 'feed' those operational plans with a steady diet of sustainable funding, so the most vital projects can remain viable – and on a limited budget. That is why our second objective is **sustainable asset management**, speaking to such key initiatives as expanding our safe pedestrian and cycle networks – on which much tangible progress can be reported – and investing in improvements in and around the Harbour, so that marine based services, boaters and other visitors feel an irresistible urge to come to Gibsons – to come back again – and perhaps, to stay in our beautiful little town.

Our third strategic objective, **local environmental stewardship**, recognizes the worth of our environment, and our responsibility to protect it, for example by working purposefully towards zero waste, responsibly maintaining our natural assets and advancing the use of renewable energy.

Over the past few weeks, Council has zeroed in on several ways we will turn strategies into actions; this week, we have sought input from you on initiatives that can help the Town meet its objectives and goals. If you were among those who joined us Tuesday to participate in this endeavour, you will have seen a presentation from our Chief Financial Officer that clearly indicates this is a stay-the-course budget year. That means careful and strategic action is more important than ever. Your opinions as citizens are always valued; thanks to those of you who were able to join us in Council Chambers on February 9 as we put our strategic plan through its paces. If you were unable to be there in person, please share your thoughts and opinions through email, Facebook or directly to Council. We look forward to your feedback, and we appreciate your continued interest in our beautiful community.