

Mayor's Message – April 2016

Recent good weather has been a boon to local gardeners, and the smell of fresh soil and growing things pervades the air in our town. So, too does the good weather benefit builders and contractors, as new homes are being built, home sales are up, and renovations are under full steam in many neighbourhoods.

Local residents are watching with interest progress on another key structure: the building which will house a fully-functioning, vibrant public market which will provide an anchor for revitalizing the downtown core and harbour areas of Gibsons. The Town of Gibsons has particular interest in this project, where the contribution of \$275,000 raised by residents and businesses from across the Coast, along with a modest additional investment on the Town's part, has enabled us to secure 39% ownership interest of the facility.

To supplement community philanthropy, in late 2015 the Gibsons Council voted to allocate \$275,000 from the Parks Acquisition Fund to the Gibsons Public Market project. The Town also agreed to undertake frontage works along Bay Road and Gower Point Road for the proposed development, with an estimated value of \$110,000. When it is complete, it is important to note that no tax dollars will go into the market's day to day operations: the responsibility to operate and maintain the public market facility will fall to the Gibsons Community Building Society, under the terms of a long-term operating lease agreement.

Throughout the process of preparing for the major renovation, we have been impressed with the commitment and rigour of the Public Market team of volunteers, and the professionals hired to assist them, as they worked with our staff through the various requirements for building, form and character and geotechnical development permits.

Once the renovation of the site is completed, the much improved community amenity will house a community kitchen, permanent farmers market and a marine education centre, in an excellent location not far from our library, museum and harbour. It is encouraging to see a partnership between government, business and the community enable the development of multifaceted project like this, which will benefit Gibsons and the Coast for many years to come.