

Mayor's Message – December 2016

As other areas of Canada shovel driveways for the first time, we Gibsons residents cherish the sunny days that occasionally intersperse with the abundant rain we have received over the past few months. Accustomed as we are to accepting this as 'winter' weather, like those in provinces whose weather may seem more appropriate for a Canadian winter we set about preparations for holiday celebrations, take stock of the year coming to its end, and make plans that will see us into 2017.

Your Mayor and Council are no exception to this practice – in particular, the need to 'take stock', as we are just reaching the halfway mark of our term. As a team, and with the input and support of many Gibsons residents we have faced several tough decisions, including those pertaining to the Gibsons Public Market, The George Hotel and Residences, and regional economic development initiative. Now that there are visible signs of progress related to each of these areas, it might be all too easy to forget the constructive criticism we received at each stage of decision making – but we have valued the level of engagement our town has shown, and we have come to recognize this as a valuable part of any process. Other projects intended to improve the community, such as the Sunshine Coast Affordable Housing Society's collaboration with Click Homes and with the Town of Gibsons to construct workforce affordable housing on unused traffic rights-of-way; establishing new bike lanes; and improving roadways with a chip sealing process, have likewise involved vigorous debate, and here again, we are confident these projects will benefit Gibsons for years to come.

One compass which helps us stay the course is our Strategic Plan. On our website, you can check our progress against our strategic objectives including advancing our Eco Asset Strategy, ongoing community development and enhancing our harbour. We appreciate the input we received on the Plan from local residents at various stages of its evolution and implementation, and we hope that willingness to collaborate in the process will continue as the Plan itself continues to evolve, and objectives continue to be realized. As your Mayor, I would also like to acknowledge the professionalism and hard work of Council, our staff and community volunteers, each of whom have played key roles in advancing our objectives.

For many of us who live in this community, along with the successes we have achieved, this past year has had its share of challenging moments and personal losses, and it is important that soon, we all down tools for a period of rest and rejuvenation with family and friends. On behalf of Council and staff, I wish each of you precisely the kind of holidays you are hoping for, shared in good health and peace with those you care about.