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Town of Gibsons Announces Grant of \$955,000 to Expand Stormwater Ponds in White Tower Park

July 7, 2020 – The Town of Gibsons today announced that it has been awarded a total of \$955,000 by the Province of BC (\$382,000) and the Government of Canada (\$573,000) to construct an additional storm water pond at White Tower Park. The money is being awarded under the *Rural and Northern Communities Infrastructure Stream* (RNIS) of the *Investing in Canada Plan*, which will see the Government of Canada invest more than \$180 billion over 12 years.

The existing stormwater ponds are a natural asset in White Tower Park which help collect stormwater run-off from development in Upper Gibsons. This enables the Town to reduce the extremely costly engineered drainage infrastructure it would otherwise require. With the new funding, the Town will build an additional pond on the vacant Town-owned parcel of land behind the Gibsons & District Aquatic, which will be fully planted to help settle out sediments and remove pollutants from the stormwater before it enters the creek. Work is expected to begin in 2021 and take several months to complete.

The expansion will enable the stormwater ponds to service 47.7 hectares of land, and help address long-term erosion and water quality impacts of past development on Charman Creek. It will also add to the Town's outdoor recreational space, as the site will be fully landscaped with native plant species and include walking trails, split rail fencing, flora and information signage.

"This project provides many valuable benefits to our community," said Dave Newman, Director of Infrastructure Services. *"It improves the Town's water quality and stormwater management capacity, expands our parklands, increases wildlife habitat, and enables residents to better connect with Gibsons' natural assets."*

Gibsons has been recognized internationally for its pioneering work in natural asset management, which treats natural assets (such as the stormwater ponds and the Gibsons Aquifer) in the same formalized way as engineered infrastructure assets.

"The expansion of our stormwater ponds represents the next step in the Town's bold leadership in natural asset management," said Mayor Bill Beamish. *"This is a project that has been a part of Gibsons' long-term plans since 2016, and we are extremely pleased that the provincial and federal government recognize the value of this innovative and green infrastructure investment."*

For more information and regular updates on this project, please visit: gibsons.ca/white-tower-ponds.

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"Nature is our most valuable asset"

