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AWARDS KEEP THE BAR HIGH

By Mayor Bill Beamish

Each September, representatives from municipal governments across BC come together for several days to attend the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) convention.

The gathering provides an opportunity for local governments of all sizes and from all areas of the province to meet, share their experiences and take a united position on various policies, which are then carried to other orders of government and organizations involved in local affairs.

In the world of local politics, the UBCM convention is one of the most important events of the year – which is why Gibsons' Council and staff were honoured when the Town of Gibsons won the Excellence in Asset Management category of the 2020 UBCM "Community Excellence" Awards.

The award was related to our 'eco-asset strategy', which dictates that we manage and protect our natural assets (like the stormwater ponds in White Tower Park, the Gibsons Aquifer, and our urban forest) in exactly the same way we manage our engineered assets (like our water and sewer pipes, and roads).

It's an approach that has garnered the Town international attention and positioned us to win multiple awards from numerous well-respected organizations.

While the recognition is certainly gratifying, I believe the awards bestow value that go beyond the short-term thrill, as they set a standard (both internally and externally) that Town Council and staff strive to uphold in our day-to-day work and decision-making.

As a team, we are well aware that Gibsons is a global role model for its progressive and innovative approach to natural assets. Accordingly, we are highly motivated to keep implementing the policies and supporting the initiatives that will enable us to maintain (and advance) our excellent reputation.

It's a similar feeling with regard to winning Small Business BC's "Open for Business" Award and being named one of BC's "Age-Friendly Communities". Yes, we implemented a host of strategies to earn the titles – but what more can we do to ensure we remain worthy of the honour?

For the audience, awards represent a brief opportunity to acknowledge an individual's or an organization's hard work and resulting achievements.

But to the winner, awards can be far more valuable, providing a moment of pride, a buffer against the naysayers, and the longer-term confidence and motivation to keep moving forward with work that's been deemed to be worthy by our peers.

For information on our natural asset strategy and the UBCM award, please visit gibsons.ca/natural-assets.

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