



TOWN OF GIBSONS

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Town of Gibsons' Population Remains Below 5,000 According to 2021 Census

February 9, 2022 – According to figures released today by Statistics Canada, the Town of Gibsons' population was 4,758 at the time of the 2021 Census. This is up by 3.3% over the 4,605 people counted during the 2016 Census, but still below the 5,000-person threshold which would have triggered several significant changes for the Town. According to BC Statistics, the Provincial estimate for our population was 4,968 as of July 1, 2021.

If the Town's population had been over 5,000, the most substantive change would have been the provincial requirement to begin covering 70% of its policing costs, compared to the 30% it currently pays. Additionally, there would have been a decrease to the Small Communities Grant that it receives annually from the Province.

"We were pleasantly surprised to learn today that our population has not yet officially hit 5,000," said Mayor Bill Beamish. "That means we have five more years to prepare for a large increase in our annual policing costs and to lay the groundwork for a smooth transition to a different policing model. It also means we can shift our focus slightly in the short term to help the RCMP address more immediate local issues such as the recruitment of a new Sunshine Coast detachment commander and increased service to our community."

"Interestingly," the Mayor continued, "The 2021 Census figures show that the 'Gibsons Population Centre' which includes the Town of Gibsons and portions of the Sunshine Coast Regional District's Areas E and F, has grown by 4.4% since 2016, adding 404 more people for a new total of 9,603 people. The gain in the service area may have contributed to the common perception that the Town would officially hit the 5,000 mark today. As well, the Census results show that on census day, May 11, 2021, there were 200 unoccupied dwellings in Gibsons which, if occupied, may have put us over the top."

The Police Transition Select Committee, which was formed at the beginning of this year, is expected to continue meeting in the near-term, in order to help identify and advance Gibsons' current policing needs.

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For more information, please contact:

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"Nature is our most valuable asset"

