



Town of Gibsons **STRATEGIC PLAN** 2023-2027



OUR COMMUNITY

The Gibsons area has a rich and significant history as the origin place of the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh people. The village of Ch'kw'elhp was both a permanent village and a seasonal camp used by Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh people who travelled from the Squamish area to Gibsons and back. Many Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh people are descendants of the inhabitants of this place and still have ties to Ch'kw'elhp and its neighbouring village, Scheḥk.

The settlement of Gibson's Landing was started by George Gibson in 1886 and expanded up the hill into a coastal community built upon farming, fishing, and logging. By the end of the 20th century, Gibsons was best known as the setting of the CBC TV series *The Beachcombers*, which aired from 1972 to 1990.

The Gibsons of today embodies the west coast lifestyle through its lively community focused on the arts, outdoor recreation, small business and tourism.



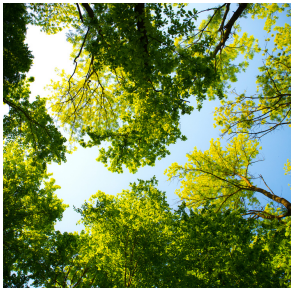
VISION

We envision a Gibsons that preserves liveability, character and the natural environment while welcoming newcomers, visitors and economic opportunity.

MISSION

- Deliver core services
- Protect our aquifer and other natural assets
- Balance growth and ecological integrity
- Preserve and enhance liveability
- Make effective decisions informed by professional expertise and public engagement

GUIDING PRINCIPLES/LENSES



1. Climate Resiliency

We will apply a climate resiliency lens that ensures climate adaptation and mitigation are at the forefront of everything we do, including our innovative work in Natural Asset Management.



2. Sustainable Service Delivery

We will responsibly manage our finances and assets, maintaining our natural and engineered infrastructure, and ensuring fiscal sustainability and efficiency of core services and the upcoming cost of policing.



3. Social Equity

We will always consider how government policies, Town processes and priorities, and community input and representation should promote the interests of all our residents and stakeholders, not just those most advantaged.



4. Effective Decision-making

Governance of the Town of Gibsons will be guided by evidence-based decision-making and strategic planning, informed by more accessible and effective opportunities for public input and participation.



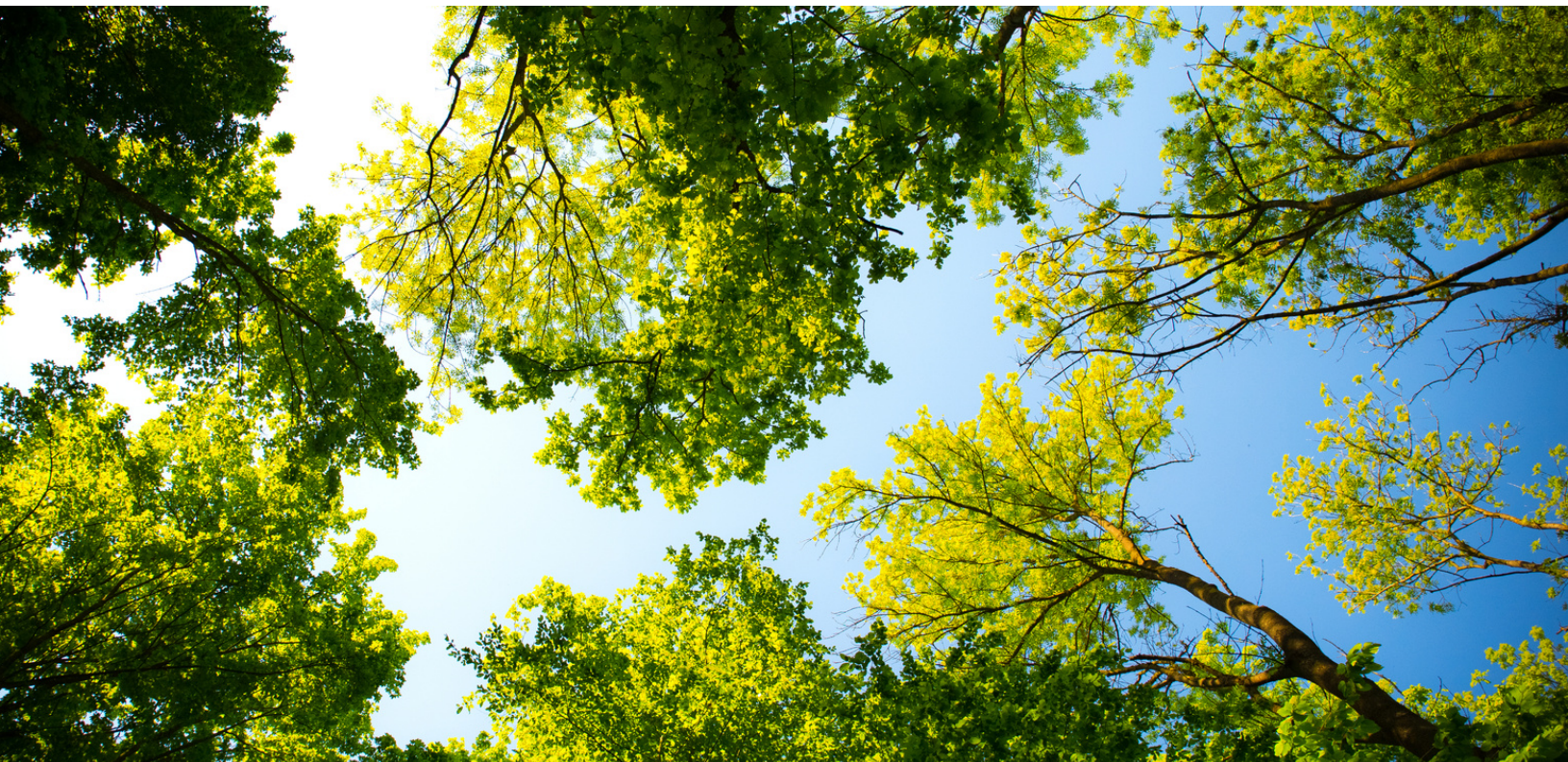
WELCOME TO GIBSONS MARINA

1

Climate Resiliency Lens

The Town of Gibsons will apply a climate resiliency lens that puts climate adaptation and mitigation at the forefront of everything we do, including our innovative work in Natural Assets Management, as well as in financial, land-use and emergency planning, the management of all assets, and consideration of economic development.

Moreover, the Town strives to be a leader in climate change solutions and will actively engage with and support other governments across Canada and the world to adopt Natural Asset Management and other Gibsons-crafted climate actions that have been initiated and promoted by our local government, non-profit partners and community members. We will also take regional leadership on water stewardship and watershed governance in partnership with the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw, shishalh Nation, and other local government partners.



2

Sustainable Service Delivery Lens

The Town of Gibsons has been an early adopter of Asset Management planning practices to ensure our services are provided in the most cost-effective, reliable, integrated, and sustainable way, using the resources we have.

In addition to the challenge of maintaining and replacing our aging infrastructure, the Town of Gibsons also must grow our annual budget by an anticipated 30% by 2027 to cover policing costs the Town will be required to pay once the population reaches 5,000.

The Town also faces the challenge of adjusting to the greater tax requisitions from other agencies (Sunshine Coast Regional District and the provincial government).

The Town's focus will be on ensuring we have sufficient financial and human resources to continue providing our core municipal services to the community. Council and staff will look carefully and diligently at finding savings and revenue in order to keep other taxation on residents and businesses minimal while we incrementally raise policing taxes by 5% per year.



4

Effective Decision-making Lens

The 2022–26 Town of Gibsons Council is focusing our governance processes on our primary responsibility to the community: decision-making. We will lead with clear roles and responsibilities, including through a new Code of Conduct, and clear delegation of decision-making authority to staff. Through staff, we will rely on evidence-based data analysis to make decisions for the Town. Our renewed decision-making process will replace outmoded and divisive public inquiries and public hearings with public input and participation that is early, inclusive, and effective, through an updated public participation toolkit.

Through this lens, we will consider *“How does this information or process support good decision-making?” “What information does Council need to support good decision-making?” “Who should be making this decision?”* etc.



PRIORITIES



Leadership



Affordability



Liveability



Natural Assets



Leadership



GOAL 1

Update critical plans and bylaws, and governance processes, to reflect current community needs and best practices in organizational excellence.

Objectives

- Update the Official Community Plan with a focus on water supply and housing needs.
- **Update Zoning Bylaw in coordination with the OCP Update.**
- Partner with the Sunshine Coast Regional District to establish a Fringe Area Plan for Aquifer 560.
- Update Development Permit Areas 1, 2, and 9.
- **Update the Town's Public Participation Toolkit and fully implement it into Town processes.**
- Public participation training for staff and Council.
- **Approve a new Council Code of Conduct.**
- **Establish a framework of personal growth planning for organizational development and excellence.**
- Clarify our governance roles and delegation of authority.

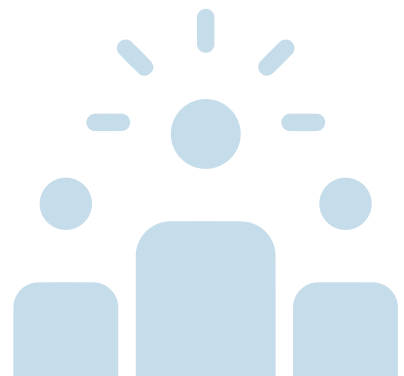
GOAL **2**

Deliver strong and sustained advocacy for our community on critical issues that matter to Gibsons residents.

Objectives

Advocacy will include:

- Coast-wide housing & homelessness supports and accountability.
- Long-term care, hospice support, mental health & addictions, treatment & recovery.
- Childcare expansion, affordability and workforce.
- Relaxation of policing downloading formula.
- Investigation of including Town in Speculation & Vacancy and Empty Homes taxes.
- Support for our current central recycling drop-off model enhanced by the option of subscription recyclables collection and delivery to our local depot.
- Fair & equitable recreation service from the SCRD.
- Federal (CBC) public release of *The Beachcombers* to promote local culture and history.



Liveability



GOAL

3

Enhance transportation options.

Objectives

- Work with the SCRD and BC Transit on establishing a new BC Transit route connecting Upper and Lower Gibsons.
- Update Active Transportation Network to plan for expanded safe routes and infrastructure to support diverse ages and users.
- Support establishment of a passenger ferry to support workforce and tourism.
- Review and expand Electric Vehicle and E-bike charging station network.
- Advocate for BC Ferries service expansion and consideration of resident priority loading.
- Advocate for MOTI Alternate Route and Highway 101 Active Transportation.

GOAL

4



Strive for social equity in Town governance, planning, procurement and operations.

Objectives

- Entrench sustainable procurement into the Town's procurement process, with measurable community benefits communicated to the community and active participation in the BC Social Procurement Initiative.
- Recognition of the importance of reconciliation, culture and history of the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw through the art that already exists in the community, with a vision to encourage and incorporate additional elements of Skwxwú7mesh art with consent and assistance of the Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw and artists.
- Meaningful engagement, employment opportunities and outcomes for Indigenous partners in project implementation and learning.
- Continue to expand the Everybody Deserves a Home Gibsons program to meet homelessness needs, including by maintaining a provincially funded outreach position.
- Collaborate regionally on the Poverty Reduction Plan and associated Social Planning.
- Partner with non-profits, School District 46, Capilano University, the SCRD, and provincial government to expand childcare spaces and workforce in the Gibsons area, including by participating on the Sunshine Coast Joint Childcare Council.
- Engage Gibsons youth through supporting and empowering the Youth Representatives on Council.
- Embrace the Town's Social Equity lens in all our operations, including offering training to assist staff in supporting residents in mental health and addictions.
- Help to complete the regional Accessibility Plan as mandated by the provincial government.

GOAL

5

Work toward an attractive, ecologically healthy and economically thriving Harbour.

Objectives

- Collaborate with the Gibsons Landing Harbour Authority on Harbour enhancement.
- Collaborate with Marine Education Centre on the Healthy Harbour Project and actively participate in the Átl'ka7tsem Howe Sound Community Forums.
- Implement new Recreational Water Lease Bylaw.
- Implement the Gibsons Foreshore and Seawalk Improvements Conceptual Design.
- Complete upgrades at the “Five Corners” area for a pedestrian-focused plaza space.
- Develop and implement a cohesive wayfinding signage plan.
- Preserve and return *The Persephone* to the Harbour Area for public display.
- Pursue any opportunities to support the preservation and restoration of Stonehurst and Molly's Reach.
- Pursue opportunities for public art.





Affordability



GOAL

6

Support rental housing.

Objectives

- Complete Shaw Road Phase #1.
- Complete Kiwanis expansion.
- Initiate three more non-profit projects this term.
- Support market rentals and explore incentives to create them.
- Encourage secondary and accessory suites.
- Support accommodation in RVs, mobile homes, tiny homes and other accessory dwellings, including through zoning, fringe area planning and simplifying the Garden Suite program.
- Regulate short-term rentals in balance with long-term rental needs.
- Streamline development approvals for non-profit housing projects to “shovel-ready” eligibility for funding.

GOAL **7**

Integrate policing costs into the budget while maintaining financial sustainability, core services and other strategic objectives.

Objectives

- Focus on core municipal responsibilities in budget.
- Increase Policing Reserve fund by 5% every year of term.
- Work with the Sunshine Coast detachment to ensure continued levels of service during transition period.
- Reconsider Grants of Assistance and Property Tax Exemption programs to align with strategic objectives.
- Support containment and reduction of rising costs and taxation at the SCRD.



Natural Assets



GOAL 8

Implement climate resilience measures through Natural Asset Management.

Objectives

- Update Development Permit Areas to strengthen the protection of natural assets i.e. creeks, riparian areas, forests, and foreshore.
- Implement recommendations from the Source to Sea and the Coastal Resilience projects.
- Continue exploring natural infrastructure solutions for climate adaptation such as the White Tower Pond system and the Lower Watershed project.
- Embed Natural Asset Management into fringe area planning and natural service expansion outside our current boundaries.
- Complete an Urban Forest Plan to balance growth with our need to support tree canopy.

GOAL

9

Ensure aquifer and watershed protection to continue to deliver safe and sustainable water supply to the community.

Objectives

- Collaborate with the Squamish Nation on leading local water governance and watershed security.
- Investigate the upper reaches of the Chaster Creek and Gibson Creek watersheds to assess the recharge characteristics of Aquifer 560 and its component aquifer lobes.
- Install additional monitoring wells to further characterize the Capilano Aquifer and the confining unit of Aquifer 560.
- Continue with the monitoring program of Aquifer 560, precipitation in the watershed and creek flow.
- Develop a Watershed Management Area Plan to enhance the protection of Aquifer 560, including:
 - Risk Management Policy
 - Water Sustainability Plan
 - Groundwater Sustainability Assessment
 - Wellhead Protection Plan
 - Emergency Response Plan
- Implement the recommendations of the 2021 Aquifer Mapping Study Update.



GOAL **10**

Offer clear communications, community engagement and regional leadership regarding water supply, climate resilience, and Natural Asset Management.

Objectives

- Take a regional leadership role in aligning our water supply assets at the ecological rather than the political boundaries, through responsible co-management with our regional partners.
- Continually inform the public on water use and conservation measures and provide regular updates on the state of the Aquifer.
- Develop a Community Energy and Emissions Plan (CEEP) to reduce community-wide consumption and GHG emissions.
- Create a Carbon Neutral Plan for Municipal Operations.
- Implement Community Dialogues on Climate Resiliency.
- Continue to advocate for water metering and volumetric billing at the Sunshine Coast Regional District.





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