

Roberts Creek SCRD Director's Newsletter, April 2017

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In person: Gumbo Café, most Saturday Mornings, 10-12

Looking forward to another great **Earth Day down at the pier on April 22nd!** Thanks in advance to the organizers and volunteers that make this day happen for our community and Coast. Sounds like this year's theme is Pack it in – Pack it out, so bring along reusable containers for your food and drink accordingly. I'll likely be wearing a green baseball hat down there if you're looking to find me in the crowd and connect in person.

New shishálh Nation Council elected

Congratulations to Chief Warren Paull and councilors Alvina Paul, Corey August, Selina August, and Keith Julius who were recently sworn in. I look forward to building a strong working relationship with the new Council. The SCRD benefits greatly from the presence of a shishálh council member on our Board, and there are many joint interests that can be advanced together.

Affordable Housing Land Use initiatives

Perhaps the most pressing social issue among many on our coast involves providing a broad spectrum of housing opportunities. While many factors such as market conditions, offshore pressures (does our “offshore” include Vancouver?) and wealth gaps are largely beyond the control of the Regional District, clearly the **land use** pieces are not.

In 2014 the Board received a needs assessment report from the Sunshine Coast Affordable Housing Committee, which largely pointed towards the municipalities of Sechelt and Gibsons as appropriate locations for purpose-built housing, as proximity to services is a well-recognized factor in affordability. That report is available here:

www.scrd.ca/Affordable-Housing

SCRD Directors were also interested in further exploring options in our Rural Areas and asked staff to report on those opportunities. That Feb 2017 report is available here on page 45: www.scrd.ca/files/File/Administration/Agendas/2017/2017-Feb-16%20PCD%20Agenda%20Package.pdf

It is receiving consideration from Roberts Creek's Advisory Planning Commission and our Official Community Plan Committee. Following the receipt of this report, the Board directed Planning staff to make the project a priority their 2017 work plan and bring forward specific recommendations that could be considered in a review of our Zoning Bylaw.

Of note is that our **Roberts Creek Official Community Plan supports a number of creative approaches** to housing, including innovative green building, increasing density through “bonusing”, opportunities in the village core, cluster housing, and alternative residential developments. However, these initiatives require proponents to push them forwards.

The Board also requested further public engagement and discussion around the issue of **short term rentals, in relation to their impact (both positive and negative) on affordable housing**. This has not been scheduled yet, but will be publicized here and in other media as well.

If you don't think that housing affordability is an issue that affects you, consider the implications of living in a community where **85% of the population is outside of the ages 18-64**, which is where we are projected to be on the Sunshine Coast in 5 years. The provincial figure is projected at 59%.

Waterfront Development

There have been a few inquiries of late around the parameters for the development of waterfront properties. The majority of these inquiries stem from concerns for the social and ecological impact of perceived encroachment into the foreshore. I've put some information up here on my website <https://robertscreekmark.com/news-blog/> The post includes a link around best practices that go beyond legislative parameters that all waterfront owners work within. Community members can also contact the Planning Department directly with questions on this or any other planning issue www.scrd.ca/Contact-Planning

Public Participation

Recently the Board adopted an updated Public Participation Framework. This framework provides direction with respect to the goals, roles, responsibilities, approach and values that guide the organization's public engagement work. Of note in the document, is a "spectrum" of engagement approaches, that can be referred to in understanding the objectives of a particular process, such as a newsletter, a open house, a public information meeting, or an advisory committee.

The final component of the Framework is a toolkit that is being developed for internal use by staff. The full 9 page Framework document can be found here:

www.scrd.ca/files/File/Administration/Policies/2017-SCRD%20Public%20Participation%20Framework.pdf

Community Dialogues are back

This informal open house format, begun last last year, provides the opportunity for the public to learn, share information and discuss local government issues directly with senior SCRD managers and staff. **This year's event will be Wed May 17, 7- 8:30 at the RC Hall.** More info to follow but put the date on your calendar. If that time doesn't work for you, there will be similar events in other areas that Roberts Creekers are welcome to attend.

SCRD April Newsletters Topics

The **April edition of the SCRD's "Coast Current" Newsletter** includes information on the 2017 SCRD Budget, the Sept 2017 Transit Expansion, a history of transit on the Coast, Salish Soils recycling depot seasonal hours, power washing and more. It can be found here:

www.scrd.ca/newsletter

Note that a copy of this Newsletter is posted in the glass case beside the General Store, and hard copies are available in the Roberts Creek Library Reading Room, immediately on the left as you walk in.