

Roberts Creek SCRD Director's Newsletter, February 2017

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

Ahhh, snow days! Kids playing outside, insulated gumboots and skis come out, cars slow right down, neighbours check in, and we take special notice of the natural beauty that surrounds us. Folks think twice about whether or not they really need to take that trip into big cities like Sechelt or Gibsons.

A special thank you to the gentleman I met shovelling and sanding the pedestrian access at the intersection of Hwy 101 and Roberts Creek Rd. on his own accord. I'm sure there are lots of stories out there like that. Of course, safety and service interruptions are part of the picture as well...the Twitter feed at the bottom the SCRD.ca homepage is a good spot to look for short notice updates, and you don't need to be a Tweeter to access it.

Volunteer Corner

Our Roberts Creek **Official Community Plan Committee** is charged with advancing the implementation of our Official Community Plan. Elections for members are held yearly. New members for 2017 include Andy Sloss, Sarah Bradley and Karen Spicer. **A big "thank you" to all committee members**, along with departing Chair Dianne Sanford and Secretary Sheila Wilson for all of their work over the years.

John Gibbs is the Committee's new chair. Meetings are public (2nd Wednesday of the month at RC School Library, 7PM) and minutes are posted on the Community Association's website. If you are wondering what is on the committee's next agenda, or have an issue that you would like the committee to consider, contact the Chair at ocpjoh4@gmail.com. At its last meeting, the group considered trail routing, the Board of Variance, a Planning Department landuse referral, forestry and other issues. Our Official Community Plan, which constitutes my "marching orders" from the community, can be found here: www.scrd.ca/Roberts-Creek

Property Assessments

While most of us realized that housing market changes were going to have an impact on assessments, many were surprised at the mailbox in early January to see how much the assessed value of our properties had increased. Prior to the Budget meetings (discussed below), the Board received a report from staff on the impact of property assessment changes on the Sunshine Coast. **Overall, assessed values on the Coast were up about 22%. Roberts Creek assessments increased an average of roughly 27%.** Individual taxes do not increase at the same rate as assessments. However, they do have an impact if one area, neighbourhood or property's assessments change relative to other areas' figures. Areas where the relative apportionment increased were Gibsons, Elphinstone, Roberts Creek, and Sechelt. Pender Harbour, Halfmoon Bay, Sechelt Indian Government District, and West Howe Sound saw average decreases in their relative apportionment.

Another factor that will have an impact on Roberts Creek households is that the entire residential property "class" rate has increased relative to business, farm, private managed forest, industrial or utility property "classes". The net result of all these impacts is that **if they were applied to last year's Budget figures, Roberts Creekers property owners would be paying an average of 5.3% more of their share of the bill**, relative to the Sunshine Coast as a whole. This is prior to any impacts from 2017 Budget discussions.

The average value of an improved (built upon) property in Roberts Creek went from \$570,000 last year, to \$730,000 this year. The full report can be accessed in this agenda on page 16: <http://www.scrd.ca/files/File/Administration/Agendas/2017/2017-JAN-23%20CAS%20Agenda%20Special%20PACKAGE.pdf>

Budget Round 1

As the SCRD's **Asset Management Plan** moves forward, it helps staff and the Board get a more detailed understanding of the financial implications of **maintaining** the SCRD's recreation, water, transit, fire service, solid waste, parks, administration and other capital assets. Our share of the national "infrastructure deficit",

estimated by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities at \$129 Billion, is graphically demonstrated in reports on various facilities, including rec centers, firehalls and docks. Staff actively pursue grants from senior governments to support identified priorities through means other than taxation.

Budget proposals come forward **only if identified as being in one of 4 categories**: mandatory for regulatory compliance or business continuity, Strategic Plan related, identified in the 5 year Integrated Plan, or “low cost/high value”.

Work Safe compliance projects, Landfill upgrades, Parks bridge work, dock repairs, and software and hardware upgrades were some of the projects under consideration. Transit proposals were deferred to the second round, pending a February staff report. Levels of support for libraries, museums, community schools, youth programs, tourism, cultural and other community development initiatives were considered. Other factors that will impact the budget include the Canadian Dollar, union and exempt staff contract agreements, and changing provincial regulations.

Drop by the Gumboot if you would like to talk specifics about any of the above. Round 2 of Budget deliberations take place on March 7th and 8th.

Suncoaster Trail Route Planning Open House

As mentioned here previously, the planning aspects of Phase 2 of the Suncoaster Trail (Halfmoon Bay to Langdale Ferry Terminal) are underway. There will be an **Open House on Monday, Feb 27th from 3:00 to 6:00 at Roberts Creek Hall**. There will be maps, feedback forms and staff to answer your questions and take your input. If you live above the highway, I would suggest that you pay particular attention to this trail project as it moves forwards.

This is a great opportunity for you to have input into what has the potential to be an important piece of transportation, recreation and tourism infrastructure on the Coast. If that time doesn't work for you, a second event will be held at the Sechelt Seaside Center on Wednesday March 1 from 3:00 to 6:00.

Maps are viewable online in advance here, along with a staff email contact for submitting input if you can't make it in person. www.scrd.ca/Suncoaster-Trail#Open%20House

Mapping Services

Looking for more mapping information for the trail planning above or for any other reason?

The **SCRD Geographic Information Systems department** has a new **“open data portal” mapping resource** that you might find useful. It contains maps of more than 25 different subjects, ranging from parcel boundaries to fire protection areas, eelgrass beds to land use zoning, water mains to 1 meter contours. The information is available in 3 different formats, KML, DWG and SHP. I have no idea what they stand for, but by downloading a KML file, it overlays the data onto Google Earth. Great for school projects, too! As well, an **updated version of the PIMS Property Viewer Web mapping application** that works on all platforms is available at www.scrd.ca/myscrdmaps.

SCRD February Newsletters Topics

The **February edition of the SCR D's “Coast Current” Newsletter** includes information on the following topics: the 2017 Budget Process, Neighbourhood Preparedness, Water Metering, Recycling of lighting products, Outdoor Recreation, Family Day activities, along with Committee and Board schedules and more. It can be found here: www.scrd.ca/newsletter

Interested in a “late breaking” update on the **Chapman Lake Water Supply Expansion Project**? Check out the **News Blog** on my website.

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.