



Message from the Mayor

On behalf of Council, I am pleased to report on some of the Village's accomplishments and Council's priorities from 2016.

I want to begin by extending a warm Nootka Sound welcome to our new residents. I am delighted that you have chosen to make Tahsis your home. I am confident that the quality of our life here will surpass your expectations. The natural environment, the sense of community, the services and amenities, the outdoor recreation opportunities, the affordable cost of living and an extraordinarily safe municipality make Tahsis the perfect place to live, work and play. I hope you will immerse yourself in the community and help us to continue to nurture, promote and develop Tahsis.

This past year we saw several changes and improvements in Tahsis. I will not list them all but I want to highlight the most notable.

Last year I reported on our initial steps to develop the "Community Unity Trail" linking Tahsis and Zeballos. In 2016, with seed money from Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) and support from the provincial government (Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training) the entire route was hiked, flagged and mapped. In addition, a business case and initial project plan was prepared to support an application under the provincial government's Rural Dividend Fund to conduct the environmental assessment and stream crossing designs. We were delighted that the Ehattesaht/Chinehkint First Nation have formally endorsed the project and joined the executive committee which also includes the Villages of Tahsis, Zeballos and the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nations. There continues to be strong interest in this project from the provincial government, ICET, the ATV community and many other stakeholders.

Council continued to strengthen our relationship with the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation. In March 2016 Tahsis, Gold River and the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation signed a Vision Statement which states in part:

"We cherish and enjoy healthy lifestyles surrounded by some of the world's most beautiful and pristine natural environment on the West Coast of Vancouver Island, British Columbia. We are progressive communities that share a desire to responsibly manage our natural resources in a manner that will stimulate new business opportunities and develop a diversified economy whilst respecting each other."

On May 10, 2016 Claire Trevena, MLA, stood in the BC Legislative Assembly to speak to this Nootka Sound Communities Agreement and read the Vision Statement to the members assembled.

During 2016 Tahsis Days several dozen people congregated at the Tahsis Cenotaph to mark the raising of the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation flag. Chief Mike Maquinna and Rachel Blaney, MP, spoke to the symbolic and substantive significance of having the Mowachaht/Muchalaht flag flying in Tahsis.

Living in earthquake, tsunami and wildfire zones makes emergency preparedness an absolute necessity. In October 2016, we held an emergency response simulation exercise facilitated by at the Rec Centre based on a landslide event. Shaun Koopman, Protective Services Coordinator, from Strathcona Regional District led the dozen participating agencies through training and the exercise. Emergency Preparedness will continue to be a priority in 2017.

In June 2016, we commissioned our new drinking water well which the Village constructed to meet Island Health's drinking water standards. The Village had been in non-compliance with the standards since 2010 so we are very pleased that with the well we are in full compliance by providing clean and safe drinking water. Moreover, we were able to meet this requirement in a cost-effective manner. Building a filtration plant, as other municipalities have done, would have cost between \$2m and \$4m. The total cost of the well was \$686,656.08. Although this was a major capital project for our municipality we were able to pay for it without borrowing or draining our capital works reserve account.

Extensive water sampling testing was undertaken from test wells for over a year prior to constructing the production well and samples are tested every two weeks in accordance with our operating permit from Island Health. We are continuing to maintain our water intake works and water licenses on McKelvie Creek as a backup water source and for fire protection purposes.

Your Village Council is responsible for maintaining, preserving and enhancing the social, environmental and economic vibrancy and viability of our community. And, as stewards of your tax dollars, we take seriously our responsibility to make wise investments in infrastructure development, maintenance and repair and the efficient and effective delivery of your municipal services and programs. Beyond Council, many residents of Tahsis contribute to public life and service through their involvement in a multitude of groups and organizations. Your hard work, energy and creativity make Tahsis such an awesome community.

In closing, I am grateful to our professional and dedicated staff and my fellow Council Members. We are fortunate to live in a community of active citizen engagement. Cynicism and disenfranchisement are the greatest risks to our democratic system. Our local government is and will continue to be a model of democracy in action by being responsive to and reflective of the community. I encourage all to take an active role in our community and let us know what is on your mind. We are your government.



Mayor Jude Schooner