

**Strategic Economic
Development Plan**

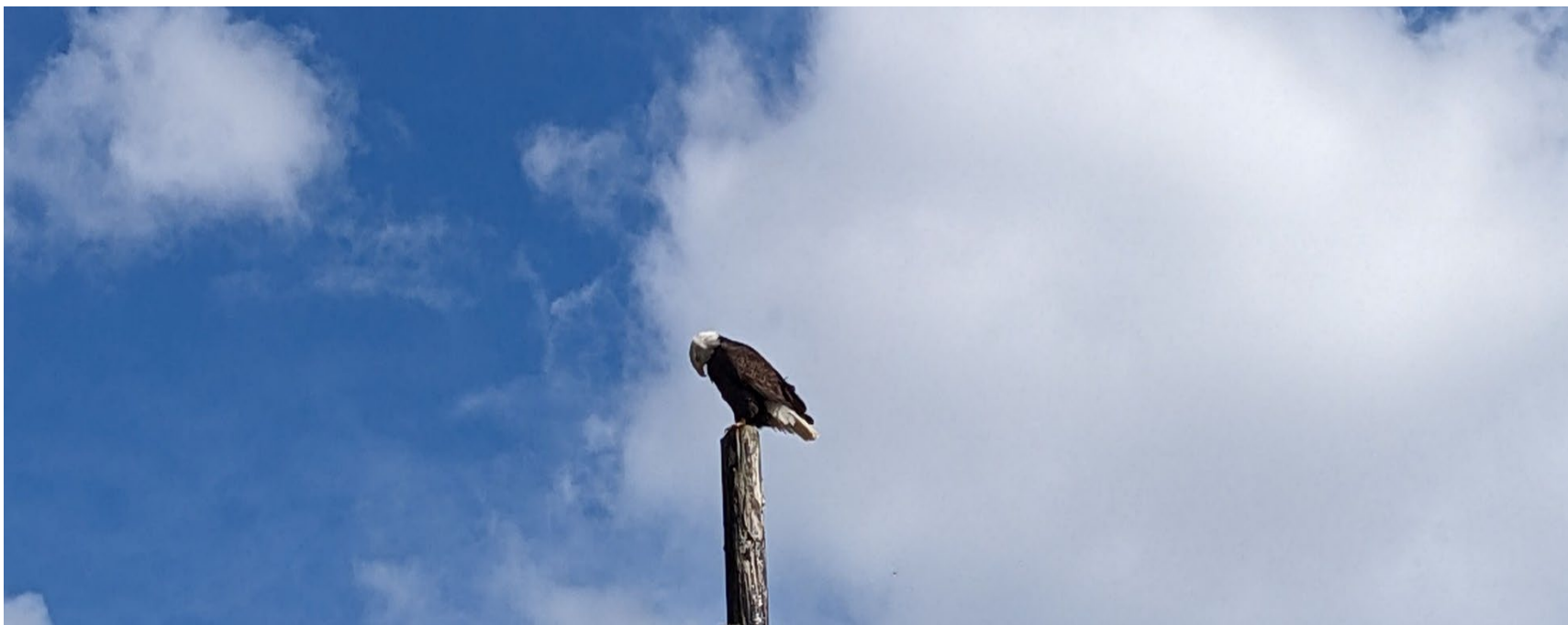
VILLAGE OF TAHSIS

**Final
August 2023**



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Introduction & Context

Introduction

The Village of Tahsis (Tahsis) is a small community with a big vision.

Tahsis is located within the traditional territory of the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation, and our region has been home to First Nations peoples for over 4,200 years. The word Tahsis means 'path', indicating our historic role as a trade route across the island.

At its peak, Tahsis was a bustling community of 2,500, built on a booming local forestry industry around two mills located in the Nootka Sound/Esperanza region. In 2023, that population stands at 400, and the economic sustainability of the community faces pressures from an aging population, neglected infrastructure (particularly housing and core infrastructure) and opportunities for local employment.

We have many reasons to be optimistic about our future:

- Our population grew by 100 during the Covid-19 pandemic, one of the fastest rates in BC, as remote working became normal
- Our village is a destination of choice for many seeking a healthier lifestyle or to live out their retirement years
- Our fishing is world class and with our breathtaking natural environment draws a reliable stream of visitors all year
- Our internet will be the same high speed as downtown Vancouver from 2024 through the Connected Coast project
- Our ambitious program of adding and replacing key service infrastructure proactively means we have recently invested in upgrades to water supply, sewage works, flood protection, docks and wharves, and emergency services, among others

This document sets out a 10-year Strategic Economic Development Plan that has the potential to both provide a sustainable and progressive long-term community for future generations and transform our economy.

It is a bold vision, but one that we are committed to delivering to ensure a bright future for the place we are fortunate to call our home.

"Tahsis is a healthy, thriving community that showcases its spectacular natural environment, recreation opportunities, and indigenous culture, where residents have pride in their community, access to safe, affordable housing, reliable health care, nutritious food, and facilities and services that support all stages of life."

Tahsis Vision Statement: Official Community Plan 2019

Strategic Framework



Strategic Framework

Context

Economic development for Tahsis involves several initiatives linked by a focused strategy for immediate implementation accompanied by medium- and long-term objectives and actions.

Our strategy is based on the following three strategic priorities:

1. Bringing in people and investment.
2. Creating employment opportunities.
3. Developing critical infrastructure.

Our plan cannot be developed in a silo. We are a small community and are reliant on the support of our wider stakeholders to help us achieve our vision. We are committed to embracing a creative and flexible mindset to help us achieve this plan and our goals.

Purpose

The purpose of this Strategic Economic Development Plan is to set out a coherent strategy for developing the village that can be enacted over time by the Council and community.

The document is written both for our existing and future community, as well as other stakeholders with an interest in our economy, including the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation, whose traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory we gratefully call home.

It sets out a vision for the future, the things that we value and that inform that vision, and a structured planning approach that derives a series of actions that we will undertake to achieve our vision.

Strategic Framework At-A-Glance

Mission

Why we exist. This is our purpose.

Vision

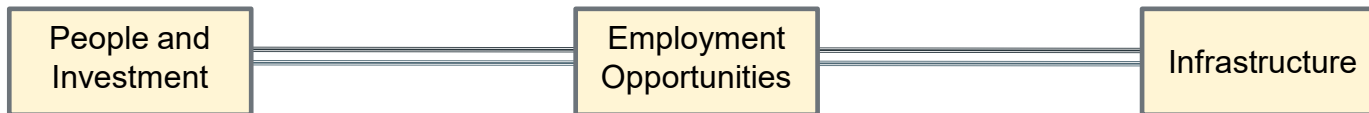
What we want to create for our future.

Our Values – How we will work towards our Mission & Vision

Our Audience - Who this plan is for

Strategic priorities

These are the top and high-level priorities that can help us realize our vision and deliver our mission.



Strategic goals

These are the goals that will support the strategic priorities and set the framework for delivery of specific activities and actions.

Activities and actions

Activities and actions that directly support the achievement of the strategic priorities and goals, with measurable and achievable outcomes.

Mission

We exist to serve the residents of Tahsis and preserve our beautiful way of life, ensuring that the needs of our community can continue to be met and evolve sustainably for future generations.

Vision

Our vision is to create a vibrant, self-sustaining economy, which can continue to provide the very best lifestyle both to our current population and future residents.

Guiding Values

Our Values will guide us in the application of our Mission and Vision:

Commitment: We are committed to each other and collectively protecting the culture, economic development, and best interests of all the residents of Tahsis.

Accountability: We do what we say we are going to do and will be accountable for the results.

Advocacy: We will advocate hard on behalf of our community with respect to funding and services owed to us by the Provincial and Federal Governments.

Communication: We will transparently report progress to our community twice a year or more where necessary.

Funding: We will both fund and share opportunity in a fair and transparent way.

Partnerships: We will be creative in establishing strategic partnerships with our stakeholders to help us enact this plan in the interests of Tahsis residents.

Our Audience: 4 groups interested in the success of this plan

1. Those primarily responsible for the success of this framework and driving the strategic priorities to achieve the vision	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Village of Tahsis Council 	
2. Those who will benefit from the outcomes of this framework	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The village of Tahsis All current and future members of our community Visitors to our village The communities of Gold River and Zeballos, their leadership and all community members, present and future All business and employers in the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The communities of Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation (MMFN) and Ehattesaht/Chinehkint First Nation, their leadership and all members, present and future Current and future residents of the wider region All natural ecosystems in the region and everything that lives in them
3. Those who need to interact with this framework and in productive and beneficial relationships with us	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provincial Government of British Columbia, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BC Ministry of Finance BC Ministry of Forests BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure BC Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Government of Canada Western Forest Products (WFP) Any other large, medium and small businesses with operations in our community and wider region The community of MMFN
4. Those who will be responsible for paying for the delivery of this plan	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Province of British Columbia and associated Ministries The Federal Government of Canada Grant funding bodies such as ICET (Island Coastal Economic Trust) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic partners looking to making investments in our community Local business partners Community taxation (through property taxes of local businesses and residents)



Our BIG Vision

Our BIG Vision





Strategic Direction 2023-2033

Strategic Economic Priorities



Our three Strategic Economic Priorities reflect the needs of the community we serve and consider the audience described above.

The circle of priorities reflects that each of these pillars are key to the success of the whole. One pillar alone will not be sufficient to rejuvenate the village economy.

The Strategic Priorities are set out over the following pages, along with the associated goals and actions needed to deliver the priorities.

Strategic Industries

Forestry

- Community forest
- Regional partnerships



Aquaculture

- Shellfish production tenure
- Tangential infrastructure



Tourism

- Partner with MMFN
- Develop tourism assets



Real Estate

- Filming location
- Tourist to resident



IT

- Online IT Strategy
- Regional partnerships



The Official Community Plan identifies policy directions relating to specific strategic industries which are core to our broader long-term vision.

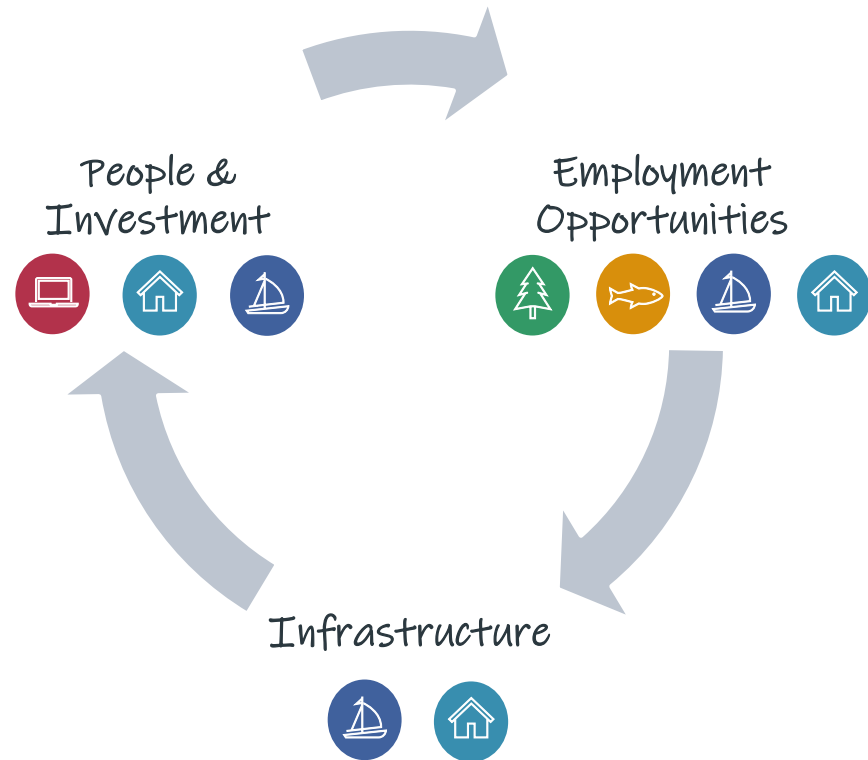
These industries are all important to the economic development plan as they represent the mechanisms through which the Strategic Economic Priorities will be delivered.

The color-coded icons are included next to the goals and actions set out over the following pages to show how these relate to the strategic industries listed here.

Circle of Development

The three Strategic Priorities or 'pillars' of this plan link to the Strategic Industries as illustrated here.

It is important to recognize that the process of development is circular, with improvements in each pillar creating demand for the others.



Strategic Priority #1: People & Investment

People & Investment means:

Bringing in new people and investment to the village to provide critical mass in the community, both to support existing local businesses and provide a catalyst to organic future economic growth.

Strategic Goals

The following strategic goals will help us deliver this strategic direction:

1. Create a business/co-working hub to support a sub-community of remote workers, both existing and future
2. Establish a municipal social enterprise entity through which to promote economic development and provide opportunity for strategic partnerships
3. Establish Tahsis as a prime tourism location on the West Coast of Vancouver Island, building on the world class fishing and access to unrivalled nature activities and recreation



Strategic Priority #2: Employment Opportunities

Employment Opportunities means:

Creating new opportunities for employment for existing residents and to encourage in new members to the community which is needed to support the existing economy and aging population.

Strategic Goals

The following strategic goals will help us deliver this strategic direction:

1. Support investments in critical assets such as tourism infrastructure which will create both seasonal and year-round work
2. Active consideration of how existing assets can be used, with community support, to develop local businesses or increase community revenues
3. Implement Community Forest and Aquaculture strategies to create jobs in community and with local partners, MMFN and Gold River

Strategic Priority #3: Infrastructure

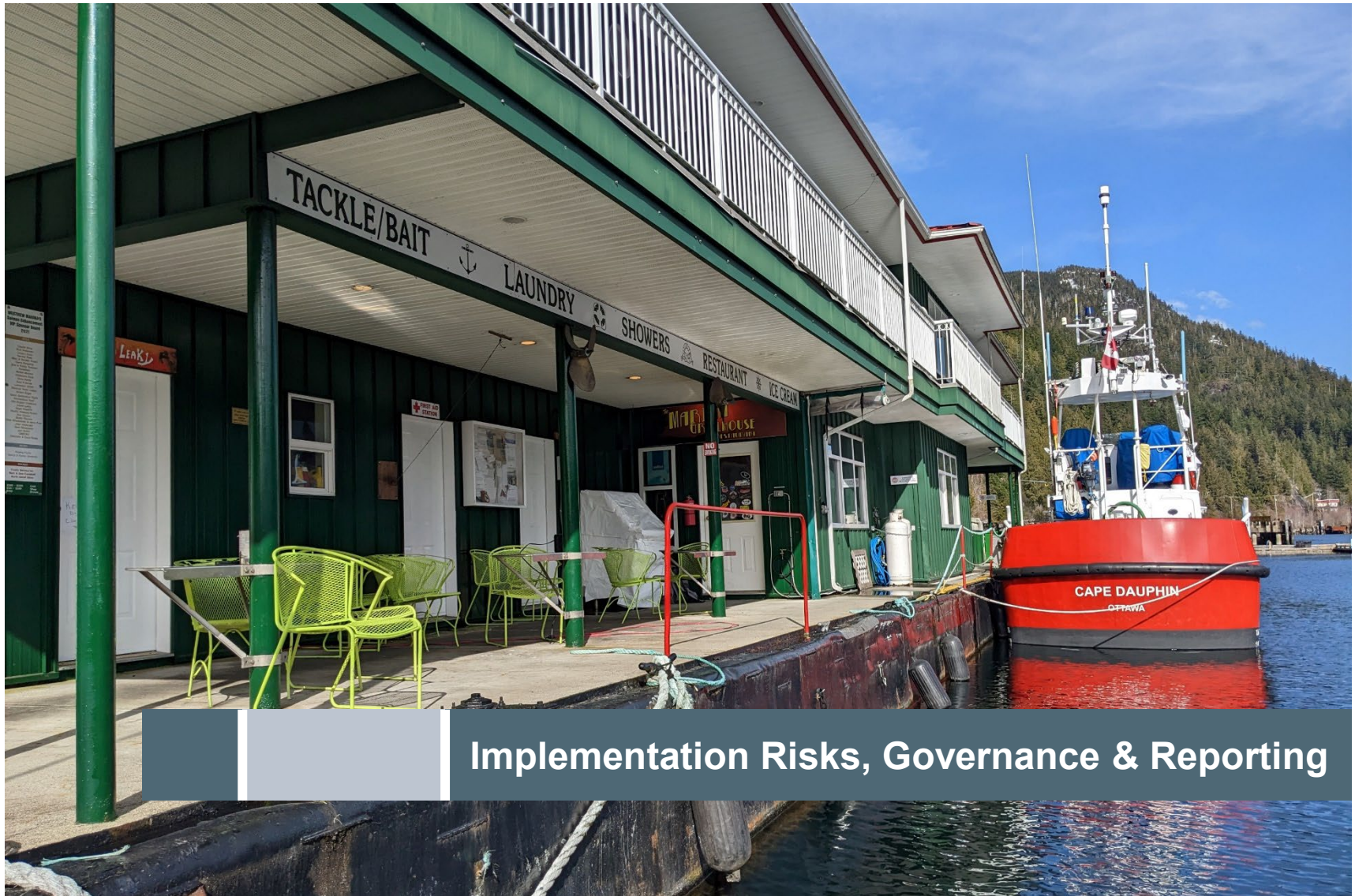
Infrastructure means:

Investing in critical infrastructure both within the community and to allow connectivity to the rest of Vancouver Island, which is considered fundamental to being able to achieve the other strategic priorities.

Strategic Goals

The following strategic goals will help us deliver this strategic direction:

1. Paving of Head Bay Road, connecting Tahsis to the rest of Vancouver Island
2. Investment in key strategic assets that will make Tahsis a 'destination'
3. Investment in additional housing options that will make Tahsis attractive to new residents



Implementation Risks, Governance & Reporting

Implementation Risks

Risk

Capacity and capability to run the economic development program

Limited financial resources

Lack of coordinated effort between regional strategic parties

What's the issue?

If we don't dedicate enough time to actioning the plan, no change will happen

With limited financial resources available, there is always a tradeoff in terms of how many projects we can support

Economic development is important because it increases our ability to source new income to sustain our economy and meet future resource needs

Scattered approaches across neighboring communities is likely to be less effective than a coordinated effort in terms of pooling resource, energy and putting pressure on government

Mitigation

We may need to invest in additional resources, either internally or through external advice, to provide the required bandwidth

We will source as many new funds through grant processes as possible as well as maximize our use of existing grant funds where there are mutual benefits (e.g. recreation center upgrades)

Our plan includes thinking creatively about the strategic partnerships that will serve us and bring in external investment

Working with our regional partners will be a core component of our governance strategy for actioning the plan, and collective meetings are already ongoing to identify areas of common interest

Governance

We are committed to implementing this Strategic Economic Development Plan, which will be used and updated as a living document, and formally reviewed annually by the Council.

We will take the following steps to ensure this commitment can be met:

Capacity

1. Action: Undertake to bring in specific economic development capacity to support implementation.
2. Action: Apply to applicable grant funding programs to source additional funds for capacity development.

Strategic partnerships

1. Action: Working with Mowachaht /Muchalaht First Nation and Gold River (in the first instance) to form a regional economic development committee once the strategies of all three have been defined and articulated
2. Action: Identify partnership opportunities with Gold River and Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation for specific projects and apply for joint grant funding resources.

Detailed planning

1. Action: Develop a detailed plan setting out the actions required to deliver the Strategic Goals set out in this document over the course of the next few months.
2. Action: Provide updates on the detailed action plan, including any updates for new actions, every six months.

Reporting

Progress on the implementation of this plan will be reported to residents every six months at townhall meetings. In addition, each annual report will include a more formal and measured update on progress.

