

Strategic Economic
Development Plan

VILLAGE OF
TAHSIS

REVISION
January
2026



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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. As of 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 extensive outdoor recreation assets continue to drive steady year-over-year growth in visitation.
- Planned infrastructure upgrades through the Connected Coast project are expected to support improved internet connectivity.
- Our ambitious program of adding and replacing key service infrastructure proactively means we have recently invested in upgrades to the drinking water system, sewage treatment, roads, flood protection, docks and wharves, and fire and emergency services, among others

The Strategic Economic Development Plan ("the Plan") was approved by Council in 2023. This 2026 document updates the Plan with new priorities and input garnered through extensive community consultation and engagement. The Plan has the potential to lead to a sustainable and progressive community for generations to come by transforming the 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 Official Community Plan (2020), Vision Statement





Strategic Framework

Context

Economic development for Tahsis involves several initiatives linked by a focused strategy for immediate implementation accompanied by medium- and longterm 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 and replacing 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 realized our vision and deliver our mission.



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 environment, 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 annually 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 • The Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation (MMFN) and their leadership and all members, present and future All current and future members of our community • Current and future residents of the wider region Visitors to our village • All natural ecosystems in the region and everything that lives in members, present and future them The Village of Gold River, their leadership and all community • All business and employers in the region | |
| 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: BC Ministry of Finance BC Ministry of Forests BC Ministry of Transportation and Transit BC Ministry of Jobs and Economic Growth • Surrounding municipalities and regional districts (Gold River, SRD, CVRD) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Government of Canada Western Forest Products (WFP) Businesses and stakeholders in our community |
| 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 Community taxation (through property taxes paid by local residents and other property owners) Local business owners |

Our BIG Vision



Our BIG Vision

Hub for remote working **Core infrastructure**

Become a 'destination'

Tourism & Marketing Outdoor Recreation

Head Bay Road

Strategic partnerships

Beautification



Increased population
Employment opportunities
Investment
Infrastructure
Sustainable economy



Strategic Economic Priorities



Our three Strategic Economic Priorities, updated from the 2023 plan, 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 local economy.

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

Strategic Focus

Outdoor Recreation



Natural amenity infrastructure
Regional Partnerships

Municipal Infrastructure



Aging Infrastructure
Recreation Centre

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Marketing
Regional Partnerships

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Tourist to resident
Build tax base

Connectivity



Hub for remote workers
Connectivity infrastructure

The Economic Development Plan adopted in 2023 reflected community priorities at the time, with a focus on forestry, aquaculture, tourism, real estate, and information technology as primary drivers of local growth. These sectors were identified based on market conditions, regional strengths, and anticipated investment and employment opportunities. Over the past five years, changing economic conditions, demographics, and community expectations have prompted a review to ensure the Plan remains relevant and effective.

In 2025, community engagement revealed a shift toward greater emphasis on quality of life and foundational community assets as key drivers of long-term economic resilience. Residents highlighted the importance of outdoor recreation, municipal infrastructure, housing availability, and community connection in supporting sustainable growth. As a result, the updated Plan adopts a more place-based approach, recognizing connectivity and recreation as catalysts for attracting residents and businesses, and positioning housing and municipal assets as essential to long-term prosperity and community wellbeing.

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. Leverage high-speed internet infrastructure to position and market the community to remote workers
2. Attract and retain new residents, entrepreneurs, and investors by promoting Tahsis as a livable, connected, and opportunity-rich community that supports business growth, infrastructure investment and a safe and healthy community.
3. Strengthen Tahsis's profile as a prime tourism destination on the West Coast of Vancouver Island by strengthening strategic partnerships, outdoor recreation opportunities, and memorable visitor experiences



Strategic Priority #2: Employment Opportunities

Employment Opportunities means:

Creating new opportunities for employment for existing residents and to attract new residents which are 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 seasonal and year-round work
2. Active consideration of partnership opportunities to expand upon training and grant opportunities.
3. Increase sustainable employment opportunities for residents by strengthening workforce capacity, attracting new workers, and supporting businesses that drive long-term economic stability.

Strategic Priority #3: Infrastructure

Infrastructure means:

Investing in critical infrastructure, within the community and enhancing connectivity with the rest of Vancouver Island, is fundamental to achieving other strategic priorities.

Strategic Goals

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

1. Improvements to Head Bay Road maintenance and further chip sealing, connecting Tahsis to the rest of Vancouver Island
2. Investment in key strategic assets that will make Tahsis a 'destination'
3. Investment in key municipal infrastructure to improve quality of life for both residents and visitors.

Implementation Risks, Governance & Reporting



Implementation Risks

Risk

Capacity and capability to run the economic development program.

What's the issue?

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

Mitigation

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

Limited financial resources

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

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)

Lack of coordinated effort between regional strategic parties

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 resources, energy and putting pressure on senior governments.

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

The program is ineffectual

Economic development is influenced by a multitude of factors, most of which are beyond the influence of local governments, e.g., interest rates, provincial and federal and regulations.

By focusing on the fundamental areas of importance to private investors - core infrastructure and community health and safety - local investment climate is improved.

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 Council.

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

Capacity

1. Action: Where feasible, increase economic development capacity through the budget process or available grant funding to implement the plan.
2. Action: Prioritize and phase implementation actions based on available capacity, focusing on high-impact and achievable initiatives in the short term.

Strategic partnerships

1. Action: Continue work with Mowachaht /Muchalaht First Nation and Gold River on aligned economic development priorities through the Nootka Economic Development Forum.
2. Action: Collaborate with local non-profit organizations to enhance shared capacity, with a focus on economic development and skills training initiatives.

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 annually. In addition, an annual report will be submitted to Council, including actions to date and progress made on plan development and implementation.

