



Where Locals Eat, Shop & Play...

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Executive Director's Report on 2017

A Year of Organizational Growth and Advocacy

2017 began with a large change to the funding of the SDBA with the BIA Bylaw renewal. We used the opportunity to listen to our members—both property owners and businesses. We heard that some businesses were not feeling well represented, and they wanted to see a change in how the SDBA is run.

We took that feedback and worked with consultants Bill Beamish and Sandra Cunningham to create a strategic plan. The new 2018-2021 plan allows the SDBA board to be more strategic in how financial and staff resources are distributed. We consulted with members to find out their priorities and worked with the executive and staff to allocate those limited resources for a very productive 2018.

In terms of organizational capacity, the BIA Bylaw renewal allowed for an increase in staff time from 20 hours a week to 30 hours. This allowed for focus to expand beyond basic administration and event planning.

The largest expansion of staff time was around advocacy. We were able to actively listen to issues that our members brought forward and work towards solutions.

In 2017 we spoke publicly about:

- All Day Parking in Downtown Sechelt
- Farmers and Artisans Market Traffic Issues
- Local Commuter Bus Service
- Development Delays
- Support for RTC Properties Shorncliffe
- Sign Bylaw
- Vacant Commercial Spaces

We are continuing work with parking and development delays in collaboration with the Sechelt Chamber. We also hosted a very successful Vacant Commercial Spaces Tour in partnership with the Sechelt Chamber and Holywell Properties.

In October we held a meeting with property owners, businesses, and many members of the District of Sechelt Council to discuss possible solutions to the large number of vacant commercial spaces. Work on this file continues, and we will be presenting a proposal to the District of Sechelt Council in the upcoming months.

The SDBA also had increased staff capacity with the addition of a summer student thanks to a grant from the Canada Summer Jobs Program. Our summer student was able to offer more direct services to members such as listings on our website, and development of a simple website for businesses that do not have one yet.

Marketing efforts were centred around promoting businesses in 2017. The spring event was rebranded to "Taste of Sechelt" and included a focus on our great restaurants. In July we launched a business listing brochure, which has been distributed to over 2500 people. In August we promoted businesses that were open on Sundays. Our highly successful Shop Sechelt promotion increased its web presence with a new format and more online promotion.

Added staff capacity also allowed for the SDBA to take on more projects in collaboration with the District of Sechelt. The SDBA has funded decorative wrapping of 3 hydro boxes in the Downtown area, and we hope to have another round of new street light banners for the summer. We are working on improving reliability of the Downtown Sechelt Wi-Fi network, along with utilizing it to promote member businesses.

We also have provided detailed feedback on District of Sechelt projects including the integrated Sustainability Planning Committee, the Trail Avenue redevelopment, and the Parks Masterplan.

Overall 2017 has been a year of change in many aspects of the SDBA, and we hope our members can help achieve even more in 2018.