

# Tofino Ratepayers Association

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Re: Pay Parking

May 31, 2021

Dear Ratepayer members,

On Friday May 28th Steve Thicke and I had a sit down with Fraser Work of the District of Tofino, for the purpose of discussing all things Parking in Tofino. Mr. Work has been assigned the job of getting a pay parking scheme up and running for Tofino.

The proposal is to initiate Pay Parking at Tofino beaches this season, (to include the whole town next year) through a system of machines that operate on credit cards and/or an app from your cell phone. Hourly charges for stays of varying duration are planned. Enforced by a Pay Parking Contractor.

I am told local residents would get a free pass. How that is to be determined and executed is still in flux.

The Tofino Ratepayers Association has been looking at pay parking as a way to increase revenues directly from the visitors who come here, as a way to offset the cost to the community (local taxpayers) of servicing this kind of tourism.

While we may support some aspects of the proposed plan it falls short of our expectations and we find the proposal anathema to the spirit of Tofino, too urban in its style and likely to offend a number of users. Our suggestions of a Paid day pass system for visitors and of options for a Paid seasons pass for visitors would produce a more relaxed environment and likely encounter less resistance. You know “half the speed, twice the pleasure.” We suggested the plan should address seasonal variability in restrictions to suit seasonal variability in use. Many lots are at times near empty in winter.

Also, we were of the view that a “day pass” or “seasons pass” should be good for the whole town. Just focusing on the beach area would tend to put pressure on adjacent areas and neighbourhoods as visitors would seek out “free” opportunities. This would lead to its own set of difficulties. In this regard I understand that private property owners in one instance are already putting up barriers on public property. To, in effect, privatize public property and restrict the potential for public parking.

Any plan should not be rushed into existence on short notice and without ample consideration. We also offered that it might have been more productive to have engaged in a more robust discussion with the public prior to announcing the principles and details of the plan. Omitting this typically leads to backlash.

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I cannot go into full detail as the plan still appears to be in development. The good news is that the plan does appear to be in development.

So I encourage all members to contact your councillors and raise your concerns. Email contacts below. I would also suggest emailing relevant staff, listed below as staff seem to have considerable sway, with council often following their lead.

One other matter seems worth mentioning here. The prospect of moneys being generated will, and has, drawn the attention of those who would spend it on other than current or essential costs. You might want to reinforce where any generated funds should be directed.

Cheers Jack Gillie

For those who have an appetite, here is the link to the Special Council meeting agenda April 26, 2021 where you will find on page 14 the parking proposal submitted to and approved by council.

<https://tofino.civicweb.net/filepro/document/115058/Special%20Council%20-%2026%20Apr%202021%20Agenda.pdf?widget=true>

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