

Tofino Ratepayers Association



October 27, 2021

Mayor and Council

On behalf of the Tofino Ratepayers Association I write to support the efforts currently underway to secure a portion of the MRDT and direct those funds toward the costs of sewage treatment. This will be of benefit for the District of Tofino, its citizens, taxpayers and businesses alike. It will benefit the whole community to help allay the onerous prospects of the only existing alternative, dramatic tax increases for everyone. It will also let us get on with removing what many consider a stain on the communities reputation, namely untreated sewage delivered directly into the ocean.

Thanks, to the FRAP members who have shown commitment to the community and are willing to partner with the community in new and positive ways. Because of your support we are on the cusp of solving this long-standing problem.

Some are not happy because the amounts of money are too low, or for some too high. A few suggest mechanisms that don't yet exist should be used. I say this council initiative is good, because it is better. Better than where we were a year or two ago when council announced 53% tax increases. And far better than where we will be without it.

In general, the public very much supports this. I can say that with confidence because I have seen it firsthand. During the most recent by-elections, every candidate expressed in the RPA pre- election questionnaire put to the candidates, the need for funds for infrastructure, to come from the greatest group of users, tourists. For the tourists to shoulder their fair share of the costs. And the MRDT was the most frequently cited vehicle that could do that. In a ten-day period leading up to the election the Ratepayers web site had over 1000 visits and membership increased dramatically, largely because of this issue. There is a clear consensus on this issue in Tofino and Council clearly has a mandate to pursue this, and they have done so.

To be absolutely fair, some have suggested that a form of general sales tax across the board might be more appropriate. We don't disagree with that sentiment, in principle, and would be willing to support working on that project with others in the community. However, no mechanism currently exists in the province to achieve that end. If, or when it is achievable, it could replace or amend or build on the work that is currently underway and take over at some point in the future, but it is very speculative right now and we need more immediate action. Use of the MRDT is ready to go. Thanks to council's work and the cooperative spirit of Tofino businesses and provincial government.

Cheers Jack Gillie