

Feb, 2020 First Edition

HICEEC REPORT

Getting your business on the map--literally

Production of the 2020 Hornby and Denman Visitor Guide is under way. The Guide provides valuable information for visitors to both islands, including a map, the ferry schedule, and messaging about Island values, especially regarding sustainability and careful nurturing of the islands. And, of course, info on local businesses, whose ads provide 100% of the funding for the Guide. If your business has participated before, you should be hearing from this year's coordinator, Caroline Sneath; if not, and you want to be on the Guide, please contact her at caroline@hiceec.org.

Update on the Internet project

We hope it's common knowledge by now that HICEEC has been working with the Denman Island Residents Association's Internet Committee to improve local Internet capacity, with the goal of getting fibre optic Internet access to every household on both Islands. In survey responses, both communities have confirmed that they prefer building a land-based infrastructure to waiting for 5G, or other wireless options.

The report that details the business case and implementation plan for the project is how complete. It will be accompanied by a compelling video produced by Zsofin Sheehy, which you can view at: <https://youtu.be/bXrj9ngmEok>. Many thanks to her, and the many people that came forward and offered testimonials and support. A special thanks to Board member John Grayson for the vision he brought to the project.

The next steps will be to find the right Internet service provider (ISP) and secure the multimillion-dollar funding needed, from both the provincial and federal governments. No one said it would be easy!

Serving the visitors, and the visited

With support from the transient-accommodation sector on the Island, HICEEC has requested the Ministry of Finance to authorize Hornby Island as a defined area for the Municipal and Regional District Taxation program. This program involves a specific tax charged to clients of transient accommodation providers—in other words, a “pillow tax”. The proprietors collect the tax and remit it to the Ministry of Finance, which then allocates the funds according to the wishes of tourism stakeholders in the individual communities and within the program's parameters. This program has been around for many years; it has become of interest to Hornby since a 2018 legislative change that allows funds to be used for affordable housing. Hornby stakeholders are investigating the possibilities for local use of these funds.

Lining up for E.V. Charging

The global transition from gasoline-powered to electric vehicles is manifesting locally at the HICEEC/UBCU electric vehicle charging station, where business has become brisk—some days, there is a line-up. Unfortunately, the hook-up is broken, and no repair parts are available. Our trusty electrician is recommending upgrading the station, from a residential standard to a more commercially robust unit. The price of success! We're working on the funding for this.

What else are we working on?

2020 HICEEC Strategic Plan; Hornbyisland.com EVENTS calendar; busing on Hornby and Denman; participation in CAST and the Central Area Planning; support for shoulder season economic enhancement; Ferry Advisory Committee; etc.

Submitted on behalf of the volunteer HICEEC Board: John Heinegg, Katherine Ronan, Carlyn Bishop, Jason Griggs, John Grayson, Jeff Zamluk, Jim Bulmer, and Jack Hornstein.