



**Texada Island Chamber of Commerce presentation to
Premier John Horgan (Friday, April 12, 2019 | Powell River)**

Premier's Question: "Why have you chosen to build your career or raise your family on Texada, and what are the challenges and opportunities of living and working in the region".

People choose Texada because it's a beautiful island with a low cost of living. It's a safe place to raise a family. However, it's isolated.

It's 3 ferries to Vancouver, 2 to Vancouver Island.

Thanks for taking some first steps to reinstate better ferry service levels between Texada and Powell River. We want a 7-day schedule. The weekend schedule does not work for us.

We look forward to the 2-year pilot direct ferry service to Comox, twice* a week. It will help our seniors to get to medical specialist appointments and our business people who can't get all of their supplies in Powell River. It will also help our forestry and quarry companies get faster mechanical servicing once per week from Vancouver Island-based companies.

Our rural airport faces challenges. In 2018, 6 pilots were poached from the small airline servicing our island, due to global personnel shortages. Many of our entrepreneurs and companies use flights extensively. Texada asks that the province create a \$30 - \$50k incentive for pilot and aviation mechanics training non-repayable grants, conditional upon graduates spending the first 5 years post-certification working in BC's aviation industry. Support from BC Hydro to improve airport commercialization would be much-appreciated too.



Regarding forestry: Without natural predators, Texada's massive deer population creates major adverse impacts. It costs more to tube and raise the seedlings than to buy and plant the trees. Our private forestry operator wants an extension on doe hunting season for population control. Secondly, we ask that you consider dropping the export restrictions, which artificially keeps timber prices down, and this may be a way to get 'Trump' tariffs dropped. Selkirk Mountain Forest Ltd. also disputes the new provincial interpretation of Crown ownership OF timber on private land, which represents a block to further investment.**

Regarding forestry on public lands, our small volume companies have small licenses. Their per metre-out machinery costs are higher. Overall, we want to participate in forestry policy consultations. We'd like to hear what the province is doing about softwood lumber tariffs.

To modernize, we wish there was a grant program to install electric vehicle charging stations on Texada for locals and for the over 13,000 visitors we get each year.

Destination marketing grants to help attract fall, winter, and spring season tourists would help our economy. That's when it's hardest for our businesses to survive.

We ask for enhanced provincial and federal support in closing the broadband gap to help our entrepreneurs. Texada is not anywhere near cities' Mbps rates. Fibre optics connectivity to a proposed line laid down the Malaspina Straight is very important for Texada.

We request your support to legalize the current local cannabis industry, meaning small local growers, processors, and retail.



Our Improvement District needs funding to sustain potable water in the face of aging infrastructure that our businesses and residents need and can't pay to upgrade.***

More than 1/3 of Texada's population is over 65. Another third is 45 to 64yrs old. We seek your direction and housing assistance for establishing an eldercare facility on Texada.

FLNR public servants should consult with Texada before approving the application for a shellfish farm at Northeast Bay. Most residents do not want it in front of the UREP park.

Thank you Premier Horgan.

OTHER... couldn't fit it into 3 minutes

We're very grateful that the yellow centre line on our roads was repainted this year. Our roads' fog lines (on the edges of the road) aren't being painted. It's turning seniors into shut-ins after 4 pm in the winter months because it's too hard for them to drive when they can't judge where the edges of the roads are with bright oncoming traffic lights facing them.

Seniors are aging out of driving and we don't have a BC Transit public bus service on a Texada route on even one day of the week.

*Ferry: Premier, I apologize that in my speech I said the pilot ferry run to Comox would be once per week. It will be twice per week (Wednesday and Saturdays). This means that on Wednesdays, forestry and quarry companies can get faster mechanical servicing on that weekday. Texada residents are glad to see that the work to reinforce the wing walls is starting, to support the Salish Orca vessel on the pick-up and drop off into Blubber Bay Ferry Terminal.



****Selkirk Mountain Forest Ltd.:** From 1888 until 1 year ago, timber upon private land was private timber. Timber marks on 8 parcels of private land on Texada are currently under dispute, with the Crown arguing that they own the timber. A clarification was made in a 1970s Royal Commission on Forestry that timber belongs to the land owner.

*****Gillies Bay Improvement District** does not have the residential property base numbers to pay for an approximately \$10 million dollar upgrade to meet health compliance regulations. There are about 240 households in the GBID area. The GBID water system is also critical for firefighting via the Gillies Bay Fire Department. Other organizations & businesses under this water system include the RCMP Station, the Texada Island Medical Clinic, the library, the Ravenous Raven restaurant, and the Gillies Bay General Store.

CONTACTS for FOLLOW-UP

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Gillies Bay Improvement District: Aging water infrastructure support needed.
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