



Regarding: Funding the Tla'amin longhouse build at Shelter Point Regional Park

October 17, 2018

To qathet Regional District,

As part of the 2018 Texada Economic Development Action Plan consultations, the Texada Island Chamber of Commerce met with Denise Smith of Tla'amin Nation and qathet Regional District (RD) representatives at the Legion on Texada Island. The Chamber's primary goal was to begin discussions with Tla'amin Nation to determine if there were any Tla'amin Nation economic development goals on Texada that our Chamber could support.

In this meeting, the Chamber learned that Tla'amin is interested in having a rendition of a longhouse built at Iy'som: Shelter Point Regional Park. Past archeological studies have revealed that Shelter Point used to have many traditional houses in the front with several longhouses in the back. Tla'amin Nation feels that a longhouse project will bring an economic benefit to Texada, increased tourism potential and, importantly, that this project would increase local and visitor awareness of Tla'amin's significant history on Texada.

During our consultation meeting with Tla'amin and the RD, the Chamber asked RD representatives how many of the capital projects currently in development were Tla'amin projects. The answer was none. Additionally, I'm not certain that the RD is funding any major capital projects on Texada at this time.

The consultation also revealed a related interest to have an interpretive walking tour with signs depicting the historical Tla'amin village throughout the Park, as it would be very educational. There are many skilled trades people on Texada who could bid on elements of the longhouse build, signage construction, and interpretive boards.

Tla'amin Nation has paid for conceptual drawings for the longhouse. The drawings are complete and building cost estimates are available. Tla'amin feels that the RD should pay for the construction of the longhouse because the qathet Regional District owns the Shelter Point Regional Park land. I believe the Park should also have signage in the traditional name Iy'som – as similar projects are being completed in Powell River.

While a past Tla'amin request to the qathet Regional District to realize the longhouse build project at Shelter Point Regional Park was not funded, the Texada Island Chamber of Commerce would like to ask that the RD reconsider reviewing such a project proposal for funding and implementation at the earliest opportunity. In discussion with Denise Smith we felt that a meeting with Tla'amin elders, qathet Regional District and the Texada Island Chamber of Commerce would be a good idea before consideration for such a capital funding project proceeds.



In addition to the support from the Texada Island Chamber of Commerce, there are other organizations who have read this letter and who support, in principle, the idea of this project, including those listed below. You will note that we have support from local and regional tourism partners that could play a key role in promoting such a building & interpretive boards as an important tourism destination.

Together, we could make this architectural piece and interpretive boards a strong destination that could boost cultural knowledge of Tla'amin, tourism and the economy on Texada Island.

Nation & Organizations in Support of this Project

- Tla'amin Nation
- Texada Island Chamber of Commerce
- Texada Arts, Culture & Tourism Society
- Texada Heritage Society, agreement in principle
- Tourism Powell River
- Sunshine Coast Tourism

Sincerely,

Cindy Babyn
President
Texada Island Chamber of Commerce

Cc: Denise Smith, Tla'amin Nation

Cc: Sandy McCormick, qathet RD, Regional District Director, Texada

Cc: Texada Arts, Culture & Tourism Society, Tim Atwood, President

Cc: Texada Heritage Society, Ken Barton, President

Cc: Tourism Powell River, Bob Timms, President

Cc: Sunshine Coast Tourism, Paul Kamon, Executive Director

Cc: Nicholas Simons, Member of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia

Cc: Rachel Blaney, Member of Parliament