

**DIRECTOR'S NEWS DECEMBER 2009**  
**AN UPDATE FROM SCRD DIRECTOR,**  
**DONNA SHUGAR**



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**CONTACT**

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In Person: Gumboot Restaurant (885-4216)

Saturdays 9-11am Dec. 5 & 12 only.

Drop by for coffee and a chat!

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**BUDGET ISSUES**

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The 2009 budget at the SCRD was a very challenging one with an increase in taxation over 2008 levels that was higher than anyone wanted. I have outlined plans for a revamped budget process in a previous newsletter. (Check my website to see previous issues.) In addition, in order to commence the 2010 budget planning season in a better position, the Board has recently implemented some staffing and other cuts. This is always a difficult and unpleasant thing to have to do and we are very concerned about the staff whose hours and even entire jobs have been cut. We deliberated for many hours over several months before making our ultimate decision. Our goal was a significant reduction of expenditures while striving to maintain the jobs of our excellent staff and to have as little impact on services to the public as possible. The cuts amount to approximately 2.5% of the SCRD workforce and include both unionized and managerial staff. Essential services such as transit, fire departments and water services remain unchanged, but the public will note slightly longer wait times for planning applications and processes, a change in parks maintenance schedules, changes in recreation programming, fewer grant in aid dollars for community groups and the like. An ad with more details will appear in the Coast Reporter and the Local the first week of December and is also posted on the SCRD website: [www.scrd.ca](http://www.scrd.ca).

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**STRATEGIC PLAN**

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The SCRD Board has completed the Strategic Plan for 2009-11. This planning process takes place during the first year of each three year term of office and sets the work priorities for the remainder of that term. The new plan has five main components: developing a long term Regional Sustainability Plan which focuses on reducing emissions and reducing energy consumption; protecting water, aquifers and watersheds (with water conservation targets, and source protection planning); addressing solid waste management (including reducing waste going to the landfill, addressing the issue of the Pender landfill which is at the end of its life, and looking at organic waste collection); achieving financial sustainability (including changes to the budgeting process and research into alternate revenue sources) and developing a regional growth strategy or alternative (depending on what regional projects the municipalities agree to engage in). Woven through these five is the commitment to collaborative leadership or working with the community and other local governments in meaningful dialogue to achieve our goals.

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**HOSPITAL EXPANSION**

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St. Mary's Hospital will be undergoing a major expansion, nearly doubling in size. We expect the first shovel in the ground in March 2010! A special grant was given by the provincial government to make this the first LEED Gold certified hospital in the Vancouver Coastal Health region. This means it will include many energy efficient features. In addition, all the patient rooms (63 in total) will be single occupancy (for disease control) with their own complete bathrooms and larger and more comfortable space for visitors. The emergency and ambulance entrances will be separate from each

other and there will be a waiting area for emergency patients. No more blasts of cold air while you wait to be seen in emerg! A display including a scale model of the new facility is being placed in the hospital lobby for public information.

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### **BYLAW ENFORCEMENT**

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The SCRD is considering a change in the way by-law infraction tickets are handled. Currently, if a person is found to be in contravention of a bylaw, the bylaw officer works with that person to bring the issue into compliance. If efforts are made to address the problem, tickets are often not issued. However, if the person refuses to change the situation (whether it is a building issue, a dog running at large or whatever) a ticket is issued and if it remains unpaid, it goes to court. This can be a lengthy, cumbersome and expensive process. A new computerized system is being implemented in various places in BC. The first part of the process will remain the same... the bylaw officer will continue to try to work with people to rectify problem situations. It is the court part that would be eliminated except in very unusual situations like major environmental disasters. If you are interested in finding out more about the BEN ticketing system, I encourage you to attend a presentation on Dec 9, 7:30pm at Eric Cardinal Hall at Shirley Macey Park.

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### **BIKE LANES**

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You may have noticed a new section of bike path on the water side of Lower Road from Largo to Woodley. This was installed by the SCRD using a gas tax grant. Once a bike lane is completed, the maintenance is taken over by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. The contract that MOTI has with Capilano Highways calls for sweeping only once a year in the Spring. We all know that this is inadequate but it is all we have. So I would like to propose that people who live along the bike lanes on Roberts Creek Road and Lower Road might like to take responsibility for the section of bike lane in front of their lots and keep them clear of debris. Much of the material does come from driveway gravel and tree material from the private lots along the bike lanes. Thank you!

Also, remember that the bike lanes are intended for the safety of cyclists and pedestrians and are not intended as parking areas! Please do not park on the bike paths!

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### **OTHER ROAD NEWS**

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It looks like we are going to get a traffic light at the intersection of Roberts Creek Road and Highway 101 after all. Surveyors have been out recently so it can be expected fairly soon. There will be warning lights on the highway so that people will know that a stop is coming up.

Please make sure you have adequate tires as the winter conditions are now here. ICBC recommends winter tires, not all seasons and suggests that you check your tread by putting a toonie into it... if the tread is deep enough for the rubber to hit the brass centre of the coin, you are OK. Any less and you should change your tires!

MOTI will be adding a 30km warning on the two S bends on Beach Avenue. Watch out for them and slow down on these dangerous curves!

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### **OCPC ELECTIONS**

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OCPC elections were held in November. All 8 vacant positions were filled. Thank you to 6 new members for coming forward: Mary Degan, Linda Hoehstetter, Roger Richmond, Frank McElroy, Jeff Rosnau and Diane Sanford. Thanks also to Mike Allegretti and Elaine Futtermen who were re-elected for another term. And a particular thank you goes out to Anne Dykes, Barry Krangle and David Moul who have all stepped down after a number of years of this important community service.

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### **HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!**

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Have a very happy and safe holiday! See you next year.

