

# Funds raised to start public market

GIBSONS



Photo submitted

The fundraising goal has been met to start a Public Market in Gibsons.

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The old yacht club in Gibsons will soon be the site of a public market after the necessary funds were secured this week.

The Gibsons Public Market team announced Tuesday night that they had successfully raised \$275,000 in donations for the purchase of the property.

This money will be donated to the Town of Gibsons and be used by the Town to finance their part ownership in the property. Donations ranged from \$25,000 to \$50 from more than 185 individuals, families and businesses from Langdale, Gibsons, Roberts Creek, Sechelt through to Pender Harbour.

"This level of community commitment to the creation of a public market in Gibsons is spectacular," said Gibsons Mayor Wayne Rowe in a news release. "When we started this fundraising program in mid-September, I was unsure we would be able to reach the \$250,000 target we gave the proponents, but this level of support clearly demonstrates the strong demand for such a community space in Gibsons. We look forward to working with the other proponents and the non-profit society, which will be running the Market, to getting the building ready for initial occupancy in early 2014 and then moving towards the fully renovated space in late 2015."

Gerry Zipursky, one of the Market proponents, said the level of enthusiasm for the project has been astounding.

"Not only did we get support from long-established Sunshine Coast families, but also from many newcomers who are wanting to see positive change in the Gibsons Landing area," he said. "This level of support has been a great boost to those of us who have been promoting the Market concept and we are looking forward to the next stage in early 2014 when we will repair the present building and hold some community and Market related activities in the existing space."

According to Zipursky and the rest of his Market team, it is anticipated the repaired building will open its doors in March or April 2014 and will then be available for functions, meetings and some market related activities.

During 2014 the team will finalize the design and engineering drawings for a complete renovation of the space, which is anticipated to be a three-storey building with more than 12,000 sq. ft. of usable space. There will also

be further fundraising to cover the costs for the renovation through accessing government, corporate and foundation grants as well as local fundraising functions.

“This must be a first,” added Brian Smith, executive director of Community Futures, one of the other Market proponents. “Rarely, if ever, have we seen such a diverse set of partners bringing donations, equity and debt together to allow the community to truly own this project. We are very excited about this investment as it is totally in line with our mandate, and the level of donations clearly shows us that the community definitely wants a public market. I also want to applaud the Town of Gibsons, Sunshine Coast Credit Union and Sunshine Coast Community Foundation, each of whom have demonstrated strong leadership in this community and have been very supportive of the Market initiative.”

There will be further information on the Market activities and plans in the coming weeks.

— Submitted