



STAFF REPORT

DATE: June 5, 2023

FILE:

TO: Chair and Directors,
First Nations Relations Committee

FROM: David Leitch
Chief Administrative Officer

RE: MOWACHAHT/MUCHALAHT TOTEM RAISING CEREMONY

PURPOSE/PROBLEM

To share details of the totem raising event in Gold River which celebrated the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation's (MMFN) newly constructed Baymont by Wyndham Hotel.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On May 22, 2024 the MMFN community hosted a gathering for a totem pole unveiling. The event and totem pole celebrate the renovation and construction of the Baymont by Wyndham Hotel in Gold River which is owned by MMFN. Renowned Master Carver Sanford Williams created the 12-foot tall pole detailed with several symbols of cultural significance. The event included cultural dance performances from local children, youth, and adults. Elders, Leadership, and Community Members gave brushings, songs and words of encouragement.

The revamped hotel retains some of its original structure along with a new extension to make up 49 rooms, including standard accommodations and kitchenettes. Jerry Jack from the MMFN Council of Chiefs spoke at the event. He recalled the hotel's initial construction in the 1960s and noted the change in the area over the years. MMFN Chief Administrative Officer Azar Kamran emphasized that the hotel is part of a broader effort through a destination marketing strategy to promote the region as a desirable destination for hosting tourists, business travellers, and events. A welcome house is planned to be constructed adjacent to the hotel, which will further support this strategy.

The event was well attended by approximately 200 people, including community members, dignitaries, industry representatives, government staff and school children. Leadership from the MMFN Council of Chiefs—Nathan George, Jerry Jack, Patrick James, and Dan Savey—were present to support their community. They shared stories about the region's history, highlighting the journey that led to this significant moment.

Regional District staff in attendance presented a letter from the Board Chair congratulating the MMFN on their achievement.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report from the Chief Administrative Officer be received

Respectfully:



David Leitch
Chief Administrative Officer

Prepared by: *Azalea Milwid, First Nation Liaison*

Attachments: Event Photos

MOWACHAHT / MUCHALAHT TOTEM UNVEILING MAY 22, 2024



MOWACHAHT / MUCHALAHT HOTEL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2024

