

TOTEM POLES

OF

CH'ATLICH | SECHELT

INTERPRETIVE GUIDE AND MAP



INTRODUCTION

The totem poles of ch'atlich (Sechelt) are impressive indications of the rich cultural and artistic heritage of the shíshálh Nation and other First Nations groups in BC.

Totem poles are monuments created by Coast Salish First Nations, typically made of red cedar, to document the stories and histories of community and clan members. They depict animals or mythological figures, often representing themes and concepts relevant to specific events or individuals.

Many totems in the Sechelt area include the figures of wolf, grizzly bear, orca, frog, and eagle. The first four represent the four main clans of the shíshálh people. Collectively, the shíshálh First Nation is represented by the figure of a double-headed eagle.

Because they are made of wood, and usually are outside, totems typically have a relatively short "lifespan". The totems that you can see in the Sechelt area were all carved and erected in the last forty years. With age, they usually are laid down to naturally decay and return to the earth.

Take a moment to stroll around ch'atlich (Sechelt) and visit these beautiful historic and contemporary totem poles. This brochure includes a handy map for a self-guided tour.

"Totem poles are a declaration, a document. They display the images that are our stories. It's a visual document in the shíshálh Nation's life, and the history and the culture of our people. Like all artists, I carve to express my inner feelings. I want to bring to life the traditional art of the shíshálh Nation, and to bring these cultural symbols to a worldwide audience for their understanding and appreciation."

- the late ʔantuni Tony Paul,
shíshálh Nation Master Carver

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WATCH THE VIDEO

Scan this QR Code to watch the "Totem Tales" video to learn more about the artists and totem poles in Sechelt.



SHE SHASHISHALHEM LANGUAGE

In this guide, you'll see many words in the she shashishalhem language, the traditional language spoken by the shíshálh Nation which is a Coast Salish dialect. Scan the QR code to listen and learn to pronounce many of these words.



Sechelt Visitor Centre

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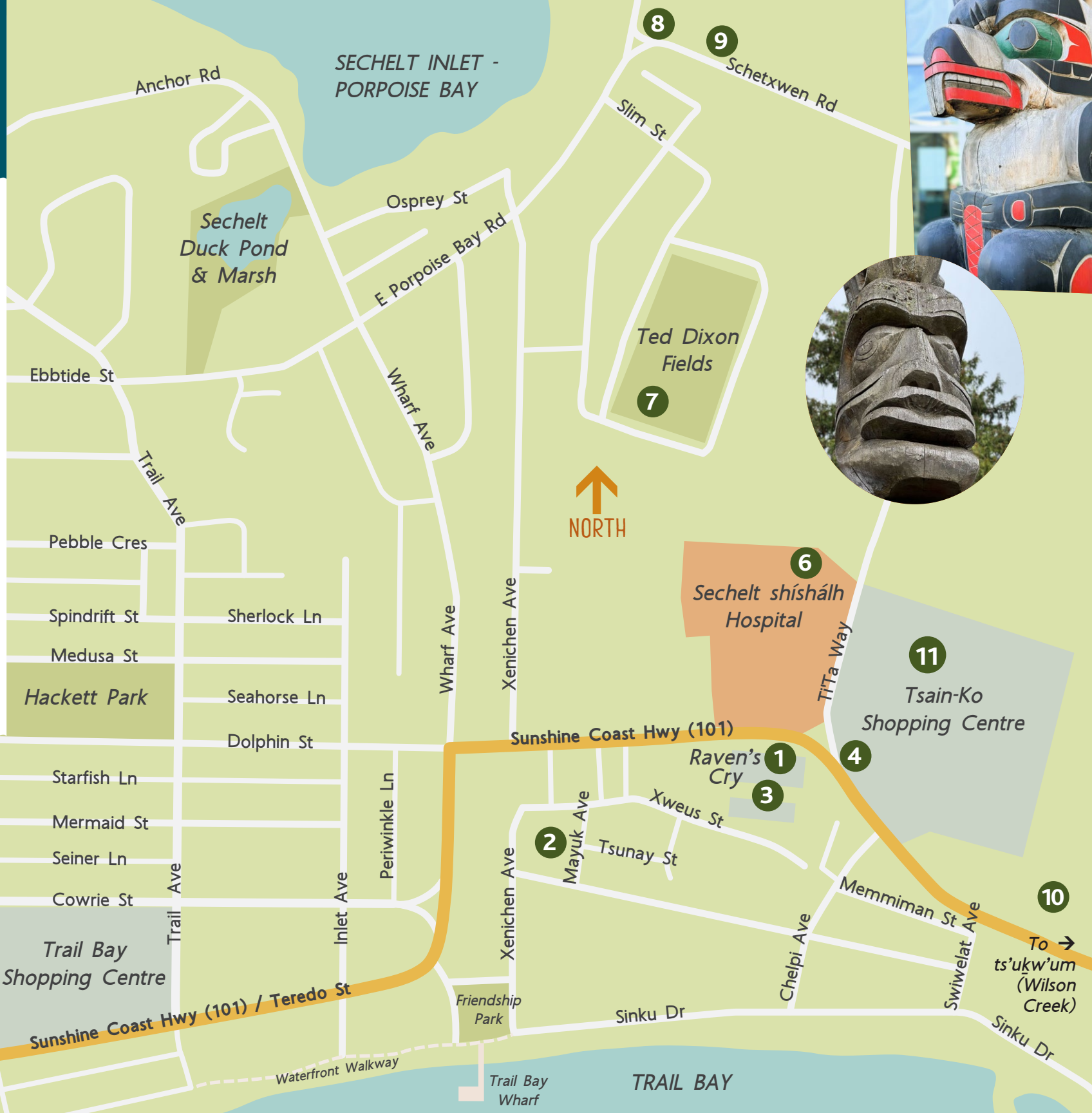


TOTEM POLES

OF

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←To xwilway
(Halfmoon Bay)

To →
ts'ukw'um
(Wilson Creek)

VIEWING WITH RESPECT

When you view the totem poles and public art in ch'atlich (Sechelt), please maintain a respectful and mindful visit. By adhering to these guidelines, you contribute to the preservation and appreciation of shíshálh cultural and artistic heritage.

Do not trespass: Please remain in designated viewing areas and refrain from entering private property. Respecting boundaries ensures the preservation of both cultural sites and the privacy of local residents.

Do not touch: To prevent damage and deterioration, visitors must refrain from touching or climbing on the totem poles. Appreciate from a respectful distance.

Respect culture: These totem poles are not only works of art; they are historical documents of Indigenous culture and heritage. As you admire them, take a moment to reflect on the significance and history behind each carving, respecting Indigenous traditions and people.

Leave no trace: Help keep the area clean and beautiful by disposing of litter properly and refraining from graffiti or vandalism. Let's work together to maintain the natural beauty of the area for everyone to enjoy.



1 RAVEN'S CRY THEATRE

There is one totem in front of the tems swiya Museum and Raven's Cry Theatre building that was carved by Jamie Jeffries sometime in the 1990's. It depicts an eagle, orca, and wolf.

2 THE NATION'S HALL

There are several totems adjacent to the shíshálh Nation's Hall of Swiyk'als Drive. The two larger totems, carved by Jimmy Joseph, Frank Dixon, and Jamie Jeffries in 1986 and 1988, commemorate

the achievement of self-government by the shíshálh Nation.

On the lawn in front of the Hall, a circle of totems carved by Jamie Jeffries surrounds a plaque describing the shíshálh Nation. Originally, there was a group of seven figures, but now only four remain. Three of these figures were faceless, representing the Nation's position under the Indian Act. Three others had faces, representing the Nation's position and identity as a self-governing people. The seventh totem in this group has a plaque in honour of the restoration of self government through federal legislation for the shíshálh people. It honours David Crombie and Chief Stan Dixon, a working team in developing Bill C-93, the self-government enabling legislation.

3 SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT BUILDING

Behind the Raven's Cry Theatre, in front of the Nation's Social Development Building, stands a totem carved by Jamie Jefferies and erected in 2012. This pole was raised in honour of military veterans from the shíshálh Nation.

4 TSAIN-KO VILLAGE SHOPPING CENTRE

On the corner of Highway 101 and Ti'ta Way stands a group of five totems, erected in 2007. Descriptions below are from right to left as you stand facing them:

Totem #1: Carved by Andrew Puglas Jr. (U'magalis) and Patrick Hunt (Kwinsistalagalis) in 2007.

Top Figure: Thunderbird – The thunderbird represents strength as is one of the most powerful figures to place on a totem pole amongst the Kwa'gulth people. It has strong history and is the healing power of the Northwest Coast First Nations people.

Bottom Figure: Tsuno'kwa (Wild Woman of the Woods) – Tsuno'kwa is the highest-ranking figure to place on a totem pole; it shows the wealth of the community and its families. Amongst the Kwa'gulth it shows how noble the family is and where the



stand in the ranking system of the Kwa'kwa'kawakw people. The Tsuno'kwa comes from both the Puglas and Hunt family and is the first mask shown in a potlatch.

Totem #2: Carved by ʔantuni Tony Paul in 2007

Top Figure: Raven releasing the sun – The raven is releasing the sun and giving us life and the Sunshine Coast its sunshine.

Bottom Figure: Human figure with Tsain-Ko – The human figure represents shíshálh ancestors. The double-headed sea serpent runs up the ancestral figure. This is "ch'inkw'u" after which Tsain-Ko Village is named.

Totem #3: Carved by Richard Baker and Matthew Baker in 2007

Top Figure: The Eagle – The eagle on the top of the totem pole with its wings out is the spiritual bird that watches over all our communities.

Second Figure: The Welcome Figure – The welcome figure, holding its arms out in greeting, is welcoming people of other Nations to the Sechelt community.

Third Figure: The Orca – The orca, "Hunter of the Sea" represents family and togetherness.

Totem #4: Carved by ʔantuni Tony Paul in 2007

Top Figure: The Watchman – The top figure is the watchman, keeping an eye on all the shíshálh territories.

Figure Below: Animal Symbols – All of the animal figures below the watchman represent the Nation's crest for each area of the swiya. These are: the wolf, the orca, the grizzly bear, the frog, and the eagle.

Totem #5: Carved by ʔantuni Tony Paul, Matthew Baker, and Richard Baker in 2007

Top Figure: Thunderbird – the thunderbird is the spiritual guardian of the shíshálh Nation.

Second Figure: Lady Figure with Drum – the lady figure represents shíshálh elders. The lady is holding a drum which symbolizes singing songs to the other totem poles. On the drum is a double-headed eagle which represents the shíshálh Nation's crest.





5 SECHELT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

On Cowrie St and Shorncliffe Ave, a totem stands in front of the former Sechelt Elementary School, carved by Bradley Hunt, a Heiltsuk First Nations artist from Bella Bella.

Before deciding to pursue his art full-time, Mr. Hunt was a much-respected teacher at the school, and students carved the totem with him along with others. The pole was erected in 1985. The two main figures on the pole are the eagle and a human. The eagle was the crest of the Sechelt Elementary School at the time. The human figure below the eagle represents the teacher. In the body of the human is a smaller human representing the child, or children of the school. On the body of the child is a copper inlay which represents wealth – in this case the wealth is knowledge. Mr. Hunt also designed the logo for the Sunshine Coast School District.

6 SECHELT HOSPITAL

Exterior: Standing outside the entrance to the Sechelt Hospital Emergency Room are three poles carved by ʔantuni Tony Paul and Deon Louie. The totem pole of the left, carved by Deon Louie, features an eagle (representing strength, leadership, and prestige), wolf (intelligence, leadership, and strong sense of family), raven (creation, knowledge, and humour), and beaver (creativity and determination).

The totem pole on the right was carved by ʔantuni Tony Paul and is titled The Healing Pole. The figure at the top is a watchman, providing protection for the hospital and the surrounding area. There is also an eagle, a hummingbird, and a human. There is a sun on the chest of the eagle, radiating healing and peace. The hummingbird is the healer, fulfilling the creator's promise that those who suffer injury or loss will be restored. The human



figure represents the staff and volunteers in the hospital who take care of those in their time of need. The blanket that is wrapped around the figure signifies that they are being honoured for the work they are doing.

The pole in the centre was also carved by ʔantuni Tony Paul and is called The Welcome Pole. It features a figure with open arms (a traditional greeting) facing people as they come into the hospital.

Interior: Just inside the main entrance of the hospital is a wooden mural created by local artist Shain Jackson, with the help of students, using only recycled materials. The large sun represents regeneration, growth, and new beginnings. The canoe piece, 'Pulling Together' symbolizes the ideals of cooperation and building unity. The four canoeists shown represent unity in diversity.



7 TED DIXON PARK

Two totems overlook the playing fields at Ted Dixon Park on Kwatamus Avenue. The taller pole was carved by Bradley Hunt, and the shorter pole of the spirit wolf was carved by Jamie Jeffries. These poles were erected in memory of Ted Dixon, a respected shíshálh Nation councillor.

8 SHÍSHÁLH NATION INDUSTRIAL PARK ENTRANCE

At the corner of East Porpoise Bay Rd and Schetxwen Rd, a totem pole carved by ʔantuni Tony Paul, marks the entrance to the shíshálh Nation Industrial Park. This pole is titled, "The Spirit of Tita" and is in memory of Clarence Joe Sr. This pole is a protection pole, providing protection to people who enter the Industrial Park. From top to bottom, it depicts the eagle, orca (in the wing of the eagle), wolf, grizzly bear, and frog, symbolizing the clans of the shíshálh Nation.



9 SALISH SOILS

Salish Soils, on Schetxwen Rd, has a small demonstration garden beside their office. It contains one of the totems carved by Jamie Jeffries that used to be in the circle of totems in front of the Nation Hall.

10 SUNSHINE COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT OFFICE

A protection pole stands in front of the Sunshine Coast Regional District offices at 1975 Field Rd. Carved by ʔantuni Tony Paul, this totem was erected in 2009. The base of the pole is a grizzly bear, signifying protection from the land. Above the bear is an eagle, its wings sheltering a frog. The frog represents unity, and here signifies the unity of the people working together to protect the watershed. The eagle represents protection from the air, and here indicates both protection of the watershed and protection of the friendship between people on the Sunshine Coast.

11 OTHER SHÍSHÁLH NATION PUBLIC ART, TSAIN-KO CENTRE

Hydro Boxes: Take a moment to see the inspiring and stunning local artwork installed on two hydro boxes in 2020, designed by two shíshálh Nation artists– Manuela Salinas (the orca) and Charles Craigan (the frog).

Metal wall panels: Throughout the shopping centre are a series of metal artwork panels, designed by Manuela Salinas that tell the story of ch'inkw'u (the two-headed sea serpent). The sea serpent symbolizes a legendary animal with infinite strength to preserve and restore balance amongst all living things. Look for the interpretation panel on the exterior of the centre building to learn more.

Wall Carving: The double-headed eagle and serpent - by the late ʔantuni Tony Paul.

On the northern end of the Tsain-Ko complex, additional art panels depicting eagles and orcas are on display, by artist Margaret August.