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City's Refresh Downtown wins silver award from Planning Institute of British Columbia

Plans for future upgrades in Campbell River have already won accolades.

The City's Refresh Downtown initiative was honoured June 1 with a Planning Institute of British Columbia (PIBC) silver award of excellence in the small town and rural areas category.

In a congratulatory letter, Bill Corsan, the PIBC awards chair wrote, *"It was a tough year with a competitive field of submissions. Your project stood out among them as a great example for the planning profession."*

In 2016, the City ran a survey and held numerous public events to gather feedback on new designs to refresh the downtown core in Campbell River. The aim was to ensure the City could coordinate street upgrades in the heart of our community with future private development.

The City received 920 survey responses from the general public and 550 responses from youth highlighting the community's priorities for creating a vibrant heart of the community. Survey results and the design workshops established that celebrating Campbell River's west coast heritage, having ample outdoor seating, a pedestrian-friendly core and live entertainment and events downtown, were among the top priorities identified by Campbell Riverites.

The City also conducted infrastructure reviews for water, sewer, drainage and parking to be ready to support new development in the downtown.

The process established options for sidewalks, public gathering spaces, lighting, landscaping, decorative features, bicycle areas, signs and building look and design that showcase Campbell River's unique history and identity. One stand-out element is a colour palette based on the work of internationally-acclaimed linocut artist Sybil Andrews, who made Campbell River her home and taught from her Willow Point studio for decades.

"Revitalizing our downtown is a key Council priority that will help draw more people and business to this area. Council appreciates the time the community took to provide valuable and constructive feedback," says Mayor Andy Adams. *"Thanks to Refresh, Campbell River has plans in place to work with current property owners and potential investors interested in re-development in the heart of our community."*

This initiative successfully built on past projects such as Spirit Square and recent projects such as the St. Ann's and Alder Street upgrades, beautification grants and the façade improvement program.

The City also won a PIBC award for the successful development at Alder Street/St Ann's block. Here, below ground infrastructure (sewer/water/storm drainage) was in need of upgrade, and the City upgraded the streets with wider sidewalks, improved landscaping, undergrounded overhead wires adjacent to a large new commercial development (Seymour Pacific).

Information about Campbell River's award will also be published in *Planning West* magazine as well as on PIBC social media sites and YouTube.

Find out more about the Planning Institute of BC at: <https://www.pibc.bc.ca/>

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