

April 1, 2014

Finishing touches wrap up St. Ann's upgrade and downtown revitalization project

Finishing touches are currently underway on the St Ann's upgrade project, which should wrap up in early April.

This nine-month, \$4.048 million project involved upgrades to underground services including sewer, water and storm drainage systems, as well as above-ground improvements to roads, sidewalks, streetlights and landscaping for the area connecting 10th Avenue to Shoppers Row.

"This work changes the entire look and feel of the area. This is a huge step forward in revitalizing downtown and making it a desirable place to work, visit, shop and do business," said Councillor Claire Moglove, who holds the economic development portfolio for City Council. *"If you recall the plaza that was there previously, there is no question that the area has been totally transformed. The fact that we were able to achieve this by piggybacking the aboveground improvements onto the very necessary underground infrastructure updates is testament to good planning and design."*

As intended, the end result dramatically transforms both the look and feel of the area. The goals of the project, shaped during public consultation sessions in December 2012, included linking waterfront green spaces to City Hall, creating shared space where public areas blend with commercial properties, and animating the public space so that street level activity focuses on people – to make visitors feel welcome and help businesses reap the benefits of the new energy that comes from a well designed and inviting potential destination for residents, shoppers and visitors.

Landscaping features local and west coast plant and tree varieties such as Kinnikinnick and scarlet oak, and plantings fit into an overall design scheme that includes rain gardens to direct storm water runoff and upgraded piping installed below the surface to re-direct pooling water that had been a problem in this area. A more balanced approach to various modes of transportation also enhances the pedestrian experience in this area.

Positive feedback received to date indicates that the project is on track to meet its intended goals.

"The St. Ann's downtown revitalization project is an important initiative for Campbell River that promotes a positive business climate and facilitates and nurtures a prosperous community and strong local economy. From the time of the launch, it's been a positive process of collaboration with the City and other stakeholders, and we look forward to sharing with our members communication updates as development progresses," said Colleen Evans, President & CEO, Campbell River Chamber of Commerce. *"It's been exciting to see how local growth-minded businesses are leveraging these opportunities to support suppliers and service providers. Last year, the Chamber launched the Think Local program, demonstrating the importance of local business connecting with and contributing to our local economy and quality of life. There is a real sense of community pride and ownership in the downtown transition and now an opportunity to leverage this positive energy to propel Campbell River forward."*

"The BIA is pleased to see the completion of the upgrades to St. Ann's, Dubeau, and Alder. This is an important step in the revitalization of our downtown. We look forward with anticipation to the future of the heart of the city," said Ryan Phillips, Barrister & Solicitor with Tees Kiddle Spencer and Director of City Centre Business Improvement Association.

The St. Ann's upgrade project will be completed within the approved budget and as scheduled at the end of the month in spite of freezing temperatures and snow, which presented the contractor with logistical challenges starting in December and continuing on and off through to March.

Residents should note that work continues on the Seymour Pacific Developments Office building site. This project, the creation of a new national headquarters for Seymour Pacific Developments is anticipated to be complete later this year. A community celebration will be planned once both projects are finished.



For more information on the stages and milestones of the St Ann's upgrade project, visit the Campbell River website at www.campbellriver.ca and view City Construction Projects under Planning, Building & Development.

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“Before” and “After” photos available for publication on request.

Caption: The St Ann's block area has been completely transformed from being a location without a defined purpose to an inviting “people place” in the heart of Campbell River's downtown.