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CITY ACCELERATES DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION WITH MAJOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Acquisition of properties on the 1300-block of Shoppers Row fuels next phase of downtown redevelopment.

Downtown is the heart of Campbell River. It's the cultural center of the community, a space for Campbell Riverites to come together. As such, revitalization and investment in the downtown continues to be a strategic Council priority.

To support the City's goals and objectives for the downtown, the City acquired the property located at 1302 Shoppers Row (Downtown Safety Office) in 2023 and is expanding this investment with the purchase of three properties in the 1300-block of Shoppers Row, including 1342 Shoppers Row (Harbourside Inn), 1352 Shoppers Row (vacant lot) and 1362 16th Avenue (commercial building). The City intends to 'Reimagine the Row' with the demolition of existing buildings and by partnering with the private sector to develop commercial and civic spaces along with housing above.

The acquisition and development of a mixed-use, purpose-built rental project in the heart of downtown is in direct alignment with the 2023-2026 Council Strategic Plan and several of Council's Strategic Priorities as well as the OCP and Downtown Refresh Plan. This initiative has been a priority for many years, and the current Council is focused on actively driving it forward during their term. Council is intentionally focusing on Shoppers Row as the epicentre of downtown revitalization and wants to see efforts continue to expand outwards.

"Council has a vision for the downtown. We are reimagining Shoppers Row and bringing back the vibrancy and strong character that Campbell River is known for. This strategic investment will animate the area, increase livability and walkability, and deliver on Council's commitment to downtown revitalization and community safety," says Mayor Kermit Dahl. *"The purchase of these properties for redevelopment supports a wide range of businesses and housing opportunities in key locations. It will be home to new commercial spaces which will stimulate our local economy and provide more attainable housing within walking distance of key amenities, while addressing some of the existing safety challenges at this location."*

Campbell River has a very low rental apartment vacancy rate, and this strategic land acquisition is intended to deliver purpose-built rental housing with a variety of unit types (studio apartments to 3-bedroom units) for middle income earners. The investment also looks to continue advancing community safety in Campbell River and reduce challenges that area businesses and residents are experiencing. The new development is intended to house the Downtown Safety Office and be a space where residents can speak to bylaw enforcement officers about neighbourhood concerns and be a hub for the regular patrols and clean-up work taking place downtown.

"To support a safe, welcoming and thriving downtown, the City purchased a few key properties to address some ongoing challenges in the area and create opportunities for positive improvements. By thoughtfully investing in these spaces, we hope to encourage a vibrant, inviting downtown that serves as a place for connection and enjoyment for all," says Elle Brovold, City Manager. *"The City is committed to working with community partners and BC Housing to relocate existing tenants in the coming months, to support these individuals to be more appropriately housed, and to maintain continuity for these important social services"*.

The City purchased the select properties in the 1300-block of Shoppers Row for \$10.6 million, using a portion of the \$10.4 million in funding from the federal government's Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF). Grants, such as the HAF, and City reserve funds will also be used to advance this project with no direct impact to taxation.

The project is currently in the planning phase. A public process to select a development partner will move forward in the coming weeks. The City will work with community partners to assist in the relocation of existing tenants.

The City invites citizens to visit www.getinvolved.campbellriver.ca/reimagine-the-row to learn more.

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Image: This rendering shown is for illustration purposes only and may not be the exact representation of the final development.