

**HIGHLIGHTS of JUNE 14, 2021 COUNCIL MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING**

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**DELEGATIONS**

**Pledge to combat racism** – Council endorsed the #DifferentTogether pledge following a presentation by Ann McLeod, community engagement manager of the Immigrant Welcome Centre. The pledge affirms that we are stronger when we are different together, and that racism and hate have no place in our community. Council members will post photos of themselves with the #DifferentTogether pledge on social media in support of the Canadian values of diversity and inclusion, and to encourage everyone to oppose all forms of racism and hate.

**North island health update** – North Island medical health officer Dr. Charmaine Enns provided an update on public health status for Campbell River and area. Enns advised that Vancouver Island has fared best in the province in terms of COVID-19 case counts and direct health impacts from the virus. The main source of infections in our health region was within households and from social gathering. Vancouver Island had 31 cases during the March peak. There have been no Campbell River deaths due to COVID-19.

Enns emphasized that there have been profound indirect impacts from the pandemic, especially to mental health in youth and young families. With a significant increase in anxiety, depression and a sense of helplessness reported in survey data, Enns noted that these contribute to drug use in the community, which saw 21 deaths caused by illicit drug toxicity during same time period.

Enns said British Columbia is now in the recovery stage from the pandemic, thanks to vaccines that are safe and effective, even against the virus variants.

See the entire presentation in the meeting recording archives at [campbellriver.ca/webcasts](http://campbellriver.ca/webcasts).

**DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

- **Hotel and spa approved for Petersen Road** – Council approved a five-storey hotel (93 rooms) and spa, including a separate building for an indoor pool, and three maintenance buildings at the Campbell River Golf and Country Club at 700 Petersen Rd. They praised the development as a welcome addition that will bring opportunities for tourism as well as training and job creation.
- **Zoning Bylaw text amendments** – Council adopted text amendments to the City's Zoning Bylaw to prohibit commercial bottling of groundwater, and permit increased variety of uses on individual commercial or mixed-use sites. They also support redevelopment of the former Elk Falls mill site and align with Campbell River's Official Community Plan. The changes are considered minor revisions as part of regular updates to the City Zoning Bylaw. Highlights include:
  - Prohibiting commercial groundwater bottling;
  - Adding Seafood processing and marine research laboratories as a permitted use in the industrial-two zone;
  - Adding coffee shop and restaurant as permitted uses in the commercial eight zone;
  - Defining and adding community gardens as permitted land use in any location
  - Removing the 'or' between permitted uses for the multiple residential seven zone to support a mix of housing types (duplex, triplex, fourplex) on one site.

**COVID-19**

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**COMMUNITY SERVICES UPDATE**

- **Update on minor baseball relocation for 2021/2022 season** – Council approved \$3,000 for field grooming at Willow Point Park for the month of July 2021 with funding from the gaming reserve, and directed staff to amend the 2021-2030 Financial Plan accordingly. They further supported in principle temporary modifications to Willow Point Park and Nunns Creek Park pending further consultation with user groups on field needs for 2022. Council directed staff to report back following further consultation with field users. Thanks to other groups to make room for minor baseball at this location.
- **Sportsplex recycling depot closing July 1** – Council received an announcement from Comox Strathcona Waste Management regarding the closure of the Sportsplex recycling depot on July 1. Continuing to advocate for expanded recycling options, Council agreed to write directly to Recycle BC and the provincial Ministry of Environment requesting an immediate facility for southern Campbell River and Area D of Strathcona Regional District. **FINANCE UPDATE**
- **Maritime Heritage Centre upgrade** – Campbell River District Contracting will upgrade the Maritime Heritage Centre enclosure. The work is valued at \$265,000, and will be scheduled to reduce the impact to potential facility rentals during the summer period.
- **Council Finance Investment Policy** – Council approved amendments to the City of Campbell River's investment policy to further support good governance and to modernize the City's investment practices.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

- **Destination Campbell River update** – Council approved Destination Campbell River's 2020 annual performance report, the 2020 financial report, the five-year tourism strategic plan and the 2022 one-year implementation plan. The municipal and regional destination tax (hotel tax) report will be filed with Destination BC to meet the September 2021 deadline. This tax is applied to charges for short-term accommodation, and funds support tourism marketing.
- **Signs supporting aquaculture, forestry and tourism** – Council directed that billboard signs in support of major drivers of the local economy – aquaculture, forestry and tourism – be installed at three entrances to the community (near Jubilee and 19A, near Campbellton on Hwy 19 and south of the airport on Hwy 19).
- **Support for Campbell River whale watching companies** – In response to a request by Campbell River whale watching companies, the City will send a letter of support to the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sports for funding through the BC Major Anchor Attractions program.
- **Growing Canada's Forest initiative – In response to correspondence** from Western Forest Products offering to plant trees in our community, Council requested that a meeting be arranged to discuss potential sites. Sites suggested include the sewage treatment plant, Nunns Creek, the ERT transfer site, and various riparian areas throughout the community. The information will also be referred to the City's economic development department as well as the advisory planning committee and environmental advisory committee for feedback.
- **Update on correspondence from Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development** – Council received correspondence about modernizing the provincial forest policy and a

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response to the City's letter regarding old growth forest management. Council appreciated the invitation from the minister to participate in virtual town hall sessions and will reply with a message that continues to advocate for local government consultation and a collaborative, cooperative approach among different levels of government, with decisions based on science.

#### **PUBLIC HEARING – Duplex considered for 2257 Dalton Road**

The property owner intends to demolish the existing house, and the property is large enough to accommodate the four required parking spaces. The City's Official Community Plan generally supports modest infill and increasing diversity of housing stock in this area. The City received no community feedback during the public hearing, and has received no questions or concerns in response to advertisements and notifications mailed to households within 100 metres of this property.

#### **HIGHLIGHTS of JUNE 15 COMMITTEE of the WHOLE MEETING**

##### **Economic Development strategic plan**

Council received the *Innovative by Nature*, the economic development department's five-year strategic plan. The plan includes seven strategic goals aimed at strengthening Campbell River's business climate to support current and future growth, innovation, diversity and employment opportunities—particularly with the changes and challenges presented by the ongoing pandemic. The strategy is underpinned by seven overarching goals, which were created with feedback and participation from the community and other stakeholders. These goals are: nurture a positive business climate, integrate an economic focus across City functions; foster a supportive environment for key sector industries; build a future-ready workforce; foster a culture of innovation; prioritize open, transparent and effective communication and marketing initiatives; and build strong partnerships. A final draft of the report will be presented for Council's consideration later this summer.

Building on the *State of Campbell River* report by Meyers Norris Penny (MNP) earlier this year, Susan Mowbray of MNP, presented Council with an analysis of the local economy.

The presentation summarized the current economic climate and provided a forecast for anticipated changes in the short and longer term.

The summary noted that, overall, Campbell River fared relatively well during the pandemic, thanks in part to the demands for home renovation and construction, and that the outlook for the local economy is improving. While local retail and tourism businesses were the hardest hit industries during the pandemic (because these sectors rely on the ability of people to gather and travel), the summary also noted that Campbell River is well positioned to take advantage of growing sectors such as technology and film production as well as a location for people able to work remotely and enjoy high quality of life.

While short-term, temporary inflation is anticipated for items such as fuel, longer-term impacts of the pandemic include an increasing number of virtual store fronts and investment in green technologies and increasing demand for outdoor tourism.

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The City's future annual economic development plans will build on opportunities laid out in the report such as: removing barriers to business, further revitalizing downtown, encouraging business development at the airport, and conducting a labour market study.

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