

December 16, 2015

Rolling, rolling, rolling – Momentum continues for Campbell River economic development

Economic development is moving ahead, thanks to the Campbell River advantage.

“When we take stock of what’s happening in economic development, it’s clear that there’s a lot going on in Campbell River, and the list of work moving us forward is impressive,” says Mayor Andy Adams.

“Campbell River economic development and tourism staff did a fantastic job hosting the Tourism Association of Vancouver Island convention in September, which profiled all the great things happening locally to all the island tourism agencies and organizations. We are seeking other opportunities to host annual general meetings and conferences, and the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities annual convention will be in Campbell River in spring 2017,” the Mayor says.

“We’re definitely on the map and on the minds of people in our neighbouring communities,” the Mayor adds. *“Along with the delegates and guests who attend conventions, think ahead to Canada Day, and you know that the organizing committee will do their best to knock it out of the park and draw a record crowd of locals and visitors again this year. These events benefit many local businesses.”*

Campbell River’s economic development potential was recently highlighted in the Vancouver Island Economic Alliance’s *State of the Island* report by independent accounting firm Meyers Norris Penny, and momentum continues for new businesses and construction.

“We’re building on the boom brought by the new hospital, BC Hydro construction, the Seymour Pacific office building, Berwick by the Sea and the Comfort Inn. The new Healthyway across from the Community Centre and new Discovery Laser on Pier Street are welcome additions downtown. There’s also a new Hospice House and Ford dealership coming, an expansion for New Horizons Care Home, and new locations for Dairy Queen and Discovery Chiropractic – and potentially a craft brewery with food services,” Mayor Adams says. *“Council is also eager for updates about plans for Tyee Plaza and from other developers interested in purchasing and building in Campbell River, bringing revitalization that benefits the entire community.”*

Ongoing City programs that promote economic development:

- Façade improvement program
- Downtown tax exemption
- Airport Authority’s active role in marketing and promoting Campbell River Airport (YBL)
- Beautification partnership grants for downtown, Pier Street, Willow Point and Campbellton

“Our partnerships with the Chamber of Commerce and the Business Walk on Nov. 4 offer new insights into ways to keep businesses thriving,” the Mayor says. *“And Council’s meetings at the Union of BC Municipalities convention in September emphasized to the Province the importance of development near the airport and the need for high-speed Internet and highway connectors into our community as well as the re-establishment of the Forestry Task Force and potential for a community forest as an economic driver.”*

New initiatives underway:

- Reviews of business licence process as well as building, zoning and sign bylaws
- 3.5 Acre Task Force endorsed by Council
- Land marketing readiness workshop
- Tourism re-structuring

“With Campbell River’s economic development function moving into City operations, and in anticipation of recruiting an economic development officer, Council appreciates that economic development staff have continued to maintain key aspects of these functions during this transition, updating promotional materials and key economic information to keep us equipped to answer questions from potential investors. With a focus on moving forward, Council and senior staff are carefully considering the structure, strategy and resources required to build on economic development advancements to date,” the Mayor adds.

“Council also recognizes that tourism is a vital economic driver in Campbell River, and tourism will be a key focus for Council once the new economic development structure is in place and functioning,” he sums up.

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