

October 5, 2020

CITY WELCOMES, RESPONDS TO BUSINESS RECOVERY TASK FORCE REPORT

The City of Campbell River welcomes a report on the state of the local economy and recommendations to assist local businesses. A group of volunteers compiled a number of interviews with local business representatives and will present their findings to Council on Oct. 6. Along with summarizing the results of their discussions about the impact of COVID-19, the report highlights the continuing role and contributions of primary industry to the Campbell River economy.

“This effort reflects both the volunteers’ history of service and commitment to our community,” says Mayor Andy Adams. “Our city belongs to everyone, and so does the responsibility for contributing to our success. Every person in our community has a vested interest in the success of our local businesses, large and small. The findings in this report reinforce the commitment of so many people to keep Campbell River’s economy moving forward during and after the challenges we are currently facing.”

“We appreciate the initiative and willingness of this group to volunteer their time to talk with different businesses earlier this year,” adds city manager Deborah Sargent. “They share the results of multiple conversations in a report that’s easy to read and illustrates their findings.”

In addition to the resource industries cited in the report, the City’s economic development office notes that the many small businesses (fewer than 100 employees) as well as the health and education sectors are major contributors to local economic health – and the growing technology sector provides innovation for industry, small businesses and services.

“98% of Canadian businesses are small business. In Campbell River, the enterprising spirit of small business has carried us through the loss of major industry and built the foundation of our success,” says economic development officer Rose Klukas. “A hallmark of our community and our diverse local businesses is our willingness and ability to adapt. Time and again, our local businesses demonstrate the capacity to grow and change with the times. That potential creates the unique character and quality of life that makes Campbell River so attractive to new residents, tourists, new businesses and new investment generally.”

Klukas adds, *“We absolutely agree that primary industries such as forestry and aquaculture continue to contribute significantly to Campbell River. Thankfully, our attractive and well-serviced location also draws new investment, from aerospace to health care, education and tourism. Such diversity is key to long-term economic health.”*

Mayor Adams fully supports the City’s economic development initiatives, which follow internationally-recognized best practices and principles.

“These include maintaining close connections and embracing opportunities for change and improvement,” adds Mayor Adams. “The relationships built by our economic development officer since 2016 are proving to be extremely beneficial to local businesses as we navigate the ongoing pandemic. Knowing local needs and working in partnership with the Campbell River and District Chamber of Commerce, business associations, Wei Wai Kum and We Wai Kai First Nations, and other partners helped our team pivot very quickly to support customized business recovery and renewal.”

Klukas adds, *“Consultation is a key part of the role, and it’s ongoing, every day. Always, I’m checking in to learn how we can best to contribute to the success of local businesses, including opportunities to promote Campbell River and invite new investment to our community. We have formalized these check-ins with our Let’s Talk Wednesday forums. If that doesn’t work for someone, I am always available to listen and discuss what businesses need, and what new opportunities might be right for Campbell River.”*

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