

December 22, 2008

Sidewalk Network Improvements

Two improvements to the City's sidewalk network will provide improved access in the neighbourhood of Pinecrest Park sports fields and Robert V. Ostler Park.

"The City has made these significant improvements, in consultation with the Campbell River Access Awareness Committee and Youth Soccer, as part of a commitment to provide safe pedestrian access to the community," says Mayor Charlie Cornfield on behalf of Council.

A sidewalk project was constructed this fall along the north side of Merecroft Road between South Birch Street and the City's Public Works Yard, and a concrete walkway now connects Merecroft Road and the Pinecrest Park sports fields.

"This sidewalk and walkway provide safe access for sports-field users to Pinecrest Park as well as a convenient walking route for pedestrians," says Councillor Roy Grant.

In Robert V. Ostler Park, a new four-metre sidewalk runs along the park-side of the parking lot, providing a safe hard-surfaced link between the playground area at the south end of the park and the floral display area at the north end. Included in this sidewalk project was the reconstruction of several picnic table pads for wheelchair accessibility.

"These improvements at Robert V. Ostler Park were recommended in the Parks Access Audit, and I am pleased to see how quickly the City organization has been able to incorporate accessible design principles to respond to the need for better access and to increase people's ability to participate fully in society at this gathering place," Councillor Grant emphasizes.

The previous City Council learned of the need for accessibility improvements to three of Campbell River's most popular recreation sites at the October 28 Council meeting when an audit presented by Dave Calver Consulting detailed access deficiencies in Robert V. Ostler Park, Nunns Creek Park and the Rotary Sea Walk. The audit was based on 2004 Canadian standards for universal accessibility and funded by a Measuring Up grant, part of the Provincial Government's 2010 Legacies Now program, through the Campbell River Access Awareness Committee and the City's Parks, Recreation and Culture Department.

"Since deficiencies were found in all existing facilities audited, the previous Council proposed the upgrade of Robert V. Ostler Park to allow people with physical disabilities easy access to the picnic facilities," Mayor Cornfield explains. *"The new Council supports this as a standard to which future amenities should measure. To improve our amenities for everyone's enjoyment, we look forward to City staff's recommendations to address other issues identified in the accessibility audit as part of the 2009 financial planning process."*

Funding for both these projects came from the City's annual sidewalk infill account.

Check out the City's website at www.campbellriver.ca for information on other City initiatives.

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