

September 22, 2016

REFRESH Downtown Campbell River supported by Small Initiatives Program

To complement the ongoing REFRESH Downtown Campbell River program, and based on public input, small initiatives such as the CR Live Streets festival series, sidewalk “parklet” on Shoppers Row, and the Tidemark light canopy were undertaken this summer to help revitalize the heart of our community.

As work continues on the creation of the REFRESH Downtown Plan, these easy-to-complete projects have been generating excitement and adding vibrancy to downtown. The small initiatives were inspired by feedback received from the public in the Downtown Survey and at various consultation events.

“The purpose of the Small Initiatives Program is to create momentum and encourage people to see downtown as a place to work and shop, as well as a destination for entertainment, events, food and general leisure,” says Brian McLoughlin, the City’s long range planning clerk technician, who coordinates the small initiatives program. *“We’re listening to the community, improving spaces, and programming events to bring people into the downtown one small initiative at a time.”*

The CR Live Streets events took place on the first three Wednesday evenings of August and attracted hundreds of people downtown. The “Show on the Row” movie night saw Shoppers Row from 11th to 13th Ave. transformed into an outdoor theatre with approximately 700 people in attendance. This was followed with a Wednesday night Chalk Fest bringing families together to have fun and be creative, and the next week an Artisans Market. The installation of a light canopy between the Tidemark Theatre and the library, along with additional tree pruning, opened up the poorly lit square, making it a potential location for future events. The outdoor patio or “parklet” constructed on Shoppers Row provides a public space for pedestrians to gather and interact on a previously underused sidewalk. The City also worked with the Downtown Business Association to increase the number of bistro chairs and tables available for people to enjoy.

“Feedback from the community has been very positive, and people are genuinely excited to see small improvements in the downtown,” says Mayor Andy Adams. *“The fact that these initiatives have been well received by the public shows that people are ready for these types of changes, and the benefits they will bring to our downtown and the community as a whole.”*

City staff are developing more concepts for downtown revitalization using feedback received during public consultations last spring and summer. Another round of consultations on the REFRESH Downtown Plan are anticipated for late October.

To sign up for information and keep up to date on Refresh Downtown Campbell River visit the project website at www.campbellriver.ca/downtowndesign, or phone the Community Planning and Development Services Department at 250-286-5725.

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