

May 11, 2017

Mini boom – growing number of building, development inquiries slowing processing times

Another surge in local construction has City staff processing a flurry of applications and permits in Campbell River, to the point where it's getting hard to keep up with demand.

"According to the record of land use applications over the last 10 years, Campbell River is in another boom cycle," says Ron Neufeld, the City's deputy manager and general manager of operations. "Last year's stats were comparable to the building happening in 2007 and 2008. This year is expected to rival the numbers for the last peak construction boom year of 2006."

Employees in the community planning and development services department are working hard to try to meet the rising demand for development application and building permit processing. Already this year, the City has received almost 50 development applications, one and a half times the number of requests for the same period of time in 2016.

"Construction has been strong and steady in our community since 2013, when a mini building boom began ramping up. By the fall of 2013, we had such a volume of applications, we had to borrow staff from other local governments to help keep up with demand. This year, we're anticipating an increase in volume of up to 70 per cent over last year," Neufeld adds.

Neufeld says *"if the rate of development applications starts to plateau, it will allow some time for City staff to catch up on files. In the meantime, we want to advise the development community we are seeing a growing backlog and our expected processing times are getting a bit longer because of the volume of applications to process."*

Delays due to the increased volume are adding approximately four weeks to the standard turnaround times for development permits and approximately six weeks to building permits.

"Even responses to emails and phone calls can take longer, up to three days, and we apologize for the delay. We know that timing is important, and that these are exciting opportunities for the community, and we're doing our best to keep projects moving forward," Neufeld emphasizes.

The department has begun assigning one staff representative per application as the contact person to streamline inquiries.

"This will reduce the chance of an applicant making multiple phone calls to multiple staff members," Neufeld says. "We also remind people that efficiency in processing applications also depends on builders and developers having the required details available."

Larger building projects often rely on a certified registered professional, which helps both the projects and related permitting process run more smoothly.

"We invite anyone thinking of building a house, developing land or planning to construct a new building to talk to City staff ahead of time to get advice that will help ensure the permitting process goes as smoothly and quickly as possible," Neufeld adds. "Our staff are available to help people navigate the development process and answer questions to make land use decisions easier and help keep projects on track."

For more information, or to book a meeting about your business plans, development or building project, please contact the community planning and development services department 250-286-5725 or email planning@campbellriver.ca.

To discuss downtown projects or a development with larger community impact, please contact the City's development services manager Marianne Wade at 250-286-5742 or via email to marianne.wade@campbellriver.ca.



The City's website offers a wide variety of online information about planning, building and development, including frequently asked questions, how-to videos, building permit and development permit applications, the City's interactive land use map complete with zoning and development permit information, and a range of other helpful information, visit: campbellriver.ca/planning-building-development

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Contact: Marianne Wade, Development Services Manager

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Background

Five-year construction value comparison

YEAR	Construction \$	# Building Permits	# Building Inspections	# Development Applications
2016	\$72,939,168	316	2,389	107
2015	\$152,934,955	231	1,439	81
2014	\$81,037,147	316	1,519	76
2013	\$101,402,500	302	1,571	68
2012	\$58,600,574	260	1,313	60

10-year growth in land use applications (rezoning, development permits, subdivision)

