



Spirit Square – QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

On June 23, 2009, the City of Campbell River began the process for construction of the first phase of the Spirit Square. The following questions and answers are intended to provide an overview of the project and its impacts.

What is the project about?

The Spirit Square Program is a provincial government initiative intended to provide BC communities with the opportunity to develop gathering places within their cities that will create an enhanced destination in the downtown core and support many different activities, from cultural and heritage celebrations to special events. When completed, the Campbell River Spirit Square project will transform a section of the downtown core into a unique gathering place for residents and visitors to enjoy for years to come.

Where is the Spirit Square going to be built?

The Campbell River Spirit Square site incorporates a portion of the Tye Plaza between the Art Gallery / Visitor Information Centre and the Coast Discovery Inn, which includes the former transit interchange, the Veterans Memorial Cenotaph and the grassy knoll along Shoppers Row at 11th Avenue.

Who has been involved in developing the plans?

The City has worked closely with the public and various community stakeholders and committees during the planning and design phases of the project.

In 2008, Council recommended that a steering committee be established to guide the design team ensuring that the objectives of the Square were to be achieved. The committee was made up of representatives from the Community Advisory Committee, the Development Advisory Committee, Success by Six, the 'Heart of the City' Business Improvement Association, Rivercorp, Branch 137 Royal Canadian Legion, Campbell River Access Awareness Committee, Youth Advisory Committee, Seniors Advisory Commission and Council. Council also thanks owners and management of the Tye Plaza for their assistance and cooperation. Three design options were developed and presented to the public at Open Houses with the current option being the most popular choice.

How will it affect the downtown area?

The Spirit Square will be a gathering place for residents and visitors alike, and it is expected to add vibrancy and energy of the downtown core in a complimentary fashion to businesses operating in this area. During the construction phase, the sidewalk on the east side of Shoppers Row from the Coast Discovery Inn to the Art Gallery / Visitor Information Centre will be closed. Also, people can expect modifications to traffic patterns into and out of the Tye Plaza parking lot off Shoppers Row.

What happens to the parking in the area?

During the construction phase, the Tye Plaza parking lot will see a temporary reduction of approximately 50 parking stalls in the area between the Art Gallery / Visitor Information Centre. When the project is complete, there will be new angled parking on Shoppers Row where the transit interchange was previously located and a reduction of six parking stalls overall.

When is the construction work going to take place?

Construction has begun, with completion targeted for the end of October 2009, in time for the celebration of the Olympic Torch Relay and the Remembrance Day Ceremony.

All work is currently scheduled to take place during normal working hours on a seven-days-a-week working schedule. Any service connections and/or disruptions to Shoppers Row are anticipated to be completed during non-peak times to minimize disruption to traffic in the area.

Why is this project going ahead now when Campbell River is experiencing significant economic challenges?

Spirit Square construction is a local stimulus package that helps Council's goals for downtown revitalization and enhanced public safety. This means local work for local people, with the money circulating in the local economy. With eligible matching funding from other levels of government, the timing to complete this project now is very cost effective because Campbell River doubles its resources for this project. In addition to creating construction jobs immediately, the City is able to take advantage of favorable construction costs.

What is the cost of the project?

The total cost for phase one of the Spirit Square project is estimated at \$1,750,000. Design and engineering costs are estimated at \$250,000. The value of the contract work to be done by local contractor Ketza Pacific is estimated at \$1,306,556. The balance is made up by miscellaneous contracts including such things as material testing, utility connections and asphalt repair.

I had heard that the project would cost \$3 million – where did that number come from?

The \$3 million estimate was developed for all phases of the project, including possible future work within Shoppers Row as well as possible future upgrades to the area between the Library and the Tidemark Theatre. Only phase 1 with a project budget of \$1,750,000 has been approved for construction. Future phases will be deliberated by Council.

How is it being paid for?

The project is a partnership between the City of Campbell River, The Provincial Government and the Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) with funding provided as:

Provincial Government contribution: \$500,000

ICET contribution: \$250,000

Trees for Tomorrow \$ 27,500

The City of Campbell River reserve fund will cover remaining costs from existing reserves. (Applications have also been submitted for additional funding that, if successful, would further reduce the City's contribution.)

Could these reserve funds have been used to lower general taxation?

No, reserve funds are established to provide one-time funding for various community projects and required infrastructure replacement.

Who is completing the work?

The design and implementation of the project has been led by Downs/Archambault Architects & Planners Inc. with support from Highland Engineering and Surveying Ltd., PFS Landscape Architects Inc., RB Engineering Ltd, CWMM Consulting Engineers Ltd. and Levelton Consultants Ltd. Construction has been awarded to local contractor Ketza Pacific Construction 1993 Ltd. acting as the General Contractor with numerous local contractors providing sub-contracting services.

What will happen to Logger Mike?

Logger Mike has been refurbished, and his new home will be in the Spirit Square, close to his previous post. A new Western Red Cedar pole is in the works for him.

What will happen to the Cenotaph?

The Cenotaph will be temporarily removed during the construction phase and will be re-installed in a feature location as part of the Spirit Square. This will be completed in time for the 2009 Remembrance Day Ceremony. The Spirit Square design is expected to offer more room, with the cenotaph more of a focal point, to better honour the sacrifice recognized on Remembrance Day.

What else is being installed in the Square?

The Square has been designed to support a wide variety of events. The center stage, surrounded by an open air amphitheatre, will provide a focal point for concerts, performances, shows, movies and more, all of which will bring new energy and life to our downtown core. In addition, electrical upgrades completed with this project will enhance downtown lighting and decorating.

What happens to the transit interchange?

On July 6, 2009, the downtown transit interchange was re-located to the Community Centre.

Why was the transit interchange moved from Shoppers Row to the Community Centre?

There were a number of problems with the existing interchange building, which needed to be replaced. To enhance public safety in the downtown area, the relocation and redesign of the Community Centre transit interchange will be more visible and user-friendly. Smaller bus shelters at the new location will discourage group loitering, which is consistent with the City's Crime Reduction Strategy.

Who decided on the site for the new transit interchange?

BC Transit chose the location.

Why was the Community Centre site chosen?

The City worked with BC Transit to explore numerous sites throughout the downtown core. The Community Centre location at Cedar and 11th Avenue is the best match for BC Transit's transit interchange criteria. This location has good traffic flow for buses, it is close to the existing interchange to allow for minimal changes to routes, it is still within the downtown core, and the Community Centre has additional amenities such as public washrooms (open during regular Community Centre hours only).

What does the new transit interchange look like?

The interchange will consist of seven bus bays situated on both Cedar Street and 11th Avenue adjacent to the Community Centre. Included in the relocation work are:

- four new bus shelters (two on Cedar and two on 11th Avenue)
- decorative street lighting
- benches
- trash cans
- updated landscaping

Will this relocation change the bus schedules?

BC Transit and the City have made every effort to minimize the effect on routes and scheduling. The bus routes throughout the community will not change, however there will be a slight change (up to two minutes) in some of the scheduling to accommodate the new bus movements in the downtown area.

When will the buses actually start using the new interchange?

On Monday, July 6, all transit buses were re-routed to the Community Centre location.

How much is all this work costing the City?

The budgeted amount to relocate the transit interchange is \$385,000. All of this funding has been provided through the Federal Gas Tax (Transit) Fund – not from the City's general taxation. This fund is administered under the Public Transit Agreement and the Public Transit Infrastructure Funding Agreement.

I have heard that this is just a temporary interchange. What does that mean?

The Community Centre site is the new location for the transit interchange. It will continue to support this function as long as information indicates this is the best location to meet growing transportation demands to serve more people and buses.