

March 30, 2015

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### **Downtown tree maintenance update**

A dying cherry tree in the courtyard next to the library and Tidemark Theatre will be replaced as part of the City's annual street tree maintenance program.

*"The City's has completed the pruning of the London plane trees downtown, and as part of our inspection of the trees, the Parks Department has confirmed it will remove the cherry tree in the courtyard later this week because it is starting to decay and rot, potentially becoming a hazard in the courtyard,"* says Ross Milnthorp, the City's general manager of parks, recreation and culture. *"We know that people enjoy a spectacular tree in this location, and staff will plant a new tree in the fall, when it will have a long stretch of wet weather for establishing its roots."*

As part of its annual street tree maintenance program, the City pruned the London plane trees along the Shoppers Row and Pier Street sidewalks over three Sundays in March.

*"We thank all members of the public who respected the temporary closures of some parking spaces and small areas along the sidewalks while we conducted this work. And we appreciate the support and understanding from the Downtown Business Improvement Association, the Pier Street Association and the Chamber of Commerce,"* Milnthorp says.

The trees were pollarded, with all branches cut back to control the size of the tree and limit the reach of the tree canopy while promoting a dense head of foliage and sturdier branches to withstand high winds.

*"London planes are very vigorous, and can produce long, heavy branches. Pollarding protects nearby buildings and signs and keeps the branches light, to prevent them from breaking off and falling on the sidewalk,"* Milnthorp adds. *"By reducing the canopy, we also reduce the risk of the tree falling over in heavy storms."*

The London planes are pruned this way approximately every three years, the last time in 2011.

*"The trees have been consistently healthy, and we can expect to see new branches by mid to late May, and they'll be leafing out in June with a full canopy by mid-July,"* Milnthorp confirms.

The trees were planted during the downtown revitalization work nearly 30 years ago. The pruning program began when tree limbs grew too long and heavy.

Downtown street trees are part of the urban forest, and the benefits of this significant community investment include carbon emissions capture, shade, cooler temperatures and the attractive streetscape.

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Contact: Ross Milnthorp, General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture

250-286-5797