

June 1, 2010

City Hall Green Roof Wins National Award

Campbell River was among 22 municipalities and individuals honoured during the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' (FCM) first-ever municipal awards of excellence this past weekend.

Campbell River City Hall's green roof has been recognized in the Building Awards category of the national competition that showcases leading municipal environmental, energy, sustainability planning and waste reduction initiatives.

The new green roof received \$489,039.83 from the federal Gas Tax Fund, covering the full cost of construction.

"The City of Campbell River is the first municipality in British Columbia to complete a combined intensive and extensive green roof renovation to an existing civic building," said Mayor Charlie Cornfield. *"With our green roof retrofit to City Hall, we saved local taxpayers the cost of a replacement roof, and installed one that will last twice as long, we've demonstrated leadership in environmental sustainability, and we're helping clean the air and water and reduce our community's carbon footprint."*

The Campbell River City Hall green roof consists of a combined extensive upper roof and landscaped courtyard area. The upper roof is modeled after rocky bluffs in the coastal range, including those visible on Quadra Island. The courtyard area – previously an unattractive, unoccupied space – is modeled after a Japanese style garden in recognition of the City's sister city in Ishikari, Japan. This area has been converted from a barren rooftop to a usable gathering space, and the City's Green Team aims to incorporate compost and vegetable growing demonstrations in this area.

"The green roof initiative demonstrates the City's commitment to both its Green City Strategy and to the BC Climate Action Charter, requiring carbon neutrality by 2012," the Mayor said. *"With this green roof, the City of Campbell River is demonstrating to other municipal governments across Canada that a green roof retrofit makes sense from a triple-bottom line approach when considering upgrading a conventional roof."*

More than 40 municipalities entered the 2010 FCM awards competition in four different award categories ranging from innovation in sustainable practices to involvement in international municipal cooperation. An FCM Sustainable Community Green Building Award also went to the Town of Newmarket, Ontario for constructing Canada's first occupied neighbourhood of LEED® platinum homes.

The Gas Tax Fund is a tripartite agreement between Canada, British Columbia and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, delivering infrastructure funding to local governments for capital projects that lead to cleaner air, cleaner water or reduced greenhouse gas emissions. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities represents the interests of municipalities on policy and program matters that fall within federal jurisdiction. Members include Canada's largest cities, small urban and rural communities, and 18 provincial and territorial municipal associations.

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Backgrounder:

Campbell River's City Hall green roof was funded 100 per cent by the Community Works Fund (saving local taxpayers the cost of a replacement roof) because of its measurable environmental benefits for cleaner water, cleaner air and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

The green roof is designed to be self-sustaining and requires little maintenance. The low-growing vegetation consists of locally occurring, drought tolerant species that require minimal watering and maintenance after the first year. The vegetation on the roof will also act as a carbon sink, collecting and storing carbon dioxide as well as particulates from the air, thereby reducing the City's carbon footprint. The green roof will reduce storm water runoff through the vegetation and growing medium which store rainwater and release it slowly through evaporation.

The increased building insulation from the vegetation layer is anticipated to reduce the need for heating and cooling by up to 25 per cent, which will moderate the temperature inside the building, reduce heating and ventilation costs and improve people's comfort in the building. The energy savings are expected to equate to up to two tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per year. The green roof meets the LEED requirements for the 'Heat Island Reduction, Roof' credit (vegetated area > 50% of roof).

The green roof offers twice the life-span of a conventional roof. It is expected to last up to 50 years thanks to the plants protecting the roofing membrane from UV radiation, temperature variations and physical damage.

Campbell River City Hall's green roof is the only example of a complete, extensive green roof renovation to an existing civic building in British Columbia, and one of the first municipal buildings in Canada to receive a complete green roof retrofit to an existing building. It is the first green roof in Campbell River, and there are limited examples of this innovative technology on Vancouver Island. Also, this is one of the first green roof retrofits that provides the highest level of fall protection under Worker's Compensation Board (WCB) regulations by way of perimeter guardrails.

The green roof on City Hall is in keeping with Council's Green City Strategy, which includes reducing greenhouse gas emissions and achieving Climate Action Charter compliance, developing green policies and bylaws, improving modes for alternative transportation, exploring alternative energy systems, protecting watersheds, implementing alternative waste management methods and participating in the development of a regional district solid waste management program. The Green City Strategy incorporates door-to-door recycling programs, yard waste pick up, pesticide restriction policies, green facilities and a green fleet for the City of Campbell River.

Campbell River's Corporate Green Team is considering opportunities to enhance use of the green roof for social and educational opportunities, including compost demonstration and vegetable gardening.

The Green Roof consists of more than 1,000 shrubs, succulents, ferns, wildflowers and groundcover, including Oregon grape, stonecrop, tiger lily, coastal strawberry, deer fern, blue rocky mountain fescue, salal, licorice fern, sword fern, clematis and honeysuckle, plus two Japanese maples in the courtyard. Banded patterns of plantings include 15,000 sedum plugs and 1,200 sq ft of wildflowers.

Re-roof design and specification was by Northwest Inspection Ltd. Landscape architecture including specification of landscaping and overburden on the green roof component was by Sharp & Diamond Ltd. Construction was awarded to Nelson Roofing and Sheet Metal Ltd. with landscaping sub-contracted to Paradise Cityscapes. Construction was completed in November, 2009.

Taxpayer cost savings:

- Capital savings are estimated at \$90,000 over the life of the roof.
- Based on a conservative 12.5% reduction, energy savings are estimated at \$106,000 over the life of the roof.
- Total life cycle cost savings associated with the green roof are valued at \$196,000 in 2009 dollars at 2009 electricity rates.