



City of Port Alberni

Spring 2017

CITY CONNECT

a newsletter highlighting services, projects and other information from the City of Port Alberni

Façade Improvement Program

If you've noticed a fresh look on some of your favourite local businesses, it has been intentional. For a second year, the City of Port Alberni and Community Futures Alberni-Clayoquot (CFAC) has provided a façade improvement program to assist property and business owners with revitalizing their storefronts.

The program is designed to improve the physical appearance of local businesses and, as a result, enhance the overall aesthetics and profitability of commercial districts.

Matching grants – up to a maximum of \$5,000 – have been made available for commercial buildings across the city to strengthen local businesses and the character and vibrancy of our community.

Last year's program, also delivered in partnership with CFAC, resulted in 26 projects receiving funding and a total investment of over \$600,000 in business façade improvements that are now underway.

"The partnership with CFAC has been critical to this program and its success," said Pat Deakin, Economic Development Manager.

The City has contributed \$100,000 to the program over the past two years, with CFAC leading the program with an investment of \$200,000.

For more information on the program, please contact the Economic Development Department at 250-720-2835.



Oil to Heat Pump Incentive Program

Residents of Port Alberni can now access up to \$2,200 in rebates for making the switch from oil heating to an air source heat pump.

The City of Port Alberni has partnered with the Oil to Heat Pump Incentive Program to help residents reduce their heating bills and greenhouse gas emissions.

The program has been providing up to a \$1700 rebate and a new top-up incentive from the City of Port Alberni is now providing an extra \$500 to residents for making the switch.

"By partnering in the Oil to Heat Pump Incentive Program, we're helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the community and the risk of oil tank leaks into our local waterways," said Mayor Mike Ruttan. "Supporting this program was a key recommendation of our Food Security and Climate Disruption Committee and will help ensure a sustained government push." The program is delivered through City Green Solutions, a non-profit energy efficiency organization. The top-up incentive of \$500 from the City of Port Alberni is available until March 31, 2018 for a limited number of homes.

To learn more about the rebate, or to get started, visit www.oiltoheatpump.ca or call 1-877-545-6247.

2017 Property Taxes: Due July 4, 2017

2017 Property Tax Notices will be mailed late May with a due date of July 4, 2017. If you have not received your property tax notice, please contact the Finance Department at 250-720-2816. Please note that banks no longer process Home Owner Grant applications. If eligible, please claim your grant online, by mail, in person, or by using the drop box at City Hall.



Winter Walking Program Coming

With the support of Island Health, the City of Port Alberni is launching a new series of indoor fitness programs this fall to help residents stay active during the cold and wet winter months.

The City is receiving a total of \$11,578 through the Community Wellness Grant Program to deliver registered and drop-in fitness programs, including a new indoor walking program, at the Alberni Valley Multiplex. The new programs will also include activities such as chair yoga, gentle cardio and aerobics, all taught by certified instructors.

Many local residents, particularly senior citizens, reduce their physical activity during the dark and wet winter months. A new marked indoor walking route within the Alberni Valley Multiplex will enable residents of any age or physical ability to safely engage in physical activity and improve their health.

The programs are being delivered in partnership with Island Health, Port Alberni Integrated Health Network and the Echo Sunshine Club.

Dates and times of the specific programs will be provided in the City's 2017 Fall Leisure Guide, scheduled for release in late August.

2017 City Budget Approved

In early April, Port Alberni City Council passed the 2017-2021 Financial Plan, following considerable debate and discussion, public input, and collaboration with staff. The budgeting process highlights the difficult decisions that must be made that directly impact the taxes you pay and the level of services the City of Port Alberni can provide.

For 2017, the average single family residence in Port Alberni will see a 2.9 per cent increase on their tax bill. This means an increase of \$51 on a home assessed at \$202,667.

The adopted Financial Plan provides for consistent and modest taxation increases of approximately 3 percent each year coupled with a hold-the-line approach to expenditures. The results of this approach mean increased funds being made available for much-needed renewal of publicly owned assets - our streets, sidewalks, our public buildings, and storm water systems. The budget also places emphasis on supporting core community priorities such as public safety, park and trail improvements, the environment, and efforts to promote economic growth. Overall, the 2017 Budget continues Council's commitment to strengthen the long-term vision of a vibrant waterfront community. City-wide highlights include: support for artistic crosswalks in the Rotary Arts District, replacement of the Roger Creek Park playground, revitalization of Recreation Park, rehabilitation of the Harbour Quay Clock Tower, an alternative energy pilot project, improved pedestrian safety by constructing a sidewalk along Vimy Street, renewal of the Façade Improvement Program for commercial properties, and completion of major upgrades to the City's wastewater treatment system.

We thank residents for participating in the budget feedback process. For further information on the 2017 Budget, visit portalberni.ca/budget



Summer Leisure Guide Out Now!

The City of Port Alberni's Summer Leisure Guide is now available for residents of all ages looking to get involved in fun activities this summer. The guide contains details on all recreation programs and services offered through the Parks, Recreation & Heritage Department.

There are over 60 events and programs available, including day camps, fitness classes, drop in sport programs, children's art classes, and special events.

Registration for all programs can be done in person at Echo Centre or over the phone by calling 250-723-2181. The Summer Leisure Guide is available online at portalberni.ca/programs or pick up a copy at Echo Centre, AV Multiplex or City Hall.

MyCity Port Alberni

Access your taxes, utilities, dog & business licences online. Sign up to get tax & utility bills and do detailed inquiries on your accounts. Sign up today at portalberni.ca/mycity