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Downtown News to 'Feel Good' About

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A Message from Deputy Mayor Stan Frost

Welcome to this first in a series of newsletters regarding the Downtown Vitalization initiative. I am very pleased to have been a part of this project and to see it take shape from the study phase into action that is now underway.

I believe the vitalization of our downtown is probably the single most important initiative undertaken by this term of Council. Our downtown with its 19th century streetscape is a major defining element of our community and we must do whatever we can to secure it for the future.

This Vitalization Initiative is aimed in large part at preserving and maintaining the built heritage that we are now custodians of. Realistically though, this can only be accomplished and sustained through a prosperous downtown business community. Thus we have two major objectives that are totally interdependent.

Much has been accomplished to date thanks in large measure to the support and effort of the many volunteers that helped and supported this initiative but we still have some distance to go.

The work plan is in place, responsibilities have been assigned, funding has been secured and I believe you will now see steady sustained progress in the months ahead.

Stan Frost

Deputy Mayor



The Downtown Vitalization 'Implementation' Phase Begins

We're excited to announce that the Downtown Vitalization Project has entered into the 'implementation' phase!

Since 2012, the Cobourg Downtown Vitalization initiative has undergone a series of strategic planning sessions with the resulting strategies used to guide the initiative. From these sessions a four stage process was decided upon:

- Organizing & Scoping
- Data Collection & Analysis
- Planning & Prioritizing
- Implementing & Monitoring

The Implementing & Monitoring stage will take about two years, during which time the working teams and project teams will implement individual initiatives as part of the Strategic Plan. Two years is sufficient time to complete several projects and to see them start “bearing fruit”.

When positive outcomes are being achieved, we will then renew involvement and review the types of actions that remain to be accomplished, or identify new ideas for downtown revitalization. These final steps include implementing the action plans and selecting indicators for bench marking. Positive changes that have occurred in the downtown as a result of the Task Force’s work will be promoted to the broader community, and the achievements of volunteers will be recognized with awards or celebrations.

Changes in the downtown will also be recorded in an Annual Report Card to rack progress and positive impacts that have occurred in the downtown.

A Quick Summary: The 13 Projects

The Downtown Vitalization initiative will begin implementing the following 13 projects within the next few years.

1. The Youth Entrepreneurship Pilot Program
2. Heritage Building Asset Inventory (Engineering Study)
3. Street Light Enhancement
4. Vehicle Way Finding Signs
5. Downtown Gateway & Street Parking Signs
6. Henley Arcade
7. Closed Circuit Security Cameras
8. Venture Initiative Business Plan

9. Marketing & Communications Plan
 10. Heritage Master Plan
 11. Community Improvement Venture Initiative - Phase 1 Legal
 12. Community Improvement Venture Initiative - Phase 2 Business Plan
 13. Tourism Asset Feasibility Study
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Project Completed: Closed Circuit Security Cameras Installed

Together with the Cobourg Police Service the Downtown Vitalization team has recently completed the installation of two closed circuit cameras in the Downtown area. These cameras are located at the King & George Street and the King & Division Street intersections.

The highlights of this project include:

- Improved pedestrian safety
- Reduction in loitering

Deterrent for vandalism

The Youth Entrepreneurship Program

In partnership with the Town of Cobourg, Business Advisory Centre Northumberland, Northumberland CFDC, Friends of Downtown, Downtown Business Improvement Area, and Northumberland Central Chamber of Commerce, the goal of the Youth Entrepreneurship Program is to provide youth of all skill levels, between the ages of 18 and 29 with an educational entrepreneurship experience. Through mentorship and support the entrepreneur will enhance their skills and knowledge in order to successfully operate a new and/or expand an existing business in Downtown Cobourg from May to August 2014.

Highlights:

- Through funding from CFDC, locations for youth to operate their businesses were secured that included a retail space at 48 King Street West and construction of two 10' x 10' kiosks that will be located at Cobourg beach.
- 11 youth expressed an interest and further information on the program. Three submitted business plans and two youth were selected by the committee that was made up of partner members.
- Ryan Barrett of "Tech-Tonics" will offer computer and technology related products and services at 48 King Street West.
- Ellee Hellier of "Under The Sun Treasures" will sell fun beach toys, Cobourg souvenirs and various beach items such as sunscreen, sunglasses, etc.

Questions?

Interested in learning more about *Project: Youth Entrepreneurship Program*? Contact project lead Wendy Gibson at 905-372-5481 or by emailing wgibson@cobourg.ca

Volunteer Appreciation & Public Open House

Last Thursday a Volunteer Appreciation & Public Open House was held as a kick off towards the second 'implementation' phase for the Downtown Vitalization initiative.

The event recognized the 50+ volunteers who have given their time to the initiative and then launched into a presentation from Economic Development Officer Wendy Gibson on the second phase of the project. Once the presentation concluded citizens were able to view the 13 projects displayed on easels.

Project owners and subject matter experts were on site to speak to each of these projects as well as Mayor Gil Brocanier and Deputy Mayor Stan Frost.

