

CREATING A NEW VIBE IN QUALICUM BEACH'S EAST VILLAGE

Revitalization in downtown neighborhood to stimulate social and economic growth

COURTENAY, 22 May 2020 – Qualicum Beach's East Village is preparing for a unique redesign, with support from the Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET), that will transform the street into a distinct and vibrant area catering to technology, business and tourism activities.

The downtown revitalization project, led by the Town of Qualicum Beach, will exploit a currently underused location in the architecturally distinct neighborhood by ensuring a variety of uses that contribute to enhancing the East Village's vitality and business profitability. The new neighbourhood design will remain true to its industrial roots by including brick facing, tall spacious windows and natural landscaping.

The project works supported by ICET will include streetscape redesign, with more pedestrian friendly elements and a focus on accessibility. The project will also include the development of a community square and stage, seating areas and other enhancements designed to foster greater community vitality and visitor attraction.

"This new, inviting public space, known as "The East Village", will attract residential and commercial development and stimulate the area's business and tourism organizations," says Mayor Brian Wiese. "This will help make it investment ready and definitely one of the places to be in Qualicum Beach!"

The improvements are expected to spur the development of new mixed-use residential and commercial spaces, a brew pub as well as an innovation hub targeting the town's growing tech sector. These new community social spaces, alongside with the community square and stage, will support increased downtown visitation and event hosting, such as concerts, festivals and recurring community events such as farmers' markets.

"Creating a Village neighborhood identity that has an attractive streetscape and an energetic vibe will have significant social and economic impact on the Town of Qualicum Beach," says ICET Board Chair Josie Osborne. "This project will help foster and attract new economic activity in the community's growing tech sector, increasing diversity in the Town's commercial and demographic mix."

Environmental and financial sustainability were both key considerations in the project's development. The integration of low maintenance plants, drip fed watering systems and tree planting will help minimize paving conflict and innovative storm water systems. Revenues sourced through lease agreements with the Brew pub, increased tax and business revenue from increased investment and tourism will support a stronger local economy.

"We are very pleased to see communities such as Qualicum Beach moving forward with future focused projects, even during this difficult time," stated ICET CEO Line Robert. "In the short term, project construction



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will spur much needed economic recovery activity. But more importantly, in the longer term, these improvements will be setting the stage for the next generation of economic activity and vitality that residents and investors are seeking.”

ICET has contributed \$250,000 to the project’s overall \$1,153,458 cost. The project works are expected to begin in the fall.

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About the Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET)

Created and capitalized by the Province of BC in 2006, the Island Coastal Economic Trust’s (ICET) mission is to create a more diverse and globally competitive North Island-Sunshine Coast and Central-South Island economy. In partnership with local and regional government, nonprofits and indigenous groups, ICET serves nearly half a million residents with a range of economic diversification funding programs and support services. Through a unique community centered decision-making process, more than \$52 million in funding has been approved supporting over 200 initiatives, led by more than 150 community-based partners. These investments have leveraged over \$270 million in new investment into the region creating more than 2500 construction phase jobs and 2650 long term permanent jobs. To learn more, visit www.islandcoastaltrust.ca

For further information:

Line Robert, CEO
Island Coastal Economic Trust
Tel. 250-871-7797 (Ext. 227)
line.robert@islandcoastaltrust.ca

Amanda Fortier, Communications Officer
Island Coastal Economic Trust
Tel. 250-871-7797 (Ext. 232)
amanda.fortier@islandcoastaltrust.ca

Daniel Sailland, Chief Administrative Officer
Town of Qualicum Beach
Tel. 250-752-6921
dsailland@qualicumbeach.com

To request media images, please contact Amanda Fortier, ICET Communications Officer.

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