

NEWS RELEASE

Thursday, October 19, 2023

CITY OF
PORT ALBERNI 

CITY ENHANCES COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT WITH EVOLUTION OF PARKS, RECREATION AND HERITAGE TO PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURE

Port Alberni, BC - The City of Port Alberni is pleased to announce the evolution of the Parks, Recreation, and Heritage department to Parks, Recreation, and Culture. This progression reflects our commitment to providing diverse opportunities for community engagement and connection to a wide range of disciplines, including heritage, music, art, placemaking, and events.

By expanding the department's focus, we aim to better connect residents and guests to the rich cultural offerings and experiences available in the community. The shift in focus will enhance collaboration with local organizations that play a vital role in fostering community vibrancy:

Events: We will strengthen our connections with the Nuu-chah-nulth Nations, including the Hupačasath First Nation and Tseshaht [cišaaʔath] First Nation, to ensure meaningful participation and representation in community events.

Art: Collaboration with the Community Arts Council will facilitate the promotion and support of local artists, enriching the artistic landscape of Port Alberni.

Placemaking: We will work closely with various organizations and groups to actively engage in placemaking initiatives, creating gathering spaces and enhancing the aesthetic appeal of the community.

To streamline the operations and development of our Alberni Valley Museum and City-owned heritage facilities, we have transitioned the position of Manager of Museum, Heritage, and Culture to the Manager of Culture. This dedicated role will oversee staff and ensure the highest standards in the operation and growth of our cultural offerings. In addition to this, the reintroduction of the Education Coordinator role will allow for a dedicated focus on the programming aspects of the Alberni Valley Museum, offering enriching experiences for residents and visitors.

"I'd like to extend a sincere thank you to Shelley Harding for her many years of terrific work at the Alberni Valley Museum and congratulate her on her retirement," said Willa Thorpe, Director of Parks, Recreation and Culture. "Our department has benefitted immensely from Shelley's expertise, and we are enjoying this latest evolution of the department thanks to her dedication to advancing heritage in our community."

These changes are aligned with Council's mission statement and strategic plan goals to remain committed to thoughtful and sustainable reconciliation efforts with First Nations and to adapting to demographic changes and community development. The shift will reflect organizational structures seen in other municipalities of a similar size and further supports Council's goal to provide outstanding value and quality services to residents.

"We are excited about this evolution and the numerous possibilities it brings for the continued growth and enrichment of our community," said Mike Fox, Chief Administrative Officer. "Together, under Council's guidance, we will build a stronger, more vibrant Port Alberni."

To commence this departmental shift and further our commitment to community engagement, we will be launching the Parks, Recreation, and Culture Master Plan. This plan will guide our efforts in providing enriching experiences for all community members.

Job postings for the positions of Manager of Culture and Education Curator will be published during the week of October 16th inviting qualified candidates to be part of our vibrant cultural team.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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