

New Parksville Outdoor Theatre Celebrated on July 22

The much-anticipated official opening of the Parksville Outdoor Theatre in the Parksville Community Park took place on Friday, July 22. Hundreds of residents and visitors brought lawn chairs and settled in for the evening, kicking off Parksville Beach Festival's summer concert series. The evening began with a performance by Salish shxw'aluqwa' (Salish Sisters), traditional singers from Snaw-Naw-As First Nation, followed by speeches and the official passing of the management of this new theatre, on behalf of the City, to the Parksville Beach Festival Society.

In 2018, the Parksville Beach Festival Society approached Council with the concept to build an outdoor theatre in the Parksville Community Park. This new facility will provide a formal entertainment space, support the festival's five-week international sand sculpting exhibition and concerts in the park as well as many other community activities and events.

In 2020, the City of Parksville received funding of \$1,263,521 through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program, Community, Culture and Recreation Infrastructure Stream, for improvements to public spaces in the Parksville Community Park. This funding generously supports the construction of the outdoor theatre and a new gathering space proposed for the area near the waterfront gazebo. Construction will begin this fall for completion in early 2023. This project also received generous funding of \$204,000 from Island Coastal Economic Trust and received funding support from the City of Parksville and Parksville Beach Festival Society.

The Parksville Outdoor Theatre features a covered accessible stage, dressing rooms, washrooms, storage space, lighting, acoustic treatments, hardscaped access ramp, and area for dancing. The City has an operating agreement with the Parksville Beach Festival Society to manage the facility.

The Honourable Harjit S Sajjan, Minister of International Development and Minister responsible for the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada, and Member of Parliament for Vancouver South, on behalf of the Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities

"Artistic and cultural events help connect our residents and breathe life and vitality into communities. By investing in cultural spaces like the Parksville Outdoor Theatre, we are providing a place for residents to enjoy plays, concerts and a variety of activities – and building a more inclusive community."

Adam Walker, MLA for Parksville-Qualicum

"Finished in time for the return of the Parksville Beach Festival summer concert series, this new stage will carry the beat of local musicians for years to come. Not only does this provide new opportunities for local arts and culture movements, this project engages the community and inspires young musicians and artists!"

Aaron Stone, Island Coastal Economic Trust

“A huge congratulations to the City of Parksville and the Parksville Beach Festival Society on this major investment that will enhance and breathe new life into the special events that make Parksville such a wonderful place to live and to visit. Led by islands and coastal communities, the Trust committed to this strategic investment as the first funder. This is a key role we’re honoured to deliver on today—serving as a catalyst for vital investment and economic development in exciting projects like this across the coast.”

Mayor Ed Mayne

“The Parksville Outdoor Theatre, an exciting new addition to the City, will create a sense of community and enhance the quality of performance-related events, bringing new and exciting cultural events to Parksville for residents and visitors. We are grateful for the significant support from the provincial and federal governments, Island Coastal Economic Trust, and the Parksville Beach Festival Society.

Cheryl Dill, President, Parksville Beach Festival Society

“We are so proud of this gorgeous, new performance theatre tucked within the jewel of Parksville, our community park. It represents many years of volunteerism and collaboration and promises tremendous opportunity for community engagement and economic development. Our Society is determined to ensure the operational success of the theatre while enhancing the arts and cultural vibrancy of Parksville and the surrounding regions.”

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