

- September 2014 Newsletter -

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Downtown News to 'Feel Good' About



Project Update: Signs Under Review for Location & Look

As a component of the Downtown Master Plan, the 10 Vehicle Wayfinding Signs will be posted every 0.5 kilometers along William and Division streets directing vehicular traffic to the downtown core.

The signs are currently being reviewed aesthetically and for the proposed locations of each. A final recommendation will then be brought forth to Council for approval. Following Council approval the signs will be sent out for tendering and construction.

For more information on the Vehicle Wayfinding Signs contact Teresa Behan, Manager of Engineering at The Town of Cobourg by calling 905-372-4555 or emailing tbehan@cobourg.ca.

Project Update: Building Asset Study Seeks Downtown Building Owner Partnerships

The Building Asset Study is a Town of Cobourg project, with funding from the Province of Ontario. Our goal is to preserve and enhance our downtown heritage buildings and provide building owners with an opportunity to review their current assets and plan for future development.

A draft letter is currently ready to go and a mailing list in place targeting commercial building owners in the downtown along King Street between McGill and Spring Streets. We will be seeking interest



from building owners in partnering with us to have a qualified professional carry out an assessment of their building. The owner will share in the cost along with the Town and Province.

Any building owner with an interest should contact the Economic Development Department and we will set up a time to either meet in person or have a telephone conference call in order to identify the needs of the owner and any future plans they may have for the building. Owners taking part in the project will have full access to the results of the study, and may use the information to determine their current assets and future potential for their building.

Owners may expect to receive letters within the next few weeks.

For more information on the Building Asset Study contact Alison Torrie Lapaire, Heritage Planner I at The Town of Cobourg by emailing atorrie@cobourg.ca or calling 905-372-1005 ext 4455.

Project Update: Henley Arcade Ad Hoc Committee Seeking Members

The Committee for Art in Public Spaces (CAPS) submitted a report on July 14 to Cobourg Council to establish an Ad Hoc Henley Arcade Committee to organize the creation of mural(s) within the Henley Arcade on behalf of the Downtown Vitalization initiative.



The committee will be comprised of seven members including the Council Coordinator and the following:

- (2) Art Professionals
- (1) Cobourg Downtown Improvement Area Member (DBIA)
- (1) Cobourg Heritage Committee Member (CHC)
- (1) Art Gallery of Northumberland Member (AGN)
- (2) Town of Cobourg Citizens

The Ad Hoc Committee is seeking two (2) interested citizens. Any interested Cobourg citizens are asked to please contact Lorraine Brace, Manager of Legislative Services & Municipal Clerk for The Town of Cobourg by emailing lbrace@cobourg.ca or calling 905-372-4301.

The Henley Arcade Ad Hoc Committee will then choose the art or artists selected for commission of the mural(s) with their recommendation forwarded to the CAPS Committee for their review and final recommendation to Council.

The Henley Arcade project includes the reconditioning of Henley Arcade to improve lighting, signage, landscaping, walkway design and include a mural on the east wall. This will result in a safe and well defined connection between King Street and the Covert Street parking lot.

For more information on the Henley Arcade Ad Hoc Committee please contact Lorraine Brace, Manager of Legislative Services & Municipal Clerk at The Town of Cobourg by emailing lbrace@cobourg.ca or calling 905-372-4301.

Interview: CEDAC Chats about Downtown Business Attraction

We talk with Wendy Gibson, Economic Development Officer for The Town of Cobourg and Cobourg Economic Development Advisory Committee (CEDAC) member about CEDAC's upcoming strategy to recruit businesses to the downtown core.



Q. Taking a look at Cobourg's downtown you tend to notice the empty storefronts. What is going on here?

A. The answer is not a simple one but I want to assure citizens of Cobourg that business attraction is definitely on our radar. Businesses leave our downtown for many reasons. We have seen a considerable number of business owners who have retired. We also have two very large spaces, one 11,000 sq. ft. and the other 7,000 sq. ft. that became vacant due to changes within the franchise. Those include Liquidation World and the Bargain Store. These have left very big gaps in our downtown

but we have met with the owners of these buildings to discuss ways we can help them fill those spaces again. For a variety of reasons we have had some retailers in the downtown who were only in business a few years then closed up shop. We want businesses to get started in a healthy position by having a solid business plan before they start with a marketing plan as well. The challenge is that often times we do not hear about the business until after they have signed their lease or opened up shop. We are working on a way that we can communicate with businesses before they open to ensure they will be successful.

Q. Where do the highest levels of job creation originate from?

A. Through retention and expansion of existing businesses. Working with established businesses is much more lucrative than trying to attract new business start-ups. Since 2011, between staff from the Business & Tourism Centre and Mayor Gil Brocanier we visited 64 businesses in the downtown to determine the health of the business and how we can help. We also call every single business in Cobourg each summer to update their information and identify any challenges they might be facing. Follow-up from those phone calls included 94 additional inquiries from businesses. Many of these are inquiries regarding a need for support in areas such as marketing, advertising, financing and so on.

Q. So once you identify areas of support what happens next?

A. Many of our small business challenges are filtered through to our partners including the Business Advisory Centre Northumberland who offer a wide variety of programs and services to support small business. Taking a pro-active approach to the needs of businesses, the Business Advisory Centre Northumberland provides educational seminars and one-on-one consultations with a goal of helping our businesses to prosper and grow.

Q. Working on retaining and expanding businesses within the Downtown is great, but how do we attract new businesses?

A. While business retention and expansion is a priority, a business attraction strategy is also being developed to complement our existing services in this area. A small sub-committee of Cobourg's Economic Development Advisory Committee are currently working behind the scenes to review the downtown vitalization market data gathered last year and identify target markets in accordance with our vision for the downtown. The focus will be to attract businesses that deliver accessible experiences and opportunities generated from local agriculture, environmental consciousness and active, health-centered living. We are looking for an addition to this committee and would look toward a retired or current business owner who operated in the downtown core.

Q. How does this correspond with the Tourism Asset Feasibility Study currently being conducted through the Downtown Vitalization initiative?

A. Recruitment of businesses that support our local area shoppers will dovetail with the results from the Tourism Asset Feasibility Study currently being conducted. This will ensure the strategy covers businesses that will attract both internal and external customers.

Q. When would this strategy be ready?

A. While still in the development stage, we anticipate the strategy to be completed in late October or early November 2014.

For more information on CEDAC contact Wendy Gibson, Economic Development Officer at The Town of Cobourg by emailing wgibson@cobourg.ca or calling 905-372-5481.

Project Billboard: Let's Keep Our Citizens Informed!

The Marketing & Communications team has been hard at work coming up with another way to ensure Cobourg citizens are kept up-to-date. The Downtown Vitalization Project Billboard was created to relay all the many project highlights that are taking place or about to take place.



The project billboard will be 20' x 8' and has received approval from the building owner, Amit Sofer of TVM Group of 1 King East. It will be erected on the wall of the building on the South West corner of King and Division for anywhere from six months to one year.

The billboard will act as a project timeline ticker, showing all of the Downtown Vitalization initiative projects, highlights of each and completion dates. When the projects are completed a large adhesive check mark will be placed underneath each one.

At the September 8th Committee of the Whole Meeting Cobourg Council received a memo from the Cobourg Heritage Advisory Committee on their approval of the billboard. After a lengthy debate Cobourg Council also approved the billboard.

"We recognize that we have a lot of projects happening either simultaneously, within the next few months or even years. We want to be hypersensitive to the fact that we are letting citizens know what's happening with each of them," said Ashley Purdy, Communications Officer for The Town of Cobourg. "The billboard will really help us demonstrate highlights, timelines and completion dates for each individual project."

The billboard will be made of a material called Alupanel, which is an aluminum composite material manufactured with two (2) .012 aluminum faces enclosing a solid polyethylene core. The rigid yet lightweight billboard will also be framed to ensure edging is protected.

For more information on The Town of Cobourg's Marketing & Communication plan contact Ashley Purdy, Communications Officer for the Town of Cobourg by emailing apurdy@cobourg.ca.

You Asked, We Answered!

Each month we'll ask you for questions and provide you with answers in our next eNewsletter issue.

Question #1: I'm interested in the Henley Arcade project, specifically in regards to the murals. Who will be in charge of approving the final artwork? - Anonymous

Answer: An ad hoc committee called the Henley Arcade Ad Hoc Committee will be charged with the organization of the creation of the mural(s) on behalf of the Downtown Vitalization initiative. The Ad Hoc Committee is seeking two (2) interested citizens. Any interested Cobourg citizens are asked to please contact Lorraine Brace, Manager of Legislative Services & Municipal Clerk for The Town of Cobourg by emailing lbrace@cobourg.ca or calling 905-372-4301.

Question #2: Attracting businesses to our Downtown, as I understand it, is the focus of the Downtown Vitalization initiative. What kind of businesses are you focusing on attracting? - Anonymous

Answer: The focus will be to attract businesses that deliver accessible experiences and opportunities generated from local agriculture, environmental consciousness and active, health-centered living.

Have a Question?

Please send your question(s) to communications@cobourg.ca.

Submit Your Best Downtown Memory & Win Cobourg Memorabilia!



The Cobourg Downtown Vitalization Committee has introduced a contest to invite people from the community to submit News from the Street.

We are looking for your favourite memories or stories about events you took part in Downtown Cobourg this summer, activities you like to do downtown, or simply why you love downtown Cobourg. The three (3) winning stories will be posted in the Downtown Vitalization monthly eNewsletter 'Downtown News to Feel Good About' along with a photo of the author.

Prizes!

Winners will also receive great Town of Cobourg memorabilia including:

- o Tote bag
- o Long sleeve t-shirt
- o 'I Love Cobourg' t-shirt
- o Baseball hat



o Frisbee

The Downtown Vitalization Committee will also post your story on the Downtown Vitalization website and share a link to your story on the Municipal Facebook page.

Submission Guidelines: Send your your story to communications@cobourg.ca or message us on Facebook by September 25. Three (3) stories will be selected on September 26 as our winners. Good luck!



Coal Train Music & Blues Festival

Brought to you by Downtown Cobourg featuring an outdoor beer tent with drinks sold by The Publican House Brewery, free sheltered seating (licensed and unlicensed), giant inflatable ride for kids operated by Mom 2 Mom Boutique & Consignment, kids safety village by Cobourg Police Service, and free, live blues all day!

When: Saturday, September 13, 2014

Time: 10 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Where: Downtown Cobourg

Musical Lineup:

10 AM - Mark Hanson Band

12 PM - Detour (featuring Brian McNamara)

2 PM - The Enforcers

4 PM - Shawn Dore Band

6 PM - Luke & the Apostles

8 PM - Johnny Max Band

Check out the Downtown Business Initiative Area's Facebook event page for further information:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/531620926966272/>