

Building a diverse and sustainable economy.

### **ART, CULTURE AND HISTORY UNITE IN CUMBERLAND VITALIZATION PROJECT**

*New THRIVE project encourages community connection while honouring past and present*

COURTENAY, 26 October 2021 – The newly formed Cumberland Business Association (CBA) is embarking on an exciting and multifaceted new community vitalization project that will help drive interest into the downtown area, with funding support from the Island Coast Economic Trust (ICET)'s THRIVE Small Capital Program.

The project is a central gathering place in the form of dynamically painted sidewalk bump outs on four corners of downtown Cumberland. Entitled “Rooted in Place: A Celebration of Cumberland’s history and future”, the initiative seeks to expand and diversify the visitor reach year-round by enhancing aesthetically pleasing placemaking essentials in the Village’s core.

The four areas will include large mural paintings, inspired by surrounding natural elements, and created by local artists and in collaboration with the public and families. Coal cart benches will sit inside these painted areas with interpretive signage detailing their historical significance. The project will also include a unique sculpture, locally made and designed by a local artist and metal worker featuring multiple bikes stripped and welded together with an interactive pedal and auditory sounds. Flags and lights will further adorn the intersection, helping create an inviting ambiance year-round.

“The interactive, educational and visual components will drive visitor interest, while fostering a vital and shared sense of community engagement for locals,” says ICET Board Chair Aaron Stone. “This project truly reflects a grassroots, volunteer driven commitment to building community vibrancy through creativity, which sits at the heart of the THRIVE program’s goal.”

The THRIVE Small Capital Program was launched in late May to help stimulate and promote vitality in downtowns, Main Streets and business districts across the region. One-stop funding support of up to 100% of eligible project costs (to a maximum of \$50,000) is available thanks to a joint collaboration with Tourism Vancouver Island (TVI) and the Vancouver, Coast & Mountains tourism region (managed by Destination BC).

“As we support tourism businesses and communities in the Vancouver Island region on their road to recovery, we are honoured to be a funding partner of the THRIVE Small Capital Program to help vitalization projects such as this be realized,” says Anthony Everett, President & CEO, Tourism Vancouver Island. “This project will help to educate visitors to Cumberland, who are already attracted to the area for its world-class mountain biking and outdoor adventures, about the storied history of the community.”

The CBA hopes beautification efforts through this unique, colorful, safe and accessible project will help rouse community pride. By showcasing a culturally and historically relevant concept, they also anticipate prompting future community-focused collaborations, especially between the business and arts communities.



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“This project is big, bold and interesting,” says Kathryn West, CBA’s Secretary. “It reflects our unique coal mining history, celebrates our mountain biking legacy and encourages community togetherness between our artistic, business and visitor communities, which will hopefully lead to future shared projects.”

The project is set to get underway shortly.

All applications to the THRIVE Small Capital Funding Stream will now be accepted on an ongoing basis until the program is fully subscribed.

For more information on the THRIVE Small Capital Funding Stream, please visit our website: [www.islandcoastaltrust.ca/capital-funding-programs#thrive](http://www.islandcoastaltrust.ca/capital-funding-programs#thrive)

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### **About the Island Coastal Economic Trust**

Created and capitalized by the Province of BC in 2006, the Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) mission is to create a more diverse and globally competitive Island and Coastal economy. In partnership with local and regional governments, non-profits and Indigenous communities, ICET serves over half a million residents. Funding and support for economic infrastructure and other economic diversification initiatives is delivered through a unique community centered decision-making process. Since inception, ICET has approved more than \$55 million in funding for over 280 initiatives. These investments have leveraged over \$270 million in new investment into the region creating more than 2600 construction phase jobs and 2750 long-term permanent jobs. To learn more, visit

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