
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Children and Family Development

MINISTER POLAK OPENS TOUR AT LADYSMITH COMMUNITY HUB

LADYSMITH – A provincial investment of \$750,000 toward the creation of a new child-care facility in Ladysmith has blossomed into a community service centre that will include an expanded seniors' facility as well as indoor and outdoor space for community groups, events and activities.

Minister of Children and Family Development Mary Polak toured the site today along with Parksville-Qualicum MLA Ron Cantelon and the community partners who combined resources to ensure success, expand their programs, and create a community gathering place.

“This project is a wonderful example of integrating services and building on what already exists in the community to use resources more effectively,” said Polak. “Ladysmith has shown that remarkable things can come to life when a community comes together, sees a vision for the future and works hard to make it happen.”

Part of the Ministry of Children and Family Development's major capital funding program, the 2008 grant was awarded to the Ladysmith Resources Centre and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Central Vancouver Island to create 41 new child-care spaces in the community. However, both groups decided to think bigger and partnered with the Town to create a 'Community Services Centre' on High Street.

“The Ladysmith Resources Centre Association is pleased to be a partner in such a wonderful project,” said Dennis Lait, executive director of the association. “Community not-for-profits looked beyond their own services and collaborated to create a vision in the best interest of the community. This initiative will no doubt be an example for other communities to follow.”

”The project has been a long-time coming to fruition and we are all confident that the wait has been well worth it,” said Ian Kalina, executive director of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Central Vancouver Island. “We all appreciate the ministry's patience while we levered their financial support into a bigger and better campus of community services that will serve our community for generations.”

The Town contributed the land and services and an existing building on the site, in addition to \$500,000 in Spirit Square funding received in early 2008 from the provincial government. The Spirit Square grant was targeted toward revitalizing Ladysmith's market square and creating an inclusive place for festivals, events and community celebrations.

“The Town saw the value in combining a number of separate initiatives into a one-stop shop for programs, services, entertainment and activity. The development will enhance our citizens’ sense of place and pride in our community, and be a welcome – and welcoming – feature of our town for all citizens,” said Ladysmith Mayor Rob Hutchins.

The federal government recently added \$2.7 million to the project through the Economic Action Plan. Funds will go toward the construction of the community services centre and renovations to an existing structure on the property.

The project has completed the design phase and broke ground this week. The child-care facility is scheduled to be operating by September 2010, with the entire project expected to be complete by March 2011.

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