



**City of
Courtenay**

Strategic Priorities

2023–2026 highlights



Building a vibrant, resilient and inclusive community requires ongoing collaboration. The highlights in this report represent only a portion of the work completed from 2023 to July 2026. Much of the work was shaped by public engagement, community consultation and partnerships, helping inform decisions and advance projects, services and policies that reflect community needs and priorities. To learn more, visit courtenay.ca.

Transportation and infrastructure

Courtenay River improvements

In 2024–25, the City decommissioned an old river sewer pipe, rerouted sewage to Comox Road and demolished three riverfront properties to launch shoreline renewal. Two of these properties had sat vacant and in a state of disrepair for years, while the third was acquired and demolished by the City due to significant safety concerns. Next steps include removing a failing wall, improving habitat, reducing erosion and creating an accessible riverfront.

Active transportation upgrades

Several major active transportation projects have transformed connectivity across Courtenay:



Dingwall Steps connecting Dingwall Road to Carmanah Drive (2024) improved access and scenic views in East Courtenay.



The new **6th Street Active Transportation Bridge** created an accessible downtown river crossing, linking trails and the riverfront.



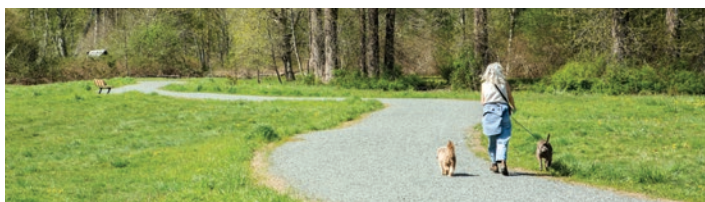
Lake Trail multi-use path improves safety and connectivity between Lake Trail and Arden schools. Phase 2, from Arden Road to Webb Road, is underway in summer 2026.

5th Street and Cliffe Avenue intersection upgrades improved safety, accessibility and active transportation while maintaining efficient traffic flow.

40 km/h speed-reduction program

Lower speed limits improve road safety, reduce crash severity and make neighbourhoods more liveable. The reduced-speed rollout on all residential roads was completed in 2025, two years ahead of schedule.

Parks, recreation and cultural planning



McPhee Meadows

This 11.8-acre riverside natural park near 3rd Street and Harmston Avenue opened in fall 2025, preserving ecological heritage with meadow trails, native habitat restoration and quiet recreation.



Playground improvements

Park Playground Design Standards adopted in 2024 guide accessible, inclusive and engaging playground designs and upgrades in Courtenay. The standards informed new and upgraded play spaces at Brookfield and Woodcote parks, creating welcoming opportunities for children and families to play, connect and be active.

Parks, recreation and cultural planning

Two major planning initiatives guide the future of community spaces and experiences. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan Implementation Strategy identifies short, medium and long-term priorities over the next 10 years. The Strategic Cultural Plan provides a long-term vision for a vibrant and inclusive cultural sector, supporting arts, culture, heritage and creative experiences that strengthen community identity and enhance quality of life.

Courtenay Outdoor Pool

The Comox Valley Aquatic Services Strategy evaluated long-term aquatic facility needs and service delivery options to guide future regional investment decisions. Following significant public engagement on the Courtenay and District Memorial Outdoor Pool, Council directed staff to proceed with replacement at its current location and to request regional funding to support the project.



The LINC mural

Five local youth artists worked with muralist Emily Thiessen to create a vibrant three-wall mural celebrating inclusion, creativity and youth culture, unveiled in 2025.

Amenity cost charges — funding our community's vision

The City's parks, recreation and cultural plans and strategies identify what our community needs and values. The new Amenity Cost Charge Bylaw helps make those priorities a reality by directing funds from new development toward facilities needed to support a growing Courtenay — including recreation and athletic facilities, community and seniors' spaces, libraries, daycares, public squares and park amenities.



Housing and community development

Official Community Plan update

Council adopted Courtenay's updated Official Community Plan in 2026 following public engagement, technical analysis, legal review and coordination with related planning initiatives. The plan provides a long-term framework to guide growth, housing, transportation, climate action, community well-being and land-use decisions.

Zoning Bylaw update

The City completed phase one of its zoning bylaw update in 2026, aligning regulations with the updated Official Community Plan and provincial legislation. Phase two is underway and will comprehensively modernize the bylaw to support housing choice, streamline development processes and reflect the community's long-term planning goals.

Net new housing units

Housing development remains a key priority as Courtenay plans for future growth. In September 2025, the Province issued the City a five-year Housing Target Order. In its first interim reporting cycle, Courtenay is on track to meet its provincial housing targets while supporting a range of housing options for the community.

Homelessness support: shelter, outreach and community response

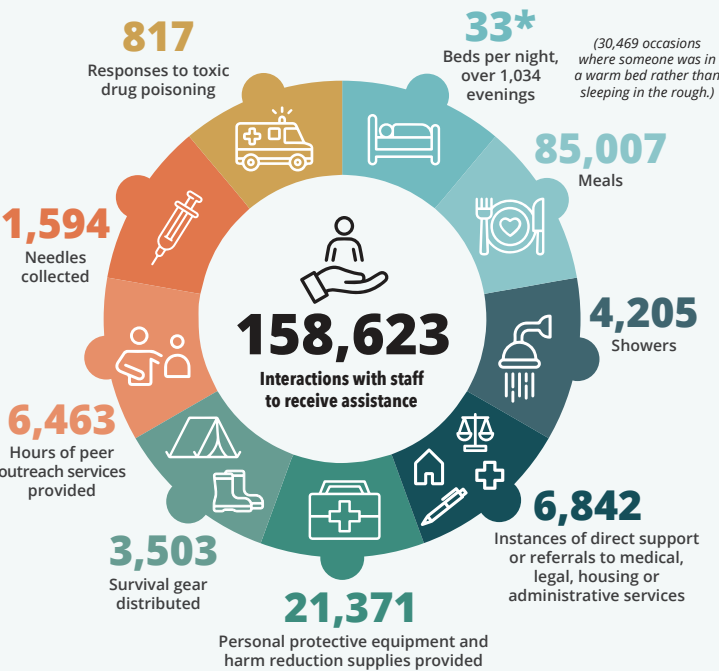
The City led the development of a regional Winter Shelter Strategy, providing a City-owned facility to support vulnerable residents through the winter season. During the 2025–26 season, the shelter operated for 101 nights and recorded 1,983 bed occupancies and 2,193 service contacts, connecting guests with essential support services.

As administrator of the \$1.96 million regional Strengthening Communities Services Grant, the City also coordinated critical homelessness response services across the Comox Valley, including emergency shelter, rural outreach on Denman and Hornby Islands, and peer-led services. Over three years, the impact was significant: every day, 100 to 150 people received shelter, food and medical supplies.

The City approved a temporary use permit and rezoning for the Lodge, enabling its use as a temporary supportive housing facility.

925/933 Braidwood

Collaboration with BC Housing helped advance plans for a purpose-built shelter and supportive housing development at 925/933 Braidwood Road, expanding housing and support options for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. BC Housing began construction work in July 2026.

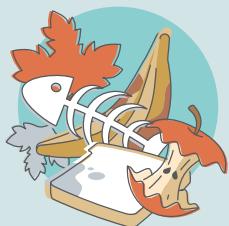


Environment and sustainability

Corporate Facility Energy Management Plan

Adopted in 2026, the Corporate Facility Energy Management Plan provides a roadmap to reduce emissions, improve energy efficiency and manage costs across City-owned buildings. The plan identifies upgrades and retrofits needed to help meet provincial climate targets while supporting long-term sustainability and resilience.

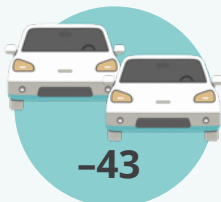
food waste



Food waste collection

Between 2023 and 2025, weekly food waste collection in organics carts reduced garbage sent to landfill by 38 per cent, diverting 13,569 tonnes of organics. That's about the same weight as 2,500 orcas.

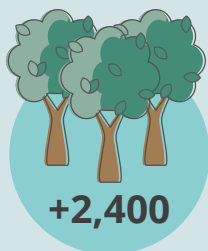
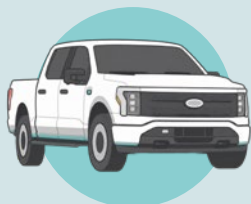
+1 electric garbage truck



Automated curbside collection

The switch to electric garbage trucks reduced greenhouse gas emissions from solid waste collection by 78 per cent. That reduction is equivalent to taking about 43 passenger vehicles off the road for one year.

+19 new EVs



EV fleet

Since 2024, the City has added 19 electric vehicles to its fleet. Together, they have saved nearly 56,000 litres of gasoline, an environmental benefit equivalent to planting approximately 2,400 trees.



Public safety partnerships

East Courtenay Fire Hall

Construction of the new fire hall is expected to start in summer 2026 and be completed in late 2027. The facility will improve response times, increase volunteer capacity and strengthen emergency preparedness.

Expanded bylaw services

City Bylaw Services expanded to seven-day operations in 2024. The increased hours improve response, visibility and compliance through greater capacity, proactive education and consistent enforcement.

Safe and Active Schools program

The City is partnering with School District No. 71 to improve safety for students travelling to and from school and encourage walking, cycling and other active and sustainable transportation.

RCMP partnerships

The Comox Valley RCMP expanded community-based responses through seasonal foot patrols and the Mobile Integrated Crisis Response (MICR) program. Foot patrols increased officer presence downtown and in other public spaces to address safety concerns, support crime prevention and build community connections. In partnership with Island Health, MICR pairs a police officer with a psychiatric nurse to provide mental health crisis support, connect people with services and reduce demand on frontline emergency resources.

Local economy

Economic development partnerships

The City's renewed 10-year service agreement supports the Downtown Courtenay Business Improvement Association's efforts in business promotion, events and advocacy.

The City continues work on the Downtown Vitalization Local Area Plan, developing a community vision for downtown growth and development.

The City's Economic Development Service Agreement with the Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce helps retain and expand local businesses through outreach and targeted programming.

Indigenous Procurement Policy

Adopted in 2023, the City's Indigenous Procurement Policy creates more opportunities for Indigenous businesses to bid on City contracts and provide goods and services. The policy supports reconciliation, encourages relationship-building and helps ensure Indigenous businesses can participate more fully in the local economy.



Governance, finance and organization

Communication and engagement

The City strengthened its approach to communication and public participation through the adoption of a Communication Strategy in 2024 and an Engagement Framework in 2025. Together with annual resident satisfaction surveys launched in 2023, these initiatives help the City better understand community priorities, measure service performance and inform decision-making.

Both initiatives prioritize increasing access to engagement opportunities across the community, including reducing potential barriers for equity-deserving groups.

Accessibility Plan

Adopted in 2026, the Accessibility Plan provides a roadmap for identifying, removing and preventing barriers to participation in City facilities, services and programs. Informed by community input and accessibility reviews, the plan supports a more inclusive community where residents and visitors can access City services, spaces and information.

Development cost charges

In 2026 the City updated the Development Cost Charges (DCC) Program to strengthen the "growth pays for growth" principle; new developments now fund the infrastructure they require instead of shifting costs to current taxpayers.



2025 Resident Survey: 65 per cent of residents were satisfied with the volume of information shared by the City. Seventy per cent of respondents think they receive good overall value for their tax dollars.



