



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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A Year in Review from Mayor Victor Cumming

As we close 2024, it's time to reflect on a year of work and progress for the City of Vernon. From breaking ground on transformative projects to strengthening community resilience and sustaining services, we've made advancements.

A defining moment of 2024 was breaking ground on the Active Living Centre, the largest single capital investment in Vernon's history. This state-of-the-art facility will enhance recreational opportunities for all ages and is scheduled to be completed in the fall of 2026.

This year also marked the reopening of the Lakeview Park "Peanut" Pool in East Hill. After years of planning, this beloved amenity is once again available for families and children to enjoy during Vernon's summer months.

Another key initiative launched this year was the review and drafting of a new Official Community Plan (OCP) and Transportation Plan (TP). These plans are being shaped by extensive public engagement through two phases of consultation, helping to guide future land use and transportation in Vernon.

Housing availability remains a critical issue, and Council is committed to working with developers and the Province to address this challenge. In 2024, several multi-unit developments were brought online in the Alexis Park, Harwood, and Central Vernon neighborhoods, while partnerships with organizations like Vernon Native Housing supported the creation of attainable housing. However, broader economic conditions led to a reduction in new housing construction, with 172 units approved in 2024, down from the five-year average of 415.

Protecting Vernon from the threat of fire is an ongoing priority. This year, we added four new firefighters and a full-time FireSmart™ coordinator to our team. Strategic FireSmart initiatives were carried out on City-owned properties in Lakeridge, Eastside Road, and Polson Park. Collaborations with strata councils in Spruce Landing, Predator Ridge, and Adventure Bay also helped reduce fire risks.

Infrastructure investments were a cornerstone of 2024. The completion of the 43rd Street bridge and the multi-use path connecting Okanagan Avenue to 43rd Street, along with the start of Vernon Creek naturalization through Polson Park, are vital projects that improve flood mitigation and enhance community resilience.

Additional achievements included the completion of the SilverStar Multi-Use Path, Becker Bike Park, the 32nd Avenue reconstruction project in East Hill, and repaving sections of road in the downtown core.

In sustainability, the City made significant strides through Climate Action implementation, supported by initiatives like the organics program and the promotion of e-scooters. The introduction of electric ice resurfacers, and other vehicles this year, is another example of our commitment to reducing emissions. Council approved Climate Action Community initiatives will provide residents with 15 public program solutions to encourage sustainable practices in 2025.

This year, Vernon hosted several high-profile tourism and sports events, including the Senior Curling Championships, Hockey Canada's Women's U18 Esso Cup, and the BC Cross Country Championships. These events reinforced Vernon's reputation as a premier sports destination. Investments in trail marketing also helped promote Greater Vernon as the "Trails Capital of BC," attracting outdoor enthusiasts and boosting four-season tourism.

A significant leadership transition occurred this year, with Ms. Patti Bridal retiring as Chief Administrative Officer in December. Her years of service have been invaluable. In November, we welcomed Mr. Peter Weeber into the role, and his expertise will help guide Vernon into the future.

As 2025 begins, I'm proud of what we've accomplished together. Every project completed this year represents a step forward for Vernon.

On behalf of Council and staff, I thank you for being part of this progress and wish you a wonderful holiday season and a prosperous year ahead.

Warm regards,

Victor I. Cumming
Mayor, City of Vernon