

KVR students help City roll out new initiative to make streets brighter, safer

(Penticton, BC – Wednesday, April 25, 2024) – Watch for brighter, more vibrant streets with added safety improvements coming to a neighbourhood near you.

**It's all part of the City's new 'Friendly Streets' initiative, which involves community collaboration, asphalt art and other creative elements to build friendlier spaces for everyone to move, play and grow.**

On May 3, a group of KVR Middle students will kick-off the program by painting street murals on a section of Jermyn Street, on either edge of the new raised crosswalk that connects KVR with Penticton Secondary.

And on Saturday, June 1, the entire community is invited to take part in a street-painting project at the intersection of Ellis and Nanaimo in downtown Penticton. The City is working with a team of artists and volunteers who are overseeing this work, with more details to be released soon.

**"We're excited to see the transformations at these two locations as the students, artists and community members make their mark on the city," says Kristen Dixon, General Manager of Infrastructure. "These two Friendly Streets initiatives are just the start of a number of projects we'll be exploring in the months and years to come to ensure Penticton's streets are welcoming and safe for everyone, no matter how you move around."**

A recent study found that incorporating art into roadway designs improves visibility and can reduce the rate of car crashes involving pedestrians or cyclists by 50 per cent. **It's also a** low-cost and effective strategy to slow vehicles through areas with high pedestrian traffic.

The City has been working with KVR teachers **Melissa Burdock, Hilary March and Carla O'Bea** for the upcoming painting project – with 17 students overseeing the mural design, colours and concept. They landed on two designs, tying together the school colours of KVR and Penticton Secondary.

**"They had such beautiful reasons for the colours they chose," says Burdock. "For half of the design, they selected shades of blue, representing KVR colours, and meaning 'strength.' The shades represent diversity in our community; we are all different and should be proud of who we are."**

**Burdock continued:** "For the second half, they chose warm tones and colours that represent community, in purple and yellow to represent Pen, bringing our two schools together in the design.

Purple is the colour of kindness and compassion; yellow represents joy and happiness. The design incorporates circles that **will be coloured in a way that spells LOVE.**"

In order to safely conduct the painting, Jermyn Avenue will be temporarily closed to traffic on Friday, May 3, starting after the school drop-off and before pickup (between 8:45 a.m. and 2:45 p.m.).

**Also as part of the Friendly Streets initiative, the City of Penticton has completed two 'Safe Routes to School' studies at Uplands and Carmi Elementary schools. The results of these studies, as well as plans for the next phases of the program, will be shared soon. Other related road safety improvements projects are being planned within local neighbourhoods to address safety concerns raised by community members and as recommended in the Transportation Master Plan.**

These ongoing projects support the City Council priorities to build a community that is safe and resilient, livable and accessible, and vibrant and connected.

To learn more about the Friendly Streets initiative, visit [penticton.ca/friendly-streets](http://penticton.ca/friendly-streets).

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Media Contact:

250-490-2339

[communications@penticton.ca](mailto:communications@penticton.ca)