

Crews move to next phase of Penticton Creek restoration project

(Penticton, BC – Thursday, Aug. 31, 2023) – Crews are now wrapping up in-creek work involving the latest phase of the Penticton Creek restoration project, having successfully removed another 100 metres of channelized concrete from the banks this summer.

“While the work within the creek has been completed, there’s still a lot of work to be done to the banks in the coming weeks, adding riprap, topsoil and plants to restore the waterway to its natural habitat,” says Jonathan Chu, City Engineer. **“Crews will also focus on improving the walkways and crossings throughout the neighbourhood, adding landscaping and making other finishing touches.”**

This year, crews removed approximately 650 tonnes of concrete liner from the section of creek between Nanaimo Avenue and Eckhardt Avenue. Once completed, it will be replaced with 3,400 tonnes of rock, 130 cubic metres of topsoil, 380 tonnes of spawning gravel and native plants along the creek banks.

Crews have begun removing the pipe and diversion dam to restore **Penticton Creek’s natural flow**. Next, the pedestrian bridge that was temporarily removed – at Norton Street and Wade Ave E – will be lifted back into position, but it will not reopen to the public until safety repairs are completed and on-site fencing is removed.

Related roadwork and landscaping projects are anticipated to be completed this fall, including adding a zebra crossing near Wade Avenue and Government Street.

The Penticton Creek restoration project is part of the City’s ongoing efforts to naturalize and restore the creek to its natural habitat, also mitigating future flood risk. In the 1950s, the creek was channelized **in response to flooding that devastated Penticton’s downtown**. **While the concrete channel helped with flood management, native fish species struggled with the loss of natural creek habitat and populations dropped.** Over time, the concrete channel deteriorated.

In 2012, the community identified the restoration of the creek as a priority for the Downtown Plan and in 2018, Council approved a plan to restore the creek in several phases over many years. Two previous projects addressed the restoration of the creek between Ellis Street and Nanaimo Avenue, just downstream of this project, and three other projects have addressed some of the upstream sections of the creek.

A summary of the project to naturalize Penticton Creek and preserve the flood protection qualities can be found at penticton.ca/restore-penticton-creek.

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Media Contact:

250-490-2339

communications@penticton.ca