



New Pagoda-Style Lamps to Enhance Chinatown

Date: Friday, April 17, 2009

For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC – Starting Monday, City crews will begin installing 26 new pagoda style-lamps on downtown sidewalks to further enhance Victoria’s historic Chinatown. The new lights complement the 52 existing pagoda lamps that were installed in the 1980s, designed by a former City Urban Design Planner.

What: PHOTO/INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY - Installation of New Pagoda-Style Lamps in Chinatown
When: Monday, April 20, 2009, from 11 a.m. – Noon
Where: Northeast corner of Government Street and Pandora Avenue

Over the next three weeks, these ornamental pedestrian lights will be installed along sidewalks on Government, Fisgard, Herald and Store Streets. The lamps are a part of the City’s Downtown Beautification Strategy developed in 1995, which includes recent improvements such as “double happiness” themed bike racks, stylized street furniture, pagoda phone booths, and a series of murals.

Made of cast aluminum, the lamp posts are painted red, a colour considered by the Chinese to bring luck and good fortune. Four cluster lights have been removed to make room for the new lamps and placed into storage for future use. During installation, all sidewalks will remain open.

The Downtown Victoria Business Association partnered with the City of Victoria, providing \$77,000, which the City matched to purchase and install the 26 custom-made lamps. An additional 22 lamps will complete the project in the future.

Victoria’s Chinatown, located in the heart of downtown, is the oldest in Canada, celebrating its 150th anniversary last year. The discovery of gold in the Fraser Canyon brought the first Chinese immigrants to Victoria in 1858. Those who followed, found work in factories and logging camps, and were largely responsible for the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Many of Chinatown’s hidden alleyways and courtyards that once housed opium and gambling dens, are now home to artists and artisans. The ornamental *Gate of Harmonious Interest* installed in 1981 by the City of Victoria, is a monument to the contributions of Victoria’s Chinese community.

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