VICTORIA, BC – In 2012, the City of Victoria’s hanging baskets program celebrates its 75th anniversary. To mark this milestone, Mayor Dean Fortin and City Manager Gail Stephens will each hang a celebratory basket outside of Victoria City Hall on Monday morning.

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY:
What: Mayor and City Manager Hang Celebratory Baskets to Mark 75th Hanging Baskets Anniversary
When: Monday, June 11, 2012 at 8:30 a.m.
Where: Victoria City Hall, Douglas Street entrance

Next week, City Parks crews will begin installing approximately 1,400 hanging baskets on downtown lampposts, featuring flowers that were grown at the Beacon Hill Park nursery. The installation will take place next Monday to Wednesday, 7:30 a.m. – 2 p.m. on downtown streets including Douglas, Wharf, Belleville, Fort, Government, View, Yates, Pandora, Broad, Courtney, Broughton and Burdett.

Nine different varieties of plants are used to make the traditional Victoria sun basket, with a total of 25 plants included in each. Similar in appearance to the traditional sun basket, three different planting combinations will be piloted again this year to determine which can best withstand warmer temperatures and bloom into October.

Victoria’s hanging baskets got their start as a way of celebrating the City’s 75th anniversary of incorporation. In 1936, City Parks Administrator Herb Warren was tasked with researching the prospect of placing hanging baskets on the streets of Victoria. Basing his research on the moss-lined wire baskets in England, several hundred sun baskets were placed on city streets in the summer of 1937. The original sun baskets included miniature roses, fuchsias, begonias, petunias and geraniums. At the time, the practice of hanging flower baskets in public areas was limited to a few European cities.

In the early years, many different plants and plant colours were tried, based on their vigour, resistance to disease and insects, period of bloom and maintenance. Although the plant colour scheme was developed in the 1960s, trials continue to enhance their selection and show. Shade baskets were introduced in the 1990s and placed under large street trees where sun baskets would never reach their full potential.

Victoria’s hanging basket program has evolved over the years with water restrictions and creative uses such as spring daffodil baskets in the mid-60s, and more recently, celebratory Olympic Winter Games baskets in 2010. Victoria’s hanging baskets are a trademark, recognized around the world. For more information, visit: www.victoria.ca

For More Information:
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