

Mobi-mat Installed at Parksville Bay Beach

The City of Parksville in partnership with Access Oceanside Association is excited to pilot a mobi-mat installation for the 2024 summer season. An accessible beach mat, also known as a mobi-mat, is now in place on Parksville Bay beach, accessed from the concrete ramp in front of the waterfront gazebo. The new 100 foot-long mobi-mat will enable easier beach access for people using wheelchairs, families with strollers and others to access the water.

City of Parksville Council confirmed its intent to review beach accessibility in 2025; however, this opportunity arose thanks to the donation by Corona Canada who offered to gift an accessibility mat to an oceanfront community. The generous and unexpected donation of the mobi-mat to Access Oceanside Association prompted Council to amend its workplan and move this item forward to the 2024 budget cycle. Staff applied for the necessary permits from the federal and provincial agencies and were successful in receiving expedited approvals based on the significance of improving accessibility in the community.

Parksville Council embraces universal accessibility as a goal for the community and acknowledges many of our residents and visitors experience mobility challenges, either permanent or temporary and accessing natural spaces can be difficult for those with physical limitations. Accessibility principles benefit all people, including young families with strollers, people with injuries and those with more long-term mobility issues.

At this time, there are some unknowns about how this new service will impact staffing and how it will operate in a dynamic marine environment. The seasonal installation of a mobi-mat is a higher level of service than the City is accustomed to and over the next few months, staff will monitor the use and track issues which may arise with maintenance and operations. Council will review the information from both City staff and the community during its 2025 budget deliberations and provide direction for future accessibility projects at that time.

The donation by Corona Canada also included two beach wheelchairs which may be reserved free of charge through the Beach Club Resort, 250 248-8999 or beachclub@bellstar.ca.

QUOTE MAYOR DOUG O'BRIEN

"On behalf of Parksville Council, our sincere thank you to Corona Canada for this generous donation, to Access Oceanside Association for their dedication to the mobi-mat project and for their work in our community, and for the support of the Beach Club Resort and the Parksville Qualicum Beach Tourism Association. We look forward to seeing how this project helps to improve accessibility at Parksville Bay beach."

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For more information:

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*The City of Parksville is located on the traditional territory of the Coast Salish Nations,
home to the Snaw-Naw-As First Nation and the Qualicum First Nation.*
