

Wharton Street Revitalization FAQ

Updated: May 2025

About the Project

What is the Wharton Street Revitalization project?

The Wharton Street Revitalization Project is a key priority and the first project to be built from the District of Summerland's Downtown Neighbourhood Action Plan (2022). It aims to create an active, desirable and welcoming downtown. The project includes utility upgrades, roadway and pedestrian improvements, and the creation of vibrant public spaces.

What is the Downtown Neighbourhood Action Plan?

In 2022, the District of Summerland completed a Downtown Neighbourhood Action Plan (DNAP). The Downtown Neighbourhood Action Plan serves as a roadmap for future downtown revitalization projects and includes actionable items and policy recommendations.

Why is this project being completed?

The Downtown Neighbourhood Action Plan supports Council's Strategic Priorities of "Enhancing Our Quality of Life" and "Protecting and Enhancing Core Infrastructure and Essential Services." Implementing the Wharton Street Revitalization project combines necessary infrastructure improvements, like stormwater management, watermain and electrical upgrades, with streetscape enhancements, addressing multiple community needs at once and maximizing investment.

What improvements will be made during the project?

The project will focus on renewing infrastructure above and below ground to ensure the longevity and safety of essential services, while creating a vibrant and dynamic downtown. It includes significant changes and improvements to Henry Avenue, Memorial Park, Wharton Street and Kelley Avenue. The improvements include:

- Utility upgrades to support new density and growth
- Roadway and pedestrian improvements
- All-season public washrooms
- Relocation of overhead power lines to underground
- Beautification and public space upgrades
- Parking improvements

What improvements will be made to Henry Avenue?

Henry Avenue between Main Street and Wharton Street will be closed to create a plaza area, which will feature an all-season washroom, a misting fountain, café style seating, a busking stage, overhead lighting and bench seating and planting areas.

What improvements will be made to Memorial Park?

The project will include the creation of the Memorial Park Plaza, which will feature an upgraded Cenotaph area, seating, power receptables, lighting, flag poles, new plantings and a raised crosswalk to connect to the Henry Avenue Plaza.

What improvements will be made to Wharton Street?

Upgrades to Wharton Street include:

- A 3-meter-wide multi-use pathway
- Replacement of aging water lines
- Intersection safety improvements
- Site furnishings and plantings
- Two-way vehicle traffic
- Food truck parking
- Angle parking
- Relocation of overhead power lines to underground (Armstrong Avenue to Victoria Rd)

What changes are being made to Kelly Avenue?

Kelly Avenue will be converted to allow two-way traffic and a 3-meter multi-use pathway will be installed.

How will this project benefit our community?

Revitalizing the downtown area brings several benefits for the community, including:

- Infrastructure improvements: Upgrading utilities and infrastructure to improve capacity and service new density and growth.
- Economic growth: Attracting businesses, creating jobs, and increasing property values, which strengthens the local economy.
- Community and social well-being: Enhancing the quality of life by providing public spaces, cultural activities, and a stronger sense of community identity while also improving public safety.
- Sustainable urban development: Optimizing existing infrastructure, promoting walkability, and integrating green spaces to foster a more sustainable and livable urban environment.

- Tourism and cultural appeal: Drawing visitors, supporting local arts and entertainment, and reinforcing the community's unique character.

Funding

How much will the project cost?

The total cost of the project is approximately \$8.5 million.

How is the project being funded?

The project is proposed to be being funded through various sources, including Development Cost Charges (DCCs), reserves, grants and debt. This includes \$3,365,080 in long-term borrowing, which was passed through an Alternative Approval Process in March 2025. The District may utilize internal borrowing, from reserves, to substitute the proposed long-term borrowing during construction.

Will this project increase local taxes?

Yes, there will be an increase in property taxes to recover the costs associated with long-term borrowing. Beginning in 2026, property taxes will increase by approximately 2.26%, which will cost the average household an additional \$40.26 annually.

Construction

What type of disruptions are expected?

There will be disruptions in the downtown area during construction. While we will work hard to ensure disruptions are minimal, residents can expect:

- Limited access to driveways and rear entryways to buildings
- Increased noise and dust
- Single lane alternating traffic and periodic roadway closures
- Impacts to special events held within Memorial Park and Wharton Street

When will construction take place?

Construction is anticipated to start in May 2025 and continue through to November 2025.

Will there be road closures or traffic disruptions?

Residents can expect traffic interruptions during construction, including single lane alternating traffic and periodic roadway closures. On-site signage will be implemented to notify drivers of

detours and direct traffic to alternate routes. Up to date information on detours and road closures can be found at whartonstreet.ca.

How will noise and dust be controlled?

There will be increased dust in the area during construction. The contractor will be taking steps to mitigate the impacts of this through dust control measures.

Periods of increased noise from construction are anticipated. Property owners within the project area will be provided with the construction schedule and when to expect disruptions.

Will local businesses remain open?

Shops and services in the project area will remain open for business during the construction period. Access may be affected, including changes to parking and entry points. Your support and patience are appreciated.

Will parking downtown be impacted?

Parking near the project area will be impacted during construction. The District will provide information about alternate parking locations. E-charging parking spaces will be temporarily decommissioned to offer more parking around Memorial Park.

Will special events be impacted?

Construction will impact multiple events held within Memorial Park and Wharton Street, including the Tuesday District Market, car shows, Action Fest, Wednesday Music in the Park, and the Sunday Rotary Club Market. This may mean changes to typical event locations, scheduling and parking. The District is working closely with organizers to make accommodations, where possible. Information about events will be available at whartonstreet.ca.

Communications

How can I stay updated on the project progress?

Information about the project is available at whartonstreet.ca. This website will be updated regularly to ensure the community is up to date on the construction schedule and any disruptions, including impacts to traffic, parking and events.

Who do I contact if I have questions or concerns?

If you have any comments or concerns, please feel free to reach out to works&infrastructure@summerland.ca or 250-494-0431.