

## NEWS RELEASE

Distributed March 31, 2016

### Fire destroys commercial building in downtown Nanaimo

#### Summary

Nanaimo Fire Rescue crews were called to a reported structure fire on Commercial Street early Wednesday evening. Upon arrival crews saw smoke coming from the building and began attacking the fire. After a short period of time the fire quickly began to grow and smoke worsened. Crews then took a defensive attack to protect adjacent buildings and businesses.

The age and construction of the building were contributing factors to the loss. Nanaimo Fire Rescue crews worked overnight to extinguish the fire. Fire Investigators are currently on scene working with structural engineers to determine if it is safe to enter the building. Our first priority is responder and public safety during the investigation and roads and sidewalks will be opened only when safe.

There were approximately 40 Nanaimo Fire Rescue members on scene. Service was maintained by one crew at Station 1 in the downtown core to ensure coverage for the rest of the city throughout the night. Various city departments and external agencies including City of Nanaimo Public Works and Engineering, RCMP, BC Ambulance Service, Nanaimo Port Authority, Emergency Management British Columbia, Ministry of Environment and private security companies all provided excellent support.

*Strategic Link:* The City of Nanaimo is committed to Public Safety.

#### Key Points

- Crews were successful in preventing the fire from spreading to neighbouring structures.
- Fire Investigators are on scene and the investigation will be ongoing.
- There were several agencies involved in the response to this significant incident.

#### Quotes

"Our thoughts are with the affected business owners as they work towards rebuilding. The responders on scene made good decisions very early in the incident that resulted in protection of life safety and minimized damage to other nearby properties. I would like to thank the crews for all their efforts in what turned out to be a very challenging incident."

Craig Richardson  
Fire Chief  
City of Nanaimo

Continued... Fire destroys commercial building in downtown Nanaimo

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