

NEWS RELEASE

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Same artist, fresh canvas; Deverill Square Park mural set for a refresh

Artist Yvonne Vander Kooi, with neighbourhood input, will create a new mural to replace her end-of-life "Land, Sea and Sky" artwork

Summary

A new public art project at Deverill Square Park will bring fresh colour and community spirit to the South End. The current mural, "Land, Sea and Sky," was created in 2009 by local artist Yvonne Vander Kooi and has become a beloved landmark in the Southend neighbourhood. Now at the end of its life, the mural will be redesigned by the artist to reflect the neighbourhood as it is today.

Inspired by nature and the uniqueness of Nanaimo, the original mural was part of a broader City initiative to incorporate public art into park development. After 16 years, the mural is now showing signs of wear and has reached the end of its lifespan.

Sandblasting of the existing mural will take place Nov 10-12. During this time, washrooms will not be accessible.

As part of the design process, Vander Kooi will engage with Southend residents to find new inspiration that is reflective of their current neighbourhood. Community members will be invited to submit photos of their favourite garden plants—especially native species and pollinators—which will help Yvonne with her new design. The new mural, which will be complete and unveiled in spring 2026, will cover all four walls of the park's building.

Along with the mural's unveiling, the sculpture Chimes for the South End by Jesse Gray will be reinstalled in the park, as well as additional public art projects by artists from the City's Urban Design Roster. Watch for a public celebration of the neighbourhood and its new artworks next Spring/Summer.

Strategic Link: This initiative continues the City's commitment to enhancing public spaces through art while fostering meaningful connections between local artists and the communities they serve.

Key Points

- The current mural at Deverill Square Park, "Land, Sea and Sky," was created in 2009 by local artist Yvonne Vander Kooi. It has become a beloved landmark in the Southend neighbourhood, but has reached its end of its life. The mural will be redesigned by the artist to reflect the neighbourhood as it is today.
- Sandblasting of the existing mural will take place Nov 10-12. During this time, washrooms will not be accessible.
- As part of the design process, Vander Kooi will engage with Southend residents to find new inspiration that is reflective of their current neighbourhood. The new mural will cover all four walls of the building at Deverill Square Park and will be unveiled in spring/summer 2026.

Quotes

"Public art is at its most special when it reflects the people and places it belongs to. This project celebrates that sentiment – honouring a familiar artwork while creating something new and inspiring for everyone to enjoy."

Jaime-Brett Sine
Culture Coordinator
City of Nanaimo

Continued... Same artist, fresh canvas; Deverill Square Park mural set for a refresh

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Contact:

For media enquiries, please contact
Communications
City of Nanaimo
Media.Requests@nanaimo.ca
250-754-4251



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