

NEWS RELEASE

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John Ruttan to receive Freedom of the City honour

City honours former mayor and longtime community leader for over six decades of service

Summary

The City of Nanaimo is proud to announce that John Ruttan, a former Mayor and prominent community leader, will be awarded the prestigious Freedom of the City. The award is Nanaimo's highest civic honour, and this fall Mr. Ruttan will receive it in recognition of his 61 years of dedication to community service, business and local governance, which have significantly contributed to the growth and enrichment of the city.

John Ruttan's long history of community involvement has played an integral role in shaping Nanaimo's development. His commitment to community service began over six decades ago and his contributions span various sectors, including tourism, commerce and politics. A key figure in the Loyal Nanaimo Bathtub Society for 53 years, Mr. Ruttan served as Commodore/Chair from 1984 to 1991, helping to grow the iconic event.

In addition to his work with the Bathtub Society, Mr. Ruttan was appointed to the Nanaimo Harbour Commission in 1995 and later served six years as Chair of the Nanaimo Port Authority. He was also involved with Tourism Nanaimo for eight terms, including four years as president, and contributed to many other local organizations such as the Downtown and Nanaimo North Rotary clubs, the Community Policing Advisory Board and the Nanaimo Hospitality Association.

Mr. Ruttan's commitment to the city extended into public office, where he served two terms as mayor of Nanaimo from 2008 to 2014. His leadership was pivotal during a period of significant city growth, including the expansion of the Nanaimo Airport, which he supported as chairman of the "Support YCD" committee. He was also recognized for his efforts in promoting tourism, downtown development and community safety.

In 2008, Mr. Ruttan was named "Citizen of the Year" by the Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce, further highlighting his dedication to the community.

Strategic Link: The Freedom of the City honour aligns with Nanaimo's Strategic Plan goals of enhancing Cultural Vitality, economic growth and livability.

Key Points

- John Ruttan, a former mayor and prominent community leader, will be awarded the prestigious Freedom of the City in recognition of his 61 years of dedication to community service, business and local governance, which have significantly contributed to the growth and enrichment of Nanaimo.
- Freedom of the City is the highest honour the City of Nanaimo can bestow, given only in exceptional cases.
- Freedom of the City honours someone with a lifetime of achievement who has enhanced the livability of the city or who has gained national and international acclaim in the arts, business or commerce, humanities,

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politics, community service, sports or professional endeavours and who has brought recognition to Nanaimo through their achievements.

Quotes

"John Ruttan's remarkable dedication to Nanaimo over the past six decades has profoundly impacted our city. His legacy is evident in the many community projects and initiatives he has supported and he is a true example of the spirit of service. It is a great privilege to recognize his contributions with Freedom of the City."

Leonard Krog
Mayor
City of Nanaimo

Quick Facts

- To grant Freedom of the City, a unanimous vote by the City Council is required.
- Recipients of the award are recognized during a special ceremony at a Regular Council meeting, which consists of the reading and presentation of a framed certificate, the presentation of the Freedom Medal followed by a reception. Recipients will also have their photo in the Freedom of the City Portrait Gallery located at the Vancouver Island Conference Centre.
- Recipients of the Freedom of the City Honour are entitled to free parking within City of Nanaimo parkades and on-street parking meters within the boundaries and managed only by the City.

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