



# The voice of business.

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 28, 2025

### **Port Alberni Visitor Centre to Temporarily Close in March 2025 Due to Funding Shortfall**

PORT ALBERNI, B.C. – The Alberni Valley Chamber of Commerce has announced the temporary closure of the Port Alberni Visitor Information Centre (VIC) for the month of March 2025 due to a lack of funding.

The Chamber's contract for visitor services with the City of Port Alberni concluded on January 19, 2025 and no new agreement has been reached. Without a formal contract or secured financial support, the Chamber is unable to continue funding and operating the Visitor Centre independently.

While this closure is temporary, it underscores the urgent need for a sustainable, long-term funding solution to ensure visitor services remain available year-round.

"The Visitor Centre is more than just a tourism resource—it connects thousands of visitors to local businesses, drives economic growth, and provides essential updates during emergencies," said Chris Washington, President of the Alberni Valley Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. "This decision was not made lightly, but without adequate funding, we must pause visitor servicing operations to focus on securing long-term financial stability."

During the closure, the Visitor Centre and its public washroom facilities will remain closed. Visitors seeking information about Port Alberni and regional attractions will be directed to online resources, including the Chamber's websites ([www.albernichamber.ca](http://www.albernichamber.ca) and [www.portalbernivisitorcentre.ca](http://www.portalbernivisitorcentre.ca)) and social media channels and partner Alberni Valley Tourism ([www.alberni-valley-tourism.ca](http://www.alberni-valley-tourism.ca))

### **Impact on Businesses & Community**

Local businesses that rely on visitor referrals are encouraged to update their online listings to ensure accurate and accessible information is available to travelers.

The Chamber remains fully operational, continuing to provide business services, advocacy, and support to its members and the broader business community.

The Chamber is actively working with local and regional stakeholders to explore alternative funding solutions that would allow the Visitor Centre to reopen and ensure its

long-term sustainability.

“We are calling on community leaders and businesses to help champion the importance of visitor services,” added Jolleen Dick, the Chamber’s Chief Executive Officer. “This is an investment in economic development, tourism, and our local business community.”

As the Chamber navigates this transition, businesses are encouraged to keep their membership up to date and to refer other businesses that could benefit from joining the Chamber network. A strong Chamber means a stronger business community.

For more information or to explore partnership opportunities, please contact at 250-724-6535 or [office@albernichamber.ca](mailto:office@albernichamber.ca)

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### **About the Alberni Valley Chamber of Commerce**

The Alberni Valley Chamber of Commerce is the voice of business in the Alberni Valley, dedicated to economic growth, advocacy, and business development. With a commitment to fostering a thriving business environment, the AVCC serves a diverse membership that includes entrepreneurs, small businesses, and large enterprises across the region. The Chamber also stewards the Port Alberni Visitor Information Centre and McLean Mill National Historic Site, contributing to tourism and local economic development.

As an active member of the Vancouver Island Economic Alliance, BC Chamber of Commerce, and Canadian Chamber of Commerce, the AVCC amplifies the concerns of local businesses at regional, provincial, and national levels—ensuring our business community has a strong voice in policy discussions and economic initiatives.

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