

## SPORTS - SEAHAWKS, PATRIOTS ADVANCE - B1

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Monday, January 19, 2015

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Artist's rendering  
Proposed four-storey apartment complex would include 44 'micro-units' less than 315 square feet in size.

## Micro suites could solve rental shortage

By RON SEYMOUR  
The Daily Courier

Half the homes in a proposed new Kelowna development would be less than 315 square feet in size.

So-called 'micro units' would account for 44 of the 90 rental suites planned for a four-storey building on Dickson Avenue, near the cluster of Landmark technology and office buildings.

"This building will consist of bachelor suites as well as one- and two-bedroom suites," said the developer, Al Stober Construction, which also built the Landmark centre.

Because the proposed suites are so small, provincial legislation prohibits the City of Kelowna from collecting development cost charges, which are fees intended to help pay for off-site services and amenities, such as new parks and roads.

The company has also received a \$240,000 break on development cost charges for the larger suites, and is applying for a 10-year tax exemption worth \$212,000. The incentives are available because the city is trying to encourage developers to build new rental housing.

Along with Vancouver, Kelowna currently has the lowest apartment vacancy rate of any city in Canada, as surveyed by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Only one of every 100 apartments in Kelowna is available for rent, CMHC says. The rate was nearly two per cent a year ago, and it was four per cent in 2013.

"If we want to attract and retain people of all ages in Kelowna, like we plan to, housing must continue to be a priority," Mayor Colin Basran said in his inauguration speech last month. "Under moderate growth estimates, our city needs 300 new rental units annually to keep up with demand and right now we aren't even coming close to hitting that target."

Overall, the proposed new Dickson Avenue development is similar in design and appearance to the nearby Mode residential building that was built in 2008.

City staff say the project fits in with official community goals such as one to increase housing densities near the Landmark centre, where thousands of people work in six first-class office buildings.

The proposed 48,000-square-foot building site currently consists of three duplexes. City council will consider today whether to give preliminary approval to the required zoning change for the property, to medium-density housing, and forward the project to a public hearing.



WAYNE EMDE/Special to The Daily Courier

## Royal karate kicks

Queen Silver Star candidate Alicia Hill-Turner of Vernon demonstrates her karate skills during the annual talent showcase in Vernon on Sunday, breaking a board held by her training partner Emily Aoki. Hill is one of seven candidates vying for the role of Queen Silver Star. Each presented a description of her sponsor and then demonstrated a personal talent.

## Creeks, ponds need upgrade

City council seeks funding to plant more suitable trees along Mill Creek, Munson Pond

By RON SEYMOUR  
The Daily Courier

Once plentiful along Kelowna streams and ponds, cottonwood and willow trees have been squeezed out by development, farmland — and even other trees.

Non-indigenous and highly aggressive tree species, such as Siberian elms, have proliferated along watercourses such as Mill Creek, city council will hear today.

"The city has been diligently attempting to remove these invasive trees over the past several years," Andrew Hunsberger, a technician in the parks planner, writes in a report to council.

But officials hope to accelerate efforts to restore the creek banks to a more natural state with a \$30,000 grant from the Okanagan Basin Water Board.

If the funding is secured, measures would include the planting of indigenous trees and shrubs and the removal of over-mature existing trees.

"Due to their age and structural characteristics, some trees are beginning to fall apart and cause issues with adjacent landowners," Hunsberger says.

Mill Creek winds through central Kelowna, roughly paralleling Highway 97 and passing through the industrial area, Parkinson Recreation Centre



GARY NYLANDER/The Daily Courier

The City of Kelowna hopes to win approval for a \$25,000 Okanagan Basin Water Board grant to plant black cottonwood and water birch trees around Munson Pond, which is to be opened to the public this year.

Additional shade provided by tree cover would also help cool the creekwater and make it more suitable for fish.

At tonight's meeting, council will also apply for a separate \$25,000 grant from the Okanagan Basin Water Board to plant more black cottonwood and water birch trees around Munson Pond, between Munson Road and KLO Road, east of Benvenuto Road.

The city owns the 10-hectare site, almost half of which is made up by the pond, and intends to open it to limited public access this year.

Plans call for construction of a trail around the pond, interpretive signage, and a small parking lot.

## Taxman looking for better press

Revenue agency eyes web page to counter negative coverage

By The Canadian Press

OTTAWA — The Canada Revenue Agency wants to set the record straight when journalists fail to include its upbeat take in their stories.

A new document shows the CRA is considering a special web page to post rebuttals to media coverage it doesn't like. The web page would also be a place where the agency could direct journalists to a canned response if it gets flooded with calls on a hot topic.

Officials pitched the idea to CRA commissioner Andrew Tseusch in an August 2014 memo.

"The purpose of this briefing note is to

follow up on a discussion with your office of actions that might be taken to get our positive messaging out in instances where media coverage does not reflect the content we have provided," it says.

The Canadian Press obtained a copy of the memo under the Access to Information Act.

The document weighed the pros and

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**Wise words**

All change is not growth;  
all movement is not  
forward

— Ellen Glasgow

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