

Thank you for your interest in the Town of Ladysmith's **Public Art – Call for Poetry**.

Transforming ordinary elements and Town history into a piece of public art is an effective method of placemaking.

## **CALL FOR POETRY**

The Town of Ladysmith is installing a historical interpretive panel at Transfer Beach that includes a short biography of former Mayor Kathleen 'Kay' Grouhel and her contributions to the community.

As part of this initiative, the Town is seeking a poem written by a resident of Ladysmith and surrounding area or Stz'uminus First Nation that recognizes Grouhel's role in shaping many of Ladysmith's defining amenities, especially Transfer Beach.

The complete poem will be displayed on the panel while the poem's title or a standalone line of the poem will be stamped onto two concrete planters that will be placed at Transfer Beach.

The poem will recognize the contributions Ms. Grouhel made to the Town of Ladysmith.

## **ABOUT THE POEM**

The theme of the poem must reflect former Mayor Kathleen 'Kay' Grouhel, affectionately known as 'Concrete Kay,' and her visionary role in the development of many of Ladysmith's defining amenities, most notably Transfer Beach and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue's many planters.

- Proponents may choose the style and format of the poem. The poem will be required to have an impactful title or standalone line that can be pulled from the poem, as it will be stamped onto a concrete planter located at Transfer Beach.
- The poet will work with town staff to select the title or standalone line that will be displayed on the planters.

## **KATHLEEN GROUHEL BIOGRAPHY**

At the encouragement of her father, Kathleen 'Kay' Grouhel ran for office and was elected Ladysmith's first female mayor in 1964. She also became the first female president of the Union of BC Municipalities in 1974.

During her distinguished 12-year tenure as mayor, Grouhel played an integral role in the vision of Transfer Beach by successfully negotiating land purchase agreements with Canadian Collieries and Canadian Pacific, which led to the acquisition and eventual creation of Transfer Beach Park. However, it was her efforts to redesign the downtown sidewalks – improving appearance and increasing pedestrian safety – that cemented her legacy and earned her the nickname 'Concrete Kay.'

Other notable accomplishments include:

- Passing zoning and sewage improvement bylaws that stopped raw sewage outflow into waters around Transfer Beach.
- The building of the fire hall and public works buildings.
- Acquiring the Town's first new fire truck in years.
- The planting of Dogwood trees along the highway (since removed).

Grouhel served as Ladysmith's mayor until 1976. She passed away in 2010 at Victoria General Hospital following complications from a stroke.

## **POETRY COMPETITION TERMS OF REFERENCE**

1. The Public Art Committee along with selected community members will coordinate with the Grouhel family to select the winning poem for the Mayor Kathleen Grouhel project.
2. The selected poet will receive an honorarium of \$500.
3. The title or standalone line of the poem will be stamped onto two concrete planters at the Kathleen Grouhel shelter location at Transfer Beach.
4. The complete poem will be displayed on a panel at the Kathleen Grouhel shelter sign located at Transfer Beach.
5. The Town of Ladysmith may publish the selected poetry in the local media. The poem will be displayed on the municipal website <https://www.ladysmith.ca/parks-recreation-culture/culture/public-art>.

### **Application:**

Interested participants are required to:

1. Complete the entry form.
2. Submit your poem, **ATTN: Community Public Art Program – Mayor Kathleen Grouhel Project** via email to [bid@ladysmith.ca](mailto:bid@ladysmith.ca).

All submissions must be received by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, August 30, 2024. For questions or more information, please email [bid@ladysmith.ca](mailto:bid@ladysmith.ca).

## **THE FINE PRINT**

### **Prizes:**

One honorarium of \$500 will be awarded to the Poet whose poem is chosen by the Public Art Committee.

### **Copyright:**

Writer/Poet maintains copyright of their poem.

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

- A. 2024 Entry Form

- B. Summary of Mayor Kathleen Grouhel – provide by the Town of Ladysmith Historical Society
- C. Site Plan
- D. Planter Placement





MAYOR KATHLEEN (KAY) GROUHEL  
(1965 - 1976)

- Former Ladysmith Mayor Kathleen 'Kay' Grouhel will be honoured with a historical interpretive sign at Transfer Beach. The poem's title or a standalone line of the poem will be stamped onto two concrete planters that will be placed nearby.
- Elected in 1964, Grouhel was the first woman to lead Ladysmith as mayor.
- Grouhel was instrumental in the creation of Transfer Beach Park, leading negotiations with Canadian Collieries and Canadian Pacific to purchase the land at lower prices.
- She is credited with passing zoning and sewage improvement bylaws that moved the outflow of sewage away from Transfer Beach.
- She was also the first female president of the Union of BC Municipalities during her term as mayor.
- Her other accomplishments include the building of the fire hall and public works buildings, acquiring the city's first new fire truck in years, the planting of dogwood trees along the highway through town and the redesign of the sidewalks downtown to improve appearance and increase pedestrian safety. The latter initiative earned her the nickname of 'Concrete Kay.'
- Grouhel served as mayor until 1976. She passed away in 2010 at Victoria General Hospital following complications from a stroke.
- Her son, Brian Grouhel, says that the new poem and sign are a great step in acknowledging his mother's legacy. "It's nice to see there's recognition being given for what she's done for the town," he said. Brian remembered his mother as being a hard worker who could rally the community together to get work done for Ladysmith. "She was always independent. She'd set herself goals then she'd go and do them. When she was mayor, she'd find goals she wanted, whether it was starting up the sewage plant, revitalizing downtown, or doing the beach. She'd figure out a way to go and accomplish that," he said.

Attachment C  
Site Plan



# Attachment D Planter Placement

