

## Squamish Opens Community Policing Station

By Andrea Levasseur

BCCPN North Shore/Sunshine Coast Regional Rep

The long-awaited Squamish Community Policing Station had its official grand opening on Tuesday, April 26. After years of planning and searching for a suitable site, the vision became reality as West Vancouver-Sunshine Coast-Sea to Sky MP John Reynolds joined Mayor Ian Sutherland, Squamish Nation Chief Eleanor Andrew, RCMP Superintendent Wayne Sutherland and Staff Sgt. Mark Hennigar in cutting the ribbon to the new downtown offices on Cleveland Avenue.



*Caption: (left to right) Sgt. Colin Worth gives the countdown as Staff Sgt. Mark Hennigar, Squamish Mayor Ian Sutherland, Squamish Nation Chief Eleanor Andrew, MP John Reynolds and RCMP Superintendent Wayne Sutherland cut the ribbon. Photo: John Levasseur.*

Two RCMP volunteers, RCMP Auxiliary Const. Blair Smith and COPs President Andrea Levasseur thanked all those involved in the collaborative effort between the RCMP, District of Squamish, Telus, local businesses and praised the efforts of the many volunteers who worked long hours to make the opening possible. They also spoke of the purpose of community policing and the many ways the new office will fulfill its role in making Squamish a safer community.



*Caption: Sgt. Colin Worth looks on as RCMP Auxiliary Const. Blair Smith and COPs President Andrea Levasseur address the crowd. Photo: John Levasseur*

With the main RCMP detachment situated a few kilometers from the downtown core, the new community policing station, staffed by volunteers and utilized by the RCMP members, provides a much-needed police presence to the business district. But its value extends far beyond that, as a convenient location where residents can walk in and learn about the many active policing services in Squamish, and how they can become involved in preventing and combating criminal activity in their own neighborhoods. Some of these programs include Block Watch, Business Watch, Climb Watch, Crime Stoppers, Citizens on Patrol, Fraud Alert, Kid Care ID and Family Identification, Bike Safety, Speed Watch, Senior Safety, RCMP Auxiliaries, RCMP Bike Squad, Victim Services and more. Through programs like these they are able to receive assistance and education for making themselves, their residences and businesses safer, and even borrow property engraving equipment free of charge.

The new office has been well-received by residents and business owners as it serves its mandate to equip and educate citizens in the ways of community policing. And Squamish is well on its way to becoming a safer community because of it.



*Caption: Special Guests and speakers stand in front of the new Squamish Community Policing Station. Photo: John Levasseur.*