

▼ From Front

New park will show off area visually

will make it a gateway into downtown."

The existing cairn will have new commemorative plaques added to it, celebrating the millennium landmark and the history of George Street. The cairn will not be moved because, as Laurie proclaims, "It is very old, and massive. We looked at relocating it and no way. We are building the park around it."

The cairn was originally put there in 1924 with a plaque to memorialize the great trans-continental trek of Sir Alexander Mackenzie. It was one of the first five such cairns built in Canada. In 1985 the Mackenzie plaque was removed and placed in Fort George Park, a more suitable location considering the explorer passed by that spot but not the George Street location. That shift allowed the existing plaque to be

placed on the George Street cairn in 1989 to honour the 75th anniversary of the Grand Trunk Pacific's arrival in Prince George.

The new park will have an array of visual elements, all representative of the local area. Native plants, dry creek beds symbolizing the headwaters of our two great rivers, a stream of exposed aggregate symbolizing the Fraser, the regional museum will bury a time capsule under artistic concrete slabs in the park, and effects will point onlookers to the adjacent Regional District building and down historic George Street.

The building of the Millennium Park amenities are estimated to begin this fall and be

mostly complete by winter. That allows free space there for Summerfest activities this coming weekend. There will be a automobile show 'n' shine, the museum's children's area, a Sweet Adeline's concert and the start of the Saturday morning children's parade will all take place at the Millennium Park site. It is also the site for the B.C. 2000 Homecoming event (2 - 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday). This province-wide campaign saw citizens send official invitations through the government to past residents of B.C., to come

back and visit in 2000.

"I have no idea how many people were invited from Prince George or how many will come back. Other communities do it different ways but we keyed on Summerfest and it was fitting to use Millennium Park," says Judy Dix, a City Hall spokesperson and one of the organizers of the Summerfest events at Millennium Park.

"Hopefully we will get a lot of visitors coming back, but everyone at Summerfest is considered a visitor to old George Street."

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