

# The Lido Theatre: A True Landmark of This Community



Expect the unexpected...dream a little dream...and rock n' roll ain't noise pollution! That is what you will soon be stepping into as you transport yourself back to the future by walking through the front doors of the newly renovated, rejuvenated, and reinvented Lido Theatre. Brian Kirschner, the driving force of the new ownership, has jumped into a pool of possibilities with both feet and with the determination and flare that so few others possess. The Lido Theatre originally opened its doors back in 1957. Those same front doors will be welcoming the public once again in June 2007...Welcome back!

**The Unexpected:** Do you remember the Lido as it was? The ticket booth, the concession, the seating, the big screen and the movies? Well, as you step back into the Lido after an extended absence, keep those memories in your head as you look at the shape of things today. As for the movies, Brian says, "Why not?" It's hard not to get excited about seeing the old classics up on the big screen spanning back over the past 50 years...Have you seen the movie "Bridge on the River Kwai"? It won the Academy Award for Best Picture in 1957. Just think of the nostalgia...Yes, it's all coming back!

**Dream Weaving:** No, this isn't quite Disneyland, but the Lido Theatre has the capacity to fulfill the imaginations of many. Brian Kirschner, is a firm believer in the "build it and they will come" philosophy...Just think of the possibilities for a fully renovated 200 seat room with a stage, lighting and a sound system: Weddings, private parties, fashion shows, karaoke contests, conferences, concerts, comedians, plays, and anything else within the ying & yang of the public's imagination...The Lido Theatre will be yours to rent...What have you got in mind?

**Rock N' Roll:** Yes, it can be summed up in just four letters: L.I.D.O. And in time, the Lido Theatre may soon carry the same significance to many aspiring and inspiring musicians as the legendary Led Zeppelin IV album immortalized by just four magical symbols... This is every local musician's Massey Hall or Orpheum Theatre...this is that dimly lit room filled with nervous anticipation...a stage up front of a 200 seat theatre...the heat of the lights, the buzz of the amps and then rock n' roll...this is where the soul of the artist can mesmerize the crowd...and keep'em coming back for more...

In June 2007, the Lido Theatre will once again be an essential cog of cultural growth for the youth and residents of Fort St. John. This building...the Lido Theatre...is a true landmark of this community...and it is back for your enjoyment.

# New life coming to downtown

## Businesses on 100 Avenue and 102 Street to be joined by reopened Lido

CHRISTOPHER SUN  
ALASKA HIGHWAY NEWS

Last week's opening of a fun and games centre and adjoining Japanese restaurant is just the beginning of a downtown corner in the process of being completely revitalized.

The two new businesses have opened in the former Elena building, which sat vacant for a number of years on the southeast corner of 100 Avenue and 102 Street, next to the Condill. Across the street, the Lido Theatre will be reopening in June and on the northwest corner where the Frontier Inn was located, a proposed mixed residential and commercial development with two 10-storey towers is expected to start construction this year.

"People are seeing the need to invest in Fort St. John," said Mayor Jim Eglinski. "There are some good opportunities ... and people with vision are taking action."

Eglinski figures it will only be a matter of time for the vacant southwest corner to be developed. That piece of private property has been on sale for awhile, but the mayor figures it won't be for long with all the things going in that area.

Chamber of Commerce president Bruce Lantz hopes that corner spurs more development in revitalizing downtown.

"Downtown needed some action for a long time and I'm delighted," Lantz said. "It's all positive and everybody could look forward to more good stuff in downtown I hope."

Lantz added that there are still a number of vacant lots and empty buildings in downtown such as the former Shoppers Drugs Mart building on 100 Avenue, which he would like to see filled. Filling up those empty buildings and constructing new ones in vacant lots will aid further in developing the entire downtown area.

One project that seems to have question marks all over it is the former hotel on the corner of 100 Street and 100 Avenue. A banner in the window indicates the Hotel St. John along with a Japanese restaurant, British pub and nightclub was to open in June 2006, but renovation work seems to have stalled.

"About 70 per cent of it is done," said manager Brian Kim, who also



Christopher Sun/AHN

Brian Kirschner gives a tour of the Lido theatre. It will be reopening in June, joining the Family Fun Centre and adjoining Japanese restaurant, which opened last week, as the intersection of 100 Avenue and 102 Street experiences significant changes. Next up is a mixed residential and commercial project on the northwest corner with two 10-storey towers.

manages the fun centre and restaurant two blocks away. "When we were doing renovations, we bought another building and another building."

Kim explained the renovations took longer than anticipated because the focus turned to fixing up another building that didn't require as much work. But the plan is to open the hotel along with the pub and another Japanese restaurant this summer.

The City has said that the project was stalled at one point last year because the owners didn't have the right permits.

Over at the Lido, new owner Brian Kirschner is hoping to have the theatre doors open in June.

"When people see what the final product looks like, they will be pleased," Kirschner said. "It's going to bring vibrancy to this corner (of town) again."

The Lido was built in 1957 and Kirschner plans to restore it so it brings back some of that 50s and 60s nostalgia.

"As a kid growing up here, I saw many, many movies here," he said. "It was a shame to see it close."

Kirschner added the Lido would be an entertainment venue able to project movies and hold concerts. Seating is being reduced to 200 from 365 to allow for a VIP area and expanded stage and dance floor.



Contributed photo

**The half-century-old Lido Theatre is getting a new look thanks to new owners, and while there have been some delays in re-opening, Brian Kirschner is issuing a challenge to the owners of the long-vacant Fort Hotel. he says the Lido will be open in September.**

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