

# Self-cleaning bathrooms coming to Callander waterfront this summer



David Briggs, [Local Journalism Initiative reporter](#)  
about 23 hours ago



1 / 2 Callander's new bathroom will look much like the one Urben Blu installed in Fort Frances' Legion Park | Image Supplied

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Boaters rejoice as Callander prepares to install a cutting-edge bathroom near the town's dock.

“It’s exciting for us,” Mayor Robb Noon said, “it gives boaters a destination, and opens the doors to the downtown.”

Council recently approved the deal, and this summer, most likely in July or August, the new facility will be installed, to the relief of boaters and walkers alike. In past summers, a porta-potty stood near where the shore meets the dock, but those days are destined for the history books, to circulate in local lore.

Installing the washrooms is a key feature of Callander’s Economic Development Strategy and a goal of the Downtown and Waterfront Revitalization Plan.

The new bathroom exceeds the current set-up in many ways. Here are some highlights. There will be two washroom facilities, and two showers. A fountain and water-bottle filling station will be included. All are fully accessible.

Sensors detect when soap and paper are low and sends word to the Municipal Operations Staff. The inner workings of the bathroom can all be controlled and monitored remotely.



See: [Callander’s lakeside bathroom will open next year](#)

Most impressively, the bathroom cleans itself. It can be programmed to clean itself after each use, or after a set amount of uses. The cleaning cycle takes less than a minute, a staff report explained,

and after it dries (which doesn't take long) the door unlocks automatically. The goal is to cut down on staff labour and save money on routine maintenance.

The self-cleaning bathroom was first implemented in larger European cities, staff noted, but "has become industry standard globally."

Surely, this industry-standard must cost a pretty penny? All in, the cost will be about \$312,000. The municipality has allocated \$300,000 in the 2024 capital budget. The NOHFC Rural Enhancement Funding Stream contributed \$180,000 toward that amount.

Urben Blu, the company that builds the washrooms, will also install it on-site. Urben Blue is based in Boisbriand, Quebec. The municipality sent out a request for the project on February 6, and when the competition closed on March 8, Urben Blu was the choice.

This summer, the company will bring the washroom to the location on a flatbed and crane the building onto the foundation. The municipality must build that foundation and run the water and sewer lines to the site from across the street. It will be located on the edge of the new parking lot on Lansdowne. The bathroom will be just a stone's throw from the lake.

"We keep making small steps each year," to improve the downtown and waterfront areas, Mayor Noon said. "That's the ultimate goal."

### **What is a smart restroom ?**



*David Briggs is a Local Journalism Initiative reporter who works out of BayToday, a publication of Village Media. The Local Journalism Initiative is funded by the Government of Canada.*

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