

# COMMUNICATIONS PLAN AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

## Off-Street Parking and Loading Regulations Update

2025-26

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## 1.0 Project Purpose

The purpose of this project is to comprehensively update and modernize the District of Saanich's off-street parking and loading regulations based on a review of current best practices, technical analysis, and engagement. The goal is to develop a technical and regulatory framework that aligns with Saanich's strategic policies and objectives, as articulated in the Official Community Plan (2024) and Council Strategic Plan (2023-2027).

Modernizing off-street parking and loading regulations will help meet a number of project objectives including to: (1) reduce the need for parking variances, (2) generate cost savings during development that will be passed on to owners/tenants, (3) improve development application processing times, and (4) support broader community goals around housing affordability, sustainable transportation, and GHG emissions reduction.

## 2.0 Communication and Engagement Objectives

This Communications Plan and Engagement Strategy aims to build public and stakeholder understanding of the purpose, scope, and benefits of the off-street parking and loading regulations update. It is designed to ensure that diverse community voices are meaningfully involved in shaping parking policies that affect them. The process will emphasize transparency by providing multiple opportunities for engagement throughout the project's phases. Informed feedback will be collected to help refine technical recommendations and propose new bylaw regulations. Additionally, this strategy seeks to enhance the awareness and capacity of internal staff and Council to support the implementation of modernized, effective parking regulations.

### 2.1 Communications Goal

The communications goal is to provide compelling, factual information that sets the foundation for informed public and stakeholder participation in the process and to build trust between and among key stakeholders.

#### **Communications Objectives:**

1. To provide information on the background and rationale for the off-street parking and loading regulations update.
2. To provide information and facts about the current state of off-street parking and loading in the District of Saanich.
3. To provide information and education on off-street parking and loading regulations in terms of what they are, their purpose and how they are managed.
4. To provide information on the planning and engagement process including scope, timelines, and how input will be used.
5. To provide information on the opportunities to participate in a meaningful way to increase awareness and motivate stakeholders and the public to be involved.
6. To report back to stakeholders and the public on what was heard in the engagement process and to foster understanding about how their feedback was considered in the proposed recommendations for off-street parking and loading regulations.
7. To produce communications materials that are accessible and inclusive for all stakeholders and the public.

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## 2.2 Engagement Goal

The engagement goal is to collect and share information, as well as to raise awareness among stakeholders and the public. To achieve this goal Saanich staff will:

- Share information on the project website and a dedicated *HelloSaanich* project page in the form of website updates and follower emails.
- Collaborate with stakeholders and the public to gather detailed feedback on their priorities and incorporate this input in drafting recommendations.
- Work with the project team, including the consultants and Saanich staff, to make sure that any changes are consistent and solve real challenges.
- Present refined proposed recommendations to advisory groups, stakeholders, the public, and finally to the Mayor and Council.

## 3.0 Key Messages for Communication

The following is a list of key messages for this project:

Communications Concerns	Key Messages for Communication
<b>What is the off-street parking and loading regulations update?</b>	The off-street parking and loading regulations update is a project that will align current parking standards with the District of Saanich’s housing affordability, climate action, and sustainable transportation goals. By utilizing best practices, adhering to pertinent provincial, regional, and District policies, and actively engaging stakeholders and the public, new off-street parking and loading regulations will be proposed to Council that reflect local needs and objectives.
<b>How did the off-street parking and loading regulations update become a priority?</b>	At a Committee of the Whole Meeting on March 18, 2024, Council passed a motion directing staff to propose a Terms of Reference for a modernized off-street parking and loading regulations update. Planning staff brought that Terms of Reference to a Committee of the Whole meeting on January 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2025, where a decision was deferred to a later meeting. On Monday February 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2025, Council decided to suspend the off-street parking and loading regulations update until September 2025, to give planning staff more time to work on other projects.
<b>Why did the District of Saanich make this a priority?</b>	Since the adoption of the Zoning Bylaw in 2003, the District of Saanich's planning and policy framework has evolved significantly to support modernizing its off-street parking and loading regulations to better reflect evolving needs. Although revising these regulations has been part of the District of Saanich’s work plan for some time, progress has been hindered by competing priorities and limited staffing resources.
<b>What is the process for updating the off-street</b>	The process to update the off-street parking and loading regulations will be completed in four phases. We will be seeking input from stakeholders and

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<p><b>parking and loading regulations?</b></p>	<p>the public throughout the process to get engaged and inform them of the updates to the off-street parking and loading regulations.</p>
<p><b>How can members of the public and stakeholders stay up to date?</b></p>	<p>Information about the plan update will be made available on <a href="#">the District of Saanich website</a> and through a dedicated HelloSaanich project page. Stakeholders and the public can sign up to receive updates and advanced notifications of opportunities to engage in the project and provide input.</p>
<p><b>What is the timeline of the off-street parking and loading regulations?</b></p>	<p>The update to the off-street parking and loading regulations will begin in September 2025. Engagement will take place in several rounds, before the final draft of the proposed off-street parking and loading regulation recommendations are brought to Council in late 2026:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Stakeholder engagement</u></b> will take place between September 2025 and August 2026.</li> <li>• <b><u>Public engagement</u></b> will take place from January 2026 to August 2026.</li> </ul>

## 4.0 Engagement Process Overview

The engagement process for the off-street parking and loading regulations update is designed to be transparent, inclusive, and accessible, while providing clear deliverables at each stage. It is designed as a sequenced and iterative journey where each phase builds upon the last. Participants will clearly see how their input is incorporated into decision-making, emphasizing multiple opportunities to engage with ongoing feedback loops.

The process follows the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation, ranging from “Inform” to “Collaborate,” and is delivered in four phases between Fall 2025 and Winter 2026. Each phase will integrate multiple engagement techniques and result in tangible outputs to support decision-making.

### Phase 1 – Initiation & Background Review (Sep–Nov 2025)

This phase will focus on **Informing** stakeholders and the community about the project scope, purpose, and process. It will also confirm the Communications Plan and Engagement Strategy with internal staff and the consultants. The intent is to raise awareness, establish trust, and identify early issues and opportunities. Deliverables will include a finalized Communications Plan and Engagement Strategy and a Draft Background Technical Report.

### Phase 2 – Research & Engagement (Dec 2025–Mar 2026)

In this phase, the focus will be on both **Informing and Consulting**. Broad engagement activities such as online surveys, community pop-ups, and social media campaigns will be complemented by targeted approaches such as focus groups (with technical partners and industry stakeholders) and intercept surveys (at retail and service locations) to capture real-world travel demand and parking behaviour. This phase will produce a deeper understanding of community values, issues, and needs. Deliverables will include a Final Background Technical Report and Engagement Summary Report No.1.

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## Phase 3 – Options Development & Engagement (Apr–Aug 2026)

This phase will focus on **Informing and Consulting**, testing draft recommendations and policy scenarios. Engagement will emphasize two-way and collaborative dialogue, using scenario visuals, focus groups, workshops, internal staff workshops, and community outreach to explore trade-offs and refine options. The outcomes will be validated draft recommendations and a higher level of agreement across stakeholders. Deliverables will include an Off-Street Parking and Loading Regulations Summary.

## Phase 4 – Final Recommendations (Sep–Dec 2026)

The final phase will emphasize **Informing and Consulting**. Updated recommendations will be presented to the public, stakeholders, and Council through virtual webinars, plain-language summaries, online infographics, and in-person Council meetings. The focus will be on showing how input influenced final recommendations and preparing for Council adoption. Deliverables will include the Engagement Summary Report No. 2, Draft Off-Street Parking Bylaw Regulations, the final staff report to Council, presentation materials, and a Final Off-Street Parking Bylaw Regulations.

Phase	IAP2 Level of Public Participation	Primary Engagement Goal
<b>PHASE 1</b> Project initiation & background review (Sep - Nov 2025)	Inform Consult	To provide information that will keep stakeholders and the public up to date and raise awareness of the project.
<b>PHASE 2</b> Research & stakeholder engagement (Dec 2025 - Mar 2026)	Inform Consult	To obtain public and stakeholder feedback on issues and priorities and receive key input on potential future recommendations.
<b>PHASE 3</b> Options development & engagement (Apr - Aug 2026)	Inform Consult Collaborate	To gather and incorporate feedback from engagement. To present recommendations to staff, stakeholders, the public and Council, and incorporate feedback.
<b>PHASE 4</b> Finalize options & Council presentation (Sep - Dec 2026)	Inform Consult	Work with staff and the consultants on an internal review and revisions of the proposed recommendations. To present the final proposed recommendations to Mayor and Council.

## 4.1 Guiding Principles for Engagement

The Engagement Strategy is developed in alignment with IAP2 protocols, its core values, and the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation. Guidance for the engagement process is also provided in the project’s Terms of Reference and by the District’s Public Participation Policy. As identified in the Public Participation Policy, the following five principles will guide all public engagement activities:

- **Inclusiveness:** The District will endeavor to involve and enable the participation of all interested parties across the full range of our diverse population.
- **Transparency:** The District will endeavor to ensure decision processes, procedures and constraints are understood and followed. The purpose and limitations of public participation will be made clear.

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Respective roles and responsibilities will be clearly communicated. Feedback will be provided on what stakeholders said and how their opinion was considered by decision makers.

- **Access:** The District will ensure that accurate information is available to participants in a timely manner.
- **Respect:** Public participation requires the mutual respect of all participants. The District will listen with an open mind and show consideration and value for another person’s point of view.
- **Honesty:** In conducting public participation, the District will demonstrate our core value of honesty; we will tell the truth, follow through on commitments, and act in a trustworthy manner.

## 4.2 Engagement Objectives, Outcomes and Methods by Phase

For each phase of the project, engagement objectives outline the intended purpose, level of engagement, and target audiences. Each phase also identifies the expected outcomes, engagement methods, and key deliverables, as detailed in the table below.

Phase 1 – Project Initiation and Background Review (September to December 2025)		
Key deliverables include:		Lead:
1. A live project website and HelloSaanich page		District of Saanich Staff
2. Finalized Engagement Strategy and Communications Plan		District of Saanich Staff
3. Draft Background Technical Report		The consultant(s)
Objectives	Outcomes	Methods
To <b>Inform</b> stakeholders and the public about the project	Stakeholders and the public are provided with clear information on the purpose, scope, and timeline of the project; awareness is raised and interest in participation is generated	Project website, HelloSaanich project page
To <b>Consult</b> with internal staff and consultants on the Engagement Strategy and Phase 2 engagement approach	Preliminary issues and opportunities are identified; clarity is established on objectives and expectations for upcoming engagement	Online or in-person meetings

Phase 2 – Research and Engagement (December 2025 to March 2026)		
Key deliverables include:		Lead:
1. Engagement Summary Report No.1		The consultant(s)
2. Final Background Technical Report		The consultant(s)
3. Website updates and communications materials		District of Saanich Staff
4. Focus group summaries and workshop notes		District of Saanich Staff
Objectives	Outcomes	Methods
To <b>Inform</b> stakeholders and the public of opportunities for input	Broader awareness of the project and clarity on how and when people can participate	Website updates, email notifications, social media campaigns, print media, and community pop-up events

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To <b>Consult</b> stakeholders and the public on current off-street parking and loading regulations	Key issues, barriers, and ideas identified; perspectives shape a shared vision for draft regulations	Online survey #1, website updates, email notifications
To <b>Consult</b> technical and industry partners on parking and loading needs	Technical feedback informs baseline understanding of demand, challenges, and impacts	Webinars
To <b>Consult</b> the public on real-world parking and loading behaviour	Practical insights into daily practices and challenges	Intercept surveys at retail, restaurant, and service sites, on-site observations

## Phase 3 – Recommendations Development and Engagement (April to August 2026)

Key deliverables include:		Lead:
1. Off-Street Parking and Loading Regulations Summary		The consultant(s) and District of Saanich Staff
2. Focus group summaries and workshop notes		District of Saanich Staff
Objectives	Outcomes	Methods
To <b>Consult</b> the public and stakeholders on draft regulatory options	Draft recommendations are tested and validated; areas of agreement and concern are identified	Online survey #2, webinars, pop-ups, community association outreach
To <b>Collaborate</b> with stakeholders and staff to refine draft recommendations	Stakeholders and staff actively shape recommendations through in-depth discussion and scenario testing	Focus group workshops, internal staff workshops

## Phase 4 –Finalize Recommendations (September to December 2026)

Key deliverables include:		Lead:
1. Engagement Summary Report No. 2		The consultant(s) and District of Saanich Staff
2. Draft Off-Street Parking and Loading Bylaw Regulations		The consultant(s) and District of Saanich Staff
3. Proposed Final Off-Street Parking and Loading Regulations Bylaw		The consultant(s) and District of Saanich Staff
4. Council presentation slides and staff report		District of Saanich Staff
Objectives	Outcomes	Methods
To <b>Inform</b> stakeholders and the public of the final recommendations	Stakeholders and the public are aware of the proposed changes and understand how input shaped the outcome	Website updates, email notifications, HelloSaanich updates
To <b>Consult</b> stakeholders and the public to confirm alignment with community priorities	Feedback confirms that final recommendations reflect public and stakeholder values	Webinars, internal staff reviews
To <b>Inform</b> Mayor and Council	Council is provided with a clear summary of the process, issues, and final recommendations for decision making	Council presentation, Staff report

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## 4.3 Engagement Methods and Communications Tools

- **Project Website:** A project webpage set up on the Saanich website at [Off-Street Parking and Loading Regulations Update | District of Saanich](#) where all details of the off-street parking and loading regulations update will be stored and updated.
- **HelloSaanich:** An online self-registration link will be embedded on the [HelloSaanich webpage](#) to enable the public to follow the project and receive updates.
- **Pop-up Events:** A method of sharing information, raising awareness, and receiving input/comment from the public. Often, this method integrates elements from other information/education-based techniques including public displays that are highly mobile (multiple sites) to achieve a broader reach in the community.
- **Surveys:** An initial survey will be used to collect community feedback to establish support/non-support around key ideas, themes, goals and supporting objectives. A second, feedback survey will be conducted to gather feedback on draft recommendations and regulations.
- **Intercept Surveys:** Short in-person surveys at commercial, institutional, and service sites to understand real-world parking and loading behaviour.
- **Internal Review:** Engage with internal departments to gather feedback on draft recommendations.
- **Stakeholder Meetings:** Facilitated sessions with key stakeholders to explore issues in more depth, designed to mitigate polarized views and identify solutions.
- **Visual & Infographic Communications:** All major engagement summaries and recommendations will be translated into accessible graphics and plain-language materials.
- **Presentation and Report to Council:** Use the project webpage, social media, print media and project notification list to inform the public and stakeholders about the changes to the draft recommendations and when it will be on the Council agenda. This will include information on how to provide further input directly to Council through the finalization process.

The key communication tools that will be used in this project include:

Tool	Where can it be Accessed	Purpose
Off-street parking and loading regulations update project webpage	<a href="#">Project: Off-Street Parking and Loading Regulations Update   The District of Saanich</a>	Primary source for information for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documents</li> <li>• Updates</li> <li>• Links to engagement materials</li> </ul>
Off-street parking and loading regulations update project email	off-streetparking@saanich.ca	Specific updates for stakeholders and subscribers
District of Saanich social media (Facebook, Twitter/X)	<a href="#">District of Saanich Facebook</a> <a href="#">District of Saanich Twitter / X</a>	Broader awareness and timely updates
Pop-ups	Throughout Saanich	Increase visibility and access in public spaces
News Releases and Council Updates	<a href="#">News &amp; Events   District of Saanich</a>	Formal communication for milestones and media outreach

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## 5.0 Governments and Stakeholders

The following table provides a list of stakeholders identified in the Terms of Reference. This list may expand and develop as the project progresses.

Key Stakeholders	
<b>Saanich Council and Committees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mayor and Council</li> <li>• Transportation Advisory Committee</li> <li>• Economic Development Advisory Committee</li> <li>• Housing Affordability Standing Committee</li> <li>• Accessibility, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion AC</li> </ul>
<b>Saanich Internal Departments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning Department</li> <li>• Engineering Department</li> <li>• Sustainability Division</li> <li>• Parks, Recreation and Community Services</li> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• Corporate Services</li> <li>• Legislative and Protective Services</li> <li>• Technical Advisory Committee</li> </ul>
<b>Government and Local Organizations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BC Transit</li> <li>• ICBC</li> <li>• Ministry of Transportation and Transit</li> <li>• BC Housing</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Institutions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School District 61 and 63</li> <li>• Private Schools</li> <li>• University of Victoria</li> <li>• Camosun College</li> </ul>
<b>Neighbouring Municipalities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Victoria, Esquimalt, Oak Bay, View Royal, and Central Saanich</li> </ul>
<b>Non-profit Developers and Housing Providers/Agencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-profit housing providers (e.g., developers, operators, churches)</li> </ul>
<b>Building Development Industry and Business</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial landlords/Rental and strata property management</li> <li>• Construction and design industry</li> <li>• Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• South Island Prosperity Partnership</li> <li>• Car-share companies</li> <li>• Market developers</li> <li>• Urban Development Institute</li> </ul>
<b>Community Members</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Associations</li> <li>• SCAN (Saanich Community Association Network)</li> <li>• General public and residents</li> </ul>

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## 5.1 Roles and Responsibilities

**Saanich Council:** will make the final decision regarding the off-street parking and loading regulations update, with recommendations anticipated for late 2026.

**Planning Staff:** will manage community engagement, integrate feedback into draft recommendations and policy directions, and assist with engagement summaries detailing the feedback received and its influence on recommendations. Preliminary recommendations will be shared before the final report is prepared for Council presentation.

**Internal Departments:** will review draft recommendations for consistency and appropriate applicability. These departments will be referred to at every phase of the project.

**Technical Advisory Committee:** a group of internal staff from multiple departments that will manage the project, reviewing key deliverables, analyzing feedback, proposing recommendations and policy directions, and presenting them to Council. This group will lead communication between staff, the public, stakeholders, and Council.

**Consultants:** will assist with key components such as designing surveys, leading the intercept surveys and site observations, producing engagement analysis reports, and preparing infographic/visual communications.