

Shelbourne Valley Action Plan Update



Engagement Strategy

August 22, 2024

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1. BACKGROUND

The engagement strategy provides a framework to guide the public participation process in the Shelbourne Valley Action Plan update. The strategy articulates the project background and context, the purpose of the engagement, process, including guiding principles, details of activities, target audience and expected outcomes for each phase of the engagement in the update process.

The Shelbourne Valley Action Plan (SVAP) was adopted in 2017, and it provided a comprehensive vision and implementation strategy to guide land use and transportation decisions in the Shelbourne Valley area over a 30-year period. The update is an 11-month process designed to assess the Plan implementation progress and challenges, with a view to determine changes required to address these issues and align the Plan with the Official Community Plan and other recent District-wide initiatives. The updated Plan will be developed through technical analysis and engagement with the public and other key stakeholders in the area. This aligns with Council's Strategic Plan direction to review and assess the need for five-year updates of Centre, Corridor and Village Plans to maintain the relevance and effectiveness of these plans in guiding development and initiatives in Saanich.

The public engagement will allow residents, landowners, housing providers, district staff, other interested parties, and stakeholders to participate in the decision-making process. This will involve a variety of approaches at different phases of the process to ensure diverse inputs.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the public engagement strategy is to provide an accessible, transparent, and inclusive approach to gather feedback and suggestions from the community and other stakeholders on the issues and priorities identified in the terms of reference for the update. The engagement strategy provides detail of how the public and other stakeholders will interact with the project team and Council during the update process. The engagement strategy explains the levels of community engagement (as prescribed by the International Association for Public Participation) in each phase of the project, as well as the desired outcomes. The information obtained through the engagement process will be used to update the plan.

3. SCOPE OF ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

This strategy covers the engagement activities that will take place in all phases of the update process. The Public will be engaged at different levels in each phase of the process, as follows:

	Phase	IAP2 Engagement Level	Scope
Phase 1	Project Initiation and Preliminary Assessment	Inform	Raise awareness and inform stakeholders about the project and future opportunities to participate in the process
Phase 2	Plan Evaluation	Inform Consult Involve	Inform public about the update objectives and process and seek input on community issues and future land use

Phase 3	Plan Update	Inform	Provide status updates on the project and receive additional limited feedback on key issues
Phase 4	Draft Plan Review and Refinement	Inform Consult	Consult on Draft Plan and receive suggestions for revisions
Phase 5	Plan Adoption	Inform	Limited to information on Proposed Plan and how to contribute to Council process

Figure 1: Engagement Scope

The participation goal and promise to the public at each level of engagement is summarized in Figure 2. Note that no phases of the project will include engagement that falls in the Collaborate or Empower levels.

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION					
	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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Figure 2: The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum

4. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The initial step of the engagement process for the SVAP update is to ensure that stakeholders and residents are aware of the project and understand its purpose and timelines. The project website will be updated with information regarding the process, timelines, and deliverables. Additionally, individuals will have the option to register (via the project website) to receive email notifications about the update.

4.1. Guiding Principles

To ensure meaningful participation during the engagement process, this engagement strategy is built on the principles of respect, inclusiveness, transparency, access, and honesty. This is in accordance with the District's Public Participation Policy and the core values of the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2).

- **Inclusiveness:** The District of Saanich will endeavor to involve and enable the participation of all interested parties across the full range of our diverse population.
- **Transparency:** The District of Saanich will endeavor to ensure decision processes, procedures and constraints are understood and followed. The purpose and limitations on public participation will be made clear. Respective roles and responsibilities will be clearly communicated. Feedback will be provided on what stakeholders said and how decision makers considered their opinion.
- **Access:** The District of Saanich 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 of Saanich 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 of Saanich will demonstrate our core value of honesty; we will tell the truth, follow through on commitments, and act in a trustworthy manner.

Figure 3 presents an overview of the guiding principles of the engagement.



Figure 3: Guiding Principles for Meaningful Participation

4.2. Target Participants

A broad spectrum of participants is targeted to be able to make meaningful contribution to the plan update. The expected participants in the engagement include internal and external stakeholders, featuring individuals, interest groups, government and non-governmental organizations that are currently affected, will be affected or interested in the plan. Although the plan update is primarily focused on land use, the engagement activity will endeavour to accommodate discussions on the economic, social, environmental, and other aspects of the plan, and address the concerns of different sub-populations and interest groups.

The target participants for engagement include:

- **Internal stakeholders:** Staff of the District of Saanich from various departments and divisions, including Planning, Engineering, Sustainability, Parks and Recreation, Mayor, and Council.
- **External stakeholders:** Residents in and around the Shelbourne Valley area, future residents, Community Associations, including Camosun, Gordon Head, Mt. Tolmie and Quadra Cedar Hill, Bowker Creek Initiative, landowners, housing providers, developers, business owners, BC Transit, Capital Regional District, City of Victoria, educational and research institutes, advocacy groups, other concerned parties.

Different stakeholders may have varying preferences for how they would like to engage with the District of Saanich and understanding these preferences is key to effective engagement. The engagement strategy leans on previous successes in Saanich, in addition to the needed inputs, demography, geography and scope of the engagement to determine the preferred technique for the sub-populations.

A summary of how the various sub-groups will be engaged is outlined as follows:

- The public will have opportunities to participate in the update through in-person open house events and online webinars, in addition to other techniques outlined in the engagement opportunity by phases.
- Community Associations will be engaged as a focused group. In addition to email and letter correspondence, staff will endeavour to meet with each association in-person to further inform them about the plan, listen to their concerns, feedback, and suggestions.
- Developers, landowners, and housing providers can also attend the open house events and online webinars. Notice of Plan update, including engagement activity schedule will be sent to the registered mailbox of landowners in the area. Focused conversations will be held with housing providers to further clarify their concerns and receive feedback on the viability of proposed land use designations.
- Meetings will be held with the Council Advisory Committees, other government, and non-government agencies to address specific issues as it relates to the Plan.
- The First Nations, lək'wəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples, will be informed about the process and effort will be made to facilitate their participation where required.
- Saanich staff will be engaged throughout the process via direct consultations, workshops, focused discussions, in-person and online meetings, as well and quick chats and drop-ins as needed.

4.3. Equity Analysis

The following actions will be taken to ensure equity, diversity and inclusion during the engagement.

- **Inclusive Invitations:** Invite a diverse range of people to participate in the engagement events.
- **Accessible Venues:** Hold events in places that are easy to get to for everyone (of all ages and abilities); preference for locations with convenient walking, cycling and transit access.
- **Flexible Formats:** Offer meetings at different times with a mix of online and in-person options to accommodate varying schedules and preferences.
- **Accessible Communication:** Use simple language and illustrations for easy understanding of the information being communicated. Information will be available both in digital and print format.
- **Diverse Needs:** Recognize and accommodate the diverse barriers, needs, and priorities of different community segments.
- **Performance Evaluation:** Collect public feedback on the success and inclusivity of events through short surveys. Conduct staff debriefs to review and assess the effectiveness of the engagement efforts and make improvements. Prepare an Engagement Summary highlighting the success and areas for improvement in equity, diversity, and inclusion strategies.

4.4. Engagement by Phases

This section provides details of the objectives, engagement techniques, reporting, and expected outcomes in each phase of the engagement. The information in this section and throughout the document may be updated based on the outcomes of a previous engagement phase.

4.4.1. Phase 1: Project Initiation and Preliminary Assessment (*Inform*)

i. Engagement Objectives:

- Create awareness about the Plan update
- Inform the public of engagement events and opportunities to participate in the update process

ii. **Engagement Techniques:** The main techniques that will be employed in this phase are the project website, email notification list, pop-up event and social media. The project will be hosted within the district's engagement platform, i.e., Hello Saanich, and can be accessed using the following URL: <https://www.saanich.ca/SVP>. Background information regarding the plan, engagement schedules, e-mail notification sign-up link among other relevant information related to the process will be available on the project website.

A pop-up booth will be available at the Quadra McKenzie Plan public event(s) in October 2024 where the public will have an opportunity to pick-up leaflets regarding the update, inquire about the process and share their concerns and suggestions. Pamphlets on the update will also be made available in public centres including libraries and other popular spots in and around the plan area.

iii. **Expected Outcomes:** At the end of Phase 1, the public and all other stakeholders should be aware of the update, including how to find additional information online, contact for inquiries, and engagement opportunities.

4.4.2. Phase 2: Plan Evaluation (*Inform, Consult, Involve*)

i. Engagement Objectives:

- Provide updates on the progress of the plan and related initiatives to the public
- Gather feedback from the public and stakeholders on the assessment of the plan
- Identify and address key issues to achieve plan goals
- Review and gather ideas for future land use designations

ii. Engagement Techniques: Techniques to be employed in Phase 2 include open house, project website, social media, webinar, online feedback, email notification, focused groups, stakeholder meetings and focused conversations.

Open houses will be the primary in-person engagement method that will be used in this phase. The event will be open to all member of the public, other stakeholders and interested parties. Two open house events will be scheduled to allow participation from a diverse population. Considering the linear configuration of the plan area, venues for the open house event will be distributed across the northern, central, and southern regions of the plan area. Accessibility and adequacy of space will be prioritized when selecting these locations.

The Project Manager will meet with each community association to address the objectives of this phase of the engagement. These meetings will be conducted as focused group discussions, providing a platform for each association to collectively express their views. There will also be focused conversations with groups, such as housing providers, BC Transit, CRD's Bowker Creek Initiative, and other advocacy groups to obtain expert opinion and address specific topics related to the plan.

Webinars will be organized for interested participants who are unable to attend in-person events or prefer to engage remotely. There will be two webinar sessions in this phase (one during the day and one at night) to accommodate the varying schedule of different individuals.

The detailed schedule of events will be posted on the project website and social media platforms to ensure that the information reaches a wide audience. The project website will also have an online feedback section where the public can communicate their views and preferences regarding potential changes to the land use designations.

iii. Expected Outcomes: At the end of Phase 2, the public and other interest parties in the Shelbourne Valley Action Plan should have had an opportunity to contribute to the plan update by sharing their ideas and reviewing the potential future direction for the plan. Staff should also have benefited from the community inputs and have a comprehensive record of the public concerns and preferences in view of developing the draft plan. An engagement summary report will be prepared and posted on the project website.

4.4.3. Phase 3: Plan Update (Inform)

i. Engagement Objectives:

- Inform the public about the project status and provide details on the engagement opportunities in Phase 4

ii. Engagement Techniques: The public will have the opportunity to access status updates on the project website and email notifications will be sent to subscribers.

iii. Expected Outcomes: The public will be informed of the project status and when the draft plan is completed.

4.4.4. Phase 4: Draft Plan Review and Refinement (Inform, Consult)

i. Engagement Objectives:

- Inform the public and stakeholders about Phase 3 engagement outcomes
- Present the draft plan to the public and stakeholders for review
- Consult the public and stakeholders to gather feedback on the draft plan

ii. Engagement Techniques: The draft plan will be communicated to the public through two online webinar sessions (afternoon and evening), an open house, presentation at community association meetings and focused conversations with housing providers, and other stakeholders. The project website will contain the detailed draft plan, including presentation documents and recording, schedules, and venues for all the engagement activities. An online feedback mechanism will be provided to the public to provide feedback on the draft plan and subscribers to email notification will continue to receive progress update on project.

iii. Expected Outcomes: At the end of Phase 4, the public and other stakeholders should have had an opportunity to review the draft plan, and the project team should have a good understanding of their concerns, suggestions, and considerations for preparing the proposed plan. An engagement summary will be prepared for Phase 4 to summarize what was heard during the review meetings, next steps and where to find more information about the process.

4.4.5. Phase 5 Engagement: Plan Adoption (Inform)

i. Engagement Objectives:

- Inform the public of proposed plan and Council's public hearing event
- Submit and present the proposed plan to Council for consideration

ii. Engagement Techniques: Project website, email notification list, social media, and public hearing.

iii. Expected Outcomes: The public is informed about how their comments were addressed in the proposed plan and the public hearing schedule. Council provides comments and decides on the Plan. Staff will make a presentation before the public and Council. The presentation including, attendance, public and Council comments and questions will be recorded and available on both the project website and Council Agenda page on Saanich website.

5. COMMUNICATION TOOLS

A summary of the communication tools that will be utilized throughout the project is provided below:

- **Project website:** This website, <https://hello.saanich.ca/en/projects/shelbourne-valley-action-plan-update>, will provide comprehensive project information, reference documents, an email sign-up link, updates, contact details, engagement schedules, and access to live and recorded webinars, presentations, and surveys.
- **Email Notification:** Users can sign up for notifications on the project webpage.
- **District of Saanich platforms:** Information will be shared on Buzz, E-Link, and project webpages.
- **Social media:** Updates will be posted on LinkedIn, Facebook, and 'X' formerly known as Twitter.

- **Print media:** Information will be distributed through newspaper articles, ads, and mailers.
- **Written materials:** Communication will include press releases, backgrounders, FAQs, handouts, reports, factsheets, presentations, and display boards.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The duties of the key actors involved in the Shelbourne Valley Action Plan update is outlined as follows:

- **Project Manager:** The Project Manager oversees the entire process and work with all stakeholders to ensure that timelines are met, and objectives are achieved.
- **District Staff:** Supports the Project Manager in planning and executing engagement activities. Staff members from various departments (Planning, Engineering, Sustainability, Parks, and Recreation) contribute their expertise to inform the process, participate in public consultations, and help analyze feedback.
- **Council:** Saanich Council provides strategic direction, reviews the outcome of the engagement and the proposed plan, and makes final decision on the updated plan.
- **Community Associations:** Comprised of local area residents, these independent groups represent the perspectives and concerns of their members. Community Associations participate in focused group discussions, provide feedback during public consultations, and contribute to shaping the updated plan through their collective input.
- **Public and other Stakeholders:** Participate in the engagement activities by providing input, attending events, and reviewing updates. Their feedback is critical in shaping the plan and ensuring it meets community needs.
- **Engagement Coordinator:** The coordinator organizes the engagement events and manages communication channels, including the project website, social media, email notifications, and print media, between the project team, public and other stakeholders.

7. MEASURING AND EVALUATION

The following assessment will be conducted to measure and evaluate the success of the engagement activities:

- **Participation:** Track the number of participants in each engagement event, including attendance at open houses, webinars, community meetings, online engagement, and email signups. Review the diversity of participants to ascertain the level of representation across different geographies, demographics, and sub-populations in the area.
- **Feedback Quality:** Evaluate the relevance of the feedback received from stakeholders and the public in relation to the engagement objectives and overall plan update.
- **Process Efficiency:** Measure the efficiency of the engagement activities by assessing the effectiveness of communications, adherence to schedules, event organization and delivery.

- **Outcome Evaluation:** Analyze the extent to which the engagement objectives were met, including the adequacy of public consultation and how the feedback influenced the final plan.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Obtain and review participant feedback about the process of engagement itself through brief surveys to identify what went well and what did not.
- **Reporting:** Summarize activity in Engagement Summary Reports, highlighting key metrics, feedback received, and the effectiveness of the engagement strategy.