

MINUTES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Council Chambers and via MS Teams
770 Vernon Avenue
September 4, 2025, at 5:30 PM

ROLL CALL

In Attendance: Councillor Karen Harper (Chair), Jason Arruda, Amber Hockin (via Teams), David Lewis, Rachid Ouache, Ingrid Strauss, and Robert Wickson (via Teams)
Regrets: Tim Petropoulos, Russ Benwell, Richard Michaels, and Raymond Chan
Staff: Mitchell Edgar, Economic Development Manager; Jon Poole, Development Planning Process Manager (via Teams); Sharon Froud, Deputy Corporate Officer, Kirsten Blackstock, Economic Development Coordinator, Alfonso Molina, Committee Clerk Assistant

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOVED by J. Arruda and Seconded by I. Strauss: “That the Minutes of the Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting held June 25, 2025, be adopted as circulated.”

RESULT: Carried 7 TO 0

IN FAVOUR: Harper, Arruda, Hockin, Lewis, Ouache, Strauss, Wickson

OPPOSED: None

R. Wickson, who was absent from the previous EDAC meeting, expressed concern that the Tillicum–Burnside Action Plan process appears to duplicate prior work undertaken by the community in 2005–2008 and adopted by Council. The Chair indicated that the concern would be included in the minutes.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS ITEMS

CHAIR’S REMARKS

The Chair noted an addition to the agenda: Item 4: Economic Development Office Update. R. Wickson requested consideration of an additional agenda item –Transportation and Economic Development.

PERMIT APPLICATION MODERNIZATION (PAM)

The Development Planning Process Manager provided a detailed presentation and update on the Permit Application Modernization (PAM) project, noting progress since the June 2024 report to EDAC.

Committee discussion included:

- Clarification on how interdepartmental issues (e.g., Parks vs. Engineering requirements) are resolved; the Development Planning Process Manager confirmed planners coordinate internally and escalate as needed.
- Use of metrics to assess whether historic internal processing timelines remain realistic; data informs achievable performance targets.
- Benefits of data visualization for workload management and staff support.
- Positive feedback on the collaborative approach and transparency for applicants.

SOUTH ISLAND PROSPERITY PARTNERSHIP (SIPP)

Aaron Stone, CEO, and Dallas Gislason, Deputy Director, Regional Economic Development presented the framework for SIPP's forthcoming Five-Year Economic Development Plan and asked EDAC for feedback on the accompanying SWOT analysis deliverable. As the Plan is not yet finalized, SIPP shared the process-to-date and sought early input so EDAC can provide timely feedback when the complete draft is ready. SIPP requested consideration of the following motion:

"That the Saanich Economic Development Committee:

- Review and provide feedback on SIPP's Regional SWOT Analysis
- Endorse the Rising Economy 2030: SIPP 5-Year Regional Economic Development Plan
- Recommend that Saanich Council approve a renewed 5-Year funding agreement with the South Island Prosperity Partnership, effective April 2026."

To allow sufficient time for review and discussion, the Committee agreed to hold a special one-hour meeting in October (via Teams) for focused consideration of the SIPP materials.

MOVED by J. Arruda and Seconded by I. Strauss: "That EDAC hold an one-hour meeting in October to consider the SIPP presentation and related recommendations."

RESULT: Carried 7 TO 0

IN FAVOUR: Harper, Arruda, Hockin, Lewis, Ouache, Strauss, Wickson

OPPOSED: None

ROUND TABLE

Economic Development Office Update: The Chair noted this item would be added to a future meeting agenda.

Transportation and Economic Development Discussion: The Chair noted this item would be added to a future meeting agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by D. Lewis and Seconded by J. Arruda: "That the meeting be adjourned at 7:35 p.m."

RESULT: Carried 7 TO 0

IN FAVOUR: Harper, Arruda, Hockin, Lewis, Ouache, Strauss, Wickson

OPPOSED: None

CHAIR

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

DEPUTY CORPORATE OFFICER