

SAANICH GOVERNANCE REVIEW

**Report of the
Governance Review Citizen Advisory Committee**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Presented to Saanich Council
October 23, 2017**

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

During the November 15, 2014 local government elections, eight municipalities in the capital region included a non-binding question on the ballot to determine the level of community support for either amalgamation or a review of governance within the region. The questions varied, but most called for public consultation and a provincial study on amalgamation and regional governance.

Saanich voters were asked:

“Do you support Council initiating a community-based review of the governance structure and policies within Saanich and our partnerships within the Region?”

Over 88% of those who voted indicated “Yes.”

In December 2014, Council passed a motion to request staff to prepare a report indicating how a governance review might be structured and carried out in accordance with the ballot question. CitySpaces was contracted to assist in determining a process for conducting the governance review. A working group was formed, comprising members of the District’s Advisory Committees and two members of the Saanich Community Associations Network (SCAN). The group held meetings in September 2015 and January 2016 to discuss the purpose, roles, and terms of reference for the Governance Review Citizens Advisory Committee (GRCAC), as well as the criteria and methodology for identifying members and alternates for the Committee. In early February 2016, Saanich Council reviewed the report of the working group and approved 13 members and two alternates to form the GRCAC. The first GRCAC meeting was held March 30, 2016.

The consulting firm of Sirius Strategic Solutions was contracted for the period October 2016 to October 2017 to provide support to the committee with respect to planning and facilitating public engagement, development of educational and promotional materials, and providing advice in the fulfillment of the committee mandate.

The GRCAC Terms of Reference can be found in Appendix A.

Objectives of Governance Review

The committee’s objectives were:

- a) To undertake a review of the governance structure and policies within the District of Saanich and its partnerships within the region and report to Council with recommendations for its consideration;
- b) To prepare a series of educational materials that enable residents and stakeholders to be productively involved in the consultation process; and
- c) To consult broadly with Saanich residents and Saanich-based stakeholders related to governance, ensuring a diversity of opportunities for input and feedback.

1.2 Governance Review Methodology

The GRCAC developed a comprehensive engagement and communication program, with multiple opportunities available for the public and stakeholders to provide input to the review. Formal engagement got underway on February 9, 2017, with a media event to launch the process.

Engagement Launch February 9, 2017



GRCAC Chair John Schmuck and Saanich Mayor Richard Atwell

Engagement methods included:

- **Online Consultation** – a survey was available through PlaceSpeak (<https://www.placespeak.com>) on the Saanich website from March 1 to June 15 (extended from May 31), along with Polls and a Discussion Forum.
- **Public Meetings** – the committee hosted four public meetings to allow opportunities for broader discussion: two Workshops, and two Town Halls. These were designed to accommodate as many residents as possible, with two different formats, and both daytime and evening sessions available on weekdays and weekend.
- **Targeted Engagements (Focus Groups)** – key stakeholder groups were invited to meet with the committee for facilitated discussions.
- **Written Submissions** – a committee-managed email address was set up to receive submissions and questions (saanichgovernancereview@shaw.ca).
- **Pop-up Events** – booths at shopping centres, Saanich Cycling Festival, University of Victoria and Camosun College, to provide information and engage in discussion in high traffic locations.

GRCAC Pop-up at Saanich Cycling Festival



Many tools were employed to inform the public about the governance review and governance in general, and raise awareness of the engagement opportunities and ways to be involved. These included:

- ❖ ongoing updates on GRCAC site on the Saanich website
- ❖ educational materials distributed and available on the website
- ❖ advertising and promotional materials – posters and rack cards, newspaper ads (Saanich News), Facebook ads
- ❖ social media posts (Facebook, Twitter)
- ❖ articles and references in Community Association newsletters and websites
- ❖ media launch in February and radio and print interviews by Committee Chair
- ❖ experts from the UVic School of Public Administration

Committee members met monthly in open meetings, often with guest speakers, to review progress and set direction. The committee formed working groups for in-depth discussion and assessment of issues and feedback, and subsequently developed 30 recommendations in three major thematic areas. (See Section 4 for the Committee Recommendations).

Details on engagement and communication activities can found in Appendices B and C.

1.3 Public Participation

Although the feedback received was thoughtful and well considered, the number of participants in the survey and the public meetings was disappointingly low. Some people participated in more than one type of engagement, so while we can identify the overall number of participants in the many forms of engagement carried out, we cannot determine how many unique voices were represented.

Despite offering numerous opportunities for public involvement, various methods to provide feedback, and considerable promotion of the opportunities, participation levels in the engagements represented less than 1% of the Saanich population.

Table 1 – Engagement Events by Participants

Type of Engagement	# Events	# Participants
Survey	1	251
Workshops and Town Halls	4	122
Written submissions	n/a	17
Targeted Engagements (Focus Groups)	13	73
“Coffee chats” and ad hoc meetings with community groups	7	11
Ad-hoc/pop-up events	5	Unknown
Total	29	474
% of Saanich population (based on 114,148 per 2016 Census)		< 1%

2. DEFINITION OF GOVERNANCE¹

2.1 Components of Good Governance

There are many interpretations of governance, but it is fundamentally about how governments and organizations ensure that they are doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest, accountable manner.

Governance includes all the systems and processes, values and rules that are designed to coordinate and control an organization's actions, decisions and resources, and how the organization engages and involves citizens. Good governance facilitates good:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| ✓ Decision-making | ✓ Meeting procedures |
| ✓ Management | ✓ Stewardship of public money |
| ✓ Performance | ✓ Council-staff relationship & conduct |
| ✓ Service protocols | ✓ Public engagement |
| ✓ Policies and practices | |

2.2 Governance Framework used in this Review

The review focused on, but was not limited to, the following key components of governance as the basis for discussions:

- ❖ **Authority**
 - Lines of authority between Council and staff, clarity around functions
 - Strategic leadership, including articulation of vision, purpose and outcomes
 - Regulatory processes and how they are exercised
- ❖ **Accountability**
 - Degree and scope of public engagement
 - Public reporting of progress and activities
 - Timeliness and responsiveness
 - Compliance with strategic plan, financial plan, policy and regulation
 - Standards of conduct and behaviour
- ❖ **Decision-making**
 - Transparency of decision-making process
 - Degree to which decision makers are well informed, and supported by objective, quality information and advice
 - Management of risk
 - Public consultation and engagement
- ❖ **Continuous Improvement**
 - Development of Council and staff capacity and capability
 - Regular evaluation and course correction
- ❖ **Regional Role**
 - Relationships between local governments, Capital Regional District, First Nations, and provincial and federal governments
 - Partnerships and collaborations

The GRCAC further reviewed these components in the context of Internal, External and Regional governance and relationships, policies, and structures.

3. OVERVIEW OF SAANICH and REGIONAL GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORKS

3.1 District of Saanich Roles and Responsibilities

In British Columbia, the *Community Charter* and the *Local Government Act* give local governments, led by their municipal councils, the authority to do such things as adopt bylaws and establish policies to guide the development and operation of the municipality, to set budgets and levy taxes, all for the benefit and protection of its citizens.

Saanich Council consists of a Mayor and eight Councillors who are elected to represent the municipality.

3.1.1 Council

The *Council Procedure Bylaw* stipulates that every Council member has the following responsibilities:

- to consider the well-being and interests of the District and its community;
- to contribute to the development and evaluation of the policies and programs of the District respecting its services and other activities;
- to participate in Council meetings, Committee of the Whole meetings, committee meetings and meetings of other bodies to which the member is appointed;
- to carry out other duties assigned by the Council; and,
- to carry out other duties assigned by or under the *Community Charter* or any other Act.

Council members must also abide by confidentiality rules, conflict of interest guidelines and other requirements of the District's Code of Conduct. (See section 3.1.5 for an overview of the Code of Conduct).

3.1.2 Mayor

The Mayor is the Head and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the District, with a statutory responsibility to provide leadership to the Council. In addition to his role as a member of Council, the Mayor has the following responsibilities:

- to recommend bylaws, resolutions and other measures that, in the Mayor's opinion, may assist the peace, order and good government of the District;
- to provide, on behalf of the Council, general direction to municipal officers respecting implementation of policies, programs and other directions of Council;
- to establish standing committees;
- to suspend municipal officers and employees in accordance with the *Community Charter*;
- to reflect the will of Council and carry out other duties on behalf of Council; and
- to preside at Council meetings when in attendance.

The Mayor of Saanich is also the Chair of the Saanich Police Board.

3.1.3 Chief Administrative Officer and Staff

The Council's sole employee is the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). All other municipal employees are accountable to the CAO. The CAO is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the District and the implementation of the strategic direction set by Council. The Saanich Police Department reports to the Police Board, not the CAO.

3.1.4 Committees

Saanich has many committees and boards in place, the majority of which are intended to provide advice to Council. There are three primary types of committees that the Mayor or the Mayor and Council may establish – Standing, Select and Advisory. There are also statutory boards and authorities that senior levels of government establish, and technical committees that come together to deal with specific technical items.

More information on the committees is available on the Saanich website at <http://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/local-government/committees-boards.html>

a) Advisory Committees

Advisory Committees (AC) are established by Council, and are chaired by a Council member, except the Advisory Design Panel and the Governance Review Citizen Advisory Committee, which have no Council representatives. The Mayor is an ex officio member of each Advisory Committee (except the GRCAC). Advisory Committees make recommendations to Council on subjects within the scope of their Terms of Reference, and represent an opportunity for the public to have input and influence on municipal issues. Members are recruited through a public selection process, with applicants reviewed and approved by Council. Meetings are open to the public. Information on the Advisory Committees and membership is maintained on the Saanich website.

3.1.5 Code of Conduct

Council approved a Code of Conduct in November 2016. This policy applies to all council members and the Chief Administrative Officer, setting minimal behavioural expectations for carrying out their functions. This includes five key principles that reflect good governance:

- Integrity
- Accountability
- Leadership
- Respect
- Openness

The Code of Conduct also speaks to the interactions of Council with staff and advisory body members.

3.1.6 Decision-Making Processes

The powers, duties and functions of a municipality are exercised by Council bylaw or resolution at a Council meeting. Authority for certain decisions may be delegated to staff.

The Official Community Plan (OCP), Strategic Plan, Financial Plan, and formal policies are key resources for Council decision-making.

In Saanich, along with Advisory Committees, Community Associations (CAs) provide input on matters before Council. The CA role extends to land use-planning matters. Development permit applicants are encouraged to consult with the relevant CA prior to taking their proposal to Council.

Public participation also plays a role in decision-making. Saanich conducts extensive public engagement on many topics. Staff and Council review that feedback for planning purposes, and as issues are considered. Public input can also be provided at Council meetings and Public Hearings. However, Council retains the final authority and responsibility for all decisions.

3.2. Stewardship Role: Financial Management and Budget Process

3.2.1 Financial Planning

The *Community Charter* requires that the District of Saanich approve a five-year financial plan each year prior to finalizing its budget through the adoption of the annual property tax bylaw. This document includes the primary financial and technical details for the budget process. Contextual information is provided through a community and organization profile, along with budget planning issues. Budget guidelines, policy and principles provide the final elements of context for the majority of the document, which focuses on the general operating fund and the general capital program.

3.2.2 Budget Planning

Saanich has also produced another document that outlines its budgeting context and process. “Municipal Budgeting, Understanding the Budget Process”, has been developed to help the public better understand the municipal budgeting process. It contains the District’s overall financial principles, information on revenue sources and expenditures. In addition, it provides a summary of Saanich’s budgeting process

Budget meetings are held from February through April each year. The first budget meetings focus on departmental operations. At the meetings, each department presents their budget in turn and highlights any particular pressures or opportunities they may be facing in the coming year. These are open meetings held in “Committee of the Whole” style. This means that at the beginning of each meeting an opportunity is available for the public to contribute their thoughts and suggestions or ask questions.

Saanich conducts regularly scheduled citizen and business surveys. These are comprehensive surveys designed to garner public input that can be used to inform the

budget process. The surveys are a key method for public participation. Both surveys were last conducted in 2015.

3.2.3 Asset Management

Attention to asset management is found in different ways in Saanich's governance framework. First, the Strategic Plan contains many indicators of service excellence; one of them being "provide best value for money"². The key initiative listed here is to implement business technology resource planning to ensure that technological capabilities meet desired business and organizational objectives.

A second service excellence initiative involves enhancing the use of information technology by implementing asset management. A corporate wide asset management system will improve the District's ability to track, assess and manage the long-term maintenance, repair and replacement needs of the assets under its stewardship.

A third element related to asset management is captured under the indicators for a healthy community. The strategy is to sustain community infrastructure by planning for the use and management of parkland and open spaces. Saanich is committed to providing both natural and developed parkland and open spaces that support a high quality of life. It has committed to developing plans over the next five years for the management and use of five key areas.

The strategic plan also includes indicators of a vibrant, connected economy, with a goal to sustain community infrastructure. Saanich has a long-term objective of reducing the gap between the actual and required capital investment for the replacement of municipal infrastructure.

3.3 Strategic Planning

3.3.1 Strategic Plan

In August 2017 Saanich Council approved an updated four-year Strategic Plan (the Plan). Strategic plans are developed early in the new Council term and are typically reviewed three times per year, and updated as needed. The Plan takes its overall direction from the Saanich vision articulated in the OCP. The Strategic Plan links to the Financial Plan, the Official Community Plan, and priorities and initiatives from other key strategic documents such as Local Area Plans, Capital Plans, Master Plans and Citizen and Business Surveys.

The Citizen and Business Surveys provide an opportunity for public input to the Strategic Plan. Currently these surveys are undertaken every three years. In recognition of the longer four-year election cycle, is expected that Saanich will conduct the surveys every two years, to provide greater opportunities for input and generate more current and relevant information.



(Graphic: Saanich website, 2017)

The Strategic Plan is structured around three broad focus areas or community themes. Each of these core themes is aligned with two corporate themes, and these in turn link to a set of corporate objectives. Departmental work plans are intended to align with the overall corporate direction and incorporate corporate objectives and initiatives. Departments are accountable for monitoring and reporting on their progress in achieving objectives and targets/indicators.

In describing the approach to achieving the vision, the Strategic Plan states: “The policies adopted by Saanich Council in the Official Community Plan express the fundamental shared values and goals of the community and establish the direction for achieving a collective vision. The Saanich Vision tells us where the community wants to go but not how to get there. The OCP guides the direction, while the Strategic Plan sets the priorities, focusing energy on what is most important and clearing a path to move us forward from where we are today to where we want to be in the future.”³

3.3.2 Progress Reporting

Key Performance Indicators have been used for some time in Saanich to monitor and measure progress toward achieving Council priorities articulated in the Strategic Plan. The Plan identifies Short (Annual), Mid-Range (3 to 5 years), and Long-Term Indicators for the Community and Corporate Themes. A comprehensive set of indicators is provided, along with an explanation of how they are calculated, which facilitates understanding and transparency. Progress on the indicators is reported through the Annual Report.

3.4 Capital Regional District Structure

The Capital Regional District (CRD) is the regional government for 13 municipalities and three electoral areas on southern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands, serving more than 383,000 citizens. It is governed by a 24-member Board of Directors and supported by more than 75 committees and commissions. The Board provides a political forum for representation of regional residents and communities and a vehicle for advancing the interests of the region. Board

meetings are held once a month and are open to the public. The Board is composed of one or more elected officials from each of the local governments within the CRD's boundaries. Each local government has one director position on the Board for every 25,000 people (or portion thereof). The directors also sit as members of the Capital Regional Hospital District Board.

Currently, Saanich Council is represented on the CRD Board by five Directors (Mayor and four Councillors). Other Councillors are designated alternates.

3.4.1 Regional Responsibilities

The CRD provides regional decision-making on issues that transcend municipal boundaries. Its authority is derived from Letters Patent, through Establishment Bylaws and generally from provincial legislation, primarily *the Local Government Act* and the *Community Charter*.

The services provided by the CRD are numerous and include animal care and control, parks and trails, as well as regional housing and solid waste and recycling. Each service has a defined set of participants, a specified purpose and scope and method of cost recovery. A complete list of services can be found in Appendix E.

3.4.2 Partnering Agreements

As a local government and shared services provider, the CRD develops partnerships to facilitate and deliver projects and services that benefit municipalities, electoral areas, First Nations and the region as a whole. It also operates where municipal collaboration is required to achieve economies of scale. The CRD has over 200 service, infrastructure and financing agreements with municipalities and electoral areas to deliver services in the following categories:

- **Regional** – where all municipalities and electoral areas are served;
- **Sub-regional** – where two or more jurisdictions are served;
- **Local** – in the electoral areas where the CRD is the local government.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Early in its discussions, the committee identified three themes and has assessed the findings according to these themes. These are “Internal Governance”, which includes the operations of Council and staff, “Community Engagement” with stakeholders (also referred to as “external” governance), and “Regional Governance”. The latter was meant to capture the request to the committee from Saanich to review its relationships within the region.

The committee arrived at these three themes through two “search sessions” facilitated by CitySpaces consultants during the committee’s initial meetings in April 2016. During these sessions, these thematic groupings emerged as the framework to capture all the issues raised. The committee recognized that there was some overlap between them, but feel that these three themes have served us well in organizing our findings and recommendations.

The charge to the committee was to examine the governance structure and policies of Saanich. We have tried to keep to this division but there are overlaps that cannot be avoided. And not all matters of governance in Saanich are structural or policy related. There are procedural matters, as well as the sense of corporate culture that do not fit nicely into one category or the other.

During our work, we recognized that local government is the closest government to the people it serves, where citizen involvement can have real impact, and where the principal powers revolve around delivering municipal services and regulating land use. The larger questions of land use and related concerns about environmental quality, transportation systems, emissions and climate change, water use, resource recovery, etc. are also regulated or influenced by larger governance systems. While the committee has necessarily focused on a narrow range of governance matters, we draw attention to this larger canvas.

The recommendations in this report are informed by the results of our consultations (see Appendix D), our own research, information the committee received over the past year, and committee discussions. They are aimed at improving governance by addressing both structure and policy-related governance issues that were raised.

4.1 INTERNAL GOVERNANCE

Topics explored:

- Leadership
- Bylaws
- Budget Process

4.1.1 Leadership

Leadership is not really a structural or policy matter, but it goes to the heart of good governance. Political leadership in a democracy is a complicated process as the selection of candidates depends very much on the collective judgement of voters being applied to those who step forward to run.

The process can only work effectively if voters are sufficiently engaged in the electoral campaign to choose wisely and they remain engaged afterwards to judge the effectiveness and direction taken of those they elect to represent their interests. Saanich, like most Canadian municipalities, has a low voter turnout and an even lower degree of engagement in the daily affairs of Council. Without stronger citizen participation, Council faces greater uncertainty when trying to lead, because they lack a strong mandate from voters. Arguably, they are also left with too much latitude and too little oversight. These challenges are compounded by the fact that Council must work as a team.

Structure of Council

The council is structured the same way as other municipal councils in BC. The mayor is the “first among equals”. Council is responsible to consider and debate issues before them but must ultimately speak with one voice. People look to the Mayor and Council for overall leadership. Citizens want to see that their elected officials are the ones that lead and are in overall charge of municipal government.

We have only the present council to examine, although several councillors served in past councils before the 2014 election. While the present council has strength in the experience and dedication to public service, we find though that the present council tends to react rather than lead. An example of this has been shown with the outcome and approach to addressing the Environmental Development Permit Area (EDPA) issue.

Citizens have an expectation that council leads, and that councillors park their personal agendas at the door and work together with the guidance of the mayor. In our opinion, collaborative relations between members of council could be improved. A number of the councillors have been on council for many terms. Some are, in effect, career politicians. We presume they see themselves as busy managing the business of the city, which in some respects, is understandable. Except, that is not their job.

(a) Findings

- Council’s role is to establish direction, including policy and strategic direction, and hold staff accountable for achieving those directions. Council, through the CAO, has a staff to manage the business of the city. Council does not exist to manage, but to lead.
- Several citizens told us that they found Saanich is easy to work with, but by far the majority claimed that city officials can be unreasonable, slow, autocratic, and can show hostility and disrespect toward citizens and taxpayers.
- The Saanich bureaucracy has been described as having a culture of non-cooperation and even obstruction, rather than service delivery. We also heard that citizens are reluctant to question or criticize staff, lest they be subject to obstinacy or reprisals.
- Many of the behaviours noted above can be attributed to weak leadership. Instead of being inspired and led by Council, and having Council set the tone for dealing with the public, employees are perceived to do as they wish. In order to lead, Council needs to be prepared for leadership. Both staff and councillors are capable of “upping their game” in this respect.

- Corporate culture in Saanich, as well as service delivery concerns, are in part the result of a lack of clear direction from Council, and holding senior staff accountable for outcomes, including high standards of service to the public. Giving direction and insisting on accountability is the primary job of Council.
- We found much frustration over how long it takes for the District to issue permits and approvals. Such approvals are not guided by enforced timelines. Delays and slowness in approvals means that investors, developers and businesses are locating elsewhere, thereby depriving Saanich of tax revenues, and residents of needed services. Concerns were raised that the District can be arbitrary and even antagonistic when dealing with developers, and has implemented bylaws such as the EDPA in a manner that has aroused public anger.
- Council spends what seems like excessive time on minor decisions that could be made by staff, and not enough time framing policy and giving direction.
- Renewal of the public membership on several of council's advisory committees is overdue, as some members have served for 20 years or more. There must be an opportunity for others to serve.
- There was support for time limits for serving on council (and virtually none in support of the existing situation). Term limits would resolve concerns we heard that councillors go past their "best before" date; would permit fresh ideas and perspectives more frequently, and prevent what amounts to career politicians in Saanich. However, we see the real problem is not how long councillors serve, it's how little public engagement there is in civic elections and subsequent holding of elected officials to account. It should be the electorate that imposes term limits, particularly on councillors who do not perform well. Finding ways to improve civic engagement is the principal and central challenge in Saanich.
- Advisory Committees were seen as an important component of governance in Saanich, but not used as effectively as they could be.

(b) Recommendations

1. Enhance functioning of Advisory Committees through:
 - a. Term limits for Advisory Committee members of six years maximum. (This is the term of Advisory Committees in the CRD).
 - b. Annual review of Terms of Reference for each committee at the beginning of each year to keep things on track, and encourage members to bring forward agenda items.
 - c. Co-chair arrangement with a council member and citizen member elected by the committee. Advisory Committee citizen co-chairs, not Councillors, should report to Council regularly.
2. Establish a two-term limit on serving on Council. After that, a candidate would have to step aside for a term before running again.

This may not be supported by current legislation, but it was felt that Saanich could request the Province, through the UBCM, to enable this approach.

3. Limit the use of in-camera meetings and explain why an agenda item is being addressed in-camera, e.g., personnel, land or labour issue.

This will address the public perception that council does too much business “in secret”. Perhaps more explanation of why meetings are being held in-camera would be helpful in changing this perception and increasing public confidence and transparency.

4. Compile and release Council meeting agenda packages earlier, by mid-week of the week prior to the meeting.

This will require an adjustment in the short-term to move up report submission deadlines, but will provide the public with more time to plan and formulate responses to agenda items.

5. Provide leadership training for Councillors at a minimum of once per term.

It is critical that councillors are all on the same page with respect to what it means to serve on a fiduciary board.

6. Adopt Policy Governance as an alternative governance model to enhance council leadership and accountability.

The use of a qualified consultant to do the training is required.⁴ Policy Governance, if properly implemented, is a governance model that would directly address and strengthen methods, policies and procedures for improved leadership and accountability. It will also clarify roles, lines and limits of authority, and the relationship between council, the CAO, and staff. Adopting and using the Policy Governance model offers a very good chance for council to get and stay in control of giving direction, clarifying the outcomes it wants, and demanding accountability.

7. Appoint an ongoing Citizens’ Strategic Plan Advisory Committee to review performance against the strategic plan on a quarterly basis and make recommendations to Council on annual strategic plan objectives, desired outcomes and targets. Results should be reported publicly.

The review should be transparent and provide an opportunity for input from Community Associations, Advisory Committees and members of the public.

8. Examine past council agendas and minutes, and create a list of the types of decisions that are related to setting direction, and the type that can easily be made by staff with criteria set by council. Further consider restricting the agenda to the former wherever possible, and approve decision-making criteria for staff to do the latter, within an accountability framework. Make this process as transparent as possible.

9. Conduct minor updates to the Official Community Plan (OCP) every five years with an holistic review being done every ten years, through a consultative and transparent process. After each update, update each Local Area Plan every three years.

Best practices and feedback from our consultations require the OCP to be up-to-date to remain relevant and keep pace with the changing needs of the community.

10. Place the job descriptions for the CAO and Directors on the website, along with the service delivery plans, targets, performance measures and progress updates for each department, to provide greater clarity and transparency for the public.

4.1.2 Bylaws

Municipal bylaws are a manifestation of a particular set of council decisions and thus looking at the way they are used provides a useful measure of transparency and accountability of at least one dimension of our governance system. Governance is not just about making decisions but is also about taking reasonable steps to ensure consistent implementation of those decisions. In our view, an examination of Saanich's bylaw system provides a practical means to examine the consistency between council decisions and the action outcomes that follow.

Bylaws are a reflection of the values of the community, which may evolve over time. For bylaws to be effective, the public must have confidence that they are implemented and applied with the principle of administrative fairness, which is "an overall approach to decision-making that is transparent, fair and accountable".⁵

Saanich has a reasonably well-established set of bylaws, which set out a regulatory framework for matters within the competence of municipal authorities. Though there are some curious anomalies, such as an extant bylaw on testing nuclear weapons and several bylaws confusing anyone who wishes to construct a dwelling, garden or build a fence, the bylaws are largely relevant and useful, and are available online in an easy to read format.

However, the enforcement system for property maintenance and nuisance behaviour bylaws is complaint driven and is seen by many respondents as unfair and open to abuse where neighbours fall out with each other or where prejudice rears its head. Others noted that bylaws could simply be ignored if one had good relations with neighbours or simply wanted to avoid starting an exchange of complaints. Biblical injunctions against casting the first stone notwithstanding, the current enforcement system encourages a *laissez-faire* attitude towards a cluster of bylaws dealing with property maintenance at the same time as it opens the door to vindictive use of the system.

Leaving enforcement dependent on individual citizens making complaints also allows for a form of harassment to develop. This, at the very least, undermines the credibility of local government and renders the whole process of creating bylaws somewhat moot as they appear neither consistently respected nor rigorously enforced. In addition, since there is currently no system to apply sanctions to vindictive use of the complaint system, the current enforcement policy puts

enforcement officers in the awkward position of having to make ad hoc judgements in those cases where complaints are used for purposes other than those for which they were enacted.

Since the system depends on neighbours “snitching” on each other, whole neighbourhoods can, and do, slide into neglect because property owners find snitching distasteful. For example, one can find numerous violations of bylaws pertaining to derelict vehicles over height fences or unkempt property in many parts of Saanich. The reason for this seems to be that bylaws are not enforced unless a neighbour decides to make a personal issue out of a perceived violation.

Finally, it is noteworthy that Saanich is the largest municipality in the Province (by population) that does not use Bylaw Notices as permitted by the *Local Government Bylaw Notice Enforcement Act*. In the Capital region, the City of Victoria, and Esquimalt have Bylaw Notices available as an enforcement tool. While there may be valid reasons that Saanich has made this choice, they are unclear to the GRCAC.

(a) Findings

- When Council goes to the trouble and expense of enacting a bylaw intended to improve, protect or enhance the living conditions of all Saanich residents, then the bylaw should be binding on everyone. There is no point in having bylaws that are not enforced fairly and consistently. They are ineffective.
- The GRCAC public outreach generated many comments, some quite passionate, regarding the Saanich bylaw enforcement system. It must be said though that the amount of public comment was low relative to the size of the population. The lack of general comment and the lack of public agitation on this issue, taken together with the few somewhat strident voices speaking out on it suggest that, in the main, Saanich residents accept the “live and let live” approach to enforcement unless they have been directly affected in some way, in which case it becomes personal.
- Some respondents observed that the present enforcement system lacks due process, and appears to be inconsistently and arbitrarily enforced.
- The EDPA is a prime example of a bylaw resulting in a strong backlash. A cursory study of the issue suggests that there is a persistent gap between Council intention, as articulated in the approved bylaw, and implementation and enforcement, that seems to go beyond reasonable limits. So far, the EDPA, despite the strong public consensus supporting environmental protection, has been divisive and, in the perception of many affected property owners, grossly unfair.

(b) Recommendations

1. Adopt the best practices outlined in "Bylaw Enforcement: Best Practices Guide for Local Governments, Special Report No. 36 to the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, March 2016" by the Office of the Ombudsperson.

Saanich has adopted some the best practices noted in the Guide, but not all. Our review suggests that there are areas of bylaw enforcement that could be enhanced by following these practices, e.g., bylaw offence notice process, consistent application of rules. A list of the best practices can be found in Appendix G.

2. Review Saanich's bylaw procedures and determine whether Bylaw Offence Notices are an appropriate bylaw enforcement tool for the municipality.

4.1.3 Budget Process

Currently the budget process starts with the high-level goals as set out in the OCP. The medium and short-term goals in the OCP become the basis of the Five-Year Strategic Plan, which is looked at in detail in the first year of a new Council term. For the subsequent four years it is tweaked based on input from Council. The budget sets the tone for operational spending and level of taxation for the coming year. Only capital spending initiatives are looked at over the complete five-year financial cycle.

To be a dynamic organization, sometimes the organization has to reinvent or re-engineer itself. Over time, the organization should question the continued relevance and cost effectiveness of the products and services it provides, in light of changing demographics and technological change.

Since the municipality is primarily a service-based organization, one of its largest cost drivers is the cost of its human resources. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the organization to keep these costs in line, not only with the public sector but with the private sector as well.

(a) Findings

- It is hard to engage the public when it is only asked to comment on the budget in the final stages of approval. We believe there should be more meaningful public engagement and education process at the start of the budget cycle. This would include having citizens appointed to the Finance and Audit Committee, similar to the other advisory committees. While we realize that the topic of budgeting is not top of mind for most Saanich residents, a motivated citizen-led group could lead the process of greater citizen comment on spending priorities and taxation levels.
- The Finance and Audit Committee might be supported by one senior staff member from the Finance Department to keep the engagement on track.

(b) Recommendations

1. Prior to the formulation of the budget, conduct a major citizen consultation and educational process ("Budget 101") on the budget once each council term, ideally to start first year of a new term and be completed by the second year.

Consultation should start by holding an open workshop on "Budget 101" to explain in layman's terms how the various parts of the budget and strategic plan process work and come together. These sessions should also allow citizens to understand some of the cost drivers and some of the critical decisions that have to be made. Input should be requested from the public following this information session, and then an appointed committee should be created to follow up on this process.⁶

2. Once per council term, conduct a top to bottom review for council of the financial and service delivery structure as part of the budgeting process.

Saanich might look to the District of Central Saanich's "Organization Capacity Review" or the creation of a Citizens Assembly Process, (similar to the process followed by Duncan North Cowichan in examining their amalgamation question), as two different models to guide this process.

4.2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Topics explored:

- Voter Engagement
- Public Participation
- Communications
- Community Associations

Community engagement plays an important role in Saanich governance as it helps shape the decision-making processes in the municipality.

This is done via:

- Voter engagement at municipal elections to determine the government's members;
- Public participation strategies to engage with citizens;
- Communication strategies to communicate how and why decisions are made; and
- Community Associations to provide feedback on land use decisions.

As Saanich tries to rely on community engagement in its decision-making processes, an examination of how these factors influence and are shaped by governance is warranted.

4.2.1 Voter Engagement

(a) Findings

- Municipalities are limited by provincial legislation in how they run elections.
- Historically there is a low voter turnout in Saanich elections, although the recent trend shows a bit of a reversal i.e., 35% in 2014, 25% in 2011, 21% in 2008.⁷
- Online voting is not currently permitted in British Columbia. One example of online voting in Canada is the City of Markham, Ontario, where its implementation did not lead to any significantly increased turnout.
- Youth don't learn about local government in the school system.
- Saanich used a ward system from its incorporation in 1906 until 1950 when it was discontinued after Ward 6 seceded to become the District of Central Saanich in 1950.
- Ward systems have advantages and disadvantages that help empower neighbourhood identities but also lead to competition and emphasis on localized issues. (See Appendix H)⁸
- The only ward system in BC is the District of Lake Country.

- A hybrid-ward model is an option where a limited number of Councillors are elected from wards and the remaining elected at-large. While this could bring some more neighbourhood-level representation to the municipality and ensure that municipal issues are not ignored, it may add another layer of confusion, and is therefore not recommended at this time.

(b) Recommendations

1. Saanich should explore options to enhance voter participation and work with the Province and neighbouring municipalities to implement any proposed changes. Means of increasing turnout that should be considered include more mobile voting, advance voting, information provided to electors, and possibly online voting when the option becomes available in the province.
2. Promote youth participation in both voting and running for elected office, request that the provincial government and local school districts highlight more local government topics in the school system. Consider reaching out during municipal election periods to teach students about local government.

4.2.2 Public Participation

(a) Findings

- Even though Saanich has a framework to guide consultation for planning initiatives and other projects, public participation can be a challenge. While there is a public perception that Saanich tends to over consult, these consultation processes are often not perceived as open or sincere. We heard that people don't feel they have been listened to.
- More avenues are needed for effective consultation with different demographics.
- Public participation in Saanich is guided by the Public Participation Administrative Policy (2013) and Public Process Handbook (2015).
- Public participation processes are carried out for planning initiatives and other projects led by District departments. Recent examples include the Active Transportation Plan (Engineering Dept.), Strategic Facilities Master Plan (Engineering Dept.), Cedar Hill Park Visioning and Planning Project (Parks), Older Adults Strategy (Community Recreation Services), and the Shelbourne Valley Action Plan (Planning Dept.).
- In 21st century representative democracies, the value of public participation should be properly considered to ensure that consultation activities are linked with specific outcomes and weighed against risks and costs.
- The international standard for public participation is set by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) and Saanich's Public Process Handbook is loosely based on IAP2 guidelines.⁹
- The Public Process Handbook contains the Public Participation Continuum (p. 15) but there is no public explanation of where and when each strategy on the continuum will be employed. Other jurisdictions and institutions that follow IAP2 best practices openly define how a level of public participation will be chosen (City of Calgary Engage

Framework Appendix B p. 18)¹⁰ (University of Victoria Community Engagement Framework pgs. 14-15)¹¹ (City of Victoria Engagement Framework pg. 7)¹². Saanich uses an internal toolkit to assess and select the level of participation, but due to propriety issues associated with the toolkit, is unable to share this information publicly.

- Transparent and well-understood public participation strategies, combined with enhanced communications strategies (see below), will build trust and benefit Saanich and its citizens. This will not necessarily lead to more consultation, but clearer and more properly defined framework may reduce the amount of consultation that needs to take place.
- Public participation in the 21st century often relies heavily on traditional techniques (open houses, surveys) while research has found that more collaborative and dialogue-focused participation produces better results for governments and stakeholders.¹³

(b) Recommendation

1. Review and update the Public Process Handbook to better reflect IAP best practices and to provide a clear and robust explanation of *what*, *when*, *why*, and *how* Saanich will engage.

Transparent and well-understood public participation strategies, combined with enhanced communications strategies (see following section), will build trust and benefit Saanich and its citizens. This will not lead to more consultation, but a clearer and more properly defined framework may reduce the amount of consultation that needs to take place. Specifically, Saanich should:

- Define *what* level on the Public Participation Continuum will be used for each public participation process and how it will be chosen. A transparent selection process could increase public confidence in public participation. Risk management and cost/benefit analyses at this stage will help the municipality decide the value of consultation and level of engagement. Consideration should be given to the municipality's ongoing engagement strategies to ensure that not too many consultation activities are running concurrently.
- Explain *when* Saanich will engage and at what stage of the process. Where possible, public participation should be earlier in the process to ensure a sense of meaningful engagement for participants.
- For each public participation process that Saanich engages in, the purpose of the public participation strategy should be clearly communicated so that participants know what to expect and understand *why* they are participating. Explain how citizen feedback will be considered in addition to technical input and other sources beyond the scope of public participation. Saanich should report back to participants what was heard, how feedback was used, and if not - why not.
- Clarify the techniques that will be employed for *how* Saanich conducts public participation. Depending on the level of engagement (*what*), innovative non-traditional techniques or activities should be considered as traditional techniques such as open houses may not work for all segments of the

population. Innovative techniques could include roundtable dialogues, Facebook live sessions, and online contests or games.

- Refocus existing staff and resources on prioritized consultation to increase its effectiveness.

4.2.3 Communications

(a) Findings

- Reports and agendas should be produced on a timely basis and in plain language.
- Some residents experience difficulty receiving information in English only. Between 2011 and 2016, the percentage of Saanich residents who spoke a language other than English most often at home grew to 9.6%. This equates to a growth rate of 15.1% from 2011, almost quadruple the 4.0% growth rate for the municipality overall. Some municipalities in British Columbia conduct outreach in other languages.
- Some municipalities in British Columbia conduct outreach in other languages.
- The current website is cumbersome and often difficult to navigate. The Saanich website should be revamped so that information is easy to find. Saanich should also push out information through various media, such as email, Facebook, Twitter, etc.
- Most municipalities follow the same timeline for public availability of Council meeting agendas (Thursday or Friday prior to meeting).
- Other municipalities have updated their public development application notice signs to be more informative and in plain language (see City of Vancouver¹⁴ and City of Toronto).¹⁵

Recommendations

1. Continue strengthening communications through online channels (including Facebook, Twitter, and emerging technologies) and improved translation services.

In addition to traditional offline communications, newer technologies will help build an ongoing dialogue that will lead to buy-in for public engagement activities and decisions made by Saanich. Notice of Public Hearings, for example, could be posted as Facebook ads in addition to their listing in local newspapers. Improved translation services and outreach will help reach and engage with residents in Saanich who may not otherwise be engaged.

2. Establish a menu of options for citizens to receive information about topics they choose, in the format they choose. This should be integrated into the Saanich website for easy access.

This system would integrate and replace the existing mailing lists offered by Saanich and provide more flexibility in how information is "pushed out", keeping citizens engaged with the issues they care most about.

3. Redesign development application notice signs that are displayed on properties to be clear and easy to understand by the general public. Use plain language, colour, and images where possible.

4.2.4 Community Associations

(a) Findings

- CAs cover most of Saanich although there are some areas where there are no CAs and other areas where two CAs overlap.¹⁶
- CAs are a common form of neighbourhood representation in North America and have evolved from more traditional ratepayers' associations in the 20th century. While supposedly representative, many in Canada are restrictive and do not represent younger generations, visible minorities, or renters.¹⁷
- In Saanich, CAs have no formal role in governance except that they receive referrals from the Planning Department when there is a development application in the CA's area and they are expected to reply within 30 days. How each CA chooses to formulate its response varies.
- CAs are underutilized and have potential to be an effective and meaning source of feedback and input to local planning and decision making.
- In the City of Victoria, CAs play a formalized role in the land use development application process and the City has developed Terms of Reference for the role of CAs in the process.¹⁸
- CAs in Victoria also are assigned a rotating Council member liaison.¹⁹

(b) Recommendations

1. Formalize Community Associations (CAs) in Saanich by establishing Terms of Reference. The Terms of Reference should be worked on with the CAs and other impacted stakeholders. This will legitimize and clarify the role of CAs by:
 - a. Distinguishing the areas of representation.
 - b. Clarifying the role of CA involvement in land use development applications.
 - c. Putting in place measures to monitor that CAs are open to all, not restrictive, and that they follow the *Societies Act* requirements. Saanich could request a copy of Annual General Meeting minutes from CAs to ensure they are in good standing prior to any allocation of operating grant funds.
2. Assign Council liaisons to Community Associations that rotate on a regular basis so each community has an elected official that can become familiar with local issues and provide support.

This would provide direct feedback to Council. It may also assist in furthering the renewal of Local Area Plans, many of which have not been renewed for a decade or more.

4.3 REGIONAL GOVERNANCE

Topics explored:

- Regional Districts
- Shared Services Agreements / Joint Services Agreements
- Amalgamation and Restructuring

4.3.1 Regional Districts

The regional district is referred to in academic literature as a “voluntary cooperative model” and within North America is unique to British Columbia. In other jurisdictions city-region planning is carried out via 1) various service agreements between local governments (e.g. most city-regions), 2) provincial or state-level planning (e.g., Toronto, ON), 3) a single municipality (e.g., San Antonio, TX), or 4) a city-region metropolitan government (e.g., Portland, OR). The voluntary cooperative model benefits from flexibility in addressing diverse needs of member municipalities, but is at a disadvantage when facing disagreement between members over regional issues when the region has little authority to act.²⁰

Regional Districts (RDs) in British Columbia were established in 1965 and there are twenty-nine (29) regional districts in operation today. Essentially the “regional district” is the sum of its member municipality parts operating as a group of municipalities under a provincially legislated regional structure and authority. Under this structure, not all member municipalities at the regional district table benefit equally from every service they participate in. While some municipalities contribute more or less than their fair share to a particular service, there is often “give and take” required to benefit the region as a whole.

Regional districts have demonstrated themselves to be an effective form of governance for the provision of local services delivered at a regional scale (water supply, Hartland landfill, regional parks, social housing, air quality, etc.). Coordinated regional responsibilities beyond basic service delivery, however, have proven to be more difficult to address through regional districts (regional strategic planning, regional transportation planning, integrated resource management, etc.).²¹

Currently in the Capital Regional District (CRD), the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) is going through a mediation process, a Regional Transportation Authority has yet to be established, and the coordination of a sewage treatment centre was taken over by the Province.

It should be noted that the CRD extends beyond what is commonly perceived as Greater Victoria, e.g., includes Port Renfrew.

(a) Findings

- Regional districts are an effective form of governance for the provision of basic local services which are best delivered at the regional level.
- While the CRD may be effective in some areas, it is believed by many in Saanich to lack authority and accountability. It lacks authority because it cannot carry out strong coordinated regional planning exercises such as the Regional Growth Strategy and it lacks accountability because regional directors are not directly elected but appointed by member municipalities.

- There exists a natural and expected tension among the regional directors as they tend to represent first their municipal interests, and secondly, the regional/local interests.
- At the regional district table all issues and services are local whether they are expressed as regional, inter-municipal, extra-municipal, local, extra-local, intra-regional etc.
- Regional directors constantly strive to participate for the benefit of the region within a milieu of natural and expected tension, but there are legislative limitations and shortcomings in the *Community Charter* and *Local Government Act*, which prevent regional districts from being more effective.

(b) Recommendations

1. Continue to participate fully at the Capital Regional District table and ensure that Saanich regional directors approach the business of the regional district with a mindset which recognizes that regional and local go hand in hand and what is best for the region is often best for the member municipalities overall.
2. Through the UBCM (Union of British Columbia Municipalities), petition the Province to review the *Community Charter* to give regional districts clearer powers and authorities in the delivery of regional planning (e.g., Regional Growth Strategies), transportation, integrated resource management plans and other coordinated services.
3. Through UBCM (Union of British Columbia Municipalities), petition the Province to review all applicable legislation to provide for the Chair/CEO of regional districts and up to 40% of the regional directors to be elected at large with such elections and terms of office to be consistent with municipal elections.

4.3.2 Shared Services Agreements / Joint Services Agreements

The municipalities in the Capital Regional District have a 60-year tradition of participating in various joint service agreements among and between the member municipalities. These joint service agreements allow any municipality to share and participate in a variety of services with other municipalities at a mutually agreed upon cost and duration. In many cases, and for many municipalities, particularly the smaller ones, it is cost prohibitive to undertake many of the shared services on a “stand alone” basis. One example is fire dispatch services, and there are many others.

Joint service agreements allow the municipality to very easily opt in and opt out of any service with proper notice and cost contributions.

(a) Findings

- Saanich must continue to explore better governance and how we partner with other local governments in the CRD.
- Saanich needs to find cost-savings, reduce duplications and redundancies, and must strive to become an efficient and effective government.
- Shared service agreements and more joint or regional services being delivered through

the CRD should be pursued.

- Reports such as the Oppal Report (“Closing the Gap, Policing and the Community, date”), as well as the committee’s discussions and consultation, indicate that a regional police force is a concept worth exploring. (See Appendix H)

(b) Recommendations

1. Continue to look for opportunities to share and participate in services provided by other municipalities in the CRD.
2. Continue to look for opportunities to provide services to other municipalities through joint service agreements or shared services agreements, as the case may be.
3. Saanich should be receptive to any initiatives for the creation of a regional police force.

4.3.3 Amalgamation and Restructuring

Amalgamation of Saanich with another municipality or municipalities is one possible outcome of a review of regional governance in Greater Victoria. Even though the original mandate of the Governance Review did not specifically address or ask questions about amalgamation, not surprisingly, we heard from many people with views on this topic and the committee felt it was important to discuss, so it is addressed in our report. Many respondents were of the view that the ballot question regarding support for a governance review was ambiguous and designed to avoid directly addressing the amalgamation topic.

Canada has a long-standing tradition and experience with amalgamations in every province. This experience seems to demonstrate that the post-amalgamation per capita cost of local government is often greater than the pre-amalgamation per capita cost; that is to say expected economies of scale are met by diminishing returns and such diminishing returns appear to carry on for decades. In some cases, it is before the amalgamated municipality reaches the population and tax base thresholds required to become economical and cost efficient on a per capita basis. This means that amalgamation is a long-term proposition and should be considered in that context.²²

In the Capital Regional District, many agencies, non-profit groups and inter-municipal service providers are challenged annually to secure budget approval from the up to 13 municipalities they serve (e.g., Greater Victoria Public Library, community and social agencies).

(a) Findings

- The topics of amalgamation, shared services and regional governance were raised by many Saanich citizens throughout the consultations. We heard a wide-range of perspectives, including strong support for and against amalgamation, a desire to continue to pursue some form of shared services with adjacent municipalities, the acknowledgment that more study may be needed on this issue and a desire to have a more specific question relating to amalgamation on the ballot in 2018.

- There wasn't consensus on the Committee about whether Saanich should pursue an amalgamation of some kind. However, there does seem to be a consensus that discussion on this topic shouldn't be shied away from. We feel this is probably consistent with the views of the general population of Saanich, based on our consultations and community feedback.
- The topic of amalgamation appears as an attempt to answer a variety of issues raised by Saanich citizens, but through the Governance Review we were unable to engage with the public at a deep enough level on this topic to truly understand all the issues and interests behind calls for amalgamation. Some issues that Saanich citizens hope to address through amalgamation may also be addressed through the implementation of our regional district recommendations (section 4.3.1). These recommendations include increasing authority to carry out regional planning initiatives and increasing accountability for regional decision-making.
- The Province offers the opportunity to partially fund a governance (incorporation) study prior to a referendum in affected municipalities. In the municipalities of Duncan and North Cowichan, the two jurisdictions opted to pursue a Citizens' Assembly as their form of governance study, which was 1/3 funded by the Province provided they included a technical report on amalgamation along with the Assembly process. In the absence of a thorough study on the issue in Saanich, such an Assembly appears to be the best way to move forward on the question of amalgamation.
- At the same time, we acknowledge that Saanich pursuing amalgamation on its own is not possible due to provincial legislation (*Community Charter*, Part 9, Division 1, Article 279). Amalgamation by its very nature must be a collaborative exercise with other municipalities. Until a consensus emerges across the region we do not recommend that Saanich pursue its own amalgamation path.

(b) Recommendations

Given the many views expressed regarding amalgamation, Saanich should take a leadership role in establishing a consensus about amalgamation, through the following recommended actions:

1. Call on the Province to establish and fund a Citizens' Assembly on Amalgamation with interested municipalities in the Greater Victoria Region and actively support and participate in the Assembly.

To inform the citizens participating in this process a study would be conducted to provide a baseline set of facts on the costs of service delivery and governance across the region. By agreeing to support the Citizens' Assembly process, Saanich and the other municipalities should be required to take the findings of the process to referendum directly.

2. In 2027, a decade from today, or a decade after a Citizens' Assembly is convened, if such assembly is convened, convene a second ad hoc Governance Review Citizen Advisory Committee to once again explore and address local governance in the District of Saanich and alternatives. This is to recognize that the governance of Saanich and the region is an evolving question that warrants regular study.

4.4

MOVING FORWARD with the WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The following table summarizes the 30 recommendations detailed in the report and identifies the level of government with the authority to implement the proposed actions, i.e., District of Saanich, Province of BC, CRD and/or other Local Governments in the region.

While the Committee acknowledges that some of the recommendations will require others levels of government or other partners to fully implement them, we believe Saanich must take a leadership role in moving each of these recommendations forward. This means initiating discussions with other municipalities and the Provincial and Federal governments where needed.

INTERNAL GOVERNANCE		Saanich authority	Provincial authority	Region and/or other LGs
Leadership				
1	Enhance functioning of Advisory Committees.	x		
2	Establish a two-term limit for serving on Council.		x	
3	Limit the use of in-camera meetings and explain why an agenda item is being addressed	x		
4	Compile and release Council meeting agenda packages earlier.	x		
5	Provide leadership training for Councillors at a minimum of once per term.	x		
6	Adopt Policy Governance as an alternative governance model to enhance leadership and accountability.	x		
7	Appoint an ongoing Citizens' Strategic Plan Advisory Committee.	x		
8	Create a list of the types of decisions related to setting direction, and the type that can easily be made by staff, within the criteria and accountability framework set by Council.	x		
9	Conduct minor updates to the Official Community Plan every five years with an holistic review every ten years. After each OCP update, refresh each Local Area Plan within three years.	x		

INTERNAL GOVERNANCE		Saanich authority	Provincial authority	Region and/or other LGs
10	Place job descriptions for CAO and Directors on website, along with dept. service delivery plans, targets, performance measures and progress updates.	x		
Bylaws				
1	Adopt the best practices outlined in "Bylaw Enforcement: Best Practices Guide for Local Governments, Special Report No. 36 to the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, March 2016" by the Office of the Ombudsperson.	x		
2	Review Saanich's bylaw procedures and determine whether Bylaw Offence Notices are an appropriate bylaw enforcement tool for the municipality.			
Budget Process				
1	Prior to the formulation of the budget, conduct a major citizen consultation and educational process ("Budget 101") on the budget once each Council term.	x		
2	Once per Council term, conduct a top to bottom review of the financial and service delivery structure as part of the budgeting process.	x		

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT		Saanich authority	Provincial authority	Region and/or other LGs
Voter Engagement				
1	Explore options to enhance voter participation through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - more mobile voting - advance voting - information provided to electors - online voting when the option becomes available in the province. 	x	x	

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT		Saanich authority	Provincial authority	Region and/or other LGs
2	Promote youth participation in both voting and running for elected office, request that the Province and local school districts highlight more local government topics in the school system. Consider reaching out during municipal election periods to teach students about local government.	x	x	x
Public Participation				
1	Review and update the Public Process Handbook to better reflect IAP2 best practices and to provide a clear and robust explanation of <i>what, when, why, and how</i> Saanich will engage.	x		
Communications				
1	Continue strengthening communications strategies through online channels and improved translation services.	x		
2	Establish a menu of options for citizens receive information about topics they choose, in the format they choose.	x		
3	Redesign development application notice signs that are displayed on properties to be clear and easy-to-understand by the general public.	x		
Community Associations				
1	Formalize Community Associations by establishing Terms of Reference.	x		
2	Assign Council liaisons to Community Associations that rotate on a regular basis.	x		

REGIONAL GOVERNANCE		Saanich authority	Provincial authority	Region and/or other LGs
Regional Districts				
1	Continue to participate fully at Capital Regional District table.	x		
2	Request that Province review <i>Community Charter</i> to give regional districts clearer powers and authorities in delivery of coordinated regional services.		x	
3	Request that Province review all applicable legislation to provide for Chair/CEO of regional districts and up to 40% of regional directors to be elected at large.		x	
Shared Services / Joint Services Agreements				
1	Continue to look for opportunities to share and participate in services provided by other municipalities in CRD.	x		x
2	Continue to look for opportunities to provide services to other municipalities through joint services or shared services agreements.	x		x
3	Remain receptive to any initiatives for the creation of a regional police force.	x		x
Amalgamation and Restructuring				
1	Call on the Province to establish and fund a Citizens' Assembly on Amalgamation with interested municipalities.		x	x
2	In 2027, or a decade after a Citizens' Assembly is convened, convene a second ad hoc Governance Review Citizen Advisory Committee.	x		

5. IN SUMMARY

With its mandate to review governance in Saanich, including its relationships within the Capital Regional District, one of the GRCAC's first challenges was to define governance in a way that made sense for engaging citizens and stakeholders. Fundamentally, governance is about how organizations ensure that they are doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest, and accountable manner. It includes all the systems and processes, values and rules that are designed to coordinate and control an organization's actions, decisions and resources. In considering these factors, the committee focused on key components of governance:

- authority
- accountability
- decision-making
- continuous improvement
- regional role

A number of principles filter through each of these components including transparency, accessibility, responsiveness, equity, inclusion, effectiveness and efficiency.

The recommendations we have made are intended to reflect these principles of good governance given the components noted above. Some over-arching themes bear highlighting as they lend themselves to more immediate action and further consideration given their potential benefits.

Results of our consultations with respect to transparency and decision-making found a lack of clarity around roles and responsibilities. This includes clarifying the role of Community Associations and Advisory Committees in the consultation and decision-making processes. Challenges were also identified in timely follow through and accurate communication with the District. Decision-making processes appeared to be untethered from evidence-based practices and information was often unavailable to citizens and associations in a timely way.

With regard to the matter of enhancing the effectiveness of regional governance, we heard that it is key to address the role of the CRD. This is closely linked with views of amalgamation and the need for more cost-effective service delivery at the regional level. There is a need to look at efficiencies of the over 200 regional partnerships and whether services can be delivered better through other means, including some level of amalgamation or increased integration at the CRD level.

Finally, Saanich should continue to explore options to enhance voter participation and public engagement on issues of importance to the future of the community. Saanich has an opportunity to take a leadership role on advancing more mobile voting, online voting,

and providing better information to voters. This will require working with other municipalities as well as the province. In addition, we believe that educating voters includes our future citizens. The provincial government and local school districts should be encouraged to highlight local government learning in the school system.

With all our suggestions and recommendations, leadership, partnerships and collaboration are critically important. Saanich has an opportunity to step into a larger regional leadership role to enhance its own service delivery, internally and externally, to meet the needs of citizens now, and in the future.

Governance Review Citizen Advisory Committee Members



Back Row: Jim Schneider, Julian Anderson, Zig Hancyk, John Schmuck (Chair), Brian Wilkes
Art Beck (Vice-Chair), Matt Gauk
Front Row: Joseph Calenda, Caleb Horn, Mano Sandhu, Phil Lancaster. Missing: Andrew Medd

END NOTES

¹ The 2017 – 2021 Financial Plan is the most recent version of the five-year plan and provides the supporting details to the 2017-2021 *Financial Plan Bylaw*.

² 2015-2018 Saanich Strategic Plan, p. 29.

³ 2015-2018 Saanich Strategic Plan, p. 6.

⁴ Consulting firms offering training in Policy Governance include Governance.ca, and the Governance Coach, among others. Note that the City of Richmond has adopted Policy Governance, and it is being proposed to the CRD Board.

⁵ Office of the Ombudsperson. *Bylaw Enforcement: Best Practices Guide for Local Governments, Special Report No. 36 to the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia*. March 2016. p. 7”
<https://www.bcombudsperson.ca/documents/bylaw-enforcement-best-practices-guide-local-governments>.

⁶ As part of the budget process, the public engagement policy costs currently spent by Saanich should be collected in one cost centre, so that Council is aware of the aggregate dollars spent by the various departments. This would include an estimate of the cost of staff time. Once Council, staff and the general public are aware of the total amount spent by the various groups Council would then be in a position to direct how its wants this money spent in a more cohesive and strategic manner. Perhaps this could be done by coordinating all outreach efforts through one department.

⁷ CivicInfo BC retrieved from <https://www.civicinfo.bc.ca/>

⁸ A city of neighbourhoods: Report of the 2004 Vancouver electoral reform commission, Thomas Berger.

⁹ <http://iap2canada.ca/page-1020549>

¹⁰ http://engage.calgary.ca/application/files/1314/6376/8116/Engage_Framework.pdf

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<https://www.uvic.ca/campusplanning/assets/docs/UVic%20Engagement%20Framework%20Dec%2013-%202012%20Version%201%200.pdf>

¹² http://www.victoria.ca/assets/Departments/Communications/Documents/Engagement~Framework/Engagement_Framework%20July%202017.pdf

¹³ Innes, J. & Booher, D. (2004). Reframing public participation: Strategies for the 21st century. *Planning Theory & Practice* 5(4).

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1464935042000293170>;

Innes, J. & Booher, D. (2010). Planning with complexity: An introduction to collaborative rationality for public policy. Sandercock, L. (2003). *Cosmopolis II: Mongrel Cities in the 21st Century*.

¹⁴ <http://vancouver.ca/news-calendar/new-improved-development-signage.aspx>

¹⁵ <https://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=f869e480a155c510VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD>

¹⁶ <http://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/community/community-associations.html>

¹⁷ Koschmann, M. & Laster, N. (2011). Communicative Tensions of Community Organizing: The Case of a Local Neighborhood Association. *Western Journal of Communication* 75 (1).

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10570314.2010.536965>

¹⁸ <http://www.victoria.ca/EN/main/residents/planning-development/development-services/community-association-land-use-committees.html>

¹⁹ <http://www.victoria.ca/EN/main/residents/neighbourhoods.html>

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- ²⁰ Artibise, A. F., Cameron, K., & Seeling, J. H. (2004). Metropolitan organization in greater Vancouver: "Do it yourself" regional government. In D. Phares (Ed.), *Metropolitan governance without metropolitan government?* (pp.195-211). Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing.
- ²¹ Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development. (2017). *Capital integrated services & governance initiative*. Government of British Columbia. Retrieved from http://www.cscd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/library/Capital_Region_Governance_Final_Report.pdf
- ²² Bish, R. L. (2008). *Local government in British Columbia*. Richmond, Canada: Union of British Columbia Municipalities.