

**AGENDA**  
**Parks, Trails and Recreation Advisory Committee**  
Via MS Teams  
Wednesday, April 27, 2022 at 4 p.m.

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In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and to ensure social distancing, this meeting is closed to the public and can be viewed/heard via MS Teams. Please note that MS Teams callers are identified by their phone number which can be viewed on screen by all attendees at the meeting.

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**\*\*\* Territorial Acknowledgement & Inclusivity Statement \*\*\***

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

**2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

- March 23, 2022 (attachment)

**3. RECEIPT OF CORRESPONDENCE**

- Community Services Division Report (attachment)
- Recreation Division Report (attachment)
- Parks Division Report (attachment)

**4. CHAIR'S REMARKS**

**5. ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN REPORT CARD**

- Senior Manager of Transportation & Development Services to provide an update on Active Transportation Plan (20 mins.)

**6. PARKS VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

- Park Stewardship Coordinator to provide an update (20 mins.)

**7. PEOPLE PARKS AND PETS STRATEGY**

- Park Planner to provide an update (20 mins.)

**8. URBAN FORESTRY STRATEGY REVIEW**

- Senior Manager of Parks to provide an update on the scope of work and engagement (10 mins.)

**9. RECREATION UPDATE**

- Senior Manager of Recreation to provide an update (10 mins.)

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

**\* Adjournment \***

**Next Meeting: May 25, 2022**

**In order to ensure a quorum, please contact Nancy Chaggar at 475-5494 ext. 3505 or [nancy.chaggar@saanich.ca](mailto:nancy.chaggar@saanich.ca) if you are unable to attend.**

**MINUTES**  
**PARKS, TRAILS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Via Microsoft Teams  
March 23, 2022 at 4:01 p.m.

Present: Councillor Judy Brownoff (Chair), Ted Austin, Leigh Campbell, Pam Carroll, Rachel Corder, David Little, Amy-Jade Louie, Darrell Wick.

Staff: Suzanne Samborski, Director of Parks, Recreation & Community Services; Valla Tinney, Director of Finance; Stacy McGhee, Program Manager for Strategic Facilities Planning; Cristina Caravaca, Senior Manager of Community Services; Nathalie Dechaine, Manager of Community Development and Business Systems; Graham Thomson, Manager of GR Pearkes Recreation Centre; Alison Chamberlain, Older Adults Community Programmer II; Julie Lommerse, Park Planner Designer; and Austin Winters, Committee Clerk.

Regrets: Dex Owen, Annie Djiotsa.

Guest(s): Andrew Pape-Salmon and Daniel Cammiade.

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**1. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

**MOVED by L. Campbell and Seconded by T. Austin: "That the minutes of the February 23, 2022 Parks, Trails and Recreation Advisory Committee meeting be adopted as circulated."**

**CARRIED**

**2. CHAIR'S REMARKS**

- Budget meetings are still in process and nearing completion.
- Numerous projects and events are underway with Parks, Recreation and Community Services.
- 2022 Pop-Up Dog Park program will be returning to PTR for further consideration per Council's direction.

**3. SAANICH OPERATIONS CENTRE**

The Program Manager for Strategic Facilities Planning and the Director of Parks, Recreation and Community Service delivered a presentation on the proposed redevelopment of the Saanich Operations Centre (PowerPoint on file). The following was noted during discussion with committee members:

- The current conditions of buildings at the Saanich Operations Centre are concerning and may be affecting staff morale and retention.
- The existing central location of the Saanich Operations Centre is key for garden waste drop off and timely service.
- Staff safety is paramount and measures are in place to ensure continued protection.
- The Surrey Operations Centre was redeveloped and staff there have noticed improvement in productivity and interdepartmental collaboration.
- Landscape architects and environmental consultants are included as part of the Saanich Operations Centre redevelopment and will focus on the creek, green space and proposed pathway.
- Sharing the story about why this redevelopment is required will be key to gain

community and stakeholder support.

- Staff parking for the redeveloped Operations Centre is being thoughtfully considered, in addition to ensuring adequate facilities for staff who cycle or use other modes of transportation.
- Garden waste drop-off may be relocated to another site in the future. For the time being, it will remain in place.
- During peak season, the Saanich Operations Centre sees 350 to 425 employees on site.
- A construction management company will deal with temporary relocation of staff during the construction process.
- There will be an open-house at the Saanich Operations Centre on March 26, and an upcoming final virtual event.

#### **4. OLDER ADULT STRATEGY**

The Senior Manager of Community Services and the Older Adults Community Programmer II provided an annual update. The following was noted:

- The Older Adult Strategic and Implementation Plan was approved by Council in 2017.
- The program has seen many successes despite a slow start as a result of funding requests and the global pandemic.
- Programs such as the Connections Guide and NEPT (Neighbors Engaging on Phones Together) were created to address isolation faced by older adults.
- Age Friendly Spaces, a World Health Organization initiative, provides walking trails that accommodate for people with limited mobility.
- Programs such as the Sign Strategy and Wayfinding Guide, and the Welcome Kiosks aim to deliver services and clear direction for older adults to be able to get around autonomously.
- The biggest barrier for the Strategy has been the lack of funding.
- Next steps include efforts in creating sustainable age-friendly programs and acquisition of additional resources.
- The impacts of the Strategy are significant and provide ongoing support, wellness, and connections for older adults.

In response to questions from the Committee, the following was noted:

- Resting spaces such as benches in parks and trails are included as part of the Older Adult Strategy.
- The washroom strategy was approved and funded by Council in 2021. It is a multi-year plan that will see more washrooms in parks.

#### **5. RECREATION UPDATE**

Due to time constraints this item is postponed to the next meeting.

#### **6. COASTAL CONNECTOR TRAIL**

Daniel Cammiade and Andrew Pape-Salmon delivered a presentation on the Coastal Connector Trail Initiative (Presentation on file). In response to questions from the Committee, the following was noted:

- The Active Transportation Plan (ATP) is a key part of the Coastal Connector Trail Initiative. This proposed trail may be considered as part of the ATP five year update.
- Trail connections would potentially include McMinn Park and trails such as Quick's Bottom and Panama Flats.
- The Committee is supportive of initiatives such as this to improve trail connections.

## 7. PICKLEBALL REPORT

The Park Planner/Designer presented an update on outdoor pickleball courts and the following was noted:

- Two styles of sound mitigation panels are being moved from Tolmie to McMinn Park as they proved to be unsuccessful at Tolmie Park.
- Signs have been installed at Tolmie Park tennis courts requesting that they not be used for pickleball as a result of noise impacts to neighbours.
- As of April 4, 2022, a limited playing schedule will be introduced at Tolmie Park which should reduce play time by 50%.
- Staff are proposing that a security company lock and unlock the gates. This may not be done right on time.
- An online booking system will be implemented in late spring; a booking fee will be implemented in future as well.
- Parks staff will be impacted as a result of the new booking system.
- Staff will continue to explore alternate locations for outdoor pickleball courts.
- Tolmie Park pickle ball courts will close and be repurposed when a replacement pickle ball location is found.
- Topaz Park within the City of Victoria is getting six new pickleball courts with an anticipated completion by early 2023.
- Staff have used a well balanced approach to reach a compromise with pickle ball users and residents.

In response to questions from the Committee, the following was noted:

- Concerns were expressed regarding Saanich's outdated and lenient Noise Suppression Bylaw, and that additional opportunity for silence and tranquility could be beneficial.
- Saanich has indoor pickleball courts at Saanich Commonwealth Place, Pearkes and Cedar Hill Recreation Centres with good availability which tends to get booked up.
- Pickle ball courts at McMinn Park are further away from residences than at Tolmie Park. Staff will trial sound mitigation panels as well as the acoustic panel that may be moved from Tolmie Park courts when they are decommissioned.
- Saanich Parks is making efforts to accommodate residents and pickleball users through various noise mitigation factors and exploration of new outdoor courts. It will take some time before new courts are found and constructed.

## 8. ADJOURNMENT

**MOVED by D. Owen and Seconded by R. Corder: "That the Parks, Trails, and Recreation Advisory Committee meeting be adjourned."**

**CARRIED**

The meeting adjourned at 6:03 p.m. The next meeting is April 27, 2022 at 4 pm.

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Councillor Brownoff, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

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Committee Secretary

## The Corporation of the District of Saanich

### Report

**To:** Healthy Saanich Advisory Committee;  
Parks Trails and Recreation Advisory Committee

**From:** Cristina Caravaca, Senior Manager- Community Services

**Date:** April 12, 2022

**Subject:** Community Services Division Update

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee receive this report as information.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an overview of Community Services division activities.

### DISCUSSION

#### Older Adult Services:



Visit us online at Saanich Volunteer Opportunities, select Saanich Recreation volunteer and then Community Services Department, to see the full volunteer posting or call Julie at 250-475-5502 for more information!

**Community Ambassador Volunteer Program**

Do you have a passion to better your community? Create your own contribution, or help us with an existing area, join this diverse group of volunteers, we need you!

Existing areas range from being an accessibility, site or facility tour guide, to hosting technology tips, to being a decoration and information hub for cultural celebrations, the arts, or our fun events held in Saanich and so much more!

**COMING SOON TO THIS DESK!**

**Saanich**  
PARKS, RECREATION & COMMUNITY SERVICES

Cedar Hill Recreation Centre, Gordon Head Recreation Centre, G.R. Peakes Recreation Centre, Saanich Commonwealth Place

Posters are now up at our four recreation centres. “Coming Soon to our Saanich Recreation Centres: Community Ambassador Volunteers!” These posters are one of the many communication routes we are taking to actively recruit for volunteers, fulfilling welcoming roles, at our re-opening Welcome Desks.

These volunteers are diverse people, passionate about welcoming communities for all ages, including Older Adults. They will not only be a welcoming face, or a helping hand as you visit but will add additional welcoming features.

Added features that we are currently recruiting for range from: giving tours (history tours, accessibility tours, site indoor/outdoor tours), to helping with navigating Saanich Recreation Online with “Technology Tips Times”, to being a cultural event and celebration communicator, to being an event/meet/art show or tournament host, to a social lobby drop in facilitator, and so much more!

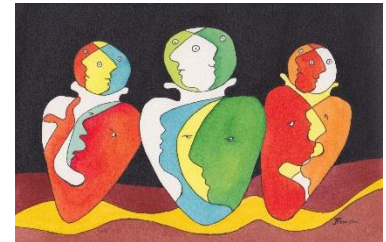
Welcoming features will occur on a regular basis that is shared with the public ahead of time. This way the Welcome Desk will be a hub the public can expect to

find added services that aid to everyone feeling welcome in this space on an ongoing basis. We look forward to starting the seeds of this program and watching it continue to grow, year after year!

### **Community Arts:**

*Exhibitions at Saanich Municipal Hall:* Exhibitions by the African Arts & Cultural Community Contributor Society – Black History Month, Sharon Lam, and Robert Dalton and Bill Zuk ran through to March 31. New exhibitions for April include a Preview Exhibition by the Hills to Shore Artists Tour (Cadboro Bay, Gordon Head and Mt. Tolmie) for their upcoming May Artists Tour and works by artist Deborah Leigh.

*Exhibitions at Cedar Hill Arts Centre:* Artist Joanne Thomson's Exhibit "It's Going to Be Okay" Exhibit opened on International Women's Day, with a special gathering of circle dances to celebrate both this important day and the exhibit. Featuring selected works from her *Bottled Series*, the exhibit explores personal struggles with oppressions, and is about living with limits, relevant to the current world situation.



**Programs:** Coming up in April, a free BIPOC Youth Ceramics Workshop is being organized by Community Services, in collaboration with Esquimalt High Schools Students of Colour Association and the Cedar Hill Arts Centre. Community Services is also offering a 2022 offering of "Inspired by Nature: Forest Bathing and Creative Expression," a free 4-week program for older adults.

### **Diversity and Equity:**

Lekwungen Territory Tours with Mark Albany have wrapped up for the winter. We ran one staff tour and four community tours between January and March. The goal of these tours is to help people understand when you hear or say "Lekwungen Traditional Territory" that you know where that was, some place names and stories, and how colonization has effected the area. All the tours ran full and there was a sizable waitlist for community tours. Greater Victoria Naturehood provided funding support for some of these tours and we will continue to offer the community tours quarterly.

Planning is underway for Music in the Park to return this year. It will be the 15th year for the concert series. We will be offering a slightly different format that removes close contact gather spots such as face painting in an effort to help keep the community safe.



### **Financial Assistance:**

After school programming at Tillicum School supported by the Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities program and the District of Saanich has been operating now for the past 7 years. This program provides children in grades 1-5 an opportunity to be physically active and socially engaged who may not have the resources or support to do so. PISE, Pacific Institute for Sport Excellence, provides the direct leadership highlighting the Jump, Run, Throw concepts through physical literacy principles. An evaluation of the program heard messages of

gratitude and appreciation from the parents, the teachers and the participants. The program provided children a space to feel a sense of belonging. School admin have noted that school attendance is

higher for these children on the days that they are committed to the after school program. Teachers are seeing improvements in school performance and behavior. The participants commented that the program is FUN! We greatly appreciate the support of the Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities program enabling children in our community to be stronger in multiple dimensions of their existence. Moving forward, we continue to seek additional support and hope that the Canadian Tire Jumpstart program can continue to support this health initiative.

**Child and Youth Services:**

Programs have been welcomed back into our Flipside Teen Centre at Pearkes! Youth and staff are excited to be back in the space and are busy making it feel comfortable and friendly. As we get the space up and running our partnership with Saanich Neighbourhood House has been reignited with a Cooking Skills Course and the introduction of an Anxiety Awareness program. This program will be running in partnership with Colquitz School and SNP after spring break. These partnerships are both mutually beneficial and advantageous for our Pearkes Community.

SNPP Spring Break Camp is successfully running for the first time! Located out of Marigold Park, we are full with 24 kids ages 5.5 to 11 years old for both weeks. Although the weather has not been cooperative, the kids don't seem to be fazed and are having a blast playing capture the flag, aces and so much more!

With the refresh completed at the Upside Teen Centre, the space looks professional and inviting with new paint from top to bottom and new counter tops, just in time for the Canadian National Swim Meet at the beginning of April.

School programs at Royal Oak Middle School continue to be successful and are paused for Spring break, but the youth are eagerly awaiting the new spring session with a variety of arts, crafts, games and cooking planned.

In partnership with the Cedar Hill Arts centre, who share their gym and multipurpose space with us to program for Youth on Friday nights, we have seen a huge uptake in our program offerings. Over 30 youth are registered for the Sports drop in, where they gather to play volleyball, badminton, table tennis, and more. Across the hall, youth enjoy a drop-in social with board games and crafts, and attend weekly registered maker/artist workshops including this seasons valentines chocolate making, tie die, watercolor, felting, stamp making, and drawing classes.



Cedar Hill also partners with community services to provide a low cost, registered youth only ceramics open studio, and affordable clay workshops each season designed specifically with youth in mind.



## Special Events, Film & Volunteers:



**Saanich Earth Day Festival**  
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION • EDUCATION • CLIMATE ACTION

**Saturday  
April 23, 2022**

Saanich Municipal Hall  
11:00 am - 3:00 pm | Free Admission  
Live Music | Festival Food Trucks

Explore Saanich by bike, celebrate Earth Day, and learn about the different ways we can care about the Earth and decrease human impact on our climate. The event will showcase the expansion of the Saanich cycling network and investment in active transportation, raise awareness of our natural ecosystems and show how you can get involved in taking climate action in your community.

Visit [saanich.ca](http://saanich.ca) for a full list of activities

MEDIA SPONSOR  
CFAX 1070 CTV 1073 SAANICH

Saanich

### Earth Day Festival – Sat, April 23 from 11:00 am – 3 pm

After a long two years of pandemic restrictions on social gatherings the Earth Day Festival originally scheduled in 2020 is set for a return in April. Residents are encouraged to explore Saanich by bike, celebrate Earth Day, and learn about the different ways we can all care about the Earth and decrease human impact on our climate. The event will showcase the expansion of the Saanich cycling network and investment in active transportation, raise awareness of our natural ecosystems and show residents how they can get involved in taking climate action in their community.

Guests who cycle to the festival can register to win a variety of prizes including a \$1000 gift certificate towards an E-Bike from a local cycling shop.

Families can enjoy a variety of free activities in the Saanich Hall parking lot from 11:00 am - 3:00 pm including two live bands playing music throughout the afternoon.

### Volunteers:

Plans are underway for National Volunteer Week (April 24-30). This year's theme is Empathy in Action. Plans include recognizing volunteers at each centre, through social media, the Saanich website and through email.

Volunteer applications have significantly picked up, specifically in children/youth programs, events and Aquatics. Parks continue to have a steady stream of volunteer applications with approximately 5-10 a week.

Meetings are underway with Volunteer Victoria. Connections and introductions to other organizations are happening. The goal is to share local resources, information and best practices. There is much potential to promote Saanich Volunteerism within the community.





## The Corporation of the District of Saanich

# REPORT

**To:** Parks, Trails and Recreation Advisory Committee  
Healthy Saanich Advisory Committee

**From:** Tiana Solares, Senior Manager - Recreation

**Date:** 4/20/2022

**Subject:** April 2022 Report

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### RECOMMENDATION

That the Parks, Trails and Recreation and Healthy Saanich Advisory Committees receive this report as information.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide the Committees with an overview of Recreation Division activities.

### DISCUSSION

#### Summer Registration

April 20 marked the kick-off of the summer registration session, including regular programs for all ages and summer camp programs for children and youth.

By noon on April 20, over **9,800** program registrations had been processed, with a further **3,600** registrants on waitlists. This represents **\$1.27 million** in revenue, with an average fee per registrant of **\$102**.

For 2022 Saanich is offering 573 summer camp options for families, with a mix of full- and half-day choices. **97%** of those camps filled by 9:00am. This year the number of STEM speciality camps have been expanded, often in partnership with local organizations such as Byte Camp Education Society and Engineering for Kids Vancouver Island. A suite of arts and culture themed camps are also offered, including dance, musical theatre, and pottery, along with more traditional multi-activity day camps and sports camps.

#### Recreation Pass and Use Statistics

After not selling access passes for the duration of 2020 and most of 2021 due to the pandemic, Recreation launched the new, Continuous Access Pass in summer of 2021, along with resuming sales of the annual pass. The Continuous Access Pass was developed as a result of 2019's Saanich Access Pass Analysis and recommendations to reduce the number of fee products and introduce a monthly 'auto-renewal' plan option.

Uptake on the new pass has been steadily increasing since its introduction, and particularly since the reduction and subsequent elimination of COVID restrictions. 3,684 passes have been purchased since January, along with 249 10-time punch cards.

Saanich Commonwealth Place (SCP) continues to see the highest use for both pass holder scans and for drop-in punch pass scans, followed by Gordon Head Recreation Centre (GHRC). Data for the month of **March 2022** is below:

Recreation Centre	Pass Holder Scans	Punch Pass Scans	Total
SCP	15,109	3,251	<b>18,360</b>
GHRC	8,520	1,663	<b>10,183</b>
GR Pearkes	1,629	499	<b>2,128</b>
Cedar Hill	2,725	701	<b>3,426</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,956</b>	<b>6,849</b>	<b>37,805</b>

Note, these figures do not include registered programs, spectators or accompanying parents, or children under 5 years of age.

### Facility Projects

At Gordon Head, project kick-off has occurred for two projects: Slab Remediation in the Mechanical Room, and the Feltham Room/Pool Deck Storage update. For the Slab Remediation Project, the GHRC pool will be shut-down May 1 through late August, with the goal of being accessible to patrons again by Labour Day weekend in September. The weight room and other program areas will remain open. Patrons are being encouraged to use their access passes at SCP for pool use, along with municipal pools around Greater Victoria with whom we hold a reciprocal use agreement for shut-downs. The Feltham Room project will begin in conjunction with the Slab Remediation, on May 2.

In the coming weeks, the services of a structural engineer will be acquired at SCP to assess both the dive tower and the competition pool after the observation of some minor cracks, and lifting of tiles in the competition pool. SCP's annual shutdown in September will be extended to five weeks to incorporate aspects of the Biomass Boiler Replacement Project, which will minimize the overall service disruptions at SCP and reduce impact to High Performance aquatics competitions, as well as to recreational users.

### Aquatics

During the pandemic, the number of participants in swimming lessons was reduced per class, often down to one. The reduction of COVID restrictions this spring allowed lesson capacity to increase over spring break and into spring and summer sessions to pre-COVID levels, allowing for an increase of swim lesson participants of close to 40%. Registration has been strong, and given the Gordon Head pool shutdown, there are significant waitlists at SCP for all lesson sets.

Staffing has continued to be a challenge, particularly given the temporary suspension of a number of certification courses during the pandemic, including National Lifeguard Service certification required to become a lifeguard. Supervisors from both SCP and GHRC are transitioning the temporary movement of GHRC aquatic staff to SCP for the duration of the pool shutdown at Gordon Head, including four Lifeguards and 13 Swim Instructors, along with six staff for summer day camps. In addition, two full National Lifeguard Service courses were run at SCP over the spring break, creating more qualified potential new hires to meet the continued demand for aquatics staffing.

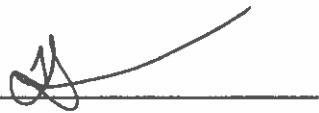
Of note in Aquatics is that the SCP-based Victoria Artistic Swimming Highlight Team have qualified for the Canadian Nationals in Quebec in May.

### **Canadian Nationals – Squash**

Taking place May 5-8, 2022, the Canadian Junior Squash Championships will feature a Gold draw for the Top 16 athletes in the country in each of the boys' and girls' Under 13, Under 15, Under 17 and Under 19 divisions at Cedar Hill Squash Club. A companion Silver event open to all competitors will be hosted at St. Michaels University School (SMUS). The silver event includes additional boys' and girls' Under 11 divisions.

As part of the tournament, a glass court will be set-up in the tennis facility at Cedar Hill Recreation Centre for spectators to enjoy the game from all angles.

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_



Tiana Solares, A/Director Parks, Recreation and Community Services



PARKS, RECREATION  
& COMMUNITY SERVICES

**REPORT TO:** Parks, Trails & Recreation Committee, Environmental and Natural Areas, and Healthy Saanich Committees

**DATE:** April 27, 2022

**FROM:** Eva Riccius, Senior Manager, Parks

**SUBJECT:** **Parks Division Update – April, 2022**

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The following update is provided for Committees:

### **Community Development and Business Systems**

#### **Park user groups:**

- **User Group Permits:** Outdoor spring sports are well underway with majority of groups starting April 1. Parks had annual meetings with 25 users groups in the first quarter. There is an extremely high demand on sport playing surfaces due to COVID rebound and reduced or poorly maintained inventory from other suppliers. So far this year, Parks has generated more than 240 park permits. High volume activities are sports, school sports and classes, weddings and picnics.  
**User Group Projects in Parks:** Parks is adjudicating a high volume community project applications from home user groups who wish to do projects in parks to improve and / or maintain infrastructure. Parks is currently handling more than 20 project applications at varying stages in the process (approval or in progress). Some notable projects that are complete or near completion are the Braefoot Sports Field Lights update to LED technology, Burnside Lawn Bowling Club (heritage) building spruce up for their 100th anniversary and the Viewmont Tennis Courts repairs. There are many home user groups repainting various parks infrastructure with Parks' new colour palette, plus minor maintenance initiatives.
- **Upcoming:** We expect more of the same going into summer and fall with a high volume of permit requests and project applications.

#### **Park Stewardship Update:**

##### **New Pulling Together Stewardship Projects**

We are supporting 44 Pulling Together projects and have authorized the initiation of two (2) new projects with lead steward volunteers at this time. Those are Doris Page and Browning Parks. We are in the process of onboarding these new lead stewards and have met with volunteers on site to discuss a plan for hands on stewardship work ahead.

## **Pulling Together Restoration Planning**

At the beginning of February we reported that this was the season for restoration planning with Pulling Together lead steward volunteers. Over the last couple of years staff have usually met with approximately 20+ of the groups, but this year we have had a record 35+ requests for site meetings. These meetings allow us to track important stewardship work being done by volunteers, determine supports required, and find opportunities for the greater community to participate in these projects.



## **Schools in Parks**

To support our commitment to the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, Natural Areas staff have initiated a number of habitat restoration projects. We are finding opportunities where appropriate for the community to be involved in these meaningful stewardship experiences. We hope to see schools engage in the long-term stewardship of the places/projects they connect with. Pulling Together volunteer projects are also a great opportunity for schools to engage with Saanich Parks. Volunteer groups are currently supporting classes at Saint Margaret's School, Lambrick Park School, Arbutus Middle School, Spectrum Secondary and Mount Douglas Secondary School.



## **Outreach and Education**

In February we hosted a stewardship event/workshop for the [Tapestry Conference](#) as part of the Teachers Provincial Professional Development Day. The group planted Cedar trees at the restoration area near the new bridge site by Douglas Creek in Mount Douglas Park. It was a great opportunity to network, build relationships, and promote stewardship with local teachers. Saanich Parks will have a interactive display at the Saanich Earth Day Event and Earth Day at the Gardens at HCP. We will inspire people to grow their Natural Intellegnce about the plants and animals that inhabit Saanich Parks, and be good stewards of our natural areas.



### **Volunteer Recognition**

National Volunteer Week is from April 24 to April 30<sup>th</sup>, and we will be celebrating volunteers. You may see posted on social media, and the website with displays at the Recreation Centers. It has been a challenging two years for many, and we have missed hosting an in person volunteer recognition event, but are hopeful that we can meet again in person this year.

### **Tree Bylaw**

The tree bylaw team has successfully filled the two new positions approved by Council with excellent internal applicants. This has created a domino effect and we are working hard to fill the one remaining position caused from the vacancies with the hopes to have a full complement of staff shortly. We also have the Parks GIS Analyst posted, to work on the Urban Forest Mapping and Tracking initiative in 2022.

## **Park Planning and Development**

### **Planning and Design Section:**

#### **Tripp Station Bike Park**

Construction of the bike park continues despite several unexpected delays due to Covid19 (contractor illness), weather, tree hazard mitigation and material supply issues. Tentatively, completion is set for a late May. Plans are in the works for a ribbon-cutting event with activities and displays by the South Island Mountain Bike Society, Saanich Parks, Saanich Police and others.

#### **Park Public Washrooms**

Saanich has secured a contract with ParkWorks (a distributor formerly named RecTec Industries) to provide pre-fabricated concrete washroom buildings (manufactured by CXT). Serviced washroom buildings include an exterior drinking fountain and water bottle filling station and two buildings are on order and will be installed later this summer at McMinn Park and Playfair Park. This work is part of the 2019 Washroom Operations And Capital Plan ([Parks and Recreation Washroom Operations | District of Saanich](#))

#### **Pop-up Dog Parks**

The proposed locations and schedule for the dog park program was presented and endorsed by the PTR Committee on January 26. A presentation to Council was made April 4<sup>th</sup>, with unanimous support for the staff-proposed locations (9 parks, three at a time for three months, June, July & August).

### **King's Park Community Nature Green Space**

Saanich Council moved to rezone the property to P-4 (parks status) with the exception of the existing house's parcel (on King's Rd.) which will be zoned RS-6. Parks will lead a public engagement exercise on values and vision this summer to assist in identifying potential management framework(s) for the property.

### **Bowker Creek Greenway:**

After hearing feedback from the Parks, Trails & Recreation Committee, staff have started to develop a signage plan for the Bowker Creek Greenway and are working with Saanich Engineering, City of Victoria staff and CRD staff to ensure continuity with Active Transportation plans and the Bowker Creek Initiative plans.

### **People Pets and Parks**

The consulting team have moved into Phase 2, which involves research, exploration and analysis. They have also developed a public engagement plan and will begin reaching out to the community in the late spring and continue into the summer. Some of the public engagement activities being planned include:

- A statistically valid telephone survey
- An online survey
- Dialogue sessions
- Pop-up public engagement activities at special events

We encourage people interested in this process to self-register for updates by visiting the project [webpage](#) or go directly to the [signup form](#).

### **Pickleball Action Items:**

A modified playing schedule began on April 4, 2022 at Tolmie Park. Footprints Security have been contracted to lock and unlock the gate which has gone well to date (only minor issues have been reported). Staff continue to explore the possibility of a court booking system.

Sound mitigation panels have been installed at McMinn Park – no report on these to share yet.

### **Construction Section:**

The construction section has been working on the following:

- Playground inspections and maintenance are ongoing.
- Normandy Park solar light is now installed.
- Quadrant 2 trail maintenance program in progress.
- Work on Hampton pathway is nearing completion.
- Ongoing trail repairs as per calls for service.
- Braefoot building renovations are 90% complete and should be finished by the end of April.
- Beckwith washroom building repair (plumbing) should be complete the week of May 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Furniture repair and installation is ongoing as is graffiti removal.

## **Park Operations**

### **Maintenance Section:**

- Soccer Rehabilitation in full swing for 13 of our natural turfgrass sportsfields (aeration, topdressing, overseeding and matting).
- Baseball season has begun and all 32 of our ballfields are being serviced regularly.
- Responding to calls for cleanup from people sheltering in parks from Saanich Police and the public are increasing significantly.
- Refuse collection is back to being very busy. We have recently refilled our afternoon/weekend refuse collector position and will have the truck out seven (7) days a week again.
- Washrooms are busy as we now have all of our 15 locations (year round and seasonal) open to the public with more coming online this year.
- Dumping in Parks and abandoned material in Parks has been on the rise lately as the nicer weather puts more people outside.
- Irrigation is off to a slower start as we are trying to backfill some positions for the upcoming season.
- Tennis and pickleball are busy and will continue to ramp up as the weather improves.
- With all sections now in full swing the demand on the parks shop to maintain equipment is significant.
- 3520 gallons of brine and 98 cubic yards of salt were used this past winter in the coverage of all of the parking lots and frontages for our Parks, Fire Stations, Police Station, four (4) Recreation Centres, Library and Golf Course.

### **Horticulture Section:**

- Horticulture staff members have been preparing garden beds and greenhouse capacity for our annual planting which commences in May.
- Horticulture crews have continued the maintenance of traffic islands and cul de sacs, including the recent completion of large median beds located on McKenzie Ave and Braefoot Road, and on Burnside Road West off of Tillicum Road.
- The traffic island work involves pruning, weeding, and mulching. This past winter's wet heavy snow and freezing temperatures caused some damage to plants and shrubs but the areas made it through fairly well overall.
- A major priority of this section has been the mowing and trimming of passive turf areas in late winter and early spring, with the goal of staying on top of the healthy spring growth.
- Hiring and training of staff is a key component in ensuring our horticulture and turf routes are kept up to service standards. Our new Horticulture Supervisor started April 22, and up to six (6) casual Parks Workers will be hired soon to augment our staff complement.

## **Urban Forestry and Natural Areas**

### **Urban Forestry Section:**

- Our early season tree planting has wrapped up and staff have switched to working on STM (small tree maintenance) in Parks (trees planted from 2016-2020).



- They are weeding, mulching, and fertilizing the trees as required and removing stakes where it is suitable to do so. There is some pruning of dead/broken branches. This list currently has 820 trees and the crew is about 65% complete.
- Stump grinding is underway and the crew has about 45 stumps to get through this spring. We expect this work will take through the first week of May and then we will turn the focus to tree watering.
- Water tanks were loaded into the three boulevard watering trucks for a May 1st start up.
- The wind won't stop blowing, so our Arborists have been kept busy cleaning up tree debris.
- We've done a good job of triaging calls for service to take care of any immediate public tree hazards right away.
- The team continues to be busy with looking at Calls for Service, Engineering drawing review, planning watering routes, and providing Arborist Supervision services to Public Works projects.



Hampton Park soil cell Crimson Oak. First soil cell in Saanich.

## Natural Areas Section:

### Habitat Protective Fencing



The Playfair Garry Oak meadow, that has been restored over the past couple of decades by Pulling Together volunteer Colleen O'Brien, needed a major overhaul on it's Post and Rope protective fencing this year. Installed in 2017, when the brick-edged pathways were built, the entire length of rope (~1100 feet) and ~20 posts were replaced. As we continue to install more of this type of fencing along many of our sensitive Garry Oak

ecosystems, we estimate that each fencing system will require a five year maintenance program. Crews are installing another section in Knockan Hill Park and will move to the Little Mount Douglas area for another section.

A couple of months ago, crews installed the Post and Rope fencing along the south edge of the original Garry Oak restoration Project (GORP) on Little Mount Douglas. The recovery results have been incredible with the decreased traffic of people and pets using the undesigned trails. Other protective Post and Rope projects in 2022 include Knockan Hill, Phyllis and Hyacinth Parks.



### **Cuthbert Holmes/Colquitz River Restoration**



Crews continue to restore the new habitat alcoves at Cuthbert Holmes Park along the Colquitz River. The heavy rains and flooding caused some damage to the Trembling Aspen trees and supporting native herbaceous plants. Some of the trees needed to be re-staked and crews also recently planted an additional ~50 Trembling Aspen trees, a few Big-leaf Maple and Red Alders. In mid March an additional 900 plants including: Meadow Barley, Awi-fruited Sedge, Inflated Sedge, Yellow Monkey flower, Small-flowered Bullrush, California Brome, and Tufted

Hairgrass were planted within the two flood-plain habitat alcoves. The total trees planted along the east side of the Colquitz River, in Cuthbert Holmes Park is above 500 and close to 3500 native herbaceous plants and shrubs have been planted.

### **UN Decade Garry Oak Dripline Restoration**

Continuing on with the Garry Oak Dripline commitment, crews have several more project sites planned for 2022. Fairburn Park has a new split-rail fencing section to protect seven mature Garry Oaks. This park is right next to the Maria Montessori Academy who have committed to helping staff restore the dripline understory of these seven mature Garry Oaks with native shrubs, more Garry Oak trees and a healthy herbaceous layer of plants including Camas. A recent work party with the school saw seven (7) young Garry Oak trees planted and a large portion of the restoration area mulched.

### **Nesting Structures**

Six new Swallow and Wren nesting boxes have been installed at Cedar Hill Park with the help from Pulling Together volunteers and Friends of Cedar Hill Park. Volunteers built the boxes and staff helped install them at several locations. The success of the Great



Horned Owl nesting platforms in Cuthbert Homes Park has continued into 2022. After three successful Owlet births in 2021, the breeding pair have returned to the same nest in 2022 and three more healthy Owlets have been spotted and seem to be thriving. The 2022 Owlets are about 6 weeks ahead in schedule from last year. This photo was taken in early April of two of the new owlets. We hope to build and install several more Great-horned Owl nesting platforms this year in Marigold and Cedar Hill Parks.

### **Restoration Planting, Pulling Together Volunteer Support and Invasive Species**



Crews recently delivered a great mix of herbaceous plants including: Satinflower, Field Chickweed, Fool's Onion, Mountain Sneezeweed, Western Buttercup, Sea Blush, Coastal Strawberry, Yarrow, Pearly Everlasting, Henderson's Checkermallow, Canada Goldenrod, Shootingstar, Camas and Douglas Aster to several parks to support the Pulling Together Volunteer Program. We continue to pick up weekly invasive piles from ~20 active Pulling Together groups and support various work parties each week. Invasive plant species being treated at this time of year include: English Holly, English Hawthorn, Lesser Celandine, Shiny Geranium, and Poison Hemlock.