

# Memo

**To:** Resilient Saanich Technical Committee  
**From:** Adriane Pollard, Manager of Environmental Services  
**Date:** July 6, 2021  
**Subject:** Resilient Saanich: Draft Milestone One Progress Report  
**File:** 1030-30 • Resilient Saanich Policy Framework

Attached is the draft Resilient Saanich: Milestone One Progress Report for the Committee's review and feedback. The Resilient Saanich: Milestone One Progress Report will be compiled of the following:

- A Report to Council (attached Progress Report);
- Appendix A: Details of Progress on Action Items (attached);
- Appendix B: RSTC correspondence on the evaluation matrix, and the scope of Resilient Saanich and data collection;
- Appendix C: Terms of Reference proposed by the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee;
- Appendix D: Existing Terms of Reference; and
- Appendix E: Resilient Saanich: Milestone One/Action 7 - Public Engagement Report.

Please note, the **attached progress report is a draft for discussion** with the RSTC. In particular, the recommendations for Council consideration should be discussed.

## Next Steps:

Once the RSTC has reviewed the Progress Report and made any suggested changes, a committee motion endorsing the draft Report, or endorsing it subject to specified amendments, would be appropriate. The edits will be completed by staff and the finalized report will be recirculated to the committee for information.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "AP", located below the main body of the memo.

Adriane Pollard, MCIP, R.P. Bio, MCESM  
Manager of Environmental Services

AP/jsp



## The Corporation of the District of Saanich

# Report

**To:** Mayor and Council

**From:** Sharon Hvozdanski, Director of Planning  
Suzanne Samborski, Director of Parks, Recreation & Community Services

**Date:** July 6, 2021

**Subject:** Resilient Saanich Milestone One Progress Report  
**File:** 1030-30 • Resilient Saanich Policy Framework

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### RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council receive the Milestone One Report for information.
2. That Council provide direction regarding the revised Terms of Reference proposed by the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee (RSTC) and the associated budget, staffing and timing implications.
3. That Council approve allocation of \$237,000 from Council's Strategic Initiatives Contingency for the RSTC Milestone Two work plan.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the progress on Milestone One action items as outlined in the Resilient Saanich Terms of Reference and seek Council direction on the revised Terms of Reference prepared by the Technical Committee

### PROGRESS REPORT

On June 11, 2021, the Resilient Saanich Terms of Reference were adopted by Council using a Milestone approach. Milestone One is the 'Initiate' phase. The Terms of Reference calls for a progress report at the end of each Milestone. An overview of the progress towards each of the Milestone One actions is outlined below in Table 1. Details on the progress made for each action item are included in Appendix A.

**Table 1: Status of Milestone One Actions**

Action	Status
1. Create a webpage and subscribe-able bulletins to keep residents updated and engaged in the project, progress, and opportunities for involvement.	Complete
2. Draft a "Resilient Saanich" framework skeleton of existing policies, etc. Conduct a gap analysis. Identify options for filling gaps using the Green Bylaws Toolkit and other references.	Complete

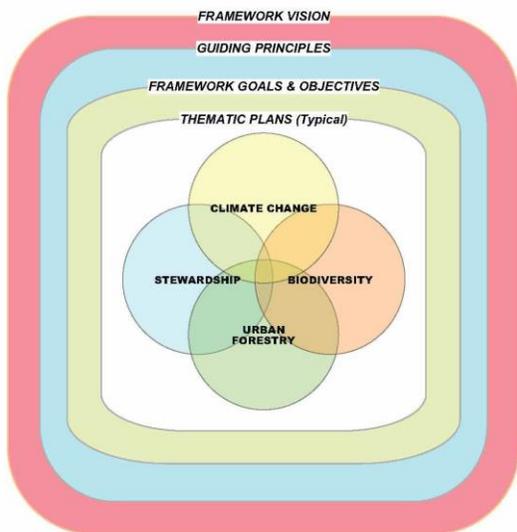
3. Collate and analyze examples of, and guides for, municipal-scale biodiversity conservation strategies and stewardship programs for applicable models and lessons for Saanich.	Complete
4. Summarize international, national, provincial, regional, and municipal targets for biological conservation.	Complete
5. Publish the 4 <sup>th</sup> edition of the ESA Atlas.	Incomplete
6. Establish the Technical Committee and, with staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further refine the scope for the Environmental Policy Framework and data collection;</li> <li>• Develop an evaluation matrix for the selection of policy tools; and</li> <li>• Propose the project goals and objectives</li> </ul>	Complete and on-going (Further discussed in the body of this report)
7. Gain public feedback on the proposed project goals and objectives.	Complete
8. Hire a temporary GIS staff person.	Complete
9. Identify an enhancement to the stewardship program	Complete
10. Submit a progress report to Advisory Committees and Council including gaps in data and information considered important for the completion of the framework.	Complete

**DELIVERABLES FROM THE RESILIENT SAANICH TECHNICAL COMMITTEE (RSTC)**

Action Item #6 of the Terms of Reference calls for the RSTC to produce three key deliverables that will shape subsequent project Milestones. Each deliverable is outlined below. Appendix B contains correspondence from the RSTC regarding these action items.

**1. Further Refine the scope for the Environmental Policy Framework and data collection**

The RSTC has produced a concept of pursuing thematic plans - one for each area of environmental focus or concern. Figure A illustrates that the different thematic areas influence and inform one another. Conservation of tree canopy, for instance, is a policy focus not just for the Urban Forest Strategy, but the Climate Plan, and future Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.



**Figure A: RSTC Thematic Plans Concept for the Environmental Policy Framework**

The following is a preliminary list of thematic plans that the RSTC is recommending for the Environmental Policy Framework:

- Climate Change;
- Biodiversity;
- Urban Forestry (includes soil and green space conservation);
- Stewardship;
- Water Management (includes storm water and watershed health);
- Land Use Planning & Development;
- Marine Shoreline;
- Saanich's Ecological Footprint;
- Agriculture (includes sustainable practice & food security);
- Green Economy;
- Transportation (environmental aspects); and
- Governance and Administration (of environmental policies and service areas).

Each proposed thematic plan would contain the policies and program objectives that would make up Saanich's response to its diverse environmental challenges and opportunities. The typical outline of thematic plans would be:

- Relevant Landscapes and Scales;
- Evaluation of ecosystem health and functional condition;
- Desired future condition;
- Gap analysis and SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) assessment;
- Policies and program objectives;
- Strategies (approaches);
- Tools;
- Action Plan (tasks, timelines, lead department, resources); and
- Monitoring and Assessment.

The RSTC proposes that data gaps and collection be addressed for each of the thematic plans of the framework. A new Mapping Working Group is proposed for the Resilient Saanich Terms of Reference for Milestone Two to support the Thematic Plans such as Biodiversity Conservation Strategy. Data collection refinements would be recommended by the RSTC Mapping Working Group.

## **2. Develop an Evaluation Matrix for the Selection of Policy Tools**

Development of an evaluation matrix is needed to select policy tools and make recommendations in current Milestone Three. An interpretation of the evaluation matrix the RSTC is recommending to be piloted and adapted as necessary, is outlined in Table 2. The criteria would be weighted. The principles, goals, and objectives may change based on the results of the public engagement.

**Table 2: Draft Evaluation Matrix**

<b>Draft Evaluation Matrix for Potential Proposed Tools for Conservation and Stewardship</b>		
<b>Draft Principles</b>	<b>Draft Objectives</b>	<b>Performative criteria (examples)</b>
Recognize the intrinsic value of nature	Fairly and effectively manage <sup>1</sup> the natural and built environment to adapt to climate change, and enhance biodiversity and other essential ecosystem services;	Relevance and usefulness
Respect Indigenous knowledge and land uses	Foster resistance and regenerative capacity (i.e., resilience) in our landscapes against escalating environmental shock and stressors;	Fairness to residents and other stakeholders
Consider future generations	Engage and support citizens in diverse approaches to active and beneficial stewardship;	Strong public support
Ensure evidence-based <sup>2</sup> decision making	Update bylaws and policies across all departments to be transparent and consistent with the Environmental Policy Framework.	Effectiveness (capable of providing clear, measurable environmental benefits)
Adopt the precautionary principle when facing knowledge gaps	Other objectives from future plans and strategies.	Timeliness (can be implemented within a reasonable timeframe)
Build upon foundational knowledge of historical land use		Accuracy
Lead by example through innovation and best practices		Clarity
Look beyond our borders to achieve results at a bioregional scale		Recognized standards and proven methodologies
Address climate adaptation and mitigation in all that we do		Consistency of application in the field by QEPs
Work in partnership with diverse interests to achieve outcomes that realize multiple values and benefits		Completion of a SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats)

<sup>1</sup> "Manage" encompasses protection, rehabilitation, enhancement, as well as planned development and managed Use.

<sup>2</sup> Supported by as much available and appropriate scientific data, models and research, Indigenous knowledge, historic and cultural documents.

		Precedence (has the policy been used to effect elsewhere)
		Enforceability
		Adaptive management

**3. Propose the Project Goals and Objectives**

The RSTC produced draft Resilient Saanich goals and objectives about which staff led a public process to gain feedback. The report on the public engagement, including the RSTC draft, is in Appendix C.

At the May 28, 2021 meeting RSTC endorsed the following recommendations:

- “The draft goals and objectives be edited to clarify terminology and to flesh out the goals and objectives to be “SMART” (Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound)”;
- “Supportive funding be made available to retain a First Nations representative to provide feedback on the draft” and
- “That a consultant take the results of the engagement process and return with a revised draft of the vision, principles, goals and objectives for the consideration of the RSTC”.

This approach could create an opportunity for Milestone Two action items to run parallel with the finalization of Milestone One actions. The additional expenses have been included in the proposed budget increase outlined further in this report.

**REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The RSTC has chosen to re-draft the Terms of Reference and undertake/oversee more of the work, themselves. Both the original and revised Terms of Reference are provided for Council’s review and consideration (see Appendices D and E).

The proposed Terms of Reference includes the provision for a secretariat, as described by the RSTC:

“The secretariat will provide support for the chair and working groups, improving the efficiency of recording and communication between all parties including staff and advancing our work between meetings. This will allow better coordination between RSTC working groups and between the RSTC and staff. The ability to make more progress between meetings is essential to completing this work by the end of 2022.”

To assist Council in understanding the reasons for the proposed changes, the Committee Chair(s) will be providing a report and making a presentation at the Council meeting at which this Report is considered. Councillor Mersereau, Council Liaison for the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee, will also be providing Council a memo outlining the proposed changes and their implications as to timing and required resources.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The existing budget for the initiative is \$250,000 previously funded from Council's Strategic Initiatives Contingency plus \$110,000 for a two year Environmental GIS Analyst. The original budget included \$30,000 of unallocated dollars for contingency. The pandemic resulted in spending an additional \$20,000 on public engagement due to the need to deal with the impacts of public health restrictions and additional money was spent on honourariums. Overall, with the addition of the \$30,000 unallocated/contingency funds, Milestone One was completed on budget.

Should Council support the revised Terms of Reference as presented by the RSTC, the project budget would need to be increased as generally outlined below. It is important to note that the dollar figures noted below are estimates based on other programs of work undertaken by the District. Additional funds may be required as work progresses.

- Retain the services of a third-party consultant to undertake a leadership and project manager (Secretariat) role for Milestone 2 (\$100,000)
- RSTC goals and objectives workshop (\$1,000)
- Consultant to revise the draft goals and objectives (\$25,000)
- Honouraria for additional meetings (\$20,000)
- Additional staff time (\$6,000)
- Public Engagement materials (\$10,000)
- Retain the services of a third-party consultant to produce conservation measures study (\$15,000)
- Retain the services of a third-party consultant to undertake a state of biodiversity report (approximately \$60,000)

The proposed total increase in budget is estimated as \$237,000. Given timing of this work is not aligned with the budget process, if Council supports the revised Terms of Reference, in order to move forward with the Milestone Two work in the near term, it is recommended that Council allocates funding from the Strategic Initiatives Contingency. The work is in fulfilment of Council's Strategic Plan, specifically the Climate Action and Environmental Leadership initiative - Introduce an Environmental Policy Framework with a focus on climate change, stewardship and biodiversity. Alternatively Council could forward the resource request to the 2022 budget process

It is anticipated that with the delay in the start of Milestone Two, the GIS Analyst position may need to be extended past two years. A request for these funds will be made to Council in the future if needed.

Prepared by:

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Adriane Pollard  
Manager of Environmental Services

Approved by:

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Sharon Hvozdzanski  
Director of Planning

Approved by:

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Suzanne Samborski  
Director of Parks, Recreation &  
Community Services

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Attachments: Appendix A: Details of Progress on Action Items  
Appendix B: Correspondence by the RSTC  
Appendix C: Resilient Saanich: Milestone One/Action 7 - Public Engagement Report  
Appendix D: Terms of Reference proposed by the Resilient Saanich Technical  
Committee  
Appendix E: Existing Terms of Reference

cc: Valla Tinney, Director of Finance

**ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS:**

I endorse the recommendation from the Director of Planning and the Director of Parks, Recreation & Community Services.

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Paul Thorkelsson, Chief Administrative Officer

## APPENDIX A

### Details of Progress on Action Items

**Action Item 1:** Create a webpage and subscribe-able bulletins to keep residents updated and engaged in the project, progress, and opportunities for involvement.

Several webpages were created for the initiative including pages about the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee (RSTC), stewardship opportunities, biodiversity, a Frequently Asked Questions factsheet, and a link to the Climate Plan. 305 people have subscribed to the e-Bulletins and eleven e-Bulletins have been sent to date. The e-Bulletins were the most preferred method of engagement identified by feedback form respondents.

**Action Item 2:** Draft a Resilient Saanich framework skeleton of existing policies, etc. Conduct a gap analysis. Identify options for filling gaps using the Green Bylaws Toolkit and other references. Publish summary for information and review.

A first draft was presented to the RSTC. A revised draft was presented to the RSTC incorporating committee feedback. The drafts may be viewed as agenda package attachments.

This detailed document is structured to show the connections between Natural Assets and how they are protected or enhanced in Saanich. Broad categories of natural assets, their benefits, and the threats they face were identified. Some of the information was drawn from the “Climate Plan Update: Resilient Saanich Risk Assessment Report”. Next, the document lists all of the current Saanich bylaws, policies, strategies, procedures, partnerships and programs that contain provisions for environmental enhancement or protection. All of the potential legal tools are described and evaluated in terms of how Saanich currently utilizes these tools ranging from completely absent to up-to-date and effective. Finally, a summary is given to show how well Saanich is doing to protect its natural assets

**Action Item #3:** Collate and analyze examples of, and guides for, municipal-scale biodiversity conservation strategies and stewardship programs for applicable models and lessons for Saanich. Publish summary for information and review.

Several binders of background documents were made available to RSTC members. Three public factsheets were published on the project webpage with links to direct users to the subject documents:

- Examples of Biodiversity Conservation Strategy;
- Biodiversity Conservation Resource Documents;
- Saanich Reports related to Biodiversity; and
- Examples of Environmental Stewardship.

**Action Item #4:** Summarize international, national, provincial, regional, and municipal targets for biological conservation. Publish summary for information and review.

There are established and evolving targets for biodiversity conservation to which many governments subscribe. While the targets may not be directly transferable to a local jurisdictional area, they do provide context. A public factsheet was published on the project webpage to give an overview of international, national, provincial, regional, and local targets. These are most often expressed as a percentage of the land base that should be protected for

conservation. There are other targets that are related to individual species, climate action, and others.

A second factsheet was published to outline how much natural area is protected in Saanich. This factsheet has some shortcomings due to data availability, but it does provide comparisons and approximate metrics for discussion purposes.

**Action Item #5:** Publish the 4th edition of the ESA Atlas. Inform the public.

A copy of the newly renamed Environmental Reference Atlas (ERA) was provided to the RSTC and a presentation was made. Comments were submitted by the RSTC and a response from staff with recommendations was submitted to the RSTC. Staff recommend that the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the Atlas be published to increase accessibility to both residents and staff, on the understanding that the 5<sup>th</sup> edition will be produced at the conclusion of Resilient Saanich to display all of the new and improved data collected. The RSTC is not in support of publishing the atlas now or in the future.

**Action Item #6:** Establish the Technical Committee and, with staff: further refine the scope for the Environmental Policy Framework and data collection; develop an evaluation matrix for the selection of policy tools; and propose the project objectives.

The RSTC held their first meeting August 13, 2020. Nine members were appointed to the committee by Council after a comprehensive call for applicants in June 2020. A seat was reserved for a potential First Nations Government representative. The committee currently has eight members. The committee has met at least monthly. A daylong facilitated workshop was held in October 2020 to orient the committee and begin work on drafting the goals and objectives for Resilient Saanich. The RSTC has also spent time working in small groups to address biodiversity, mapping, stewardship, etc. This work has been valuable in preparing the members to give advice and complete tasks.

Appendix A of the Resilient Saanich Terms of Reference is specifically for the RSTC and states that the purpose of the committee is to “work with staff and consultants to advise and share expertise in shaping the actions outlined in the Resilient Saanich Terms of Reference”. In terms of Milestone One, the following were included in the scope of work for the RSTC:

- To support Saanich staff in reviewing and preparing the draft goals and objectives of the Environmental Policy Framework during Milestone One;
- To assist Saanich staff with the development of an evaluation matrix for selection of policy tools needed for the implementation of the Environmental Policy Framework during Milestone One; and
- To assist Saanich staff to define the scope of further research and environmental data collection needed to develop the Environmental Policy Framework.

In recognition of the work of the professionals on the committee, a honourarium was paid to each member for each meeting attended.

**Action Item #7:** Gain public feedback on the proposed project goals and objectives.

The RSTC submitted their final draft of the goals and objectives to staff on December 31, 2020. The virtual open house and feedback forms were launched on January 20, 2021 and closed on

March 15, 2021. A few further anticipated submissions were made by targeted stakeholder groups after this date and are included in the report.

The engagement process attracted over 1400 participants and resulted in over 200 submissions. Overall, there were high levels of support for the draft and many suggestions for improvement. A detailed report on the participation, feedback, analysis and recommendations is attached (Appendix C).

**Action Item #8: Hire a temporary GIS staff person.**

An Environmental GIS Analyst was hired in June 2020. Highlights of completed work to date are: compilation and presentation of potential data sources for biodiversity for the consideration of the RSTC; creation of interpretive maps to aid stewardship tools; compilation of inventory verification data; and increasing the accuracy of mapped areas.

To date, the RSTC has not provided advice as to the biodiversity data that should be analyzed by the Environmental GIS Analyst. As a result, it is expected that this temporary two-year position may need to be extended.

**Action Item #9: Identify an enhancement to the stewardship program**

Several enhancements to stewardship programs have taken place during Milestone One or are in progress/nearing completion. These include:

- Expanding the Native Plant Salvage Program to include plant propagation opportunities;
- Publication of a Saanich Naturescape Program handbook for residents;
- Expanding the current recommended native plant lists into a handbook with greater detail and ideas;
- Training of watershed stewards to create projects using iNaturalist and participate in the CRD biodiversity challenge;
- Launch of the Neighbour to Neighbour Program which encourages resiliency via getting to know neighbours and potentially working together through a central hub (webpage) for a range of Saanich programs and resources that support community connections;
- Continued promotion of the Residents' Climate Action Guidebook and a prize draw for individuals sharing their own climate action plan;
- Continued support to One Planet Saanich stakeholders in the development and implementation of their One Planet Action Plans, that often include ecosystem stewardship actions;
- Presentations to students, community associations, and organizations on the Climate Plan and range of actions and resources, including ecosystem enhancement;
- A summer media/awareness raising campaign regarding Natural Intelligence from July to October. Almost 23,000 public engagements with our Natural Intelligence content on social media (includes comments, shares and likes). Up from 3700 in 2019, Over 620% increase. 779 hours public spent reading the Natural Intelligence website content on CTV and Saanich websites. Up from 71 hours in 2019, more than tenfold increase;
- Continued Pulling Together activities including invasive species removal in 44 sites, over 25 planting/restoration projects, and 11,137 volunteer hours;

- New education and outreach for Mount Douglas Park visitors by Park Ambassadors totaling 518 volunteer hours;
- 83 new partnership trees planted on Saanich boulevards since last summer, an increase from 71 last planting season;
- 71 new trees planted for International Day of the Forest planting and media release and several media post surrounding the UN initiative;
- 25 staff led restoration projects;
- November 14th planting Colquitz Creek with Peninsula Streams Society; 532 trees, shrubs and forbs planted;
- National Tree Day give-a-way;
- Tree Appreciation Day events at Mt Douglas Park resulting in 783 trees, shrubs, and forbs planted;
- Construction of three Great Horned Owl nesting platforms and nine swallow nesting boxes by the 10th Garry Oak Venturer Scouts;
- Invasive plants removal by several school volunteer groups;
- Bat Box monitoring by 10th Garry Oak Venturers (Habitat Acquisition Trust);
- Fish Carcass toss by Victoria Nature School into Douglas Creek;
- Monitoring of Great Horned Owl pair at new nesting platforms by several volunteers;
- Continued Colquitz River fish fence seasonal counting by volunteers; and
- Several park permits for research (UVIC & others).

In addition to the stewardship programs, the regional Flood Inundation Mapping Project was finalized which will help to mitigate risk, including increased stewardship, of ecosystems and cultural sites that may be at risk due to future sea level rise. Similarly, the Bowker Creek Daylighting Feasibility Study was completed which will assist in increasing stewardship opportunities to daylight and enhance the creek;

In Milestone Two, enhancements or new stewardship opportunities will continue to grow. As part of the budget contained in the Terms of Reference, there are no funds dedicated to creating enhanced stewardship opportunities and are currently being accomplished using core funding or grants. If during the process of identifying enhanced stewardship opportunities a need for additional funds are needed, staff will request additional funds at that time.