

MINUTES
SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE ACTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room 2 and via MS Teams
770 Vernon Avenue
November 13, 2025, at 4:00 PM

ROLL CALL

In Attendance: Councillor Judy Brownoff, Lesley Bainbridge, Jane Cameron, Spencer Graham, Barb Sharpe, and Diya Courty-Stephens (4:15 p.m. via Teams)
Regrets: George Klima, Leslie Miller-Brooks, and Karin Nelson
Staff: Rebecca Newlove, Manager of Sustainability; Amanda Blick-McStravick, Parks Planner/Designer; Glenys Verhulst, Sustainability Specialist, and Angela Hawkshaw, Committee Clerk

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

October 9, 2025

MOVED by J. Cameron and Seconded by B. Sharpe: “That the Minutes of the Sustainability and Climate Action Advisory Committee held October 9, 2025, be adopted as circulated.”

RESULT: Carried 5 TO 0

IN FAVOUR: Brownoff, Bainbridge, Cameron, Graham, Sharpe

OPPOSED: None

COMMITTEE BUSINESS ITEMS

CHAIR’S REMARKS

- The Chair noted several accomplishments achieved over the past year, including the introduction of vegan ice cream and reusable bowls at the Strawberry Festival to support low-emission food choices; ongoing work to explore solar energy opportunities for both municipal facilities and community adoption; continued advancement toward a zero-waste approach at festivals and public engagement events; and progress on the upcoming update to the Climate Plan.
- Saanich is exploring participation in the FireSmart BC program, with an update expected in 2026; more visible signage, public education, and park fire-risk management are needed.
- Municipalities can access Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) FireSmart grants (up to \$150,000 annually) for planning, education, staffing, and fuel-management work.
- The cost of solar and advancements in battery storage are rapidly evolving.
- Wind and solar remain leading renewable energy technologies.
- The Tree Protection Bylaw is being updated and will be included in the Strategic Plan.
- Enhancing staff awareness and training could help reinforce consistent sustainable operational practices.
- Vehicle telematics could support operational improvements (idling, fuel use, routing).
- Concerns were raised about natural debris in parks acting as fire fuel; identifying high-risk areas, increasing monitoring, and coordinating with neighbouring municipalities could help.

QUADRA MCKENZIE PLAN – COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

The committee held a round table discussion on the Quadra Mckenzie Plan (QMP) 2025 Alignment Summary (document on file) which led to the following motion:

MOVED by J. Cameron and Seconded by S. Graham: “That the Sustainability and Climate Action Advisory Committee support the climate related initiatives that are within the Updated Draft Quadra Mckenzie Plan presented to the committee and request that planning give greater consideration within the update to stronger policies that are directed to a reduction in building footprints, site coverage and evaluation of service corridors impacts, in order to preserve higher value natural areas, biodiversity and trees.”

The following discussion ensued:

- Committee feedback is provided only for plans formally brought forward; other area plans have not yet come to the committee.
- The QMP sits within the broader policy framework (Saanich Climate Plan (SCP), Active Transportation Plan (ATP), Official Community Plan (OCP)), which guides its direction.

RESULT: 3 TO 2

IN FAVOUR: Brownoff, Bainbridge, Graham

OPPOSED: Sharpe and Cameron

MOVED by J. Cameron and Seconded by S. Graham: “That the main motion be amended to remove the words “higher value.”

RESULT: 4 TO 1

IN FAVOUR: Brownoff, Bainbridge, Cameron, Graham

OPPOSED: Sharpe

Main Motion as Amended:

“That the Sustainability and Climate Action Advisory Committee support the climate related initiatives that are within the Updated Draft Quadra Mckenzie Plan presented to the committee and request that planning give greater consideration within the update to stronger policies that are directed to a reduction in building footprints, site coverage and evaluation of service corridors impacts, in order to preserve natural areas, biodiversity and trees.”

LAMBRICK PARK CAMPUS RENEWAL PROJECT UPDATE

The Parks Planner/Designer gave a presentation on the Lambrick Park Campus Renewal Project Update (PowerPoint on file). The following was noted in answers to questions and during committee discussion:

- Engagement with seniors will occur at Gordon Head Recreation Centre during 55+ events to reduce travel barriers.
- Ideas included integrating seniors’ fitness equipment, activity stations, and other health-supportive features into park design were discussed.
- Current engagement focuses on high-level visioning, including why people visit the park, what they value, and their long-term vision.
- Additional concepts raised: physiotherapy/rehab services, restaurants, vending options at recreation centres.

- Importance of heritage-designated buildings such as the “Dodd House” should be reflected in project planning.
- Building-performance considerations such as embodied carbon, energy sources, solar, and water efficiency should be reviewed early. Sustainability will be a core objective.
- Old gas boilers at Gordon Head Recreation Centre were replaced in 2018 with a renewable-energy heat pump and high-efficiency boilers, reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 38%.
- The Green Building Policy demonstrates Saanich’s commitment to environmental, economic, and social stewardship.
- Cost analysis is conducted to fully understand financial implications.
- Battery storage options are being investigated.
- Next engagement phase expected in early 2027.

COMMUNITY CLIMATE ADAPTATION WORKSHOP

The Sustainability Specialist led a Community Climate Adaptation Workshop. The following was noted in response to questions and during committee discussion:

- Long-term care homes need better cooling and heat-resilient building design.
- People with mental health or substance-use disorders are highly vulnerable to extreme heat due to limited cooling access, unstable housing, and medication-related risks.
- Concerns noted about protecting bird species and addressing the increasing migration of insects (e.g., ticks), due to climate change.
- Tree and landscape irrigation challenges continue due to varying drought and rain extremes.
- Real-time water metering could improve consumption tracking, as current billing data has months-long delays.
- Understanding the impact of wildfire smoke infiltration on buildings and indoor air quality is important.
- Public education is needed to help residents prepare for extreme heat, wildfire smoke, and shifting rainfall patterns.
- Upcoming open houses with the Community Social Planning Council of Greater Victoria (CSPC) will include Do-It-Yourself (DIY) air-filter instructions.
- The Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) has a temperature-monitoring program that alerts support staff when indoor temperatures exceed 26°C in clients’ homes.
- Offering incentives for water-conservation practices could be explored.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion from J. Cameron, the meeting adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

CHAIR

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

COMMITTEE CLERK