

# Strategic Plan 2023–2027

District of Saanich - Council Strategic Plan

Adopted: September 25, 2023

Revised: November 20, 2023



## **Territorial Acknowledgement**

We acknowledge that the District of Saanich lies within the territories of the lək'wəŋən peoples represented by the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations and the W SÁNEĆ peoples represented by the W JOŁEŁP (Tsartlip), BOKÉĆEN (Pauquachin), STÁUTW (Tsawout), W SIKEM (Tseycum) and MÁLEXEŁ (Malahat) Nations.

## **Diversity Statement**

Saanich is committed to celebrating the rich diversity of people in our community and we are guided by the principle that embracing diversity enriches the lives of all people. We all share the responsibility for creating an equitable and inclusive community and for addressing discrimination in all forms.

## **Our Commitment**

Saanich is committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, and continued progress towards reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and communities. As part of this commitment, through this plan you will see initiatives that support progress toward a more inclusive, equitable and diverse community and workplace through education and awareness, programs and services, policy development, relationship building and more. We believe these efforts will result in a healthier community.

# Message from Saanich Council

We are excited to present our 2023 - 2027 Strategic Plan.

The work of any municipality is about you, our community. To build a strong community we know we need to have a deep understanding of who we are and what opportunities and challenges we may face. Your Council is committed to building on our past successes while also looking to our current and future priorities. Through collaboration, informed decision-making and action, we will continue to make steady progress toward the Saanich Vision in the best interest of our residents.

The strategic priorities outlined in this plan will guide our work over the coming term and help pave the way for the future of Saanich and its diverse voices. Through community engaged processes, we will work to identify where progress is being made and where greater progress is possible. We are committed to creating a community that is sustainable, resilient and vibrant. A community that we can all be proud of, enjoy and celebrate.

We welcome your comments on the objectives and initiatives we have set out in this plan via the Corporate Services Department in person, by telephone at 250-475-1775 or through email to [strategicplan@saanich.ca](mailto:strategicplan@saanich.ca).

The Strategic Plan is available online at [saanich.ca/strategicplan](https://saanich.ca/strategicplan) and is also available in printed form at the Municipal Hall, recreation centres and Saanich libraries.



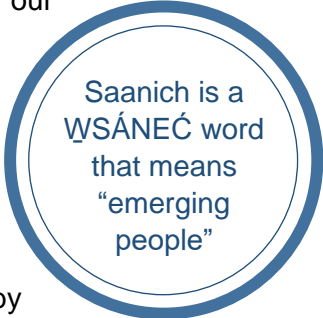
Left to right: Councillors Zac de Vries, Teale Phelps Bondaroff, Susan Brice and Judy Brownoff; Mayor Dean Murdock; Councillors Nathalie Chambers, Mena Westhaver, Colin Plant and Karen Harper

# Achieving the vision

The Strategic Plan is Saanich’s roadmap that tells us where we are going and what kind of community we hope to be.

Saanich strives to be an inclusive community where diversity thrives and our residents feel supported.

Saanich lies within the Coast and Straits Salish territory, the traditional territories of the lək'wəŋən and WSÁNEĆ peoples. We are committed to advancing reconciliation by engaging with the many Indigenous Peoples and Nations in the community with the goal of building stronger and more respectful relationships.

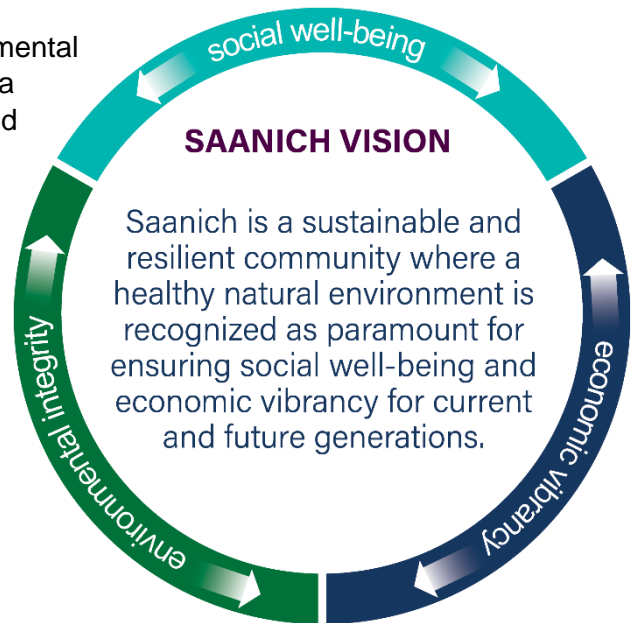


Our Strategic Plan is guided by three fundamental elements adopted by Saanich Council:

- Our vision or Official Community Plan (OCP);
- Our mission; and
- Our values.



The Official Community Plan expresses the fundamental values and goals of our community and describes a future view of our community that we are committed to achieving. The OCP embraces three core focus areas for Saanich over the next 20 years, that Council and the community identified including environmental integrity, social well-being and economic vibrancy.



# Mission and values

Our mission describes both our purpose and our practices. It acknowledges that Saanich serves diverse people, cultures and organizations, and all of their interests are important to us. Our mission also speaks directly to our employees, without whose tremendous effort and contributions we can never achieve our goals. Both our OCP and mission are founded on the values that guide all our actions and decisions.



# Strategic Plan process

The Saanich Strategic Plan process has evolved steadily, with successive Councils adding many progressive elements to improve corporate direction and accountability.

This plan is the result of the collaborative efforts of Council and staff. The themes and objectives outlined in this plan guide municipal staff in delivering services, setting priorities and developing programs.

Initiatives for achieving the objectives have been determined. Every initiative is aligned with the OCP; however, most of the initiatives are also informed by another process, program, strategy, master plan or public body. These initiatives are a to-do list; they are concrete steps to achieve the Strategic Plan.

This Strategic Plan is a continual work in progress. Over time, new priorities, opportunities, demands and challenges will emerge, and may be incorporated into the strategic planning process.



We will use the Strategic Plan to:

- define the municipality’s priorities, processes, and short and long term plans;
- guide work priorities through corporate and departmental plans;
- prioritize budget and resource allocations through the five-year financial plan;
- provide context for staff reports to Council; and
- evaluate achievement of Saanich objectives.

Ultimately, the success of the Strategic Plan is moving toward our vision.



# Themes and objectives

## **Climate Action and Environmental Leadership**

- We steward the environment.
- We take steps to ensure building stocks address our environmental and climate impact.
- We implement innovative solutions and practices to reduce emissions, mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change, and protect the environment.

## **Community Well-being**

- Diversity, equity, inclusion, and respect will guide our decisions.
- We commit to a high level of public safety in our community.
- We invest in people and neighborhoods to foster community health and a sense of belonging.
- We build and sustain respectful relationships with the many Indigenous Peoples in our community and our Indigenous neighbours.
- We work together, build understanding, seek knowledge, and advance truth and reconciliation.

## **Housing**

- We use mechanisms available to increase and improve the supply of diverse and affordable housing that meets the needs of our residents now and in the future.
- We make land use decisions consistent with the objectives of our community development plans (Climate Plan, Active Transportation Plan, etc.)
- We continue to improve our active transportation networks and infrastructure to help our residents safely move and connect.
- We recognize the direction in the Provincial Housing Target Order to increase housing supply by taking steps to meet or exceed the targets through updates to policies, processes and development review approaches, and by measuring our progress as part of the District-wide approach to housing.

## **Transportation**

- We build a culture to support sustainable transportation.
- We achieve a significant shift to active modes of transportation to reduce vehicle trips.
- We eliminate all fatalities and serious injuries on Saanich roads and trails.
- We create more connections for people walking, cycling, and using transit.
- We build a network that is accessible and provides equitable mobility options.

## **Economic Development**

- We focus on economic development to further diversify and expand our economic base which is foundational to a vibrant community.
- We commit to sustainable economic development that balances economic growth with environmental protection, social equity, and quality of life for residents.

## **Organizational Excellence**

- We balance efficiency, transparency, and engagement.
- We base financial decisions on predictability, consistency, prudence, and long-term sustainability.
- We ensure continuous improvement to support robust and modern internal processes.
- We recognize that a healthy, safe, engaged, diverse, and effective workforce is our greatest asset and will invest accordingly.
- We practice asset management to support the sustainability of our services.



## Climate action and environmental leadership initiatives

Objective	Initiative
<p>1.1 We steward the environment.</p>	1.1.1 Introduce an Environmental Policy Framework with a focus on climate change, enhanced stewardship and biodiversity.
	1.1.2 Implement key initiatives from the Agriculture and Food Security Plan.
	1.1.3 Implement the existing Invasive Species Management Strategy.
	1.1.4 Review, update and implement the Urban Forest Strategy.
	1.1.5 Continue to advance Integrated Stormwater Management Plans over the next four years, including completing baseline studies for Cordova Bay, Colquitz Creek and Douglas Creek.
	1.1.6 Develop a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.
<p>1.2 We take steps to ensure building stocks address our environmental and climate impact.</p>	1.2.1 Develop and implement a Building Retrofit Strategy that achieves our 2030 climate emissions reductions targets and climate adaptation goals.
	1.2.2 Accelerate the adoption of heat pumps in new and existing buildings to support building emissions reduction targets and the provision of cooling to address extreme heat.
	1.2.3 Show leadership by achieving our 2025 corporate GHG targets; upgrading all key municipal facilities to be 100% renewably powered, to address climate adaptation needs (e.g. cooling) and to identify opportunities for onsite energy generation and back up resiliency. Set a timeline and plan for the electrification of Saanich equipment.
<p>1.3 We implement innovative solutions and practices to reduce emissions, mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change, and protect the environment.</p>	1.3.1 Review and update the Climate Plan and associated targets by 2025, based upon the latest climate science and best practice, that addresses consumption-based emissions and that considers our global fair share.
	1.3.2 Complete an updated Climate Risk assessment using the latest regional climate projections and use this to inform individual Risk Registers, Asset Management Plans, and a new Climate Adaptation Strategy. The Climate Adaptation Strategy should identify the actions, timelines and costs necessary to mitigate and become resilient to projected climate changes and innovative approaches to financing.
	1.3.3 Enhance electric vehicle infrastructure to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
	1.3.4 Develop an up to 100,000 Trees in 10 Years Initiative.
	1.3.5 Develop and implement a community wide Zero Waste Strategy that supports the achievement of the regional waste stretch targets.
	1.3.6 Develop, fund and implement a Zero Emissions Fleet Strategy that provides the roadmap to transition Saanich fleets to 100% renewable energy and net-zero emissions by or before 2040.





## Community well-being initiatives

Objective	Initiative
2.1 Diversity, equity, inclusion, and respect will guide our decisions.	2.1.1 Launch and implement DEI Strategic Report and Action Framework.
	2.1.2 Create and implement an Accessibility Action Plan and Policy.
	2.1.3 Update the Youth Development Strategy.
2.2 We commit to a high level of public safety in our community.	2.2.1 Implement recommendations from the 2019 Fire Services Review - 2020 Fire Master Plan.
	2.2.2 Develop and implement policy, programs, infrastructure and communications campaigns that support and empower residents and the community to be prepared for emergency events and resilient to future climate changes.
	2.2.3 Support regional efforts to unify the four core fire departments to better serve residents.
2.3 We invest in people and neighborhoods to foster community health and a sense of belonging.	2.3.1 Update community contribution policy to ensure amenities can be negotiated in an equitable, clear and focused manner.  Update the CAC framework on a regular basis to ensure adequate amenities for communities and the reflect market conditions.
	2.3.2 Undertake the ten-year PRCS Strategic Vision and Actions Plans with the community.
	2.3.3 Implement the People, Pets and Parks Strategy.
	2.3.4 Undertake a Parks Field Use and Allocation Strategy.
	2.3.5 Continue modernizing agreements with community groups.
	2.3.6 Promote well-being for residents through creating strong connections between local government, health agencies and social non-profits who serve vulnerable populations.
	2.3.7 Work toward redevelopment of Nellie McClung Library space to increase and improve affordable housing.
	2.3.8 Initiate the Lambrick Park Site-wide Integrated Planning Process.
	2.3.9 Revisit the Panama Flats Concept Plan.
2.4 We build and sustain respectful relationships with the many Indigenous Peoples in our community and our Indigenous neighbours.	2.4.1 Expand support for Urban Indigenous in Saanich through partnerships with Victoria Native Friendship Centre and the BC Métis Federation.
	2.4.2 Continue implementation of the ÁTOL,NEUEL (“Respecting One Another”) Memorandum of Understanding with the W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council.
	2.4.3 Develop and nurture formal Council-to-Council relationships with the lək̓ʷəŋən peoples represented by the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations and the W̱SÁNEĆ peoples represented by the W̱ JOŁŁŁP (Tsartlip), BOKEĆEN (Pauquachin), STÁUTW̱ (Tsawout), W̱ SIKEM (Tseycum) and MÁLEXEL (Malahat) Nations.
2.5 We work together, build understanding, seek knowledge, and advance truth and reconciliation.	2.5.1 Proactively support and encourage the installation of public art in the community.
	2.5.2 Continue leading the District’s response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s June 2015 “94 Calls to Action”.
	2.5.3 Develop a formal Reconciliation framework to guide the District’s government to government work.
	2.5.4 Install Indigenous Art at Municipal Hall and expand exhibition opportunities for First Nations, Urban Indigenous Métis artists.



# Housing initiatives

Objective	Initiative
3.1 We use mechanisms available to increase and improve the supply of diverse and affordable housing that meets the needs of our residents now and in the future.	3.1.1 Implement the Housing Strategy (Top 12, phase 1 and phase 2).
	3.1.2 Undertake the Neighbourhood Homes Strategy.
	3.1.3 Expand support to non-market housing including consideration of pre-zoning for non-market housing.
3.2 We make land use decisions consistent with the objectives of our community development plans (Climate Plan, Active Transportation Plan, etc.)	3.2.1 Develop remaining Centre, Corridor and Village Plans.
	3.2.2 Work toward redevelopment of Nellie McClung Library space to increase and improve affordable housing.
	3.2.3 Review and assess the need for 5-year updates of Centre, Corridor and Village Plans and OCP document.
3.3 We continue to improve our active transportation networks and infrastructure to help our residents safely move and connect.	3.3.1 Modernize our standards for vehicle parking, bicycle parking and end of trip facilities.
	3.3.2 Complete Corridor Plans for McKenzie Avenue and Quadra Street that support improved housing density and sustainable transportation choices while reducing reliance on vehicle trips.
3.4 We recognize the direction in the Provincial Housing Target Order to increase housing supply by taking steps to meet or exceed the targets through updates to policies, processes and development review approaches, and by measuring our progress as part of the District-wide approach to housing.	3.4.1 Evaluate and respond to the Housing Targets set out in the Provincial Order as part of the work to update the Official Community Plan and Centre, Corridor and Village Plans.
	3.4.2 Measure and document progress on the implementation of recommendations identified through the Development Process Review as part of the progress response to the Provincial Order.
	3.4.3 Align progress reporting in the new Housing Strategy Monitoring Program with the reporting timeframes referenced in the Provincial Housing Target Order.



These **master plans**, among many others, provide guidance in establishing priorities in the Strategic Plan. A full list of key documents is available at [saanich.ca/plans](https://saanich.ca/plans).



# Transportation initiatives

Objective	Initiative
4.1 We build a culture to support sustainable transportation.	4.1.1 Update the Active Transportation Plan.
	4.1.2 Develop a traffic calming framework for Saanich.
	4.1.3 Implement outstanding actions in the E-Mobility Strategy to achieve mobility related climate targets and other co-benefits.
	4.1.4 Explore options for accelerating the Active Transportation Plan implementation timeline.
	4.1.5 Support regional initiatives for multi-modal transportation and transportation planning coordination.
4.2 We achieve a significant shift to active modes of transportation to reduce vehicle trips.	4.2.1 Prioritize sustainable transportation options when developing street designs to support a multi-modal transportation network and reduce the reliance on vehicle trips.
	4.2.2 Support higher density, mixed use development that promotes active transportation in centres, villages, and along rapid and frequent transit corridors.
4.3 We eliminate all fatalities and serious injuries on Saanich roads and trails.	4.3.1 Develop Saanich's first ever Road Safety Action Plan.
	4.3.2 Implement the Council Speed Limit Establishment Policy on corridors and streets with increased crash risk / trends.
4.4 We create more connections for people walking, cycling, and using transit.	4.4.1 Support implementation of a Rapid Bus along McKenzie Avenue and Highway 17.
	4.4.2 Support development of a world class multi-modal sustainable transportation hub in the Uptown area.
	4.4.3 Work with BC Transit, the Victoria Regional Transit Commission, the CRD and other regional partners to accelerate service improvements and secure dramatically increased investments that support increased transit ridership.
4.5 We build a network that is accessible and provides equitable mobility options.	4.5.1 Ensure best practices in accessibility are considered in conjunction with all new or improved trail and roadway projects
	4.5.2 Prioritize walking and cycling investments in equity-deserving areas and in locations where there is evidence of road safety issues.
	4.5.3 Ensure bus stops are designed to be accessible and in alignment with Provincial and Federal legislation; and advocate for BC Transit to reflect these improvements in their guidelines.



# Economic development initiatives

Objective	Initiative
5.1 We focus on economic development to further diversify and expand our economic base which is foundational to a vibrant community.	5.1.1 Create and Implement an Economic Development Strategy aligned to OCP, Housing Strategy, Climate Action Plan, and other related initiatives.
5.2 We commit to sustainable economic development that balances economic growth with environmental protection, social equity, and quality of life for residents.	5.2.1 Undertake a citizens' assembly to explore the costs, benefits, and disadvantages of amalgamation between Victoria and Saanich.
	5.2.2 Update the 2002 Comprehensive Arts Policy and Arts and Culture Strategy recognizing that arts and culture is a part of a vibrant local economy and civic life.
	5.2.3 Align strategies to support Indigenous economic development fostering social equity and reconciliation.
	5.2.4 Continue to explore and implement a strategic real estate function.

## Resident and Business Surveys

We conduct the resident and business surveys every four years following the start of a new council term (formerly citizen and business survey).

Randomly selected residents and businesses are asked questions about municipal service delivery, safety and quality of life in Saanich, value for taxes and Council decision making among others.

Look for this and other engagement opportunities on [Saanich.ca](https://www.saanich.ca)

## District of Saanich 2022 Citizen and Business Satisfaction Survey

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THE DISTRICT OF SAANICH  
BY BC STATS – MARCH 2023



## Organizational excellence initiatives

Objective	Initiative
6.1 We balance efficiency, transparency, and engagement.	6.1.1 Procure and implement a public engagement platform.
	6.1.2 Implement a Council Agenda Management System.
	6.1.3 Enhance access to government information through open data initiatives.
	6.1.4 Explore the potential for semi-annual Town Halls to be held in various neighbourhoods within the District to further public engagement.
6.2 We base financial decisions on predictability, consistency, prudence, and long-term sustainability.	6.2.1 Review various payments methods available to residents/businesses.
	6.2.2 Finalize the Purchasing policy and signing authority.
	6.2.3 Review implementation of digital capture of purchasing cards and cheque requisition receipts.
	6.2.4 Modernize the utility rates to promote water conservation, sustain service delivery and provide equity amongst users.
	6.2.5 Explore a new user fee for rainwater management considering site permeability and the diverse landscapes of the community.
6.3 We ensure continuous improvement to support robust and modern internal processes.	6.3.1 Review and improve the development application process based on recommendations in the KPMG report.
	6.3.2 Integrate electronic records management.
	6.3.3 Enhance automated data analytics and improve internal processes with automation.
6.4 We recognize that a healthy, safe, engaged, diverse, and effective workforce is our greatest asset and will invest accordingly.	6.4.1 Create and implement a Saanich Workforce Plan (People & Culture Plan). This will encompass implementation of a DEI action plan.
	6.4.2 Create and implement a Health & Safety Action Plan.
	6.4.3 Create a Learning and Development Framework.
6.5 We practice asset management to support the sustainability of our services.	6.5.1 Develop an Asset Management Strategy.
	6.5.2 Update the Infrastructure Replacement Funding Strategy.
	6.5.3 Develop asset management plans for engineered and natural assets, with consideration for climate change impacts.
	6.5.4 Develop and implement an asset management software solution.

"Saanich values organizational excellence and is committed to establishing an internal framework of standards, processes, programs, and initiatives intended to engage and motivate employees to deliver plans, services and supports to make Saanich the best it can be."



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