

Saanich Strategic Plan 2019–2023

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What is the Saanich Strategic Plan?

The Strategic Plan is Saanich's road map that tells us where we are going and what kind of community we hope to become. 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 OCP expresses the fundamental goals of our community and describes a vision of our community that we are committed to achieving. Our mission describes our purpose and our practices. Our OCP and mission are founded on the values that guide our actions and decisions.



Did you know?

The **Strategic Plan** is a document.

Strategic planning is a process with ongoing activities such as monitoring, reporting and budgeting.

At Saanich, we will use the Strategic Plan to:

- define the municipality's priorities, processes, and short and long term plans;
- guide work priorities through 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 goals.

The Strategic Plan is a living document. Over time, new priorities, opportunities, demands and challenges will emerge that may be incorporated into the plan when other initiatives are competed.

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Our journey: the strategic planning process

Shortly after being elected in 2018, Council started working on their Strategic Plan. Council wanted this plan to reflect the input they received from citizens through their 2018 election campaigns as well as from the data compiled in the statistically valid citizen and business surveys conducted in early 2019.

In the 2019–2023 Strategic Plan, Council introduced **five new goal areas**:

- Community well-being
- Affordable housing, land use and infrastructure management
- Organizational excellence
- Economic diversification
- Climate action and environmental leadership

These goals were chosen as the most important areas requiring change or transformation after considering community input, best practices and current organizational initiatives. They were also chosen as the areas that will move us toward achieving the Saanich vision.

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An informed approach

Our Strategic Plan provides purpose and direction to Saanich. It is a series of connected and complementary objectives that guide the strategies and actions toward a shared vision. Together, all the various parts of the Strategic Plan outline the priorities and opportunities for change.

As a starting point, Council has identified initiatives or actions that will help us to achieve our goals. Every initiative/action in the Strategic Plan is aligned with the OCP. However, the majority of initiatives are also informed by another process, program, strategy, master plan or public body. The initiatives/actions are a to-do list; they are concrete steps to move us toward the Saanich vision that we will incorporate into internal planning.



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Public engagement and strategic planning

The community as a whole benefits when there is a strong working partnership between citizens, business owners, Council and staff. We recognize that encouraging public engagement is an integral part of good governance. The more informed and involved citizens and community groups are, the better able we are to build and maintain the community we want. Given that, public engagement is a critical component in creating the Saanich Strategic Plan.

We heard in the 2019 survey results:

What is your biggest hope for the future?

- More affordable housing
- Protect nature and improve green spaces
- Improve infrastructure: roads, water, drainage



What's the most important issue facing the District?

- Housing issues
- Traffic and traffic congestion
- Environment and enhanced green spaces



How did Council use public input to draft the plan?

Surveys – In January 2019, more than 1,400 stakeholders and residents participated in our statistically valid citizen and business surveys. More than 500 people also participated in our online survey. Council used these survey results to build their strategic plan.

Election – Prior to the 2018 election, municipal candidates met with citizens and participated in community events. Our elected Council incorporated the feedback they received into this plan. 38.26% of Saanich residents voted in the 2018 municipal election.



Master plans - Many plans and strategies that outline key goals or community improvements have been developed with your help through extensive public engagement over the past few years. Council makes decisions and approves these proposed plans to ensure alignment with the Saanich vision, achievement of the strategic planning goals and available funding.



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OUR PROCESS

The Saanich vision points which way to go, but not how to get there.

The Official Community Plan (OCP) provides the framework.

The Strategic Plan gives the road map, focusing energy on what is most important.

The Financial Plan provides the funding for planned activities and ongoing operations.

The Annual Report provides a synopsis of the previous year's strategic, financial and operational progress.

How does the Strategic Plan align with the Financial Plan?

The Strategic Plan is closely tied to the five-year Financial Plan, also known as the budget. Through the Strategic Plan, Council defines the municipality's priorities, processes, and short and long-term plans. The priorities in the Strategic Plan help inform Council's decision-making during annual budget deliberations. Council ensures that the five-year financial plan and annual budget processes allocate funds and resources aligned with our goals.

Saanich has done a lot of work over recent years to determine the needs and desires of the community. In addition to the Strategic Plan, many plans and strategies which outline key goals or community improvements have been developed through extensive public engagement. Council makes decisions and approves these plans based on alignment with the Saanich vision, achievement of the strategic planning goals and available funding. All of the work contained in these plans and initiatives —the Official Community Plan (Sustainable Saanich), Local Area Plans, Active Transportation Plan, the Water, Sewer and Drain Master Plans and numerous studies on Parks and Recreation services, among many others — contributes to our financial planning process.



2019–2023 Strategic Plan goals



Community well-being

- Diversity, respect and inclusion is vital
- Public safety is critical to livability in our community
- A healthy community is a worthy investment
- Relations with our Indigenous neighbours are valued



Affordable housing, land use and infrastructure management

- Affordable and diverse housing that meets our residents' needs now and in the future
- Land use decisions are consistent with our community-supported plans
- Asset management is critical to sustainable, effective service delivery
- Active Transportation networks help our residents commute and connect



Organizational excellence

- Good governance balances speed, transparency and engagement
- Financial decisions are based in stability, prudence and long term sustainability
- Strong internal processes support service excellence
- A high performing workforce is our greatest asset



Economic diversification

- A diversified economic base is foundational to community vibrancy
- Strategic dialogue with key institutions and organizations creates synergies
- Economic development is a key focus area



Climate action and environmental leadership

- Steward the natural environment
- Balanced transportation initiatives are supported to reduce our environmental impact
- Building stock transformation helps curb climate change and integrity of natural systems