OUR PRESENTATION TO

Council and community

Victoria-Saanich Citizens' Assembly on Municipal Amalgamation

July 14 & 17, 2025

VICTORIA SAANICH CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY

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Today

An overview of our process: Assembly Chair

An overview of our findings: Assembly members

Assembly video

We want to start by saying

Thank you

To council, residents, our advisors, municipal staff, guest speakers and proponents

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MUNICIPAL AMALGAMATION & GOVERNANCE QUESTIONS ON NOV 15, 2014 MUNICIPAL BALLOTS

Eight of the Regions thirteen (13) Municipalities included a question on their Municipal Ballots related to Municipal Governance. These questions varied widely, ranging from asking their residents if they supported a study on the potential benefits of amalgamation with neighbouring Municipalities to reducing the number of municipalities in the region, whether their municipality should become part of a larger municipality or whether their internal governance or regional partnerships should be reviewed.

Five municipalities did not ask a question; they were Colwood, Highlands, Metchosin, Sooke and View Royal.

Municipality	Wording of Question	YES Votes	NO Votes	Total	% YES	% NO	Eligible Voters	% of Eligible Voters that Voted
Central Saanich	Should the District of Central Saanich petition the Province to fund a cost/benefit analysis of an amalgamation of Central Saanich, North Saanich & Sidney?	3,588	1,489	5,077	70.7%	29.3%	14,241	35.8%
Esquimalt	QUESTION 1: Are you in favour of the Township of Esquimalt exploring options to achieve efficiencies by further sharing some services with other municipalities?	3,751	578	4,329	86.6%	13.4%	14,545	29.8%
	QUESTION 2: Are you in favour of exploring the reduction of the number of municipalities within Greater Victoria through amalgamation?	2,905	1,404	4,309	67.4%	32.6%		
Langford	Are you in favour of the City of Langford being amalgamated into a larger regional municipality?	2,222	2,209	4,431	50.1%	49.9%	23,864	18.6%
North Saanich	Are you in favour of a study, Provincially funded, to investigate the feasibility, costs and implications of amalgamating the three municipalities on the Saanich Peninsula of Sidney, Central Saanich and North Saanich?	2,881	1,727	4,608	62.5%	37.5%	9,954	46.3%
Oak Bay	Are you in favor of the District of Oak Bay being amalgamated into a larger regional municipality?	2,184	3,594	5,778	37.8%	62.2%	14,107	41.0%
Saanich	Do you support council initiating a community-based review of the governance structure and policies within Saanich and our partnerships within the region?	11,417	2,780	14,217	80.3%	19.5%	60,986	23.3%
Sidney	Are you in favour of a provincially funded study to investigate the feasibility, costs and implications of amalgamating the three municipalities of the Saanich Peninsula?	2,566	1,232	3,798	67.6%	32.4%	9,100	41.7%
Victoria	Are you in favour of reducing the number of municipalities in Greater Victoria through amalgamation?	18,351	4,601	22,952	80.0%	20.0%	69,624	33.0%
	TOTALS	56,146	19,034	75,179	74.7%	25.3%	230,322	32.7%

Source: - civicweb.bc.ca website

CITY OF VICTORIA
Saanich
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CANADA POST POSTES CANADA
Postage paid Port payé
Personalized Mail Courrier personnalisé
0000000
Help determine whether Victoria and Saanich should amalgamate
1-in-12 households received this special invitation, please volunteer to serve your community
Resident of
101-123 Anywhere Street
Anytown BC V1M 1M1
Time-sensitive information inside
Response required by
May 30
Respond today

Facts and Figures

Fig. 1: Members by gender

Fig. 2: Members by age group

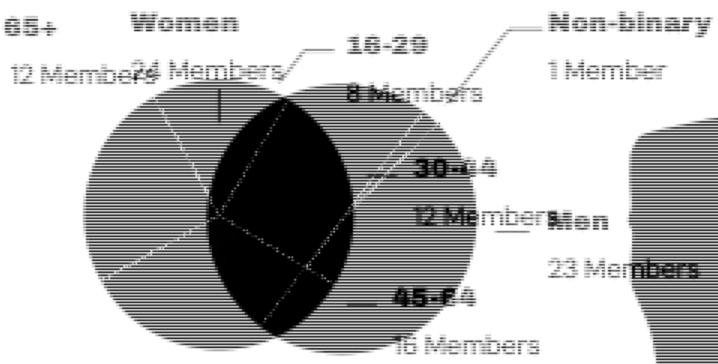

Fig. 4: Assembly members by race and ethnicity

Fig. 3: Members by type of housing

Map: Assembly members by geography

District of Saanich	27
Cordova Bay, Royal Oak and Blenkinsop	5
Saanich Core, Quadra and Shelbourne	7
Tillicum, Carey and North Quadra	7
Gordon Head and Cadboro Bay	6
Rural Saanich	2

City of Victoria	21
James Bay, Downtown and Fairfield	6
Vic West, Burnside and North Park	5
Quadra, Oaklands and Fernwood	6
Jubilee, Rocklands, and Gonzales	4

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Our program

Orientation and introductions

Understanding municipal services and administration

Introducing the technical study

Determining our values

Understanding community planning

Academic perspectives

Discussing pertinent issues

Understanding community perspectives

Understanding emergency services

Reviewing public submissions

Identifying priorities and developing scenarios

Hearing from local advocates

Receiving the technical report

Economic and community perspectives

Revising scenarios and a preferred direction

Determining a preferred direction

Drafting and presenting our recommend-ations

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What the Assembly has done so far...

- Heard from 20 guest speakers/experts
- Developed draft values
- Identified a range of issues and considerations
- Produced an interim report
- Received and reviewed the Technical Study
- Received and reviewed 55 public submissions
- Heard from the public at four public meetings
- Spent 60+ hours in discussion/deliberation

Our guest speakers

- Tracy Underwood, WSANEC historian
- John Lutz, UVic historian
- Robert Bish, municipal economist
- Jocelyn Jenkyns, Victoria City Mgr
- Brent Reems, Saanich CAO
- Lindsay Chase, Saanich Planning
- Andrea Hudson, Victoria Planning
- Ted Robbins, CAO of the CRD
- Clayton Pecknold, fmr Police Complaints Commissioner
- Julian Daly, Our Place Society
- Enid Slack, Institute for Municipal Affairs & Governance
- Dallas Gislason, SIPP
- Jonathan Dyck, Victoria Foundation
- Leo Spalteholz, Homes for Living
- Joanne Peake, PLDCA (Rural Saanich)
- Andrew Duffy, Times Colonist
- James Legh + James Anderson, Amalgamation Yes
- Allison Habkirk, fmr Mayor Central Saanich
- Agricultural Land Commission
- Susanne Thompson, Victoria CFO

Our oversight and advisory committee

- Evert Lindquist
- Ansley Tucker
- Marjan Ehsassi
- Paul Hames
- Warren Magnusson

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Questions?
Connect with us
@crd_bc
Capital Regional District
crd.bc.ca

OPENING SECTIONS
1. Who we are and why we volunteered
2. What we learned
3. The issues we considered
4. Our values
5. Main recommendation
What we see changing in our region
1
2

bubly

Considering each option

To support more closely integrating service provision, we would need to be reassured that...

Integration would be durable and	Neither municipality would dominate the	Integration process and outcomes are

To support remaining as two separate municipalities, we would need to be reassured that...

Amalgamation would be cost prohibitive	Services are still being delivered at a high	Limiting short-term political risk (with

To support amalgamation of both municipalities, we would need to be reassured that...

The full cost of amalgamation is as clear as possible. The cost of amalgamation is reasonable to achieve the short and long term benefits. There would be provincial funding to support the amalgamation process. The distinctiveness and identities of neighbourhoods are not lost and that there would be some control over localized identities and policies. Amalgamation would provide the new municipality with increased power and influence with respect to federal and provincial governments, including funding opportunities. Amalgamation would be an opportunity to make progress with reconciliation and that First Nations perspectives, values, and opinions would also be considered. Amalgamation will support improved housing, transit, land use, climate change, and other key regional planning. There is equitable distribution of service levels in the new municipality.	Amalgamation would not negatively impact existing agreements and collaboration between Victoria and/or Saanich and other municipalities in the region. The amalgamated city would be able to work towards resiliency and address large scale challenges more effectively than separate municipalities. There is willingness to invest in shared liabilities and equity of quality infrastructure. There will be a dynamic department in place for long-term planning with resiliency as a key goal. There will be an integrated and adaptable approach to planning, and a commitment to a shared community vision with long-term goals. There is a clear understanding of how amalgamation will impact local taxes, and that no single group or type of taxpayer will be adversely affected. That there would be plans in place to prevent amalgamation distracting from other local issues.	Amalgamation leads to better cohesion of emergency services to better address people across both rural and urban areas. Specific planning priorities of each municipality are not lost The amalgamated city would not lose representation on the CRD. There is fairness & flexibility in the application of new zoning and other bylaws across the new municipality. There remains appropriate representation in elected officials, of the people they represent, so that everyone still feels that they have a voice. The potential for developing a ward system to ensure local representation is considered by councils. The uniformity of a single government leads to higher quality and economic benefit for businesses. There would be a single accountable organization that deals with social issues.

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Looking for consensus

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Final vote

A. **Should Victoria and Saanich:**

Amalgamate	39
Remain separate municipalities but pursue opportunities for deeper service integration	7
Remain separate municipalities and maintain their existing approach to providing services	0

B. Do you agree that the draft report appropriately reflects our deliberations and should be submitted to the municipal councils for their consideration?"

Yes	45
No	1

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Members' report

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Introduction

Who we are and why we volunteered

What we learned

The issues we considered

Our values

Our recommendation

Further recommendations and considerations

Climate change planning and resilience

Municipal planning

Service levels and delivery

Police and Fire

Housing affordability

Agricultural and rural lands

Indigenous relationships

Governance and representation

Referendum

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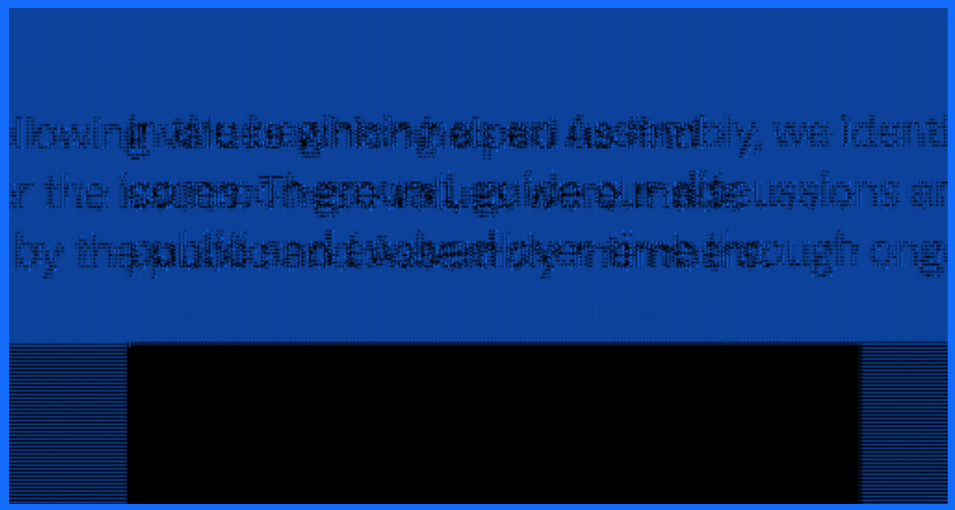
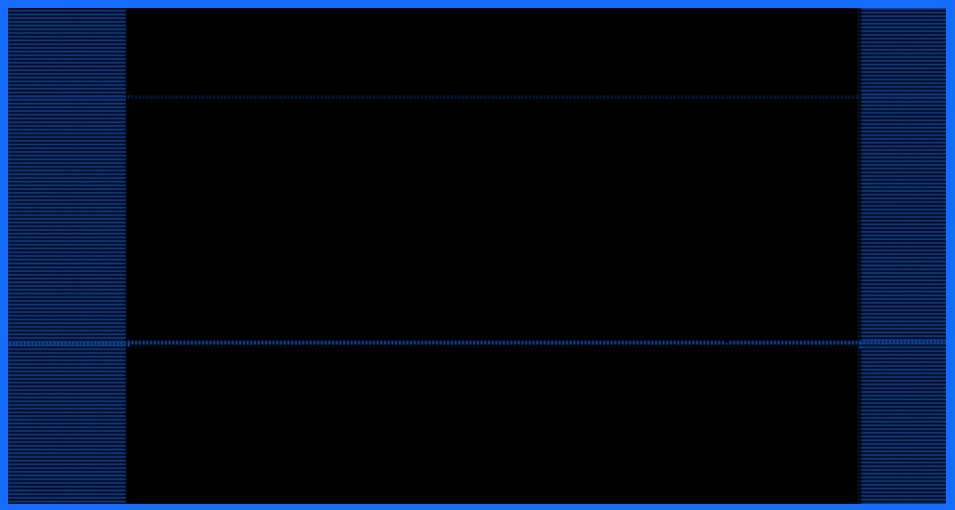
Our values





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Further recommendations and considerations

Climate change planning and resilience

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Police and Fire

Housing affordability

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