

Saanich Celebrates

As 2022 comes to a close, let's celebrate the accomplishments we achieved with our community over the past year. Read on for our 2022 highlights.

Opened 20 new EV charging stations

We **opened 20 new level 2 public electric vehicle (EV) charging stations** to make it easier for Saanich residents to drive EVs in the community and ensure access to charging on the go. The new stations are located at Saanich Commonwealth Place, G.R. Pearkes Recreation Centre, Cedar Hill Recreation Centre, Cedar Hill Golf Course, Cadboro-Gyro Park, PKOLS (Mount Douglas Park), Hampton Park and Beckwith Park. Through its Zero Emissions Vehicle Incentive Program, Natural Resources Canada provided a \$100,000 investment for the deployment and installation of the new EV chargers.



Released a coloring book

Compiled by the Arts, Culture, and Heritage Advisory Committee and the Saanich Heritage Foundation with the assistance of Saanich Archives, the **Saanich Heritage Colouring Book** is suitable for residents of all ages. You can learn about different architectural features while colouring archival photos of heritage houses in our municipality.



Approved four-year funding plan for Saanich Housing Strategy

Council **approved a four-year funding strategy** to support the Housing Strategy to allow for the immediate implementation of priority actions identified as the most impactful for improving housing outcomes in Saanich. The Housing Strategy is a 10-year framework that provides direction on how Saanich can achieve greater housing supply, affordability and diversity and accommodate a broad range of community housing needs now and into the future.

Endorsed Uptown-Douglas Plan

Council **endorsed the Uptown-Douglas Plan** which is a comprehensive strategy to guide land use and transportation changes over the next 20 to 30 years in the Uptown Douglas area. Stretching from the City of Victoria border to just north of the Saanich Municipal Hall, the area represents a critical regional hub expected to see significant growth and change. The plan focuses on affordable and diverse housing, active transportation, employment opportunities, urban design, sustainable development and climate change mitigation and resilience.

Received awards for budgeting and financial reporting

For the 15th consecutive year, our Finance Department received the Canadian Award for Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for our 2020 financial statements. For the 13th consecutive year, we received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from GFOA for our 2021 to 2025 Financial Plan.

Initiated the Saanich Operations Centre redevelopment project

We shared information with residents about the need to redevelop the Saanich Operations Centre and the first conceptual site plan through an information campaign as the first important milestone for this multi-year redevelopment project. The Operations Centre, located at 1040 McKenzie Avenue, houses all of Saanich's parks and public works operations. Residents and businesses rely on the municipal services provided by these teams every day. Services such as water for drinking and waste removal; transportation, including roads, traffic control and pathways for active transportation; parks, boulevards, waterways, and shorelines; and solid waste removal all support the high quality of life in Saanich.



Reported on Saanich Climate Plan highlights

We published the second annual Climate Plan Report Card, which provides a summary of progress toward our Climate Plan targets and objectives and the status of actions in each focus area for 2021. The Climate Plan is built on decades of climate action within Saanich. We shared the progress made in 2021 to bring us closer to meeting our Climate Plan goals. At the same time, we also recognize there's a significant amount of work to be done to move the dial on climate change and address the climate emergency.

Hired new operator for Cedar Hill Golf Course

We hired Lakeland Golf Management as the new operator of the Cedar Hill Golf Course. Lakeland will manage all operational aspects of the course including pro-shop, driving range and lessons, as well as food and beverage concession services. They will respond to the current increasing demand for golf and provide opportunities for growth and public access.

Adopted Cordova Bay local area plan

Council endorsed the Cordova Bay Local Area Plan (LAP) which provides a framework to guide growth and change in Cordova Bay, looking ahead 20 to 30 years. Through an extensive multi-year consultation process with residents, First Nations, property owners, business owners, neighbourhood groups, community stakeholders and developers, the community was able to identify priorities and create a comprehensive vision for change using planning tools and land use policy.



Launched Oil to Heat Pump Financing Program

We offered up to \$12,000 of interest-free financing to help you upgrade your existing oil furnace or boiler to an efficient electric heat pump. This innovative program enables residents to repay the financed amount over ten years through an additional levy on the home's property tax payments. While this type of financing is the first of its kind in BC, it's widely used by many jurisdictions across Canada and the US to encourage energy retrofits in existing buildings.

Received ICIP funding for Rutledge Park upgrades

Rutledge Park will receive playground improvements, a new splash pad and washroom/changeroom facilities thanks to joint federal, provincial and municipal funding through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program. We will replace existing playground equipment with a modern design incorporating nature play and natural elements. The new seasonal splash pad will have inclusive elements for children and youth of all abilities. A new washroom/changeroom building with private universal and accessible spaces will be open year-round. Additionally, new paved pathways, park furniture (benches, chairs and picnic tables), and a drinking fountain/water bottle filling station will be added to Rutledge Park.

Received land donation from resident for park use

We received a 1.85-acre property for park space through a donation from resident Edward (Ted) Wilson. We plan to subdivide the unique property at 731 Burnside West into two parcels. The southern portion, adjacent to the Galloping Goose Regional Trail, will be developed into a new youth bike skills park over the next few years. The northern portion, a wooded area with second growth forest, will be protected as part of Saanich's urban forest.

Transferred animal care services to Capital Regional District

Council approved the award of a contract for animal control services to the Capital Regional District. Two full-time animal control officers will provide 14 total hours of service daily, seven days per week. Contracting with the CRD provision of animal control services delivers a timely and effective solution, increasing efficiencies and streamlining services. The CRD uses an enforcement approach that emphasizes education and voluntary compliance that aligns well with Saanich's bylaw enforcement approach.



Invited input on People, Pets and Parks Strategy

We invited all parks users to share their input toward the development of its People, Pets and Parks Strategy in a first round of public engagement. In 2021, Council directed staff to develop *People, Pets and Parks: A District Wide Strategy for Sharing Saanich's Parks*. Saanich hired Lees and Associates to develop the strategy and Modus to facilitate the public engagement activities. The strategy will set goals and objectives for the community's vision combined with the need for practical management of specific parks and amenities.

Ran summertime pop-up dog parks

Our canine companions had new opportunities to play and socialize in Saanich parks throughout the summer. We set up pop-up dog parks in Beckwith, Gorge, Vantreight, Blair, Copley East, Rudd, Fowler, Horner and Hyacinth Parks. Council approved pop-up dog parks in 2021 as a pilot program for the summer months and decided to continue the pop-ups for 2022 as we develop our People, Pets and Parks Strategy.

Received CleanBC funding for Pearkes Recreation Centre major energy retrofit

We received more than \$2.8 million through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program - CleanBC Communities Fund toward our G.R. Pearkes Community Recreation Centre heat recovery and mechanical upgrade project. The facility's current HVAC equipment is at its end of life and due for replacement. Through this project, we will replace and expand its heat recovery system to the existing ice plant to offset the building's heating and domestic hot water energy use.

Recognized 2022 Environmental Award recipients

Every year, we recognize individuals, businesses, organizations and youth for their significant contributions to stewarding the environment. This year's recipients were recognized for ecological restoration and stewardship, ecological protection on private lands, fundraising and community leadership, climate action related leadership, youth environmental leadership and so much more. The 2022 Saanich Environmental Award recipients include: Individual – Sharon Stangeland; Volunteer – Kings Community Nature Space Fundraising Group; Youth – Matthias Spalteholz; Biodiversity conservation – Barry Andrushuk; Sustainability - Jim Church; and Long term environmental achievement – Heather Coey.



Welcomed new fire fighters

Fire Department staffing levels increased with the hire of ten new fire fighters this year as part of a 10-year funding strategy to ensure fire operations, staffing and equipment keep pace with population growth. The Fire Services Review completed in 2019 recommends increasing on-duty staffing levels to meet response time standards and address Saanich's growth in population and density, which has resulted in a considerable increase in emergency incident responses and service delivery demands.

Completed phase one of Shelbourne Street improvements

In July, we completed phase one of the Shelbourne Street Improvements Project (SSIP) from Torquay Drive to Garnet Road just south of McKenzie Avenue. Phase one infrastructure upgrades included the addition of buffered bike lanes, underground infrastructure (water, sewer and storm drainage), utility services, traffic signals, sidewalks, lighting, bus stops, a rain garden and new street furniture (bike locking posts, waste receptacles and benches). Underground infrastructure upgrades included the replacement of 1,450 metres of watermain, 850 metres of sewer main, and 500 metres of watermain. Active transportation is a major focus of the overall project.

Started Saanich Commonwealth Place biomass mechanical upgrades

We began construction to upgrade the existing natural gas boilers at Saanich Commonwealth Place to new biomass boilers with the goal of reducing the facility's fossil fuel operational greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 90 percent. SCP is Saanich's largest recreation facility and currently the largest source of GHG emissions for all our facilities. This conversion enables the facility to use renewable fuel instead of fossil fuels. We anticipate the new system to be in operation by Fall 2023. The project is fully supported by \$4 million in Federal Gas Tax Funding.





Opened new Youth Bike Skills Park

The new [Tripp Station Youth Bike Skills Park](#) **opened** July 16 just in time for users to enjoy it this summer season. Bike parks are an area designed for mountain bike and BMX riders to develop and practice riding skills in a structured, safe and managed environment. Riders of all levels and experience can develop expertise in a range of skills at the new bike park. Features include an asphalt pump track, dirt jumps and a skills trail. The park is adjacent to the Lochside Trail and easily accessible by bike. Additional improvements include a gravel pathway from the main entrance of the park off Lochside Drive adjacent to the Lochside Regional Trail connecting to Borden Street, park furniture, bike racks, a drinking fountain, signs and a portable toilet.

Began Official Community Plan update

We [invited residents to participate in a survey](#) to provide early input to the strategic update of the Official Community Plan. The focus of the initial public survey was on preliminary ideas around changes to District land use policies to address emerging priorities. Survey topics included new housing forms in neighbourhoods (through residential infill), land uses along major roads/corridors and building complete, walkable communities. Staff are summarizing the early input and will provide draft policies for extensive public review and feedback in early 2023.

Started phase two of Shelbourne Street Improvements Project

We [started construction on phase two of the Shelbourne Street Improvements Project \(SSIP\)](#) from North Dairy Road to Elm Street. This phase will see the addition of the new UVic bike connector among many other active transportation and infrastructure upgrades, including protected cycle tracks and underground utilities. Construction of this phase is expected to take approximately 24 months.



Launched new online Permit and Development Tracker

Accessing information and updates about development and permit applications just got a lot simpler thanks to the launch of our new online [Permit and Development Tracker](#). The Saanich Permit and Development Tracker lets you view newly submitted permits and development applications and track their progress online. The tracker shows the status of development permits, rezoning, subdivision and board of variance applications, and the status of boulevard, plumbing, tree and blasting permits, to name a few. It also shows residents the dates of upcoming council meetings associated with development applications.

Installed new protected cycling lanes coming on Tillicum Road

We began [installing protected cycling lanes on Tillicum Road](#). This section is an important corridor for safety improvements as it's a particularly vulnerable area for active transportation users. We removed two general purpose vehicle lanes to create the protected cycling lanes. Two general purpose and one left-turning lane remain along Tillicum Road from Arena Road near Tillicum Centre to Saanich's boundary with the Township of Esquimalt at Tillicum Road Bridge. Council approved eight quick-build projects recommended by the Active Transportation Advisory Committee, including the Tillicum Road bike lane separation.

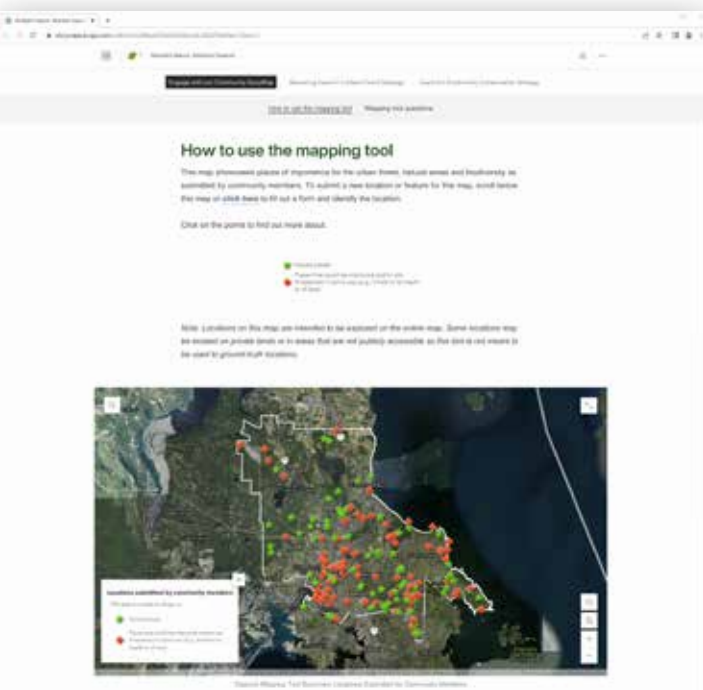
Recognized 2022 Arts, Culture and Heritage Award recipients

Our Arts, Culture and Heritage (ACH) Awards [recognize and celebrate outstanding contributions](#) made by individuals, groups, organizations and businesses to arts, culture, and heritage that impact our municipality. The awards, held once per Council term, were presented to Friends of the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory; Parminder Virk; Ashley Howe; Teresa Ranson; Olivia Hahn; Pulchérie Mboussi; and Steven Baileys.

Announced name restoration for PKOLS (Mount Douglas Park)

Council approved a request from the WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council (WLC) to move forward with a [name restoration for PKOLS \(Mount Douglas Park\)](#). PKOLS is the name of Mount Douglas in SENĆO EN and is an important place for the WSÁNEĆ people. Council identified an action in its [2019-2023 Strategic Plan](#) to rename the park recognizing the sacred significance of the location to the WSÁNEĆ people. Saanich staff will work with WLC staff to develop an appropriate protocol to honour the name restoration. Information about a name restoration event to take place in 2023 will be shared at Saanich.ca.





Created interactive map for residents to add trees and natural areas

We launched an interactive online mapping tool, the [Community StoryMap](#), to engage residents and inform two projects related to Saanich's natural environment: the [Urban Forest Strategy Update](#); and the [Resilient Saanich State of Biodiversity Report](#). The Community StoryMap provides background on both projects, allows for self-paced engagement and exploration, and enables users to identify places they value for biodiversity and the urban forest, as well as any threats and improvements needed. The input collected will help Saanich understand the community's priorities to help prepare later project phases that will include further public engagement.

Started Gorge Road infrastructure and transportation upgrades

We began a significant [storm drain replacement and active transportation improvement project](#) on Gorge Road West between Admirals Road and Tillicum Road. A major portion of this project is the installation of a bi-directional protected cycle track on the south side of the road and improvements to the existing pedestrian infrastructure on the north side. We will also replace approximately 1,500 metres of storm drain pipes, eight drainage outfalls to the Gorge waterway and all storm drain house connections to property lines.

Won Climate & Energy Action Award

Along with the City of Victoria, [we received the Community Energy Association's 2022 Climate & Energy Action Award](#) in the Community Planning & Development category at the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Convention. The award is in recognition of the contribution Victoria and Saanich have made to the Greater Victoria 2030 District initiative in partnership with the Building Owners and Managers Association of BC (BOMA BC) and the University of Victoria. The 2030 District was launched in 2021 to unite the private and public sector, creating a hub of thriving high performance buildings that are reducing GHG emissions and increasing their resilience.

Produced a video on residential school effects with Victoria Orange Shirt Day

We partnered with [Victoria Orange Shirt Day](#) organizers Eddy Charlie and Kristin Spray to share important perspectives about the ongoing effects of residential schools in a [new video](#). The video aims to share lesser-known perspectives and open important conversations around the impact of residential schools on Survivors, as well as on members of their families—often referred to as intergenerational Survivors. Appearing in the video, Diane Sam shares her experience as the child and grandchild of residential school and Indian day school Survivors. We hope the important and powerful firsthand accounts shared in the video will help deepen understanding and foster relationship building at all times of the year.

Surveyed Saanich residents and businesses

We conduct the citizen and business surveys every four years following the start of a new council term. BC Stats conducted the statistically valid surveys on behalf of Saanich over a five-week period in addition to an online survey. Participants were asked to answer questions about municipal service delivery, safety and quality of life in Saanich, value for taxes and Council decision making among others. BC Stats will present the survey results to Council in February.

Released new Naturescape Booklet

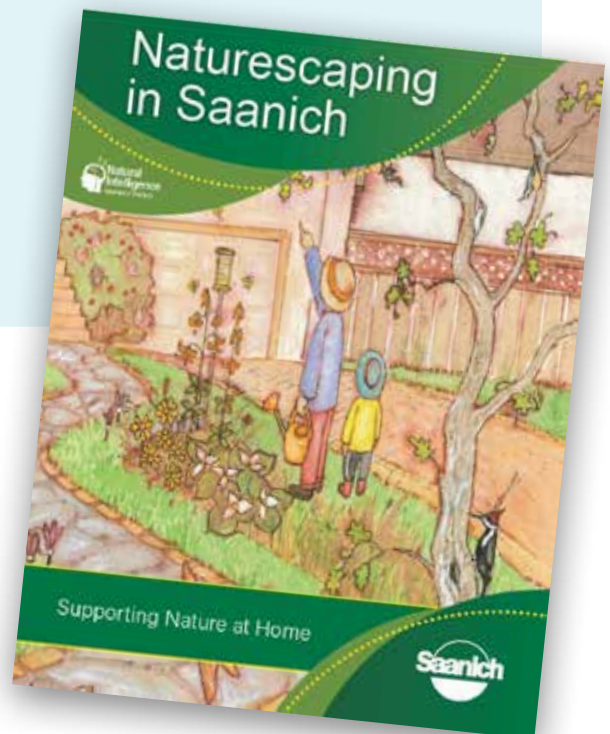
We released a new 22-page resource that provides information and ideas to start or further develop naturescaping on your property, the Saanich Naturescape Booklet. Naturescaping is a way to protect, maintain, and enhance wildlife habitat and local biodiversity and encourages the use of native plants in landscaping. Naturescaping is one way Saanich residents can participate and contribute to increasing biodiversity in Saanich and mitigating the effects of climate change.

Opened applications to Neighbour to Neighbour Resilience Initiative Pilot

We invited applications to the Neighbour to Neighbour (N2N) Resilience Initiative, which helps residents be more connected, prepared, and sustainable. Successful applicants will complete workshops designed to connect neighbours and help groups develop neighbourhood projects. Then groups will be eligible to apply for a \$500 grant to complete a community project of their choosing that addresses climate change, emergency preparedness and caring for nature on a neighbourhood scale.

Ratified new agreement with Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 2011

The District of Saanich, the Saanich Police Board and Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Local 2011 ratified a three-year collective agreement for the period of January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2024. In addition to improvements in benefits and premiums, financial terms of the new agreement include wage increases of .25 cents per hour plus 3.25 per cent in the first year (retroactive for 2022), 4 per cent in the second year and 3.5 per cent the third year. CUPE Local 2011 represents approximately 1,200 members employed at Saanich.



Requested input to for new park along Kings Road

In 2019, we acquired lands along Kings Road from BC Hydro with the intention of creating a new park. This year, we invited residents to participate in two public engagement events to provide early input into guiding the use of this land.



Selected three local artists to paint murals for the Community Canvas Mural Project

We selected three local artists for the **2022 Community Canvas Mural Project**, which saw the creation of three murals in Saanich parks. Claire Crawford painted the first mural at the entrance to Cedar Hill Recreation and Arts Centre in Cedar Hill Park; WSÁNEĆ nation artist Sarah Jim painted the second mural at Beckwith Park; and Jesse Campbell painted the final mural at Layritz Park, adjacent to the turf soccer field. The pilot project aimed to enhance Saanich neighbourhoods and public spaces by integrating public art. The goal of the project is to inspire a sense of pride and belonging amongst residents and to celebrate community, culture and diversity through publicly accessible, engaging art.

Invited applications to Neighbour to Neighbour Pilot

We opened applications to the Neighbour to Neighbour (N2N) Resilience Initiative Pilot to help residents be more connected, prepared and sustainable. N2N will accept three participant groups who will complete workshops and receive a \$500 grant to complete a community project that addresses climate change, emergency preparedness and caring for nature on a neighbourhood scale.

Launched E-Bike Incentive Pilot Program

Launched in October 2021, this highly popular program offered Saanich residents incentives to purchase new e-bikes for personal transportation. One year later, over 380 Saanich residents are now able to travel in an emission-free, healthy, and sustainable way. In early 2023, a report will be presented to Council that includes results to date from the pilot, as well as recommendations for future programs.

