

Saanich Spotlight



Summer update from Mayor Haynes

I'm not sure about you, but with recent events, summer has certainly crept up on me! Understandably, our summer holidays and travel habits will be quite "COVID-19 different" this year. If like me you plan to avoid hitting the open roads this season, there are some really great activities to pursue right here in Saanich. What better way to enjoy some R&R and reduce the stress of travel than to partake in a serial "Saanich-staycation"?

Try tastes of the world in Saanich! Explore new restaurants or expand your culinary skillset and attempt a new international recipe or two in your own kitchen.

One way to help boost Saanich's economy and reduce our global footprint is to avoid online retail giants. Shop local and support our small businesses instead. Each week, try to visit at least three local stores outside of your usual shopping routine. It can be fun.

Looking for some fitness activities? Enjoy our great trail network; we have more than 100 kilometres of trails in Saanich. Get on your bike and explore just how far the "Goose" can take you! Kids overdoing screen time? Set up a scavenger hunt to find objects or to identify local plants and flowers.

Take up a new fun hobby, such as paddle boarding or kayaking or how about taking a horseback riding

lesson? Enjoy a summertime stroll in Saanich's world class botanical gardens, Swan Lake, Beaver Lake, or Mount Doug. Try out your own green thumb and start that home veggie garden. Look to enjoy a relaxing evening or afternoon picnicking in one of our 170 parks plus beaches with family and friends, while maintaining an appropriate physical distance. Choose a new park or beach each week. I know I will be.

However your days will be spent this sunny season, remember to pause and appreciate! Our travel options are more limited than usual, but there is nothing stopping us from enjoying the family, friends, and the beautiful surroundings we have right here at home in our amazing rural and urban coastal community.



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 Saanich.BC  @saanich





Statement from Mayor Fred Haynes: Saanich's plan to restart

Planning to restart municipal services that were disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic is well underway at the District of Saanich. On June 1, Council endorsed staff's framework for restart report which provides an outline to work from as we move toward our "new normal" operations.

Our first priority is always the health and safety of our staff and residents. We carefully review and follow guidelines and requirements from the provincial health officer, WorkSafe, and the province's restart plan in addition to our internal Occupational Health and Safety best practices. Restarting is a complex process as there are many external factors that influence our work.

Saanich's restart will not look the same as other communities. Municipalities across the region, and the province, approached closures and service interruptions differently, so our restart plans won't look the same either.

As we reopen facilities and resume services, it's important to remember that our new normal will not be business as usual. To restart, we must have new safety controls in place, which may change how we previously delivered services to our residents. We are still committed to service excellence; some services will just look different in a post-pandemic world.

We will share more information as we resume services and reopen facilities over the coming months. Please visit our website for the most up-to-date information at [Saanich.ca/COVID-19](https://www.saanich.ca/COVID-19). We will also share updates on our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts.





2020 Property taxes

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Saanich has adjusted payment methods and late penalties for property taxes.

The municipal hall remains closed to the public, **so in person payments by cash, cheque or debit will not be permitted this year.** Although some services at the municipal hall are available by appointment only, appointments are not available for property tax payments or claiming home owner grants.

We recognize many taxpayers are used to visiting the municipal hall in person to pay their taxes and claim their homeowner grant. Given the volume of transactions that occur over a short time frame and the configuration of public spaces at the municipal hall, we're not able to provide a safe environment and appropriate physical distance for staff and the public as required by the provincial health officer at this time.

Property taxes and Home Owner Grant applications are due Thursday, July 2, 2020

How to pay your 2020 property taxes



Online banking: Pay through your financial institution's online banking system. Check their local cut-off time to ensure payment is received by the due date.



By mail: Mail your cheque and the bottom portion of your tax notice to 770 Vernon Avenue, Victoria, BC V8X 2W7. Payment must be received by July 31 to avoid penalty.



Through your mortgage company: Contact your financial institution to set this up.

Through your financial institution: Contact your financial institution for their rules for paying bills on site.



Drop box: There's a secure slot at the entrance of the Municipal Hall, 770 Vernon Avenue, near the parking lot. The slot is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Please practice safe physical distancing when using the drop box. Drop off cheque and/or Home Owner Grant in an envelope. Do not put cash in the drop box.



Drive through drop off: A secure drive through drop off is available at the Municipal Hall. [Visit saanich.ca/tax for details.](https://www.saanich.ca/tax)

Unclaimed Home Owner Grants are considered to be unpaid taxes and are subject to the same penalties.

2020 Property taxes

Late penalties

We adjusted the late penalties to provide some financial relief to Saanich taxpayers who are experiencing significant financial challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. We encourage those who are able to pay by the due date to do so.

| Assessment class (on your tax notice) | 1, 2, 3, 9 (includes most residential and farm) | 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 (includes most commercial, industrial and recreation) |
|--|--|--|
| Penalty on unpaid taxes | | |
| As of August 1, 2020 | 3% | n/a |
| As of October 1, 2020 | 7% | 7% |
| As of December 1, 2020 | n/a | 3% |

Learn more

We offer several resources on our website to help residents learn more about their property taxes and our financial planning process.

Visit [Saanich.ca/tax](https://saanich.ca/tax) to read the [understanding your 2020 property taxes fact sheet](#).

Visit [Saanich.ca/budget](https://saanich.ca/budget) to read the [2020-2024 Financial Plan](#), the [2020 Budget in Brief](#) companion document, and a variety of educational resources.

Need more help?

If you have questions or have not received your property tax notice, please contact our property tax staff at **250-475-5454** or propertytax@saanich.ca.





Construction has started on the Shelbourne Street Improvements Project (SSIP): A street for everyone

In April, Chew Excavating (A Division of Ralmax Contracting Ltd.) began construction of Phase 1 of the SSIP, on Shelbourne Street from Garnet Road to Torquay Drive.

The goal of the SSIP is to improve Shelbourne Street as identified in the Shelbourne Valley Action Plan, which was developed through several years of community consultation.

The project is a large step towards improving Saanich's active transportation network and will:

- improve safety for all road users;
- improve access for pedestrians and cyclists; and
- ensure vital underground utilities continue to function safely and reliably far into the future.

Construction of phase 1 is expected to take approximately 18 months. The construction contractor is required to include protocols and procedures in their safety plan for effective mitigation of COVID-19 exposure and the safe performance of their work.

Construction of phase 2 is expected to begin late in 2021 and phase 3 is expected to begin in 2023.

Saanich is committed to ensuring that all stakeholders are kept informed during each phase of the project to help minimize disruption. Regular updates will be posted on saanich.ca/shelbourne.



Albina Street at Gorge Road W. Re-opened to Traffic

Back in February 2019, a sinkhole was discovered below the roadway on Albina Street at Gorge Road West. Further investigations indicated some other areas of instability of the soil existing along the route of a sanitary sewer pipe that was installed in the early 1950's by tunneling with timber supports. Interim remediation has now been completed on Albina Street and Gorge Road West with all road operations back to normal. This collaboration between Water Resources and Public Works involved a variety of different construction methods, such as timber mat 'bridges' under the pavement surface. Engineering will now pursue on a long term solution to permanently address the tunneled sewer in the area.



Parks, Recreation and Community Services facilities and programs restart update

“We appreciate that our programs and services are especially important to you and our community and we are working on plans for resuming services as soon as we can,” said Mayor Fred Haynes. “Although the timeline for reopening Saanich recreation facilities has not been finalized, we are committed to keeping the community informed as we move forward.”

What is available now

Saanich's parks, trails, beaches, playgrounds, outdoor sport courts (including tennis, pickleball, basketball, street hockey), the Lambrick Skate Park and the Cedar Hill Golf Course are open for your enjoyment. Saanich encourages residents to enjoy these amenities and to stay active and connected while respecting the recommendations for physical distancing and healthy hygiene practices. The Community Services team continues to connect with the community in a variety of ways and will share additional opportunities for our residents to connect from a distance.

Reopening will look different

When Saanich recreation facilities do reopen, your participation will look different. The number of people in facilities will be controlled and monitored through registered drop in to maintain physical distancing and adequate cleaning protocols. It will be a gradual process of reopening and it will take time to implement these new protocols to ensure the health and safety of the public and staff, which remains the first priority. Safety plans will be posted for the public with the reopening of facilities and programs.

Passes

Due to new regulations which limit group sizes, drop-in attendance and enhanced safety protocols, Saanich Parks, Recreation, and Community Services will cancel all time limited recreation centre membership passes such as annual passes (pro-rated from March 17, 2020) and will apply account credits respectively. The credit may be used toward the purchase of single activity registrations, future admission punch cards, program registrations, and/or facility bookings once programs and services resume operation.

Saanich will not sell monthly or annual recreation centre passes for the foreseeable future. If you would prefer to have a refund, please contact any Saanich recreation centre for assistance.





Celebrate Canada Day close to home this year

Park picnics, backyard barbecues, and a 7 p.m. Oh Canada sing-along are some ways Saanich residents can celebrate Canada Day this year.

While major events like the Gorge Canada Day Picnic, the Living Flag and Inner Harbour fireworks are on hold this year, there are plenty of safe and creative ways to make Canada Day special for you and your “bubble”.

Ten ways to celebrate Canada Day in Saanich

We’re compiling a “Top 10” List of fun activities and places to celebrate Canada Day this year. This list will be shared on our website and social media accounts.

Here’s a taste of what’s on the list:

“Oh Canada sing-along” – July 1 at 7 p.m.

Join your neighbours in a home-grown rendition of the national anthem as part of your regular 7:00 p.m. shout-out to health care workers! Accompaniment by pots, pans and instruments welcome! Share your rendition online with #saanich!

Chalk your walk!

Share your Canadian spirit with a special image or message in chalk on your #saanich driveway or sidewalk. Share and tag us on social media!

Picnic in a park

With over 170 parks in Saanich, there’s plenty of space to enjoy some together time outdoors. Don’t forget to proudly wear your red and white!





Putting our “HeArts Together” for the community

This summer, a Saanich community art project invites isolated and vulnerable community members to come together creatively while staying safely at home with support from collaborating community organizations.

“Creative caring” supply kits are being delivered to health care and service organizations, including Aberdeen Hospital, Garth Homer Society, Victoria Women’s Transition House, Cool Aid Society and the Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Society.

Participants are creating clay and painted wooden hearts and messages that will be assembled with hearts made by children and other community members in outdoor displays. These collective hearts will remind us all to continue to be safe and caring for all in our community as we move forward together.

Stay tuned for more about HeArts Together or contact Brenda Weatherston at Brenda.weatherston@saanich.ca if you would like to contribute.





Residents' Climate Guidebook

Learn about climate change and how you can take part in building a climate-friendly future!

The Residents' Climate Action Guidebook will help you:

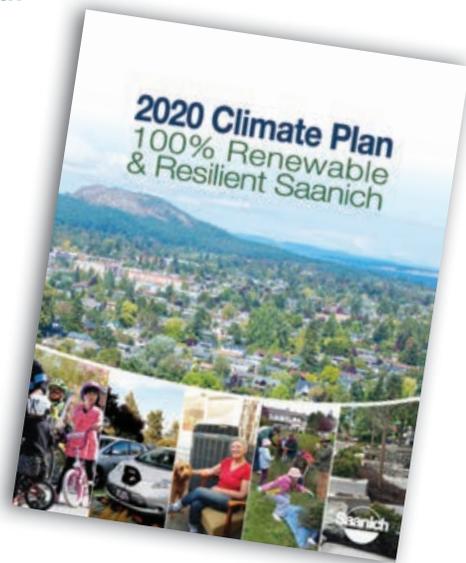
- find out how big your personal greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are;
- set your own climate target; and
- make a plan to reduce your climate impact and prepare for our changing climate.

Acting on climate change helps improve our health and well-being, protect our natural environment, save money, support clean energy jobs, and protect quality of life for future generations.

This guidebook is a companion to the 2020 Climate Plan, which outlines targets to reduce our community wide GHG emissions to zero and be powered by 100% renewable energy by 2050. It includes over 130 actions to help achieve these targets and prepare for a changing climate.

Responding effectively to climate change requires everyone to work together: residents, businesses, community organizations, institutions, neighbouring local governments and senior levels of government.

The guidebook is focused on what residents can do. We need your help to reach our targets!



From now until September 30, 2020, you can enter to win a \$500 gift card for a local bike store of your choice if you share your climate commitment with us after completing the guidebook.

Enter at: www.surveymonkey.ca/r/myclimateplan



UPCOMING COUNCIL MEETINGS

We encourage you to tune in to the webcast at saanich.ca at 7 p.m. for Council and Committee of the Whole meetings.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

June 22

July 13

August 10

August 24

September 28

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETINGS

July 6

July 20

August 17

September 14

