

Saanich Spotlight



Fall update from Mayor Haynes

Welcome back, Spotlighters!

As we fall into the new season I would like to share some news on a fantastic initiative that Saanich has recently taken on as we continue to combat climate change on a global scale.

The District of Saanich has just joined in the Cities Race to Zero and Cities Race to Resilience campaigns.

You might be wondering what this means. These campaigns will affirm Saanich's commitment to climate change and enters Saanich into an international coalition of over 1,000 other cities and local governments that address the climate emergency in a unified manner.

In Cities Race to Zero, we publicly endorse the principles of recognizing the global climate emergency; commitment to keep global heating below the 1.5 C goal of the Paris Agreement; putting climate action at the centre of all urban decision-making; and inviting our partners to join us in recognizing the climate emergency.

In Cities Race to Resilience, we have pledged to integrate climate change adaptation and resilience in urban planning; outline targets and milestones in the long-term for action; commit to resilience actions; and to report back our progress.

Joining the Cities Race to Zero and Cities Race to Resilience campaigns allows the significant efforts and initiatives by Saanich in the climate change arena to receive formal recognition by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and allows Saanich to gain access to climate events such as the United Nations Climate Change Conference taking place later this year in Glasgow, UK.

How incredible is it that by taking part in the UN Climate Change Conference, your community is making its commitment to inspire climate action on a global scale. This is in addition to our current alliance with the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate Change and Energy, as well as Saanich's own 2020 Climate Plan: 100% Renewable and Renewable and Resilient Saanich which has received the following awards: Canadian Institute of Planners 2021 Awards for Planning Excellence; Planning Institute of BC 2020 Silver Award for Excellence in Policy Planning – City & Urban Areas; and the Community Energy Association 2020 Climate & Energy Action Award. Now that is something we can be proud to be a part of.

If you have questions, concerns, ideas or feedback on climate change please contact sustainability@saanich.ca.



Subscribe to our newsletter
at saanich.ca/spotlight

Connect with us:

[Saanich.BC](https://www.facebook.com/Saanich.BC) [@saanich](https://twitter.com/saanich)





Information regarding the BC Vaccine Card and Saanich recreation facilities

By order of the provincial health officer, as of September 13, patrons must have at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, and by October 24 must be fully vaccinated (two doses) to access the programs/services listed under "required".



Required:

- All weight room visits (13+)
- All indoor adult fitness activities regardless of intensity (22+)
- All indoor adult sport activities including but not limited to racquets, hockey, basketball and pickleball (22+)
- Spectators of indoor sports over 50 person capacity
- All events over 50 people (presentations, meetings, etc.)

Not Required:

- Swimming pool activities
- Child and youth (21 and under) sports and activities; includes coaches, volunteers and parents accompanying and supporting a child's participation
- Public skating and children's skate lessons; includes parents accompanying children at a public skate or to skate lessons
- Outdoor sports of activities
- Parental drop off or pick up from youth activities
- General facility access/use such as washrooms, change rooms and showers
- Golf and pro shop access
- Adult general activities under 50 persons (i.e., pottery, art, general interest etc.)

To meet the requirements of the Public Health Order, staff will ask to see your proof of vaccination card and one piece of valid government-issued photo identification. You will be required to provide your BC Vaccine Card either digitally or as a paper copy as of September 26 2021. Until September 26, 2021, you may also show the orange and blue COVID-19 Immunization Record paper card received at the time of vaccination. Youth aged 12-18 who are accessing fitness activities or events are only required to show proof of vaccination and not a government-issued photo ID. Please see the [BC Proof of Vaccination](https://gov.bc.ca/vaccinecard) website for more information at gov.bc.ca/vaccinecard.

Please be aware that at this time proof of vaccination will be required every time you come to the facility. Please leave yourself sufficient time to do so. To help speed up entry please have your documents ready.

As the order becomes clearer and clarification has been made over the next weeks some of these requirements may change. Please see the [BC Proof of Vaccinations for Business](#) website for more information.

Vaccine Card FAQ's

Details can be found in our [Frequently Asked Questions document](#).



Saanich receives results from online citizen survey

Eighty-eight per cent of Saanich residents rate their overall quality of life as good or very good according to the District of Saanich's recent online citizen survey results.

BC Stats conducted the statistically significant survey on behalf of Saanich. Saanich heard from 870 citizens, more than double the target of 400, through the invitation only survey. Randomly selected residents received a postcard by mail to participate in the online survey from February 8 to March 29.

"We make every effort to meet the needs of our residents and consistently improve upon our service delivery," said Chief Administrative Officer Paul Thorkelsson. "These survey results demonstrate areas where residents feel we are excelling and several areas where we need improvement. All of this is valuable feedback for Council to consider."

Important issues and areas for improvement

Respondents identified eight major themes when asked about the one issue they feel should receive the most attention from Council. The theme with the highest response of 34%, or one-third of respondents, is infrastructure. Infrastructure includes summarized sub-themes of:

- road or sidewalk improvements;
- cycling infrastructure;
- traffic control and/or congestion;
- improve walkability, bus and other modes of transportation; and
- general maintenance (e.g., snow or leaf removal, lighting, power lines).

Crime, safety and policing and affordable housing were identified as other top issues that need attention followed by parks and recreation; growth and planning; Saanich Council; environment and waste management; taxes, budget and spending; and homelessness.

While 81 per cent of respondents agree they feel safe driving on Saanich roads, there is room for improvement in the areas of road safety for children, bicycles and people with mobility challenges.

Methodology

The survey provides new baseline indicators used for planning and reporting processes. Changing to the use of the 5-point Likert scale (from the 4-point scale previously used) allowed respondents to have a neutral response and did not skew results by forcing respondents into positive or negative responses. The 5-point scale also allows for comparability with the growing number of municipalities that have switched to this scale.

This was the first mid-term citizen survey. In 2019, Council committed to conducting smaller online “pulse check” surveys in between the larger citizen and business surveys conducted every four years following the start of a new council term. The next citizen and business survey will take place in fall 2022.

Quick facts

- 85% of respondents recommend Saanich as a good place to live.
- 84% rated Saanich parks and trails as good or very good.
- 72% agree that Saanich is an inclusive and welcoming community.
- 72% agreed that the Saanich website had the information they needed.
- 54% rated alternative forms of transportation in Saanich (e.g., transit, bike lanes) as good or very good.
- 51% agree they receive good value for the taxes they pay.
- 48% are pleased with the overall direction that Saanich is taking.



Learn more

The 2021 survey report and [past survey results](#) are available at saanich.ca. BC Stats presented the survey results at the June 21 Council meeting.

[BC Stats](#) is the provincial government's leader on statistical and economic research, information and analysis.



2020 Annual Report endorsed by Council

Saanich Council endorsed the 2020 Annual Report at the June 21, 2021 Council meeting.

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

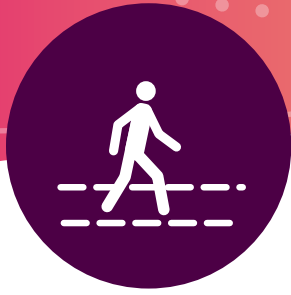
You can view the full report and previous reports at [Saanich.ca](https://www.saanich.ca).



Keep our sewers clear

Help us avoid clogs. Here are a few things that don't go down the toilet:

- grease
- hair
- wipes
- cat litter
- contraceptives
- menstrual products
- cigarette butts



New leading pedestrian intervals

Five more examples of how we're Moving Saanich Forward!

Just in time for the start of another exciting school year, Saanich Engineering has added new leading pedestrian intervals at five more intersections. The locations are:

- McKenzie at Nelthorpe
- Glanford at Agnes
- Wilkinson at Mann
- Interurban at Marigold
- Burnside at Harriet

Leading pedestrian intervals give priority to pedestrians by giving their walk signal several seconds before the driver gets their green signal. More information on this project is available at

[Saanich.ca](https://www.saanich.ca).





Bikes are for everyone

Did you know that Saanich and the Capital Regional District (CRD) have offered Safe Routes to School programs with interested schools for many years?



Depending where you live, your child's school may have already participated in the program. Check the CRD's website for a full listing of participating schools in every school district. One of the recent successes of this program was the offering of the 'Everyone Rides' pilot program for Grades 4 and 5 students.

Stemming from our long-standing commitment to Safe Routes to School programming, Saanich was fortunate enough to have five schools participate in the program, including over 500 grade 4 and 5 students. These students received cycling instruction as part of their curriculum, and the program ensured that every child had access to the necessary equipment making sure this was a barrier-free opportunity.

Feedback has been positive, and we hope to continue working with the CRD and the Province to help move this from being a pilot to being a regular part of the school curriculum.



Food Truck Pilot Program wraps up

Our Food Truck Pilot Program ended September 8 following a summer of tasty treats in Beckwith and Cadboro-Gyro Parks.

The pilot proved to be a great learning tool for staff and vendors. The pilot program launched July 1 with different vendors operating daily in the two Saanich parks. Staff collected feedback from vendors, customers and park users throughout the pilot to assess the success of the program to make it even better going forward.

Staff will compile the data collected over the summer, including survey responses, and will present a report to Council with recommendations this fall.

Thank you to all of our food truck vendors who participated this summer!





New pedestrian bridge and trail in Mount Douglas Park

Saanich Parks and Storm and Wastewater crews, together with the Friends of Mount Douglas Park Society with a grant from the Pacific Salmon Foundation, recently installed a pedestrian only bridge over Douglas Creek.

This project also included the creation of a new trail from the Douglas Trail to the Churchill Trail along with the creation of a gathering area for creek restoration/salmon rehabilitation events and enhancements to the creek. Prior to the bridge and creek work, staff undertook a tree assessment for hazards, removed any dangerous trees, salvaged native plants where possible with an aim to plant the area with native trees and shrubs in the fall. The trail and bridge are open for visitors to use and an official opening will happen later this fall.





Pop-up dog parks to help inform People, Pets and Parks Strategy

Dogs had increased opportunities for play and staff were able to gather valuable feedback through our rotating pop-up dog parks this summer. Temporary fencing was set up for a two-week period at Fowler, Hyacinth, Gorge, Rudd and Cadboro-Gyro Parks.



Why did Saanich run these pop-ups?

This pilot project was approved by Saanich Council in May to take place over the summer.

Concerns had arisen about the impact dogs off leash have on wildlife, natural areas, property trespass and the enjoyment of other park users. Since dogs can be off leash if under effective control in most Saanich parks, this pilot project was in response to address the concerns non-dog owners have while being inclusive to dog owner needs.

Why did staff gather feedback?

Parks staff visited the pop-ups regularly to collect feedback about the program and to gather information to:

- gauge the level of acceptance for establishing designated off leash areas in Saanich Parks;
- determine if establishing a temporary off leash area in Cadboro-Gyro Park would reduce the demand for the off leash beach area as currently permitted under the animal control bylaw;
- receive feedback from both dog owners and non-dog owners concerning key issues that need to be addressed in order to successfully establish and operate designated off leash areas in the parks system; and
- gain a better understanding of the most suitable locations for any future off leash areas.



What happens next?

Parks staff will prepare a summary report to present to Council this fall with observations, comments and survey results from the pilot. The survey responses will be provided to the consultant as input to developing the People, Pets and Parks Strategy.

More information is available at [Saanich.ca/dogs](https://saanich.ca/dogs).



A fun-filled summer for children and youth

Child and Youth Services, of our Community Services Division, served over 120 families in our community this summer.

We were pleased to see the return of families year after year who appreciate the high quality, creative, affordable programs we offer. Some highlights:

Breakout Adventure Youth Camps ran with high energy exploring all that Saanich has to offer. We were able to accommodate youth who needed extra support through the inclusion program, and youth who had been home schooled this year. After a tough pandemic school year it's so nice to see them regain their social opportunities with peers.

Junior Leadership Camp participants learned what life would be like as a leader at a day camp. The group participates in the wildest and wackiest games; learns strategies for gathering groups; learns how to make transitions fun; and cultivates a community of true summer camp vibes. The youth were constantly on the go and participating in new experiences.

The WYLD Youth Mentorship (Willing Youth Leading Diverse Communities) program allowed youth the flexibility to choose their own schedule to help them to be mentally and physically present for their weeks at camp. Youth gained confidence in leading games, learning about child guidance, taking initiative to assist the leaders in all aspects of camp! Many of these leaders will return on our continuum of leadership offerings and opportunities

throughout the year, and hopefully will work for Saanich in the future!

Summer Neighbourhood Playground Program (SNPP) staff incorporated lots of exciting themes and activities such as slime making, relay races, nature crafts and challenge the leader! SNPP parks also welcomed the Saanich police crime prevention team, karate lessons, and the inflatables into our camps. The kiddos had a blast with our partners and got to create relationships and try new things they might ordinarily not get to do!

What's next?

This fall we look forward to offering even more new programs that have been designed to safely catch youth back up on all the opportunities they missed out on throughout the pandemic. By partnering with the unique facility resources we host in our own recreation centres, youth will have the opportunity to get back to the pool, the ice rink, our teen social spaces, and gain valuable leadership skills through many workshops and trainings we will offer. Youth services will continue to work with our school and community partners to make sure our teen centre spaces are welcoming and available to the public, and full of the creativity and life our young people bring.



Financial assistance

Saanich **assists individuals and families** living on a low income to access recreation services and programs at our recreation centres.

As we approach another fall and return to school, our Community Services Division is preparing to serve the needs of identified low economic school communities. We created a relationship with Tillicum School Elementary in 2013 supporting after school programs for them in partnership with Pacific Institute for Sport Excellence (PISE) as our direct leadership team. Over the past eight years the program has grown to operate three days a week providing a space for children aged 5 to 11 years to be exposed to physical literacy and provide social engagement opportunities for them. These programs operate throughout the school year and we are expanding to include one day a week at G.R. Pearkes Recreation Centre. The operations of this program are dependent on grants which primarily are supported by the Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities program and the BC Recreation and Parks Association.





Opioid crisis advocacy

At its June 14 meeting, Council directed staff to work with Island Health to help promote their campaign to build awareness of men using opioids alone.

Across the province, we've lost too many lives to toxic drug fatalities, and we're working hard to make sure mental health and substance use services reach more people.

According to Island Health, among those who die from toxic drug poisoning, men who use alone are at greatest risk. Their lives matter - and there are supports and treatments to help keep them alive.

There are alternatives to using alone – such as:

- using in the presence of someone who can administer naloxone or call for help if needed
- testing drugs and using a small amount to start, or
- accessing online resources such as the [Lifeguard App](#) or the National Overdose Response Service overdose prevention hotline (1-888-688 NORS [6677])
- Island Health also operates supervised consumption or overdose prevention services in many communities in the region.
- Reach out for help by calling the BC Alcohol and Drug Information Referral Services* at 1-800-663-1441. Free, multilingual telephone assistance is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Or visit islandhealth.ca/stopoverdose



For a deeper dive into the issue, read [Island Health's article Diving deep into the drug poisoning crisis](#) in their [summer 2021 magazine](#).



Home safety inspections save lives: ensure your property is up to code

This fall, Saanich Bylaw Services is reminding homeowners and renters alike of the importance of adherence to building and fire code requirements and safety guidelines for residential properties.

Bylaw Services perform hundreds of routine safety inspections every year on all types of residences in the municipality. These inspections can save lives. This process can be initiated by a concerned neighbour, past resident or through the building permit process. These safety inspections often include a member from the Fire Department, Police Department, Building Department as well as an Electrical Inspector from Technical Safety BC.



Inspections save lives

Following a call from a resident, Saanich Bylaw staff and a Fire Prevention Officer from the Saanich Fire Department visited a home this past spring. Upon inspection, it was determined that several safety improvements needed to be made to the premises of this particular home, including the enlargement of a window in a bottom floor bedroom as a second means of egress. The owner of the home followed through with this inspection, enlarging the window and bringing it up to code.

Earlier this month the home was involved in a structure fire, requiring two of the occupants and a dog to seek escape through the window identified in the safety inspection, which would not have been possible in the previous configuration.

Additional information

- All changes to the structure of a building should be done with a permit and proper inspection process.
- Homes need to be maintained to BC Fire Code Standards.
- BC Building Code and Fire Code are companion documents to ensure your safety.
- Saanich Fire sees a marked increase in calls from parents of university students returning to school in fall, inquiring whether accommodations meet Fire Codes.
- Saanich Fire has a wealth of information for homeowners and renters at saanich.ca/fire.
- [Saanich Inspections and Bylaw Services](#) have information on the permit process and the BC Building Code.

Bylaw Services, Building Inspections, and the Police and Fire Departments work together to keep Saanich safe. It's important to remember that at the end of the day, safety inspections are conducted to ensure the residents of Saanich are protected in their homes.

Contacts

Bylaw Enforcement | 250-475-5456
Building Inspection Services | 250-475-5457
Saanich Fire Department | 250-475-5500



New Federal statutory holiday recognizing the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

On June 3, 2021 Bill C5 received royal assent and the provisions come into force on August 3, 2021 allowing for the observance of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

A newly created federal statutory holiday, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is to be observed on September 30. As one of the calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2015, the federal government, in collaboration with First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples were called upon to establish a statutory holiday to honor Survivors of residential schools, their families and communities.

The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation will become a standard statutory holiday and municipal facilities will be closed to the public.

We appreciate your understanding and we will be open to serve you on Friday, October 1.

If you wish to know more about the calls to action, please visit

[Truth and Reconciliation calls to action.](#)

We encourage everyone to use this day to learn, listen and reflect on our shared history and its impacts on Indigenous peoples.



photo: Province of British Columbia





Saanich's Checkout Bag Regulation Bylaw is now in effect, time to BYO bag!

Single-use plastic bags have now been phased out and the Checkout Bag Regulation Bylaw is in effect.

The purpose of the bylaw is to regulate the use of single-use checkout bags by residents and businesses in an effort to reduce litter and waste in our community and our landfill.

"Reducing the negative impacts that discarded plastic bags have on the environment and our municipal facilities and services is a small but significant step toward becoming more sustainable as a district and community," said Mayor Fred Haynes. "I look forward to seeing the creative solutions our residents adopt that don't require a single-use bag."

What this means for businesses

- Businesses are no longer permitted to give out single-use plastic bags. A business may provide a checkout bag to a customer only if:
- the bag provided is a paper bag or a reusable bag and
- the customer is charged a fee not less than:
 - 15 cents per paper bag; and
 - \$1.00 per reusable bag.

What this means for customers

- Customers need to bring in their own reusable bags as of August 20, 2021. Alternately, they can purchase paper bags or reusable bags at their point of purchase.

Quick facts:

- Each Saanich resident uses approximately 200 single-use plastic bags every year. Reducing waste can lead to lower District operating costs and increased service levels that enhance the quality of life and experience for all Saanich residents and visitors.
- Residents can continue to reuse their existing plastic bags.
- Businesses will still be permitted to provide paper bags at a charge.



Deliah, daughter of Saanich employee Adam Flint, heads out the door rocking her hand-painted canvas shopping bags. We'd love to see your creative and sustainable solutions too! Tag us on social media @Saanich.



Keep your four-legged family members fire safe at home

We rely on pets for comfort and warmth, and pets depend on their humans for food, shelter... and safety. If you're like most pet parents, you would do anything to keep your four-legged family safe.

Each year, 500,000 pets suffer from smoke inhalation and 40,000 die due to home fires. The National Fire Protection Association estimates that nearly 1,000 home fires each year are started by family pets. As many pet parents know first-hand, pets may become unsettled or anxious once a smoke alarm sounds, hiding rather than exiting. Pets who are already prone to anxiety may become even more so when a smoke alarm sounds when their owners aren't home.

Practicing these simple fire safety tips can make a big impact in protecting your family and pets.

Household tips

- **Pet proofing:** Like with human children, homes most often require pet-proofing. Pay careful attention to objects such as stove knobs and hot appliances that can be knocked over or turned on by curious pets. Never leave a lit candle within reach of a pet. Discard or store leftover food out of reach to prevent pets from trying to grab it (i.e., avoid leaving food on the stove).
- **Train pets to the sound of an alarm:** Dogs may become unsettled or anxious when a smoke alarm sounds, running and hiding rather than heading toward the door. Kidde Fire Systems recommends families work with skilled, professional trainers to help your canine friends learn how to respond to alarms appropriately.
- **Window clings:** In an emergency, first responders need to quickly assess the number of pets in a home. Consider attaching a removable/replaceable decal to a window near entrances to let rescuers know how many animals are inside.
- **Include pets in escape plans:** Pets should always be included in a family's evacuation plan. Stay aware of their typical hiding spots and where they often nap in case you must evacuate quickly, and assign a family member to account for each pet. Keep an emergency kit with food, medication, and a leash near the exit. When you're not home, keep pets in areas near entrances, where emergency responders can easily find them.
- **When you leave home:** Pets can be mischievous, so consider confining them to a specific area – ideally close to an entrance. Use items like a crate or dog gates to keep them safe and to make it easier for first responders to remove them quickly and safely in the event of an emergency.
- **Replace alarms at 10 years:** Smoke alarms must be replaced after 10 years. In addition to testing alarms regularly, check the manufactured date on your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms to make sure they're current. If they're older than 10 years of age, it's time to replace them.



Check out this pet safety video for more info!
Kidde Partners with Sara Carson for Pet Fire Safety Day
<https://youtu.be/SN6ig8qWEKs>



Saanich Fire crews step up to support wildfire response efforts

Due to the extreme heat and dry conditions the province is continuing to experience, our Fire Department has once again answered the call for assistance from the Office of the Fire Commissioner. Saanich Fire has deployed a Task Force Leader and an engine company (one pumper truck and crew of four firefighters) to areas like Cache Creek and 100 Mile House to assist with firefighting efforts.

Saanich crews will continue to support operations on the ground in the BC communities that are being most heavily impacted by the wildfires as requested. A plan is in place to ensure there will be no impact on the Department's ability to provide continuous, high quality service locally. The Department will be fully compensated for all staff time, equipment and resources.





Saanich Emergency Program volunteers support wildfire response efforts

This year's wildfires have resulted in a provincial state of emergency and Saanich Emergency Program (SEP) volunteers and staff have responded to support provincial efforts.

SEP volunteers are providing virtual and in-person support to evacuees displaced by the BC wildfires. From July 9 to 15 and again from July 30 to August 13, five volunteers put their training to use utilizing new virtual methods and tools to register and assist evacuees with current information and supports.

One of our more experienced volunteers travelled to Kamloops at the request of Emergency Management BC to support evacuees in person. SEP is incredibly proud of our amazing volunteers and the reputation they have earned for their knowledge, skills and compassion.

SEP staff also assisted while Emergency Program Specialist Geoff Pendrel was seconded to provide support in the Provincial Regional Emergency Operations Centre, also in Kamloops.





Quadra Street closure complete

Our hard-working crews have wrapped up work on the Quadra storm drain replacement project. The project showcases the Engineering Department's ability to seamlessly deliver infrastructure projects from inception to completion. There is a tremendous level of effort, coordination and planning that goes into completing a project of this size.

Over the past couple of months staff have been working together to deliver underground and surface upgrades to Quadra Street, which include:

- replacing 62 meters of old wooden stave storm drain with concrete box culverts;
- installing a 20 meter long concrete retaining wall to support the new storm drain infrastructure;
- replacing more than 50 sidewalk panels; and
- completing a series of road repairs.

Now that this work is completed, Quadra Street—between Falmouth Road and McKenzie Avenue—has a full pavement overlay, including new pavement markings.

Visit the District of Saanich's YouTube channel to watch a video of our crews in action!



<https://youtu.be/QKB4HmqNrkg>





A strong start for the garden suite program

It is now legal to construct a garden suite on an eligible RS-zoned property in Saanich, with permits.

Residents have shown significant interest in the Garden Suite Program since the adoption of the regulations in October 2020. Here's a quick snapshot of how things are going:

Total number of Development Permit applications	53
Total number of approved Development Permit applications	15
Average timeline for approval of a delegated Development Permit applications	3.8 months
Average timeline for approval of a Development Permit application with variances	4.5 months
Total number of Building Permit applications	9
Total number of approved Building Permit applications	5



Top reasons for variance requests include:

- Siting (e.g., location in a side or front yard, instead of the rear yard)
- Increases in lot coverage
- Increases to gross floor area

The delivery of this program has been a team effort with significant contributions coming from many different departments. We're encouraged by the number of applications and the general interest amongst residents to engage in the process.



Improving our development application review process

In July, Planning received endorsement from Council for a Development Process Review (DPR) of the Current Planning Division.

The DPR established 15 recommendations to build on work already completed or underway to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and impact of Saanich's application review process and provides a three-year implementation plan noting where resources will be needed to complete the program of work.

These recommendations aim to maximize the community benefits derived from developments by enhancing the experience of all stakeholders involved with the application review process, including applicants, community, staff, and Council.



Council gives a unanimous thumbs up to the Housing Strategy

Following a focused 13 month process, a new comprehensive 10-year Saanich Housing Strategy has been adopted!

At its August 23 meeting, Saanich Council approved the Housing Strategy. The strategy provides clear direction and actions to continue to increase the supply, affordability and diversity of housing options in Saanich to accommodate a broad range of housing needs.

The Housing Strategy supports and aligns with the Official Community Plan and the Regional Growth Strategy and focuses on seven main objectives to:

- Increase affordable and supportive housing;
- Promote and protect rental housing;
- Support housing diversity and increase supply;
- Reduce barriers to housing development;
- Strengthen partnerships;
- Enhance community engagement; and
- Understand housing demand and address land speculation.



The Saanich Housing Task Force—comprised of 18 individuals with a diverse range of qualifications and experiences, worked to develop the core content of the Strategy. Focus groups, stakeholder interviews and surveys were also used to identify issues and get feedback on the Task Force recommendations.

12 actions are identified as immediate priorities and will be the first focus for implementation. Currently, of the 73 actions identified in the Housing Strategy, eight are already underway, and many more will be initiated within the next year.

“Saanich is working on a number of fronts to address the supply and affordability of housing. This is one of them. The Housing Strategy provides a clear foundation to move forward with concrete actions that will improve housing opportunities and address the urgent need to better match the housing supply with the needs of our residents,” said Mayor Fred Haynes. “The strategy is vital to ensuring a healthy housing supply for our community. Additional work is focused on improving the efficiencies and timeliness of our development approval processes.”

Progress on the 10-year framework will be shared annually through a Housing Strategy Progress Report. You can visit saanich.ca/housing to stay up-to-date on the Housing Strategy and future opportunities for participation.

UPCOMING COUNCIL MEETINGS

We encourage you to tune in to the meeting
webcast at 7 p.m. at saanich.ca

COUNCIL MEETINGS

September 27 **November 22**
October 18 **December 13**

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETINGS

October 4 **November 29**
October 25 **December 13**
November 15

Visit our website to view the latest meeting schedule:
saanich.ca/agendas

