

Saanich Spotlight



Happy Holidays from Mayor Haynes

Things are looking busy and bright as we approach the holidays. I hope each of us will be able to get together with our loved ones and take the time to truly appreciate each other during this holiday season. It has been some time since we have had the opportunity to gather together and I hope all of our homes and hearts will be filled with laughter and joy over this festive time.

My family and I are going to do just that. This year, we shall enjoy being hosted for Christmas by David and Emilie - our oldest son and his wife in Cumberland. Emile is expecting a daughter on March 14. Our first grandchild! Joining us will be Carl (and Julia) and Luke (and Hannah), our two other sons and their partners. Like many others we feel so lucky and are very pleased to be able to visit properly with family at this time of year.

Saanich has achieved some great feats over the past year. Read through this issue of the Spotlight for more about all of the amazing achievements Council and staff accomplished in 2021.

A most recent and incredibly noteworthy accomplishment is that on December 3 the W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council and the District

of Saanich formalized their commitment to reconciliation and are pursuing opportunities for collaboration with the signing of a memorandum of understanding. This represents the commitment by each to develop a strong and fair government-to-government relationship based on respect, cooperation, and partnership to address shared interests and priorities. This milestone for Saanich and the W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council is immensely critical in our reconciliation efforts.

We have so much to be thankful for and I look forward to Saanich's many more successes in 2022. Thank you to all those in our community that are dedicated to keeping Saanich, in my opinion, the very best place to live, work, and play.

My warmest wishes to you and your loved ones over the holiday season and a happy, healthy, and prosperous new year.

Season's Greetings!
Mayor Fred Haynes



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2022 Council meeting schedule

The 2022 Council meeting schedule is now available.

You can get a copy of the schedule on our website at saanich.ca; by contacting the Legislative Services Division at **250-475-5501**; or by emailing council@saanich.ca.

All meetings are held in the Council Chambers at Saanich Municipal Hall 770 Vernon Avenue.

Please note that this schedule may be changed by resolution of Council.





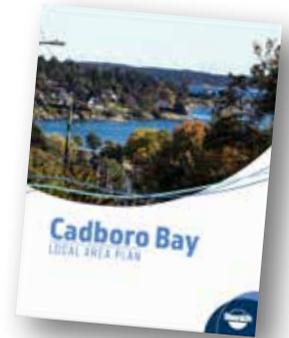
Have your say! The Draft Cadboro Bay Local Area Plan is ready for public feedback

The Draft Cadboro Bay Local Area Plan is now available for public review and feedback. The plan was developed through collaboration with the community, including through surveys, design charrettes and workshops.

The Draft Plan and accompanying Draft Village Design Guidelines will serve to guide future growth and change in Cadboro Bay over the next 20–30 years.

Key plan directions are:

- Retain and enhance the unique character of the Village core as the heart of the community;
- Diversify transportation links and be more welcoming to pedestrians and cyclists;
- Plan for sea level rise and climate change impacts;
- Provide more housing forms in the village neighbourhood suitable for all ages and stages of life;
- Enhance Gyro Park as an integral part of the community heart and place of natural beauty;
- Recognize local First Nations culture and history;
- Green the Village and surrounding streets;
- Ensure new buildings and public spaces are in harmony with the Village scale and character; and
- Enhance Sinclair Road as a safe and enjoyable walking and cycling route.



The Draft Plan and Draft Village Design Guidelines are now available for public input with open houses running from mid-November and online engagement, including a virtual open house, available until January.

Visit saanich.ca/cadboro for more information.

Saanich brings home the 2021 Award for Planning Excellence in Climate Change Planning

The District of Saanich 2020 Climate Plan earned us the CIP 2021 Award for Planning Excellence in Climate Change Planning. CIPs Award for Planning Excellence honours exceptional planning projects judged on their innovation, impact on the profession, implementation potential, and overall presentation. More information is available at the [CIP website](#).





Dog on-leash changes now in effect at Cadboro-Gyro Park

At its November 1 meeting, Saanich Council approved the final reading of an amendment to the Animals Bylaw related to Cadboro-Gyro Park.

As of November 2, dogs must be on leash at all times in all areas of Cadboro-Gyro Park and public beach areas of Cadboro Bay year round. There are no longer any seasonal restrictions or off-leash areas at these locations.

The **Migratory Bird Sanctuary Regulations**, established by the federal government, states that dogs and cats are not permitted to run at large at any time and must be under the continuous and effective control of their owners at all times, which typically requires leashing. For more details, read the migratory bird sanctuary regulations and to report violations, please contact the Environment and Climate Change Enforcement Branch at **1-888-569-5656**.

We ask dog owners to obey these leash regulations, pick up after their dog and be mindful of the environment and other park users. For more information on petiquette and dogs in parks, please visit **[Saanich.ca/dogs](https://www.saanich.ca/dogs)**.



If you have concerns about a specific dog-related incident, please contact Saanich Animal Control via the Saanich Police non-emergency line at **250-475-4321**.



National Tree Day activities

We celebrated National Tree Day with a variety of activities across Saanich.

The new Douglas Creek bridge site hosted a work party to celebrate National Tree Day on September 22 with the planting of 25 Big Leaf Maple trees. Parks staff were joined by the Friends of Mount Douglas Park Society, Pulling Together volunteers, Mount Douglas Park Ambassadors and the Victoria Nature School. They managed to get the trees into the ground in one hour! This bridge site and the trail system leading into it will see hundreds of native shrubs, forbs and ferns planted over this winter.

We also celebrated National Tree day with crews continuing to plant Trembling Aspen trees at the new Colquitz Creek salmon habitat enhancement project in Cuthbert Holmes Park.

On Earth Day in April, we invited residents to sign up to receive a native tree on National Tree Day. This event saw more than 50 trees claimed and on their way to a new home to be planted on private property in Saanich. Happy residents collected their preferred tree from Glanford Park in a drive through, physically-distanced setting. There were six native trees to choose from including, Garry Oak, Douglas Fir, Pacific Crab apple, Western Red Cedar, Vine Maple, and Big Leaf Maple.

Tree Appreciation Day planting

Saanich Parks hosted Tree Appreciation Day on November 6 by connecting with neighbours and planting of 22 trees along the pathway and surrounding the new bike park/pump track in McMinn Park.

Up to 50 residents were invited to help Saanich staff in this community based effort to dig holes, plant, stake, cage, and mulch a mix of Red Maples, California Incense Cedar, Katsura, Tulip, Persian Ironwood, London Plane, and Scarlet and Red Oaks.

In addition, we also planted native trees, shrubs and ferns along a section of Galey Brook and Pond at the south end of McMinn Park. Residents helped staff plant about 60 Western-red Cedars and Red Alders trees and about 350 Sword fern, Snowberry, Salmonberry, Dull Oregon grape, Red-flowering Currant, and Tall Oregon grape.





Climate Action Workshop Series

Join this free online workshop series about climate change big ideas and practical actions in your community.

Learn from Saanich staff and expert guests about ways to make your transportation, home, yard, and purchases more resilient and climate-friendly and different tools and rebates available to support you. Come out of the series knowing more about the inspiring climate action happening in your community and with your own personal prioritized climate action plan.

Tuesday evenings from 7 to 8 p.m.

January 25–March 1, 2022

Visit Saanich.ca/sustainability to register.





Saanich Fire crews deploy to support communities most heavily impacted by wildfire

2021 saw one of the hottest summers on record in BC which kept us busy here at home but did you know the Province also required our help?

Saanich fire fighters deployed to assist the BC Wildfire Service and work with fire departments from all over BC to protect towns and areas such as Lytton, Deka Lake, Cache Creek, Vernon and Logan Lake.

Our fire fighters protected structures, like homes and businesses from the wildland fires and supported suppression efforts and some received advanced Task Force Leader training to command other departments deployed to fight the fires.

The Fire Department received many letters of thanks and appreciation from residents affected by the fires, including a home and farm our members saved.

Not only were Saanich fire fighters able to assist in what was a truly multi-jurisdictional response, the deployment provided our crews with invaluable wildland firefighting and incident management experience. Thank you for a job well done!



Expanded regional fire dispatch service

The District of Saanich entered into an agreement for Saanich Fire to provide fire 9-1-1 call-taking and dispatch services to the Capital Regional District and its participants, including the districts of Highlands, Metchosin and Sooke and the CRD in relation to the Juan de Fuca, Salt Spring Island and Southern Gulf Islands electoral areas. This exciting service transition is taking place in December and we look forward to providing our new clients the same high level of service as we do for our current clients of Oak Bay, Central Saanich and, of course, Saanich fire departments.



Alexa's team award recipients

Alexa's Team is a provincial program recognizing officers across British Columbia for their efforts in apprehending impaired drivers, named in memory of four-year-old Alexa Middelaer who was killed by an impaired driver in Delta in 2008.

Alexa's parents responded to this terrible tragedy by lobbying the government for legislation that resulted in the introduction of the Immediate Roadside Prohibition (IRP) program in 2010. They also partnered with the RCMP, ICBC, and Mothers Against Drunk Driving to establish Alexa's Team, which in 2009 recognized 26 lower mainland police officers for apprehending a minimum of 12 impaired drivers per year.

This year Alexa's Team has grown to over 3,000 new and returning members from detachments and municipal departments across the province. The award recipients for 2020 include the following five members of the Saanich Police Department:

- Constable Cofield
- Constable Defrane
- Constable Hales
- Constable Kaluza
- Constable Marmaras





Saanich Emergency Program and Recreation collaborate on training exercise

This November, the Saanich Emergency Program was excited to work with Gordon Head Recreation Centre to host an Emergency Support Services (ESS) Reception Centre exercise. The Emergency Program appreciates these opportunities to collaborate with other departments and the recreation staff's dedication to support preparedness in Saanich.

ESS provides short-term services like food and lodging for residents affected by emergencies like fires or floods. A reception centre is a location where people who have been displaced can register and access those services. This functional exercise will provide staff and volunteers with an opportunity to practice the roles and tasks required in a real emergency.

Exercises like this one take place at Saanich recreation centres twice a year to help ensure readiness and provide fantastic learning experiences for everyone involved.



The Emergency Program is always looking for more volunteers! If you are interested in volunteering, contact them at **250-475-7140** or by email at **sep@saanich.ca!**



Trembling Aspen groves and aquatic alcoves help restore habitat diversity in Cuthbert Holmes Park

Phase one of the Colquitz River riparian restoration project in Cuthbert Holmes Park began this past August. This 200m stretch of the Colquitz River, flowing northwest from the Silver City Theatre, had been historically dredged, logged and cleared for agricultural purposes.

The infestation of invasive English Hawthorn trees created an unhealthy monoculture with little plant or habitat diversity. This three-year project aims to restore a thirty metre riparian buffer zone along both sides of the creek. Three habitat water features were built this year, with four more to be constructed next year. The largest floodplain bench or alcove is over 900 square metres (m²) and includes a 30m² amphibian pond. The second floodplain alcove is 200m²; both benches have approximately 40m² of permanent pool area (creek bed level). These two benches re-create floodplain riparian zones lost decades ago when the property was developed for agriculture. Large boulders, woody debris, spawning gravel and tree stumps were added to create predatory escape pockets and improve fish habitat. The over-2,500 native grasses, rushes, sedges, and forbs planted this year will attract various insect species that will enhance feeding opportunities for juvenile and returning Salmon and Cutthroat Trout.

Supporting these new alcoves is a new Trembling Aspen forest funded by the Ministry of Transportation mitigation funds from the new McKenzie/highway interchange project. Habitat enhancement of the forest and riparian area to mimic climax forest structures was done by erecting snags, placing or hollowing out woody debris (logs), anchoring large woody debris in pools and placing large boulders throughout. Other tree species planted to support the Trembling Aspen grove include; endangered Oregon Ash trees (grown from seed by Satin Flower Nurseries), Big-leaf Maple, Douglas Fir and Western-red Cedars. Since the completion of the creek work and planted areas, Great Blue Herons, Coopers Hawks, King Fishers, native frogs, spawning Salmon (and seals chasing them), Kestrels, and Sandpipers have already started using this new, diverse habitat.

Dave Clough, the lead biologist for all of Saanich Park's creek projects, was key to the design and construction of the creek habitat enhancements. The Parks Natural Areas crew and Public Works Creeks and Waterways crew look forward to continuing this great project over the next several years.





Planting Trees at Cedar Hill Park

The final week of October saw a Parks urban forestry crew delivering over 40 large trees to the Cedar Hill Golf Course (CHGC).

The trees will be planted by the golf course greens crew to increase the number of trees lining the fairways along this beautiful course. The trees delivered to CHGC are a mix of both native and ornamental coniferous trees. The delivery included Pines, Spruce, Cedars, and Fir trees, which will help create bird habitat in various areas along the golf course.



Not wanting to miss out on all the tree planting fun, our Parks staff teamed up with some keen volunteers to plant 30 large native trees in early November. Together they braved the fall weather to plant a naturalized area just off of the fairway of the 7th hole. When it's all said and done, over 75 trees of various sizes will be added to this once-unused space near Bowker Creek. These combined planting efforts will see more than 100 trees planted in Cedar Hill Park this year. This is in keeping with the Cedar Hill Park Management plan for this area of Cedar Hill Park and will help to enhance bird habitat. These new large-class trees will continue to enhance the urban forest and help provide the multitudes of benefits that trees provide for decades and possibly centuries to come.

Community Services in action!

Cedar Hill social Saturday events have returned! Older adults gathered on October 30 to make DIY trick-or-treat bags for neighbourhood friends and families. Competition was fierce over orange bingo and skill testing guesstimating activities, all while connecting with each other at this themed social gathering.

Saanich celebrates older adult neurodiversity. We are so pleased that after a long break over the pandemic, the older adult neurodiversity social and movement class returned weekly to Saanich Commonwealth Place on October 6. For those who may have spent years frequently participating in recreation programs, a new diagnosis of a neurodegenerative disease can be devastating in figuring out where they feel they now belong, as they cope with dementia, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's or post-stroke neurodiversity. With the return of this program, we see the joy in our participants, their families and our staff in continuing to provide social and physical opportunities, valuing these persons as continuing members of our recreation community.

On Saturday, October 2, Gordon Head Recreation Centre (GHRC) hosted the return of women's only swim from 8:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. with 37 attendees. And, on October 9, GHRC hosted the first monthly session for 2SLGBTQ+ patrons and allies, with 15 in attendance. We anticipate increased participation numbers as interested patrons become aware of and more comfortable with the service provided. The GHRC pool is ideal for these private swims, as it's possible to drape the external and internal windows for privacy. Thank you to Community Services for their work and support to facilitate these newly offered monthly swims!



Gold Arena receives a new ice slab

The Gold Arena at G.R. Pearkes Recreation Centre reopened in late September with a new ice slab and rink upgrades.

The Gold Arena is heavily used by the community and is home to numerous user groups and associations. The Gold Arena saw approximately 4,500 hours of ice time used by these groups per year before closing.

The project included the replacement of the 53-year-old ice slab, ice melt pit, dasher boards/glass, arena netting, the flooring around the boards and the building's elevator.

To mark the reopening, G.R. Pearkes Recreation Centre offered a free public skate in October.

Staff and community are thrilled to be back on the ice and using the new and improved Gold Arena.

With two arenas in operation and all sport activities allowed under Provincial Health Officer guidance, ice usage has returned to normal levels.





Calling all nature lovers!

Saanich acquires a parcel of land to expand Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary

Council recently acquired an 11,712 square foot piece of land on Lancaster Road which will eventually be rezoned to expand the Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary and further Saanich's goal of preserving green space for future generations to enjoy. The sanctuary is an important asset to Saanich as it is critical in protecting the nature and wildlife that depend on the habitat.

The District began acquiring lands around Swan Lake and Christmas Hill in the 60's and to date, has successfully acquired 29 properties in the immediate area. Currently, the nature sanctuary is comprised of two areas – the low wetland area surrounding Swan Lake and the rocky oak-forested hilltop of Christmas Hill. All of the over 160-acres are owned by Saanich, except for two small Nature Trust BC parcels, which are managed by the Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary Society.

There is also a lovely walking trail in the nature sanctuary that loops around Swan Lake and includes a floating boardwalk that puts you right in the centre of the wetland area. If you've yet to check it out, be sure to do so!





E-bike and EV Program launched!

The Sustainability Division has been busy this fall launching two successful climate-friendly transportation incentive programs.

As of this September, Saanich is providing top-up incentives to the CleanBC Go Electric (EV) Charger Rebate Program for strata condominiums and other eligible multifamily buildings. We also provided very popular webinars co-hosted with the Vancouver Island Strata Owner's Association to help stratas plan their EV charging upgrades.

And in October Saanich began providing incentives for e-bike purchases for personal transportation through the Community E-bike Incentive Pilot Program. The program has been very popular, and generated interest among many other municipalities in BC. To learn more about these programs, visit saanich.ca/ev and saanich.ca/ebike.





Saanich celebrates 2021 accomplishments

As 2021 quickly comes to close, it's important to reflect on the past year and to celebrate our accomplishments with our community. Read on for our 2021 highlights.

Won Safety Improvement Award

We **won the Safety Improvement Award** at the BC Municipal Safety Association's annual awards celebration. The Safety Improvement Award recognizes local governments for activities that improve experience rating, and reduce injuries, illness, disease and fatalities.

Aligned fire services

With the Victoria and Oak Bay fire departments, we **updated our mutual and automatic aid firefighting agreement**, ensuring continued cooperation and alignment of fire services across the three core municipalities. The new agreement increases resource capacity, inter-municipal firefighter training opportunities and professional cooperation through operational response planning and coordinated responses to high-risk events.

Requested input on environmental resilience

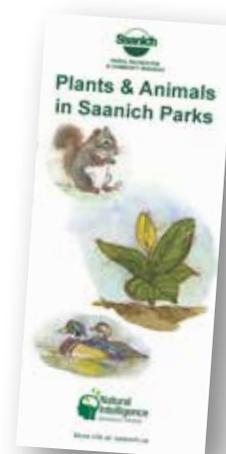
We **invited the public to participate** in the development of Resilient Saanich, a new environmental policy framework, by taking part in a virtual open house and sharing their thoughts via survey. Resilient Saanich will include a new biodiversity conservation strategy, enhanced stewardship opportunities, and the award winning Climate Plan.

Committed to UN's Decade on Ecosystem Restoration

Mayor Fred Haynes signed a **Proclamation** demonstrating Saanich's support and participation in the **United Nations (UN) Decade on Ecosystem Restoration** 2021 to 2030. We focused on building awareness and connecting with residents about what ecosystem restoration is and how they can get involved in park stewardship during the first year.

Released new field guide

We released a beautiful new **field guide** to inspire a passion for nature discoveries in parks close to home. Illustrated by local artist **Kristi Bridgeman**, the field guide highlights some of the plants and animals found in Saanich parks and the different types of ecosystems where they live. It is a visual learning tool aimed at youth, but the intent is to encourage learning and enjoyment for all park visitors.



Shared first Climate Plan report card

We prepared the first annual [Climate Plan Report Card](#) to help track progress toward our renewed Climate Plan targets, objectives and actions in 2020 and also to report on actions within the Saanich Electric Mobility Strategy. Accountability is key to the [Climate Plan](#) success and this new Report Card format provides a summary of progress towards our targets and objectives and the status of actions in each Climate Plan focus area for 2020.

Enhanced pedestrian networks with our neighbours

We collaborated with the Township of Esquimalt to [create an expanded pedestrian walkway](#) over the Gorge on the west side of the Gorge Bridge. The walkway was built using the southbound curb lane and is protected with concrete curbs. The Gorge Bridge straddles the boundary between Saanich and Esquimalt and this project supports a popular pedestrian loop route around the Gorge inlet connecting both municipalities.



Encouraged budget education

We [launched an online budget education tool](#) to coincide with our budget meetings for the second time. The tool provides an opportunity for citizens to learn about the financial planning process while Council deliberates the draft plan. The real-time results allow residents to see how budget changes could impact their property taxes.

Received awards for budgeting and financial reporting

For the 14th consecutive year, Saanich's Finance Department received the Canadian Award for Financial Reporting from the [Government Finance Officers Association](#) (GFOA) for its 2019 financial statements. For the 12th consecutive year, Saanich received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from GFOA for its [2020 to 2024 Financial Plan](#).

Opened new bike lanes

We [opened new bicycle lanes](#) along Larchwood Drive. Improvements included a combination of buffered and protected bikes lanes, planted traffic islands, defined street parking, lighting upgrades, and boulevard tree plantings. Larchwood Drive is an important connection for Gordon Head residents to access amenities along McKenzie Ave, neighbourhood schools, and UVic. These bike lanes are part of Saanich's All Ages and Abilities Bicycle Spine as identified in the [Active Transportation Plan](#).

Celebrated International Day of Forests

We celebrated the United Nations [International Day of Forests](#) with [many projects in support](#) of this year's theme of "Forest restoration: a path to recovery and well-being." Projects included Cuthbert Holmes Park hazard tree mitigation and replanting; annual Tree Appreciation Day; and our tree planting and partnership tree programs.

Enhanced fire department partnerships

We [updated our mutual and automatic aid agreements](#) with Central Saanich and Highlands fire departments, ensuring continued cooperation and high quality service for citizens. Mutual aid agreements are essential tools that enable each department to provide assistance across jurisdictional boundaries. The agreements allow departments to share resources and specialty services, such as wildland firefighting, specialty rescue, and obtain critical support for major incidents or other situations where a department's resources are overwhelmed or committed to other events.



Replaced the Gold Slab

The Gold Arena at G.R. Pearkes Recreation Centre **reopened September 27** with a new ice slab and rink upgrades. The project included replacement of the 53 year old Gold Arena ice slab, ice melt pit, dasher boards/glass, arena netting, the flooring around the boards and the building's elevator.

Superior Tender Shuttle Service Accreditation Received

The Fire Department **successfully passed the Fire Underwriter Survey re-accreditation** process which recognizes the Fire Department has the equipment and training in the use of alternative water supplies to provide fire protection in areas of Saanich not served by fire hydrants. This important accreditation extended fire insurance equivalency to more than 680 rural Saanich residents living in the north and west areas of the District and ensured they may be entitled to a reduction in the homeowner fire insurance premium.

Adjusted late property tax penalties permanently

Council endorsed an ongoing plan to **lessen the impact of late payment penalties** on property taxes for all Saanich property owners. This means a staggered implementation of the usual one time 10 per cent penalty. It will provide some financial relief to those Saanich taxpayers who are experiencing significant financial challenges, pay late by mistake or forget to claim their home owner grant through the province on time.

Further electrified our municipal fleet

We took steps to **reduce emissions from our municipal fleet** by adding 22 new level 2 electric vehicle (EV) charging stations to our facilities to support the ongoing electrification of the municipal fleet. This enhancement was made possible in part through funding from Natural Resources Canada's **Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Program**.

Hosted artist-in-residence community art project

Along with Artist-in-Residence Rain Cabana-Boucher, we **invited residents to participate** in Laying Flowers, a community art project based in community healing as a response to residential school uncoverings. The project ran at the Cedar Hill Recreation and Arts Centre Main Gallery and the Victoria Native Friendship. The Artist-in-Community Residency is a Community Services Division pilot program, focusing on diversity and inclusion and supporting Saanich's commitments toward addressing racism and moving forward toward Indigenous Truth and Reconciliation imperatives.

Recognized for HeArts Together project

Our [HeArts Together Community Art Project](#) received an Honorable Mention in the Program Excellence Award category as part of the 2021 BC Recreation and Parks Association Provincial Awards of Excellence. The community art project was created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic as a way to invite isolated and vulnerable community members to come together creatively while remaining close to home. More than 1,000 hand-made hearts were created by residents of long term care facilities, participants accessing services through a community service organizations, and children and youth participating in Saanich Recreation programs. The completed hearts were assembled and put on display in parks across the municipality.



Tested pop-up dogs parks

To gather information for the upcoming People, Pets and Parks Strategy, we [piloted pop-up dog parks](#) in five different Saanich parks throughout the summer. Temporary fencing was set up for two week rotations at Fowler, Hyacinth, Gorge, Rudd and Cadboro-Gyro Parks. Staff visited the pop-up parks regularly to collect feedback about the program.

Received \$1.2 million for ecosystem restoration

We [received \\$1.2 million](#) from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to restore Garry oak and trembling aspen ecosystems in Saanich. The funding compensates for ecosystems lost due to the McKenzie interchange project construction. With the funding, staff started work on three restoration projects in Layritz, Vic Derman and Cuthbert Holmes Parks. These parks were chosen as areas most similar to what was lost and where space allowed.

Completed first mid-term citizen survey

Eighty-eight per cent of Saanich residents rate their overall quality of life as good or very good according to our recent [online citizen survey results](#). BC Stats conducted our first mid-term statistically significant survey. We 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. Participants were asked to answer questions on topics such as municipal service delivery, safety and quality of life in Saanich, value for taxes and Council decision making among others.

Rolled out a food truck program

Sixteen of the region's finest [food truck vendors](#) [rotated](#) through Beckwith, Cadboro-Gyro and Gorge Waterway Parks from July until September. Staff collected feedback from vendors, customers and park users throughout the pilot this summer to assess the success of the pilot program.

Approved Housing Strategy

Council **approved a comprehensive, 10-year Housing Strategy** that provides clear direction and actions to continue to increase the supply, affordability and diversity of housing options to accommodate a broad range of housing needs. The Housing Strategy was developed through a 13 month process, with the core content of the Strategy generated by the Saanich Housing Task Force. The strategy focuses on seven main objectives, including increasing affordable and supportive housing; promoting and protecting rental housing; supporting housing diversity and increasing supply; reducing barriers to housing development; strengthening partnerships; enhancing community engagement; and understanding housing demand and addressing land speculation.



Updated Fire Prevention Bylaws

To align with the Fire Safety Act and changes to the BC Building Code and Fire Code, the District's Fire Prevention and Operational bylaws were revised. The Fire Prevention Bylaw regulates various fire prevention matters, such as open burning, smoke alarms, and similar matters, and the Operational Bylaw updates the Department's list of authorized services, powers and authority to respond to incidents and conduct fire safety inspections and fire investigations. New provisions to address mutual and automatic aid were also added.

Implemented BYO bag

As of August 20, it's **BYO bag in Saanich** following approval of the Checkout Bag Regulation Bylaw. 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.



Provided virtual volunteer assistance

Saanich Emergency Support Services volunteers **provided virtual assistance** to wildfire evacuees throughout BC for several weeks this summer. The Evacuee Registration and Assistance tool and virtual response model, developed by the Province in response to COVID-19, was used by Saanich volunteers to provide critical support to people displaced from their homes during the wildfires.

Made progress on safe routes to schools

To **address concerns from Marigold School** staff and parents, we installed a combination of school zone signs, road markings, and delineators across the length of the zone as well as the addition of speed reader boards. These additional traffic control devices will serve as periodic reminders to slow down and continue to watch for children. In some locations, the delineators will also serve as physical barriers to prohibit vehicles from entering the crosswalks. These improvements will serve to slow drivers, increase awareness of the three consecutive school zones and improve safety for active transportation users. Over the last six years, we worked with the Capital Regional District and 25 participating schools to develop Active and Safe Routes to School plans.



Recommendations in the Development Process Review adopted by Council

The Development Process Review is a Saanich-led initiative to further enhance the effectiveness of the application review process, expand stakeholder understanding and expectations and improve development application processing times. Last year, Council endorsed the Terms of Reference for the Development Process Review for the Current Planning Division's development application review process for rezoning, form and character Development Permits and Development Variance Permit applications. This year, Council unanimously adopted the 15 recommendations in the Development Process Review Report completed by KPMG and the implementation roadmap. Council also approved funding to complete the work, which includes updating the Zoning Bylaw Parking requirements, updates to planning and development processes and procedures, organizing educational events for the public and key stakeholders, and assisting with the digital transition to online applications.



Introduced a new EV Ready rebate

We announced **municipal top-up rebates** available to multifamily buildings looking to install EV chargers. Access to at-home EV charging is a critical factor for most households in choosing an EV for their next vehicle, which is why we are topping up existing provincial rebates provided through the CleanBC Go Electric EV Charger Rebate Program.

Launched a new e-bike pilot program

We **piloted a new program** that offered rebates to a number of income-qualified residents looking to purchase a new electrically assisted bicycle (e-bike). We were the first local government in BC to pilot an e-bike incentive program with the long-term goal of helping more residents switch to active and electric mobility in an effort to reduce local greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The pilot program is estimated to save between 1,000 – 2,000 tonnes of GHG emissions by 2030, contributing to the Climate Plan goal of cutting community GHG emissions in half by 2030. Ensuring equity in climate action is also an important objective of the Climate Plan. The e-bike incentive program is therefore designed to be accessible to everyone, regardless of income level.



Expanded regional dispatch service

The Fire Department entered into an agreement to provide fire 9-1-1 call-taking and dispatch services to the Capital Regional District and its participants, including the districts of Highlands, Metchosin and Sooke and the CRD in relation to the Juan de Fuca, Salt Spring Island and Southern Gulf Islands electoral areas. This regional dispatch service also includes Oak Bay and Central Saanich fire departments.

Commemorated 100th anniversary of Shelbourne Memorial Trees

Along with the City of Victoria and the Memorial Avenue Committee, we **commemorated the 100th anniversary** of the planting of the London Memorial Planetrees on Shelbourne Street with the installation of new gateway signs and the planting of a commemorative tree. Memorial trees were planted on both sides of Shelbourne Street in Saanich and Victoria to honour the fallen soldiers and nurses from BC in the First World and Boer Wars.



Awarded environmental stewards

Every year, we recognize individuals, businesses, organizations and youth for their significant contributions to stewarding the environment. **This year's recipients** were recognized for park and forest restoration and stewardship, environmentally sustainable food production, invasive species removal and native planting, supporting allotment gardens, contributing to the health of our lakes and watersheds, and so much more. Congratulations to all of our 2021 Environmental Award recipients!



Opened a new bridge and trail

Together with the Friends of Mount Douglas Park Society with a grant from the Pacific Salmon Foundation, we carried out creek restoration, installed the [new bridge and created new access trails](#) over the summer in Mount Douglas Park. The bridge allows park visitors to cross and get close to Douglas Creek without damaging the sensitive ecosystems of the creek bed. 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.

Won Campaign of the Year

We recently received international recognition for our [2020 Natural Intelligence campaign](#) winning first place in the Campaign of the Year – Associations and Institutions category at the [2021 Digital Communications Awards](#) sponsored by Quadriga University of Applied Sciences in Berlin. The 2020 Natural Intelligence campaign, Saanich Parks. Less Screen Time, More Green Time., encouraged people to increase their “green time” outdoors while reducing their daily screen time on all devices. During the campaign period, usage of parks surged more than 150 per cent over previous year levels.

Hosted the Witness Blanket travelling exhibition

We hosted the Witness Blanket travelling exhibition, a reproduction of artist Carey Newman’s ground-breaking art installation, at the Cedar Hill Recreation and Arts Centre Gallery. The Witness Blanket presents the atrocities of the residential school era, shares the experiences of residential school survivors, honours the children and symbolizes ongoing reconciliation. Inspired by a woven blanket, the original cedar-framed artwork is made of over 800 items from Indian residential schools, survivors, churches, governments and other cultural sites across Canada. Each item tells a story of loss, strength, resilience and pride.

Expanded Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary

The over 160 acre Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary continues to expand following our [acquisition of a new parcel of land](#). The acquisition of a parcel of land on the west side of Swan Lake adds 1,089 square metres (0.269 acres) to the Nature Sanctuary and furthers our goal of preserving green spaces for future generations to enjoy. Over time, the land will be rezoned to match the surrounding conservation area and form part of the broader nature sanctuary.



Signed Memorandum of Understanding with the **WSÁNEĆ** Leadership Council

The **WSÁNEĆ** Leadership Council (WLC) and the District of Saanich formalized their commitment to reconciliation and are pursuing opportunities for collaboration with the **signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU)**. The MOU represents a commitment by the WLC and Saanich to develop a strong and fair government-to-government relationship based on respect, co-operation, and partnership to address shared interests and priorities. The MOU is a living document and starting point that reflects generations of continuing work. The WLC and Saanich will develop protocol agreements, committees and working groups, and meet Council to Council regularly and where appropriate to review work plans and progress.



Invited residents to have their say on the Draft Cadboro Bay Local Area Plan

We invited residents to attend a series of in-person open houses to learn about and provide **feedback on the Draft Cadboro Bay Local Area Plan (LAP)**. The in-person open houses and a virtual open house began on November 13, 2021 and continued through to November 25. Saanich has been engaging with the community through community workshops, open houses, design charrettes and a community visioning survey. Over 1,000 instances of public input contributed to the Draft Plan's development and together we created a robust Draft Plan to retain what's valued about Cadboro Bay, while looking to expand housing options, respond to climate change, improve active transportation routes and enhance the Cadboro Bay Village. Thank you to everyone for participated in this process to date – you are helping shape Cadboro Bay's future.

UPCOMING COUNCIL MEETINGS

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

COUNCIL MEETINGS

January 10
January 24

February 7
February 28

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETINGS

January 17
January 31

February 14

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

