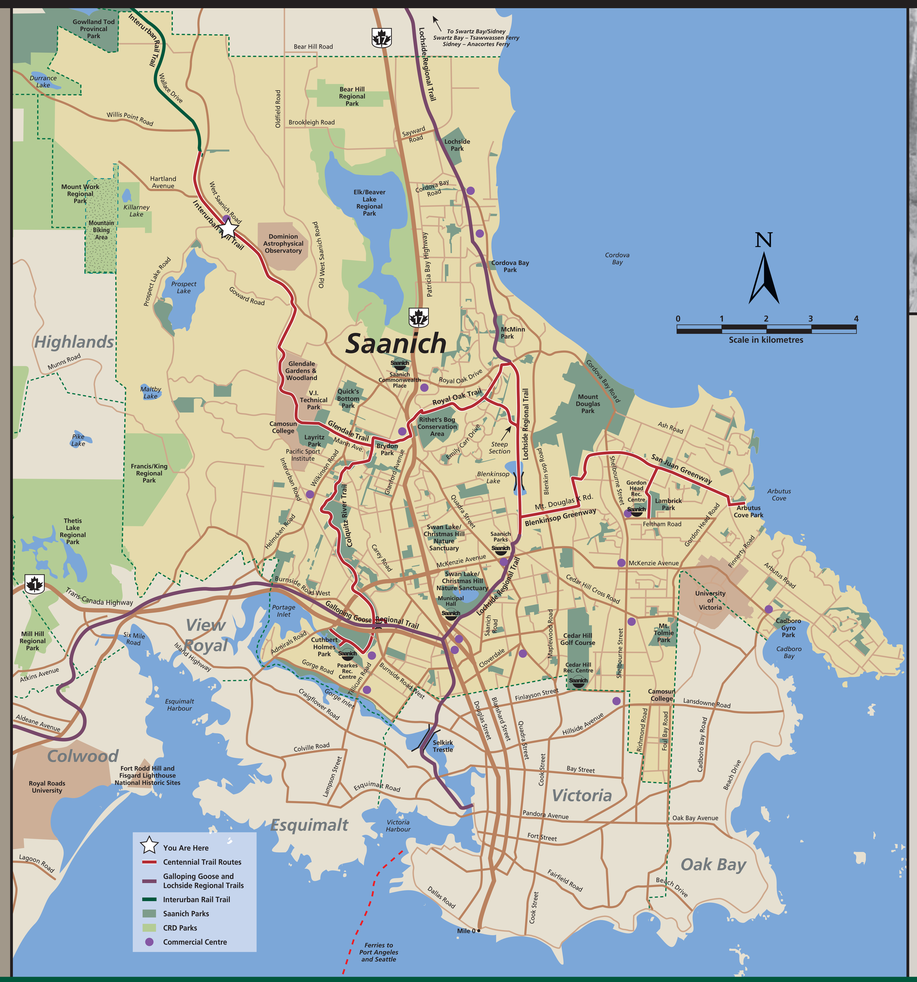
SAANICH 1906 100 2006

CENTENNIAL TRAILS

INTERURBAN RAIL TRAIL

The Corporation of the District of Saanich celebrated its centenary on March 1st 2006. To honour this milestone, a significant trail and greenways project was envisioned. The "Centennial Trails 2006 and Beyond" is a multi-year plan to develop or improve nearly 45 km of trails by making connections north-south and east-west to all geographic areas of the community.



SAANICH continues to have a long-standing belief in the value of trails and greenways dating back to the 1960's. The Centennial Trails plans build upon the successes of existing trails and greenways such as the Colquitz River Park, the Galloping Goose Regional Trail, the Lochside Regional Trail, and many neighbourhood trails.

The trails and walkways in Saanich are diverse and provide opportunities for recreation, transportation, exploration, and education. They also provide an important connection between rural and urban Saanich, and the cultural richness of our community.

DISTRICT OF SAANICH – Gas Electric car circa 1918

INTERURBAN RAIL TRAIL

In May of 1910, the British Columbia Electric Railway (BCER) confirmed they would build the new rail line at a cost of $500,000. Three routes were considered and with support from the local land owners, the final route was selected following portions of what is now Interurban Road in the Municipality of Saanich, Wallace Drive and East Saanich Road in Central Saanich. Stations were located at Tillicum, Strawberry Vale, Wilkinson Road, West Saanich Road, Heal's Range, Sluggett and its Terminals at Discovery Street in Victoria and Deep Bay (Cove) in Sidney. The last spike was driven by BC Premier, Sir Richard McBride on June 18, 1913 opening the route that would operate until 1924. It was the introduction of the automobile that eventually curtailed the Railway service out of existence.* The BC Electric Railway, the second of Victoria's three railways shuttled people and goods daily from downtown Victoria to Deep Cove.

The Interurban Rail Trail follows the central part of the former railway line from Interurban Road at Goward Road and West Saanich Road to Wallace Drive and beyond to Central Saanich and Sidney.

The Victoria and Sidney Railway – 1892-1919, Darryl E. Muralt, BC Railway Historical Association

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

The development of the Interurban Rail Trail connects rural and urban Saanich much the same way the railway did in the early 1900's. The Interurban Rail Trail provides the backbone of a second touring route from Swartz Bay to Victoria. Families can now make day trips to the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory, Prospect Lake, local Farm Markets and Hartland Mountain Bike Park with minimal on-road travel.

MICHAEL VANLNSBERGHE – white fawn lily – *erythronium oregonum*

Saanich