

Connect North Saanich: Fall 2021

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North Saanich exists on the traditional territories of the WSÁNEĆ peoples. We thank them for caring for this land and look forward to working with the BOKEĆEN (Pauquachin) First Nation and WSÍKEM (Tseycum) First Nation for years to come.

Message from Mayor & Council



As COVID-19 immunization rates rise in BC, we are heartened to see a return to relative normalcy here in North Saanich. As many of us reduced the use of masks this summer, we saw each other's faces at local businesses, parks, roadside fruit stands, and neighbours' backyards. It was wonderful to see so many people out in the community enjoying themselves.

Council continues to think strategically and plan proactively on behalf of our community, making decisions that help mitigate, adapt to, and address issues like the pandemic.

Just like many other organizations, businesses and families, the pandemic forced us to innovate. We can now acknowledge and celebrate these shifts. The municipal hall

was open for service throughout the pandemic, in part because the District modified service delivery, implemented a kiosk for payment of utility bills and taxes, and erected transparent dividers to keep staff and residents safe. To protect our vulnerable populations and communicate our commitment to health and safety, we will keep these dividers up for the foreseeable future.

During the pandemic we also offered residents the opportunity to participate electronically in Council meetings. This turned out to be a popular option. As we make the transition back to a post-pandemic "new normal", we will continue to offer residents the option of attending meetings in-person or virtually.

Transparency and accessibility to services continue to be guiding principles as we work with you on significant community initiatives that benefit from your input. Over the past 10 months we have received public input on the Tree Protection Bylaw review. On August 16, Council received a report from the consultant working on the District's behalf. This report included a number of recommendations based on feedback we received from you.

Council directed staff to bring back a revised engagement plan, including engagement through Phase 3, a revised work plan, and budget for Council's review and consideration. We expect this to occur later this fall.

We are just as grateful for your level of engagement as we continue to work on the Official Community Plan (OCP) review. On Wednesday, September 22, the public was invited to a facilitated workshop, where Council and staff reviewed the OCP's "big concepts", discussed public input, determined how you want us to keep you engaged, and developed a clear path forward. Thank you to those who participated.

Your voice on initiatives like the Tree Protection Bylaw and OCP reviews is enormously valuable. We thank you for your thoughtful and detailed feedback.

If you haven't already, we recommend that you check out connectnorthsaanich.ca—this is an excellent way for you to keep abreast of District projects and initiatives like the OCP review, and provide us with your ideas about these plans and projects. Our goal for subscribers to the Tree Bylaw review is 500 people, and 750 for the OCP: please sign up now and help us meet these goals.

If you are interested in learning more from the Mayor and members of Council in an unstructured, informal setting, we invite you to attend our next Community Meeting on Zoom at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 20, 2021. Details are available at northsaanich.ca/events-calendar.

As always, we thank you for your interest in the work Council does alongside and for you. It is immensely gratifying to see just how passionate residents are about their North Saanich community. Thank you for continuing to engage with us in dialogue, and for doing so in the spirit of open-mindedness, curiosity, and mutual respect.

The pandemic is not yet over—so please take care of yourself, your family, and your local community, knowing that we will get through this together.

What's Happening

Annual Halloween Bonfire

We are happy to welcome you back to this popular tradition, hosted by the North Saanich Fire Department. Join us at the Wain Road Fire Hall on Sunday, October 31. Enjoy the bonfire and a free hotdog starting at 6:30 p.m., and fireworks at 7:45 p.m. To help give back to the community, we will gratefully accept donations to CFA Santa's Anonymous.



What's Happening (Continued)



Flavour Trail

This summer, the highly popular North Saanich Flavour Trail introduced a family-fun scavenger hunt. This was a huge success, with scavengers on the hunt at farm gates around North Saanich, competing for a very tasty prize basket.

People from all over the region took the opportunity to bike, walk or drive down country roads in North Saanich, taking home the best flavours of the region and season.

Visit www.FlavourTrails.com to learn about the Flavour Trail venues and meet the growers, harvesters, fishers, vinters, chefs, and food producers from across North Saanich who create an amazingly rich bounty of food and beverages here in our own backyard.

Commission Appointments

Lending your expertise and experience to an advisory commission is a meaningful and tangible way for you to support your community. This fall, the District will be accepting applications from individuals interested in serving on these Advisory Commissions and Committees:

- Community Agricultural Commission
- Community Planning Commission
- Community Stewardship Commission
- Saanich Peninsula Water Commission and Saanich Peninsula Wastewater Committee
- Peninsula Recreation Commission
- Victoria Airport Authority Noise Management Committee

For more information about these voluntary opportunities, or to obtain an application form, visit northsaanich.ca/advisory-commission-application or visit the Municipal Hall between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. any weekday (excluding statutory holidays).

Outstanding Utility Bills

A reminder that all utility bills outstanding at Dec 31, 2021, will be transferred to the property tax account on January 1, 2022, and will be subject to arrears interest thereafter until paid.

Home Owner Grant

It's not too late for you to claim your 2021 Home Owner Grant if you haven't already done so. Please note that municipal governments in BC are no longer accepting Home Owner Grant applications (retroactive or new).

Instead, you can claim your grant directly with the Province online at www.gov.bc.ca/homeownergrant or by phone at 1-888-355-2700.



www.gov.bc.ca/homeownergrant

Green Waste & Outdoor Burning

Wondering what to do with the autumn leaves scattered about your property?

Our green waste processing facility is open from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. every Saturday (except Christmas) and the second and fourth Thursday of each month. For more details, including prices and a downloadable schedule, visit northsaanich.ca/green-waste.



northsaanich.ca/green-waste



Burning season will open on November 4, 2021. You are permitted fires every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of the first and third weeks of the month until May, 2022. All outdoor fires require a permit, which you can obtain at the Wain Road Fire Hall (986 Wain Road). For more information, please contact the Fire Department at 250-656-1931, or visit northsaanich.ca/burning.



northsaanich.ca/burning

Water Main Replacement

One of the District's priorities is providing residents with safe, clean drinking water. Replacing old water mains with new ones helps ensure property owners have access to a higher standard of potable water now, and for generations to come.

We started work to replace the aging and undersized water main at Curteis Point on September 7 and expect this work to continue until December 2021. Thank you for your patience as we tackle this job.

Project Updates

Tree Protection Bylaw Review

This hot, dry summer was a good reminder that trees and greenspace contribute to the District's resilience to climate change and severe weather by mitigating urban heat.

Trees improve the quality of life in North Saanich, which is why we are not surprised to have received such detailed public feedback on the draft Tree Protection Bylaw. We are still far from adopting the bylaw (we are in Phase 2 of 3 in the review process), but we are making progress.



On Monday, August 16, Council reviewed the Phase 2 report and considered alternatives to the 10 key directions in response to what we heard from you. Staff expect to bring back the revised engagement plan, work plan, and budget to Council later this fall.

Subscribe, review drafts and reports, and stay informed at connectnorthsaanich.ca/tree-bylaw.



connectnorthsaanich.ca/tree-bylaw

Official Community Plan Review

Thank you to all who have contributed their feedback on the Official Community Plan (OCP), helping to shape what the future of North Saanich may look like.

This September 22, Council reviewed the emerging concepts in greater detail, discussed the public input received to date and determined what future engagement could look like at a Special Council Meeting open to the public.

Staff will soon report back to Council with a revised Phase 2 report and look towards potential modifications to the Phase 3 engagement plan.

Please subscribe to updates at connectnorthsaanich.ca/ocp.



connectnorthsaanich.ca/ocp



Sandown Update

The heat and abundance of summer brought a busy roster of activities at the Sandown Centre. This was the first harvest season for the seven emerging growers in the Farmpreneur program. They have been learning the ropes as they bring their first harvests to local markets such as restaurants and the South Island Food hub.

This is encouraging news for an island that, 50 years ago, grew 80% of its own food (and now produces less than 10% of its own food). In August, the Centre ran the very popular Sandown Saturday series for the public, walking the land and learning about the riparian zone, natural history, and

birdlife of Sandown. The Sandown community gardens are well underway, with a series of community work parties that built the garden infrastructure over summer.

To keep up to date on the various goings-on at the Sandown Centre, visit sandowncentre.com.



www.sandowncentre.com



Did You **Know?**

Block Rockin' Beats

Joining the Block Watch program is a great way for local homeowners to help build a safer neighbourhood and a sense of community.

Through Block Watch, people look out for their neighbours' homes and properties as if they were their own. The program encourages people to get to know their neighbours, increases their level of vigilance, and helps organize people as a crime prevention group to prevent and report crime and suspicious behaviour to the police.

Learn more at blockwatch.com.

Rodenticides and Raptors

Whooo benefits from the Province's recent ban on second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides?

Owls, for one. Predators like owls and hawks can die or suffer long-term effects from eating poisoned rodents.

Given the healthy presence of raptors throughout North Saanich, we welcome the Province's 18-month ban on this class of rodenticides:

www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/pesticides-pest-management/legislation-consultation/rodenticide-ban

Did you know that District staff eliminated the use of pesticides more than a decade ago? You can learn more about our practices at northsaanich.ca/pesticide-use – a link that includes resources for North Saanich property owners.



northsaanich.ca/pesticide-use

CleanBC Heat Pump Rebate

The Heat Pump Group Purchase Rebate rewards groups of homeowners working together to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by switching from an oil, natural gas, or propane heating system to an air source heat pump.



The Group Heat Pump Purchase Rebate is additional to the up to \$3,000 available from CleanBC, the Electrical Service Upgrade Rebate, and any local government top-ups that may be available.

The Group Heat Pump Purchase Rebate ranges from \$200 per home, for a group of 2 homes, and up to a maximum of \$500 for a group of 20 to 30 homes. Participants are encouraged to spread the word about their heat pump purchase group. The larger each group becomes, the larger the rebate.

To learn more about the Group Purchase Rebate and all available rebate programs, visit <https://betterhomesbc.ca/rebates/gpr>.



betterhomesbc.ca/rebates/gpr

