



District of North Saanich

# 2021 Strategic Plan

Adopted January 18, 2021

# Context

---

This Strategic Plan sets out Council’s focus and strategic priorities for the 2021-2024 period and beyond. The Plan is based on many studies, plans, and public input opportunities over the years and we believe the Plan’s directions and priorities reflect the overall will of the community we serve.

As we learn more from the community, our staff, Commissions and Committees, the Strategic Plan will be enhanced and modified as required by Council. Over time the Plan will be reviewed and updated to ensure consistency with emerging plans and related strategic decisions. Strategic planning is a Council-driven process that is supported by staff. The Strategic Plan is a working document developed with input from all members of Council and senior management. An initial planning workshop is held early in the first year of a newly elected Council and annual workshops are held to review and update the Plan. The most recent revision of the plan was created by Council at a workshop on December 10, 2020, and then modified and adopted at the January 18, 2021 regular Council meeting.

The Strategic Plan is an “umbrella policy” that sets the context for all that we do and helps to align specific plans having to do with finance, land use, solid waste, information technology, infrastructure and parks. It also provides the basis for department business plans and annual budget submissions. The Plan focuses on new objectives; however, it is recognized and acknowledged that the vast majority of the District’s resources are devoted to its core services, including infrastructure maintenance, Planning & Community Services, parks, trails, Emergency Services protection, emergency preparedness, financial services, administration, and information management.

Mayor Geoff Orr  
Councillor Heather Gartshore  
Councillor Jack McClintock  
Councillor Patricia Pearson  
Councillor Brett Smyth  
Councillor Celia Stock  
Councillor Murray Weisenberger

# Our Focus

---

## Vision

Council and staff of the District of North Saanich are guided by vision elements that have emerged from significant community review and discussion and are drawn from the Official Community Plan.

The future will ensure that:

1. diverse neighbourhoods are respected and supported;
2. rural, marine and agricultural resources are protected, maintained, and enhanced;
3. the needs and priorities of our community are supported;
4. the arts are supported;
5. the community is inclusive, accessible and culturally vibrant;
6. suitable, appropriately located economic activity is supported;
7. efficient levels of service commensurate with appropriate taxation are established;
8. natural environments are protected, and a commitment is made to the preservation and enhancement of regionally significant green and blue spaces; and
9. North Saanich is a sustainable community that plans for the potential impacts of climate change.

---

## **Mission**

The mission of the District of North Saanich is to provide leadership and good governance that reflect the community vision and protects, promotes and enhances a safe and diverse community for current and future generations.

The Municipal Purposes outlined in the *Community Charter* further detail the purposes of the District of North Saanich:

Section 7. The purposes of a municipality include

- (a) providing for good government of its community,
- (b) providing for services, laws and other matters for community benefit,
- (c) providing for stewardship of the public assets of its community, and
- (d) fostering the economic, social and environmental well-being of its community.

## **Reconciliation**

Council acknowledges the District of North Saanich exists within the Traditional Territories of Coast Salish peoples and is committed to respectfully and appropriately engaging First Nations communities in matters of common interest.

---

## **CORE SERVICES**

The Strategic Plan focuses on new objectives; however, it is recognized and acknowledged that the vast majority of the District's resources are devoted to its core services,

Within the means of District taxpayers, we are committed to meeting or exceeding public expectations in each of the following service areas:

1. governance leadership supported by volunteer Commissions/Committees and public consultation;
2. community planning for housing, economic development, heritage, arts and culture, and agriculture;
3. Emergency Services, police and emergency preparedness;
4. public works and Infrastructure Services;
5. parks, trails and preservation of green space;
6. environmental stewardship and protection;
7. joint recreation services with Peninsula Recreation Commission;
8. accountable financial and administrative services with a focus on performance management across all functions; and
9. effective communication with the public.

---

## **VALUES AND OPERATING PHILOSOPHY**

The District of North Saanich Council and staff will:

1. be ethical, open, honest and fair;
2. provide excellent customer service;
3. collaborate as a strong team and promote constructive relationships at the local and regional level;
4. make decisions that reflect the overall will and best interests of our community;
5. be consistent in application of policy, bylaws and regulations;
6. be flexible, innovative and progressive in our efforts to improve results while being tolerant of appropriate risks;
7. ensure outstanding stewardship of public assets and the environment;
8. be supportive of the community's strong volunteer ethic; and
9. be respectful of neighbourhood issues.

# Strategic Priorities

---

Strategic Priorities are overarching directions that guide the District’s efforts towards realizing our vision. In selecting the five priorities, Council focused on the need to demonstrate our commitment to our rural and marine character, the importance of maintaining a strong sense of community, and the challenges of delivering quality services at a reasonable cost to the taxpayer.

The five strategic priorities area shown in the following illustration; each priority is further detailed on the following pages.



Each Strategic Priority is accompanied by a table that details goals and specific projects and initiatives to be initiated in the 2021-2024 period.

# District of North Saanich 2021-2024 Strategic Plan

## SP1: Protect and Enhance Rural, Agricultural, Heritage, Marine and Environmental Resources

North Saanich residents are proud and protective of their special place and unique environments. Through our participation with the Capital Regional District we continue to work with the Regional Growth Strategy. In concert with the Green/Blue Spaces Strategy, the District is committed to protecting and enhancing sensitive and significant land and marine environments. Further, the District is committed to protecting and enhancing its rural, agricultural and heritage roots and lifestyle. The District is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and related costs to address climate change.

### GOALS

- Preserve and protect significant and sensitive environmental areas and ecosystems
- Preserve and protect sensitive marine and inter-tidal habitats
- Mitigate climate change impacts
- Enhance parks and trails

	Projects & Initiatives	Timeline	Lead Department
1	Review and Update Parks Plan including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prioritize beach access improvements including parking</li> <li>• review service levels</li> <li>• future development of Jubilee Park</li> </ul>	2022	IS
2	Review Tree Bylaw <b>UNDERWAY</b>	2021	PCS
3	Staff to prepare a discussion paper on natural asset management: financial & ecological (ecological asset management to be part of the Parks Plan)	2023	IS

## SP 2: Maintain a Safe and Healthy Community

North Saanich residents expect their municipal government to take steps to ensure public and environmental safety and health issues are addressed through provision of appropriate infrastructure and services such as water quality, liquid and solid waste management, safe roads, police, fire and emergency medical services. The key challenge in a small municipality with extensive rural areas is to determine the appropriate balance amongst owner provision of services (e.g. septic systems), partnership provision with neighbouring jurisdictions (Saanich Peninsula Unified Sewer Treatment, RCMP, Peninsula Emergency Measures Organization, Panorama Recreation), and direct municipal provision (North Saanich Volunteer Fire Department).

### GOALS

- Protect resident safety and be prepared for emergencies
- Encourage and support active lifestyles

	Projects & Initiatives	Timeline	Lead Department
1	Update Wildfire Protection Plan and include consideration of development permits and implementation <b>UNDERWAY</b>	2021	ES
2	Staff to prepare a report to address the benefits and costs of green resources and outdoor burning	2021	PCS/IS/ES
3	Identify truck and bus routes on District roads	2022	IS
4	Explore the need to increase public engagement in emergency preparedness	2021	ES
5	Staff to report to Council on the scope and resources required to amend the Animal Control Bylaw to enable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• licensing of cats</li> <li>• regulation of feeding of wildlife</li> </ul>	2023	PCS
6	Set realistic goal year for carbon neutrality and develop plan for reaching it	2021	PCS

### SP 3: Encourage Compatible Commercial and Local Business Development

Local government has been given the mandate to foster the economic, social and environmental well-being of its community. The vision that guides this strategic plan makes it clear that North Saanich is interested in economic development that complements our rural and marine characteristics and our commitment to protection of the natural environment. Our motivators are to support our agricultural economy, encourage appropriate business development at the Airport and facilitate limited commercial development desired by our neighbourhoods. In addition, we must ensure the economic viability of the District through a balanced, sustainable tax base.

**GOALS**

- An operating environment supportive of local business
- A vibrant and sustainable agricultural economy

	Projects & Initiatives	Timeline	Lead Department
1	Review Home/Business Occupation permitted uses/regulations	2022	PCS

## SP 4: Maintain a Strong Sense of Community

North Saanich is comprised of established neighbourhoods: the South-East Quadrant/Dean Park, Ardmore, Lands End/Curtis Point and Deep Cove. We support pride in the community that includes respect for diversity, support for the unique requirements of each neighbourhood, and celebration of the quality of the life we share together.

### GOALS

- A strong sense of pride, identity and belonging in North Saanich
- Engaging the community
- Housing policies that support local and regional demand
- Positive and constructive relations with First Nations

	Projects & Initiatives	Timeline	Lead Department
1	Review Library Services in North Saanich <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• staff report back on VIRL vs. GVPL</li> <li>• staff report back on possible Panorama location</li> </ul>	2021	PCS
2	Hold community events and consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a “Welcome Program” for new residents</li> <li>• New Year’s Levee</li> </ul>	2023	CS
3	OCP Review & update including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review boundaries re: Areas 1 &amp; 2 Bylaw 1352 &amp; area planning</li> <li>• Review guest cottages on small properties policy/zoning</li> <li>• Address climate change impacts including sea level rise planning</li> <li>• Advance policies to guide marine &amp; shoreline development</li> <li>• Review marine task force recommendations <b>UNDERWAY</b></li> </ul>	2020 – 2022 2 year process	PCS
4	Prepare policy for decommissioning of illegal secondary suites	2024	PCS
5	Examine impacts of short-term vacation rentals on housing	2024	PCS
6	Review and update zoning bylaw (including marina structures)	Post OCP update 2023	PCS
7	Work together with local bands to enhance communications with First Nations	Ongoing 2021	CS

## SP 5: Ensure Strong Leadership, Fiscal Responsibility and Transparent Government

Our municipal mission and operating philosophy statements call for progressive leadership, service excellence, and outstanding stewardship of public assets.

### GOALS

- Efficient and cost effective management of corporate assets and financial services
- Efficient and effective administrative and regulatory processes.
- Effective governance and leadership
- Be an employer of choice

	Projects & Initiatives	Timeline	Lead Department
1	Review and update Subdivision Bylaw including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subdivision notifications policy review &amp; monitoring of impacts</li> </ul>	2022	PCS
2	Policy manual review & update <b>UNDERWAY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To include new anti-discrimination policy</li> </ul>	2021	CS
3	Finalize service agreements with First Nations	2021 in progress	Corporate Services
4	Review of MOU with Airport Authority (Align with Land Use Bylaw)	2021	PCS

## Results Report Card

### Projects & Initiatives Recently Completed

#### 2019-20

Staff to prepare recommendations for implementation of the Agriculture Economic Development Strategy (AEDS) and the Whole Community Agricultural Strategy

Develop guidelines and policies for agri-business/tourism

Examine term limits for Council appointments for certain external appointments

Improve communications with citizens. Reconsider Communications Strategy and current communications practices with a view to increasing resources for communications

Develop long-term taxation policy

Staff to prepare a report to Council regarding the Climate Action Strategy initiatives and Climate Action Committee work

Staff to prepare a report regarding possible roles for the District in the Shoal Harbour Migratory Bird Sanctuary Integrated Management Plan (boats, birds & sea level rise)

Establish long term operators for Sandown

Review Sign Bylaw

Review Emergency Services Bylaw

Develop Long-term Taxation Policy

Consider Communication Strategy and current communication practices with a view to increasing resources for communications

Review Council Procedure Bylaw

Council to review Council appointments