

Connect North Saanich: May 2023

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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



It has been an eventful and productive year so far, as Council has been connecting with residents, and working with District staff to set priorities and plan for the future.

Council approved the 2023-2027 Financial Plan in April and the 2023 Strategic Plan in May; both documents are available on the District website. Projects planned for this year include preparing the Official Community Plan (OCP) and updating the Parks Master Plan. We also commit to respectful engagement with our BOKEĆEN (Pauquachin) First Nation and WSÍKEM (Tseycum) First Nation neighbours, who are an active and vital part of our community.

The 2023 budget deliberations resulted in a general tax increase of 4.9%, a decrease from the proposed 5.9% increase. The financial impact to the average residence is approximately \$73 for the year. The 2023-2027 Financial Plan is centered around resilient financial management, strong asset management, healthy financial reserves, long-term investments, low debt, and minimizing the tax impact on our community during changing global financial challenges.

Since the beginning of the year, we have been working diligently on a path forward for the OCP. The Mayor's Official Community Plan Advisory Committee (MOCPAC) has met several times, discussing

important topics such as climate change, housing, and agriculture, and bringing in guests from other jurisdictions to share their own OCP processes and outcomes. We are delighted to have a new Director of Planning and Community Services in place that will lead the OCP process through to its completion. Felice Mazzoni joined the District in April and with years of rural planning expertise, is already proving to be an excellent resource and asset to the North Saanich team. Welcome Felice!

We have been fortunate to already have enjoyed several sunny days this spring here on the Peninsula, and as we head into summer and warmer weather, we encourage everyone to stay safe and cool. There are so many

wonderful opportunities to get out and enjoy our unique community, from our many beaches and our scenic hiking trails, to our local farmstands and summer markets. We truly are fortunate to call North Saanich home.

In March, we were notified that Brett Smyth was resigning from his position as councillor. We respect his decision and thank him for his years of service to North Saanich. On July 8, a by-election will be held to fill his seat, and we will welcome a new member to the table. We look forward to thoughtful discussion and working cohesively to represent the interests of the North Saanich community.

Heads Up

2023 By-election

On Saturday, July 8, 2023, a Municipal by-election will be held from 8:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. at the Municipal Hall Council Chambers (1620 Mills Road). There will be opportunities for advance voting Wednesday, June 28 and Wednesday, July 5, from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at North Saanich Municipal Hall.

Detailed information can be found at northsaanich.ca/elections



northsaanich.ca/elections

Green Waste

We encourage residents to be proactive about removing yard waste from their properties during these months. What is green and lush now can easily become dangerously dry in the summer and fuel for wildfires. Consider safely disposing of your waste now.

The District's Green Waste Facility, at 10180 Littlewood Road, is open from 8:00 am to noon every Saturday, as well as the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month. More details on fees and what is accepted at:

northsaanich.ca/green-waste



northsaanich.ca/green-waste

Project Updates

2023 Budget

Thank you to everyone who took part in the 2023 Budget survey, which ran from January 27-February 17, 2023. The survey results are available at connectnorthsaanich.ca/2023-budget. Survey feedback, as well as the draft budget, were presented and discussed during meetings of the Budget Committee on March 13 and 14. Council approved the 2023-2027 Financial Plan, which includes an overall increase in property taxes of 4.9%. Read more about the budget process and access the 2023-2027 Financial Plan Bylaw at northsaanich.ca/budget

Jubilee Park

During the Regular Meeting of Council held on April 24, Council gave its approval for the procurement and implementation of rubber surfacing for the phase three playground area. Funding of \$120,000 for the rubber flooring will come from the Growing Communities Fund. Earlier in 2022, Council approved \$250,000 for the phase three playground upgrades. Working within this budget, play equipment options were selected that were inclusive and diverse. The contract for the playground upgrades was awarded to Swing Time Distributors Ltd. Ground construction will begin this summer with the rubber surfacing and playground installation completed in the fall.



northsaanich.ca/jubilee

Invasive Species

Invasive species are plants, animals, and microbes that are not naturally found in B.C. and that can potentially harm our environment, health or economy. These invasive species can negatively impact humans, other animals and/or ecosystems by establishing quickly and spreading rapidly. For information on identifying and reporting invasive species, visit:

northsaanich.ca/your-community/environment

Property Taxes

2023 Property tax due date is July 4, 2023 – property tax notices will be mailed to residents at the end of May. Please email admin@northsaanich.ca if you have not received your tax notice by May 31, 2023.

Don't forget to apply for your 2023 Home Owner Grant - Residents who are eligible must apply every year directly with the province at gov.bc.ca/homeownergrant or **1-888-355-2700**. To avoid penalty, eligible home owners must submit their application by the **July 4, 2023** property tax due date.

Deferring your taxes? Applications must be submitted to the Province at gov.bc.ca/propertytaxdeferral by end of day July 4, 2023 to avoid penalty. **Please remember to claim your homeowner grant and pay any overdue amounts prior to deferring. You still need to claim your homeowner grant every year, even if you auto renew your deferral.**



Briarwood Beach Access

The District of North Saanich is undertaking a comprehensive review of the Briarwood beach access (off Glynnwood Park Road) in the context of safety, accessibility, emergency access, servicing, recreation, and environmental stewardship. For the month of April, we asked the community to provide input on how we can best improve beach access. Thank you to the 183 people who responded, staff will be reviewing the responses and providing recommendations to Council soon.



northsaanich.ca/briarwood



West Saanich Corridor

Public engagement was held in March to gather feedback on the proposed West Saanich corridor improvement project. Following feedback from the community, additional short-term improvements were recommended in addition to the 2021 Council approved parking improvements at the Deep Cove Market and the West Saanich/Wain Road intersection. At the Regular Meeting of Council held May 15, Council voted in favour of these additional recommendations, including speed limit reduction, increased school zone recognition, and bus stop relocation.



northsaanich.ca/wscorridor

McDonald Park Road Multi-Use Path Project

The District of North Saanich is pleased to be a recipient of the B.C. Active Transportation Infrastructure Grants Program. This program will provide \$500,000 towards funding the McDonald Park Road multi-use path project, a key initiative of the District of North Saanich Active Transportation Plan, adopted by Council in 2021. The construction contract has been awarded to G&E Contracting who will begin work in early June with completion scheduled for early fall.

Parks Master Plan

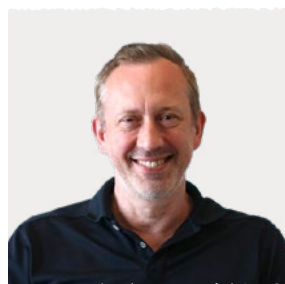
At the May 15, 2023 Regular Meeting of Council, Council authorized the award of consulting services to Urban Systems for the development of the Parks Master Plan. A project page will be available shortly providing further information about this important project.



northsaanich.ca/MPR-path



What's New



Welcome Felice Mazzone

In April, we welcomed our new Director of Planning and Community Services, Felice Mazzone, MCIP. He brings several years of experience in local government planning and is a great addition to the North Saanich team. Felice looks forward to getting to know the residents of North Saanich as he leads the development of the OCP.

Building Relationships

The Mayor's Official Community Plan Advisory Committee (MOCPAC) was privileged to have Tseycum Elder Marilyn Olsen-Page as their special guest at the April 4 meeting. Elder Olsen-Page shared her experiences of working on the land and restoration efforts. She explained the importance of medicinal plants, food plants, and harvesting practices based on the teaching: "We walk lightly on this land, because everywhere we go is sacred". She explained how the teachings of the medicine wheel relates to all peoples and all generations in land use planning practices that encourage diverse, thriving ecosystems. We'd like to extend our gratitude to Elder Olsen-Page for sharing her time and her wisdom with us. We look forward to many more meaningful conversations with our First Nations neighbours in the future. In Ms. Olsen-Page's words: "This is where reconciliation starts – building a relationship, understanding each other, and seeing each other for who we are as human beings."



Flavour Trails Festival

Mark your calendars! The 2023 North Saanich Flavour Trails Festival will be held August 18-20! Some of the local favourites will be back with some new events and activities. We look forward to seeing you on the trail again.



flavourtrails.com

Update From Sandown

Sandown Centre for Regenerative Agriculture is a non-profit operating 83-acres of farmland, forest, wetland, and meadow in North Saanich on traditional Tseycum territory. They are working with farmers, researchers, and community members to develop best practices in regenerative agriculture, restoration, and stewardship for their third year on the land. In the forest and wetlands, the Sandown team is working on developing a restoration plan to implement. The meadows have seen the return of Country Wool's sheep who overwintered across the street. The farmed area has expanded, going from six farms in production last year to nine this year, and the community gardens are bustling with the expansion of more in-ground beds. If you're interested in finding out more, check out the website at sandowncentre.com



Reminders

Saanich Peninsula Alert

The Saanich Peninsula Alert system is an easy-to-use notification tool for your mobile or landline phone. Saanich Peninsula Alert delivers critical, potentially life-saving alerts for events like earthquakes, tsunami alerts, evacuation notices, or other safety threats. It can provide you with crucial advance warning in the event of an emergency. To sign up for free, visit: northsaanich.ca/spa



Protect Yourself From Scams & Fraud

With the rise in scams and fraud, Sidney/North Saanich RCMP would like to help you to protect yourself! Fraud is currently the fastest-growing preventable



crime trend affecting our community. Fraudsters often claim to be with agencies such as Canada Revenue, BC Hydro or major banks. The average age of victims locally is 61. The Sidney/North Saanich RCMP have been working with community agencies to educate as many people as possible on how to avoid falling victim to this crime. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Sidney/North Saanich Detachment at **250-656-3931**.

Remember, if it's too good to be true, it probably is. For helpful tips, we encourage you to visit: northsaanich.ca/police

Water Wisely

The CRD's Stage 1 Watering Schedule is in effect **May 1 until September 30**. In summer months, water use in the capital region increases by 44%, mostly due to non-essential outdoor uses like lawn and garden watering. By following the Stage 1 Watering Schedule and using water wisely outdoors, you can help save water, money, time, as well as help the environment. For info, visit: crd.bc.ca/education/water-conservation

Even Addresses

Lawn watering allowed
Wednesdays & Saturdays
4-10am and 7-10pm

Odd Addresses

Lawn watering allowed
Thursdays & Sundays
4-10am and 7-10pm

Fire Department

Outdoor Burning

Outdoor Burning season is now closed and will re-open in November. This includes the burning of yard waste. During this time, we encourage you to access our Green Waste Facility for disposal of your yard waste. Small fires for cooking or quiet enjoyment are still allowed throughout the summer (with a permit), as long as no provincial fire ban is in effect.



northsaanich.ca/outdoor-burning

Night Staffing Pilot Project

In April, a one-year night staffing pilot project was launched at the McTavish Fire Hall. A firefighter and an officer will staff the fire hall weekday evenings and weekends, allowing for quicker response times and to ensure adequate resources are available to better serve our community. Many thanks to our team of volunteers for making this possible.

Fire Hall Contact Information

Non Emergency Phone: 250-656-1931 (during regular work hours)

Phone: 1-877-537-6725 (after regular work hours; ask for North Saanich Duty Officer)

Email: firedepartment@northsaanich.ca

IN AN EMERGENCY, ALWAYS DIAL 9-1-1



Stay Connected

Stay in the loop with what's happening at the District by:

- Signing up for news and public notices: northsaanich.ca/notifications
- Signing up for meeting updates: northsaanich.ca/subscribe

A graphic of a teal-colored form with a white input field for "Your email" and a yellow "SUBSCRIBE" button with a white mouse cursor pointing to it.