



District of North Saanich  
British Columbia, Canada

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# 2023-2026 Strategic Plan

Updated April 2024

# Table of Contents

- Our Context ..... 3
  - Positive Trends ..... 4
  - Challenging Trends ..... 4
  - Key Future Issues ..... 4
- About North Saanich ..... 5
- Message From Mayor & Council ..... 6
- Our Planning Pyramid ..... 7
- Our Focus ..... 8
- Core Services ..... 9
- Our Values ..... 10
- Our Governance Principles ..... 11
- Our Goals and Objectives ..... 12
- Goals ..... 13
- Our Quality of Life Indices for North Saanich ..... 14
- Appendix A: Departmental Projects & Initiatives to support Council’s Strategic Goals ..... 15
  - Goal 1: Protect the Marina & Land-Based Natural Environment ..... 16
  - Goal 2: Focus on Local Agriculture & Support Food Production & Systems ..... 17
  - Goal 3: Maintain a Safe, Inclusive, Healthy, & Vibrant Community ..... 18-19
  - Goal 4: Support Growth That is Environmentally, Socially, & Economically Sustainable ..... 20
  - Goal 5: Embody Good Governance Principles of Community Engagement, Accountability, Leadership, Impartiality, & Transparency ..... 21

## Our Context

This Strategic Plan sets out Council's focus and strategic goals for the 2023-2026 period. The Plan is based on many previous plans and public input opportunities, and is the result of the collaboration efforts of Council and Staff. We believe the Plan's vision and goals reflect the overall spirit 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 Strategic Plan is an "umbrella policy" that sets the context for all that we do, and it helps to align our specific plans for finance, land use, solid waste, information technology, infrastructure, and parks. The Strategic Plan also provides the basis for departmental business plans, individual action plans, and annual budget submissions. The Plan focuses on new goals and objectives; however, it is recognized that the vast majority of the District's resources are devoted to its core services: infrastructure maintenance, planning, community services, parks, trails, marine access, police and fire, finance, and other corporate services.

## Our Context (cont'd)

The following trends and key future issues were identified during the Strategic Plan process and serve to inform the development of Council's strategic goals.

### Positive Trends

- Exceptional quality of life
- An engaged and caring community
- A safe municipality
- Regional partnerships
- Transportation and distribution hub
- Growing manufacturing and light industrial hub on airport (YYJ) lands
- Collaborative relations with our Indigenous neighbours
- Healthy financial reserves
- An abundance of recreational opportunities

### Challenging Trends

- Maintaining and growing agriculture production
- Few affordable housing options
- Need for aging-in-place programming
- Delivering expanded/increased municipal services while considering resource constraints and tax impacts
- Public transportation networks remain distant from rural area communities such as North Saanich

- Climate change impacts
- Existing aging Infrastructure and Increase in Costs
- Responding to Ongoing Provincial, Regional and Federal Legislation Imposed

### Key Future Issues

- Responding to all facets of climate change
- Continuing to focus on local Agriculture and food production
- Protecting environmental ecosystems
- Increasing costs for local government
- Meeting accessibility requirements
- Increasing reliance on property taxes for funding municipal services due to limited revenue streams and pressure from Provincial and Federal Governments
- Enhancing community planning and engagement
- Attracting and retaining key staff
- Increased demand from non-profit organizations for Local Government funding

## About North Saanich

The District of North Saanich is located at the north end of the Saanich Peninsula, approximately 25 kilometers north of Victoria, British Columbia, on southern Vancouver Island.

North Saanich exists on the traditional territories of the WSÁNEĆ people; specifically, the BOKEĆEN (Pauquachin) First Nation and WSÍKEM (Tseycum) First Nation, who are an active and vital part of our community.

The District, surrounded on three sides by 40 kilometers of ocean shoreline, is home to the Victoria International Airport and the Swartz Bay Ferry Terminal.

The community-like neighbourhoods including Ardmore, Deep Cove, Curteis Point, Cloake Hill/Green Park, Dean Park, Lands End, Eaglehurst, McDonald Park and the South East Quadrant, are on the periphery of a rich agricultural interior (30% of land in DNS is in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)) which is protected by the Provincial Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).

North Saanich is a highly desirable rural-residential area. Its long coastline provides close proximity to excellent views of the water, islands, and mountains. Its rolling interior lands afford views of hills and valleys, and a generous feeling of open space and rapport with nature. A significant portion of the land is agricultural, with many active farms and other rural attractions. The walking trails are extensive, the parks offer a variety of attractions, and the area boasts impressive public beach access. The shorelines attract many boaters and fishing enthusiasts serviced by local marinas. Recreation activities abound.



## Message from Mayor & Council

We have heard from our community that protecting and preserving a high quality of life is very important to all who live, work and visit North Saanich. This plan has been developed to deliver on that vision through the strategic choice of critical goals, objectives, and the projects and initiatives (see summary in Appendix A) that management brings forward to Council for approval and implementation each year supported by input from the community.

We commit to:

- Reaching out to residents more often and seeking their advice on how we can continue to work and learn together on behalf of our residents. We commit to respectful engagement with the WSÁNEĆ people and other Indigenous neighbours. We know that all residents bring a wealth of knowledge, perspectives, and experience that will ultimately result in better community outcomes.
- Continuing to focus on local Agriculture and support food production and systems in the District.
- Finding ways to support continued regional collaboration, protection of marine and land based natural areas and ecosystems, and climate action initiatives.
- Supporting the Saanich Peninsula Accessibility Advisory Committee in its work to improve the accessibility and inclusivity of people with disabilities who live, work, and play on the Saanich Peninsula.
- Updating our Official Community Plan—one that the community can support, and one that will guide this and future Councils well into the future.
- Demonstrating good governance practices, transparency, and accountability.

We look forward to working together to shape our future and to reach our vision of a healthy, sustainable, and resilient community enjoying an extraordinary quality of life.

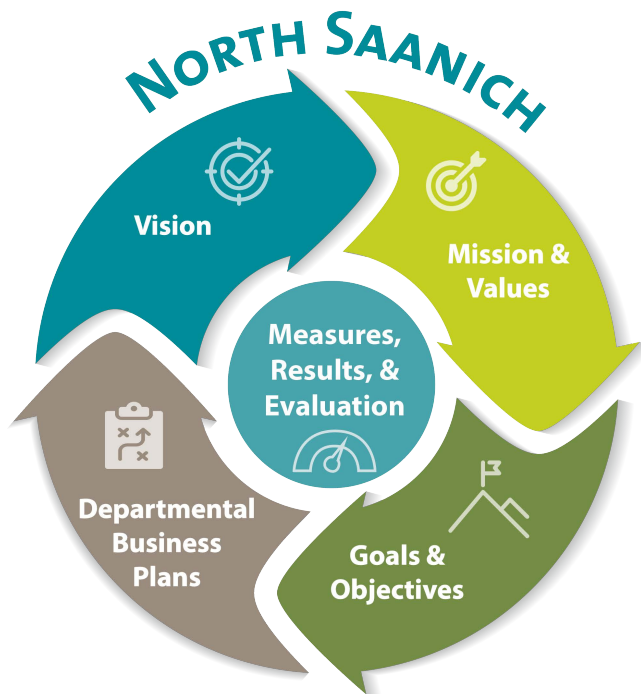
*Councillor Jack McClintock, Councillor Celia Stock, Councillor Kristine Marshall, Councillor Phil DiBattista, Councillor Sanjiv Shrivastava, Mayor Peter Jones, Councillor Irene McConkey*



## Our Planning Process

The strategic planning process that North Saanich uses to build its strategy consists of several elements including:

- Defining the vision, mission, and values that support community aspirations
- Assessing where we are and where we want to be to inform our goals and objectives (positive trends, challenging trends, and future issues)
- Determining the appropriate goals and objectives to deliver on those aspirations
- Defining key projects and initiatives, timelines, and accountabilities through departmental business plans
- Measuring and evaluating results



## Our Focus

### Vision

Our vision statement is future oriented and long term. It describes Council's overarching aspirations for the District of North Saanich.

*A healthy, sustainable, and resilient community enjoying an extraordinary quality of life.*

### Mission

Our mission statement describes our purpose—what we do, how we do it, and why we do it.

Our mission is...

*To deliver effective and efficient services to our residents, businesses, and visitors in ways that demonstrate good governance, strong partnerships, and healthy communities.*





## Core Services

While the Strategic Plan focuses on new goals, it is recognized that the vast majority of the District's resources are devoted to its core services.

We are committed to meeting public expectations in each of the following core service areas:

- Governance leadership supported by volunteer Commissions/Committees and public engagement
- Community planning for agriculture, food sustainability, heritage, accessibility, housing, arts and culture, and climate action
- Emergency services and emergency preparedness
- Public works and infrastructure services
- Parks, trails, marine access, and preservation of green space
- Environmental stewardship and protection
- Joint recreation services with regional partners
- Accountable financial and administrative services
- Effective communication with the public



## Our Values

Values are the guiding principles and beliefs in which we operate. They support our vision and shape our culture. Our values govern how we make decisions. Living our values is a joint commitment by Council and by all employees. Our values are:

### **People:**

To create a desirable, inclusive, and equitable work environment that will attract, engage, and retain one of our most important assets—our employees.

### **Service:**

To focus on excellent service to our community delivered by professional, responsive, and accountable employees.

### **Integrity:**

To conduct ourselves in an honest, respectful, ethical, and responsible manner.

### **Stewardship:**

To serve as a trusted steward of the public's financial, environmental, social, and physical resources.

### **Innovation:**

To welcome new ideas, collaboration, best practices, and continuous improvement.



## Our Governance Principles

Governance is ensuring that our direction, effectiveness, oversight, and responsibility is supported by robust structures, systems, policies, and practices. Using the principles and tools of ISO37000 as a governance framework, we will consider purpose, sustainability and society into our decision-making. Council and management commit to incorporating these principles when carrying out our official duties:

### **Community Engagement:**

Working proactively and collaboratively with the community.

### **Accountability:**

Taking responsibility for our decisions and our actions.

### **Leadership:**

Demonstrating clear strategic direction, empowerment, team building, trust, open mindedness, and empathy.

### **Impartiality:**

Acting with fairness and equity.

### **Transparency:**

Conducting the work of Council openly and honestly.



## Our Goals and Objectives

Our goals are broad areas that Council wishes to focus on over the longer term. They have been inspired by community feedback. Our objectives are shorter-term plans where progress can be measured over the period of the Strategic Plan. Specific projects and initiatives have been identified (see Appendix A) that will help further our objectives over the next four years. Completion of these initiatives, we believe, will help North Saanich reach its longer-term vision and goals.

Some of our goals and objectives require the support and cooperation of other levels of government including federal, provincial, and regional bodies. Other goals and objectives are local in nature and are supported through internal planning and implementation. Achieving our goals and objectives requires effective working relationships between Council and management. We are committed to building those strong internal and external relationships to further support a high quality of life in North Saanich and in our neighbouring communities.



## Goals

**1** Protect the Natural Environment

**2** Focus on Local Agriculture & Support Food Production & Systems

**3** Maintain a Safe, Inclusive, Healthy, & Vibrant Community

**4** Support Growth That is Environmentally, Socially, & Economically Sustainable

**5** Embody Good Governance Principles of Community Engagement, Accountability, Leadership, Impartiality, & Transparency

## Our Quality of Life Indices for North Saanich

In order to assess our strategies effectiveness, we will periodically survey our residents to measure satisfaction with their overall quality of life; satisfaction with parks, trails, green spaces, and recreation opportunities - satisfaction with the protection of the natural environment; and satisfaction with the delivery of North Saanich core services. The survey will identify what is working well and highlight any concerns residents may have with specific community issues.

As this is our first time designing and implementing a quality-of-life survey, results will serve as a benchmark with which to continuously improve future municipal programs and services. Our intent is to deliver on our vision of a healthy, sustainable community enjoying an extraordinary quality of life.



# **Appendix A: Departmental Projects and Initiatives to support Council's Strategic Goals**

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## **Departments**

**CS - Corporate Services**

**ES - Emergency Services**

**FS - Financial Services**

**IS - Infrastructure Services**

**PCS - Planning and Community Services**

## GOAL 1: Protect the Natural Environment

North Saanich residents are proud of their special places and unique environments. The District is committed to protecting and enhancing sensitive and significant land and marine environments.

### Objectives:

- Preserve and protect sensitive environmental areas and ecosystems
- Implement appropriate climate change mitigation, adaptation actions, and monitoring
- Enhance parks, trails, greenspace, marine access, and biodiversity

Projects & Initiatives	Lead Department	Status	Status Details	Completion
Complete the OCP for Council Adoption	PCS	●	Updated OCP Process and Workplan approved by Council Q1 2024	Q2 2025
Update the Parks Master Plan	IS	●	On track & budget	Q3/4 2024
Promote the CRD Rainwater Harvesting Program	CS	●	Communications channels	Q1
Develop a Climate Change, Mitigation and Adaptation Plan	PCS	●	On track to commence in Q3 2024	Q1 2025
Perform an assessment of resources needed to develop an Environmental Asset Management Plan	IS/FS	●	Planned for 2024 – not started. 2024 workplan being developed, under resources for all current tasks	Q4 2024
Consider costs/benefits of green waste facility and increased availability and collection options	IS	●	Planned for 2024 – not started. 2024 workplan being developed, under resources for all current tasks	Q4 2024
Tree Protection Bylaw Review	IS/PCS	●	Bylaw review working group has commenced	Q1 2025

**Status:** ● On Track ● Issues or Concerns ● Project at Risk ● Completed



## GOAL 2: Focus on Local Agriculture & Support Food Production & Systems

North Saanich is dedicated to supporting the thriving agricultural sector while supporting local food systems and food sustainability. With a significant portion of District lands held in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), we recognize the importance of agriculture in North Saanich to the community and the region.

### Objectives:

- Expand food production on ALR lands
- Explore food distribution opportunities
- Support agricultural initiatives

Projects & Initiatives	Lead Department	Status	Status Details	Completion
Develop policies/incentives that would maximize food production in the District	PCS	●	Review the District's Whole Community Agriculture Strategy	Q4 - 2024
Examine potential options to assist farmers with food distribution	PCS	●		2026
Develop a long-term plan for the Noble Garden	CS/IS	●	Short-term plan in place, public engagement and long term options presented in Q4 2024  IS – Long term plan is within IS, short term agreement within CS (i.e. long-term plan will come from Parks Master Plan and likely be a site-specific master plan)	Q4 - 2024
Develop a long-term plan for Wolf Orchard Park	IS	●	Short Term plan - meet with donor representative & user group(s)  Long Term Plan will come from Parks Master Plan	Q2-2024  2025

**Status:** ● On Track ● Issues or Concerns ● Project at Risk ● Completed

### Goal 3: Maintain a Safe, Inclusive, Healthy, & Vibrant Community

North Saanich residents expect a healthy community where its infrastructure and services support a safe, sustainable environment that encourages social connections and enhances the community's quality of life.

#### Objectives:

- Ensure community safety and emergency preparedness
- Encourage and support active lifestyles
- Build upon community assets to support social connections for seniors, youth, and families

Projects & Initiatives	Lead Department	Status	Status Details	Completion
Review Library Services	CS	●	Starting Q2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service level of user</li> <li>• Building – own or lease</li> <li>• Cost of service</li> <li>• Need vs want</li> <li>• VIRL vs GVPL</li> </ul>	Q2-3 2024
Complete the development of Jubilee Park and incorporate accessible and inclusive features	IS	●		Completed
Engage the community to determine uses for the Growing Communities Fund (GCF)	FS/CS	●	Completed GCF engagement including survey question and open house	Q1 2024
Municipal Hall Site Master Plan	IS	●	Formal master site plan will include considerations for an EOC, encroachment onto ALR, Green Waste Facility capital construction, building capacity, building seismic capacity, existing non-conformances, end of life public works buildings, etc.	Q4 2024

Status: ● On Track ● Issues or Concerns ● Project at Risk ● Completed

### Goal 3: Maintain a Safe, Inclusive, Healthy, & Vibrant Community (cont'd)

Projects & Initiatives	Lead Department	Status	Status Details	Completion
Fire Smart Program	ES	●	FireSmart initiatives underway	Q1 2024
Noise Bylaw Review (Moved from Goal 4)	PCS	●	Report will be presented to Council in 2024 to replace current bylaw	Q3 2024

Status: ● On Track    ● Issues or Concerns    ● Project at Risk    ● Completed



## Goal 4: Support Growth That is Environmentally, Socially, & Economically Sustainable

North Saanich Council is interested in economic development that complements the rural, agricultural and marine characteristics of the District, while continuing to protect the natural environment and provide a balanced, sustainable tax base. We support a circular economy that looks to find ways to minimize waste.

### Objectives:

- Provide an efficient and effective operating environment for local business
- Facilitate commercial development in OCP designated areas

Projects & Initiatives	Lead Department	Status	Status Details	Completion
Support growth that is environmentally socially and economically sustainable	PCS	●	Considered and reflected in the OCP review and Zoning bylaw review	2025/2026
Review Home Business Occupations Permitted Bylaw	PCS	●	To be completed in conjunction with zoning bylaw review	2025/2026
Zoning Bylaw Review	PCS	●	Review and replace zoning bylaw	2025
Subdivision Servicing Bylaw Review	PCS and IS	●		2026
Update the Victoria Airport Authority MOU	CS	●		2024

**Status:** ● On Track ● Issues or Concerns ● Project at Risk ● Completed

## Goal 5: Embody Good Governance Principles of Community Engagement, Accountability, Leadership, Impartiality, & Transparency

Elected members of Council and the management team that supports them must conduct themselves in the best interests of North Saanich, ensuring effective relationships with elected colleagues, staff, and the public and providing leadership consistent with the values adopted for the District.

### Objectives:

- Pursue community engagement opportunities to inform decision making
- Forge trusted relationships with the WSÁNEĆ people and other Indigenous communities
- Foster trust and confidence in local government through open and transparent communication
- Promote a positive and high-performance workforce culture

Projects & Initiatives	Lead Department	Status	Status Details	Completion
Design and implement a Quality-of-Life Survey	CS	●	Staff Report to be presented to COW in 2025	2025
Design and implement a Citizen Engagement Strategy	CS	●	Staff Report to be presented to COW in 2024	Q2 - 2024
Develop First Nations Partnerships and Relationships Strategy	ALL	●	Strategic initiative to building the foundational strategy for Indigenous relations	2024 - Ongoing
Asset Management Program Development	IS	TBD	Strategic initiative to formalize and build upon our current asset management framework and develop a District wide program. Integrate	2024 - Ongoing
Records Management Improvements	CS	●	Improve access to records for both staff and public	2025
Policy Review	CS	●	Prepare master register. Re-classify and sort redundant policies	Q2-Q3 2024
Bylaw Review	CS	●	Prepare master register. Review and sort redundant bylaws	Q3-Q4 2024

**Status:** ● On Track ● Issues or Concerns ● Project at Risk ● Completed



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