



**Sustainable
Saanich**

**OFFICIAL
COMMUNITY
PLAN**

DRAFT

May 2023



TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The District of Saanich is within the territory of **Lək̓ʷəŋən** peoples known today as Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, and the **WSÁNEĆ** peoples, represented today by the **WJOŁŁŁP** (Tsartlip), **BOKEĆEN** (Pauquachin), **STÁUTW** (Tsawout), **WSIKEM** (Tseycum) and **MÁLEXEŁ** (Malahat) Nations. The First Peoples have been here since time immemorial and their history in this area is long and rich.

The District of Saanich is proud that our name is derived from the **WSÁNEĆ** peoples. Saanich Council is committed to taking a leadership role in the process of healing wounds of the past and becoming a more just, fair and caring society.

Sustainable Saanich

Official Community Plan

Appendix A to Bylaw XXX Adopted MMM DD, YYYY

Prepared by the District of Saanich Planning Department



Contents

1

Background and Context

1.0	Plan Overview	1
1.1	About Sustainable Saanich - Official Community Plan	1
1.2	Planning Framework.....	2
1.3	Strategic Update Process	4
1.4	How to Use the OCP	5
2.0	Planning Context	7
2.1	Physical Setting.....	7
2.2	Demographics and Trends	8
2.3	History	10
2.4	Indigenous Relations	14
2.5	Regional Context	15
2.6	Global Context.....	15
3.0	Opportunity & Challenges.....	16
4.0	Sustainability Foundations.....	21
4.1	Overview & Vision	21
4.2	Integrated Three Pillar Approach to Sustainability	23
4.3	One Planet Living Principles	24
4.4	15-Minute Community.....	26
5.0	Climate Change Response	29
5.1	Anticipated Impacts.....	29
5.2	Links with Land Use and Transportation Planning	31
5.3	Targets & Approach	32
6.0	Natural Environment	35
6.1	Ecosystems	37
6.2	Urban Forest.....	39
6.3	Freshwater/Marine Shoreline Habitat and Water Quality	40
6.4	Air Quality	43
6.5	Environmental Stewardship.....	43
7.0	Land Use.....	44
7.1	Growth Management and Regional Collaboration.....	48
7.2	Land Use Framework	48
7.3	Primary Growth Areas	58
7.4	Neighbourhoods.....	68
7.5	Schools, Knowledge Centres and Institutional Lands.....	72
7.6	Industrial Lands.....	76
7.7	Rural Areas	78
7.8	Design and Accessibility.....	80
7.9	Asset Management	84

2

Vision and Plan Foundations

3

Focus Areas

8.0	Housing	86
8.1	Housing Supply	87
8.2	Rental Housing	89
8.3	Affordable and Supportive Housing	90
8.4	Housing Diversity	93
8.5	Partnerships and strategies	94
9.0	Transportation & Mobility	96
9.1	General	98
9.2	Active Transportation - Walking, Cycling, and Rolling	100
9.3	Public Transit	103
9.4	Electric Mobility and Zero Emissions Vehicles	106
9.5	Transportation Demand Management and Parking	107
9.6	Road Network	108
10.0	Utilities & Service Infrastructure	112
10.1	General	113
10.2	Sanitary Sewer Management	114
10.3	Stormwater Management	117
10.4	Water Supply and Distribution	120
10.5	Energy Utilities	122
10.6	Solid Waste	123
11.0	Parks, Trails, and Open Space	124
11.1	Parks and Open Space Network	125
11.2	Trails	130
11.3	Beach Environments	133
12.0	Agriculture and Food Security	134
12.1	Agricultural Lands	136
12.2	Urban Agriculture, Local Food Access, and Innovation	139
13.0	Community Well-being	140
13.1	Community Involvement and Partnership	141
13.2	Community Facilities and Recreation	143
13.3	Arts and Culture	145
13.4	First Nations Reconciliation	147
13.5	Heritage Properties	148
13.6	Public Health, Safety, and Emergency Resilience	150
14.0	Economic Vibrancy	152
14.1	Economic Infrastructure	153
14.2	Diversification and Enhancement	154
14.3	Employment	157

15.0 Implementation..... 159

15.1 Plan Management..... 159

15.2 Preliminary Priority Actions..... 162

15.3 Monitoring and Evaluation..... 163

16.0 Regional Context Statement..... 164

Maps

Map 1.	Watersheds, Water Courses & Floodplains.....	41
Map 2.	Future Land Use Designations	50
Map 3.	Primary Growth Areas	51
Map 4.	Knowledge Centres & Institutional Lands.....	73
Map 5.	Industrial Lands	77
Map 6.	Rural Areas and Agricultural Land Reserve	79
Map 7.	Bicycle Network.....	102
Map 8.	Frequent and Rapid Transit Network.....	105
Map 9.	Road Network.....	109
Map 10.	Truck Routes	111
Map 11.	Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure	115
Map 12.	Stormwater Infrastructure	118
Map 13.	Stormwater Management Areas	119
Map 14.	Water Service Infrastructure	121
Map 15.	Parks.....	126
Map 16.	Trail Network.....	131
Map 17.	Community Facilities.....	144
Map 18.	Heritage Buildings & Structures	149

**Larger versions of main document maps are available
for viewing and download at saanich.ca/ocp.**

Figures

- Figure 1. Saanich Strategic Policy Framework..... 3
- Figure 2. Regional Context..... 7
- Figure 3. Saanich Vision 21
- Figure 4. One Planet Living Principles..... 24
- Figure 5. How the Ecological Footprint Works..... 25
- Figure 6. 15-Minute Community..... 26
- Figure 7. Climate and Sea-Level Rise Projections for the Region 30
- Figure 8. Three Plan Goals 32
- Figure 9. Framework Principles and Goals 36
- Figure 10. 3-30-300 Rule..... 39
- Figure 11. The Urban Containment Boundary 49
- Figure 12. Uptown Core..... 61
- Figure 13. Centres..... 62
- Figure 14. Villages within the Urban Containment Boundary..... 64
- Figure 15. Primary Corridors 66
- Figure 16. Sustainable Service Delivery..... 85
- Figure 17. Housing Spectrum..... 87
- Figure 18. Percentage of trips by mode in Saanich 97
- Figure 19. Mobility Priority Pyramid..... 98

Tables

Table 1. Sustainability Approach	22
Table 2. Future Land Use Designations	52
Table 3. Parks and Open Space Framework	128
Table 4. Preliminary Priority Actions.....	162

Appendices

Centres and Villages Boundary Maps	173
Uptown Core	173
Gorge Village and Tillicum Centre	174
Quadra McKenzie Centre	175
Four Corners Village.....	176
Hillside Centre and Shelbourne Valley Centre.....	177
University Centre and Feltham Village.....	178
Royal Oak Centre and Broadmead Village	179
Cordova Bay Village	180
Cadboro Bay Village	181
Strawberry Vale Village	182
Glossary	183

1

Background & Context





1.0 Plan Overview

1.1 About Sustainable Saanich - Official Community Plan

The Sustainable Saanich – Official Community Plan (OCP) is the principal legislative tool for guiding future growth and change in Saanich. The Plan is an expression of the fundamental values and goals of the community. It establishes directions for achieving a collective vision of what Saanich should be. The OCP is adopted by a Council Bylaw and is composed of:

- Sustainable Saanich – Official Community Plan (also called “General Plan”);
- Area-specific plans (i.e. Local Area Plans and Centre, Corridor and Village Plans); and
- Design Guidelines for Development Permit Areas.

This OCP is Saanich’s fifth. Previous OCPs were adopted by Saanich Council in 1979, 1984, 1993, and 2008, with minor revisions made from time to time to address specific issues. Updates to the OCP recognize that circumstances can change, new issues can emerge, technology can advance, and new information can surface. To remain relevant, the OCP needs to reflect and respect what is important to the residents of Saanich.

Building on previous versions, the OCP looks to integrate community values and provide guidance on how to:

- Move towards reconciliation with the First People;
- Accommodate growth and guide change to make Saanich a 15-minute community where residents have convenient access to services and amenities;
- Respond to climate change, increase resiliency, and grow as a community while also living within the capacity of the planet;
- Protect, rehabilitate, and enhance ecological function and biodiversity;
- Integrate land use with sustainable transportation options such as transit, walking, biking and electric-vehicles;
- Protect agricultural land and support food security;
- Support diversity, equity, and inclusiveness in the community;
- Create vibrant mixed-use commercial Centres and Villages; and
- Increase housing supply, diversity, and affordability.

As Saanich moves forward it will be important to build on its strengths and successes as a community. Looking into the future means that informed assumptions must be made about many factors, and short-term trade-offs may be necessary along the way. However, by taking an integrative approach from the outset, being committed to best practice, and working continuously towards improvement, the community can move towards ensuring future environmental, social, and economic sustainability. It is important to continually examine the trends and influences that are shaping and affecting the community and to develop strategies that can influence, adapt to, and take advantage of opportunities as they arise.

Perhaps most importantly, is a commitment to implement the OCP through the use of appropriate planning and regulatory tools and the careful stewardship of financial resources. This includes on-going monitoring and reporting of decisions and actions and their outcomes, intended and unintended. Realizing the intent of the Plan is a shared responsibility and requires the combined efforts of everyone in the community. Success will be achieved through awareness and attention, involvement and cooperation, innovation and adaptation. More information on the Implementation Plan is covered in Section 4: Taking Action and Tracking Progress.

1.2 Planning Framework

The preparation of this Plan is guided by the “Local Government Act,” which provides legislative authority and sets out several requirements regarding content and process. While the Plan applies only within Saanich, it does contain statements for consideration by other jurisdictions such as senior governments, the Capital Regional District, adjacent local government jurisdictions, First Nations, and School Districts.

The Official Community Plan (OCP) also works in tandem with the Saanich Strategic (Corporate) Plan. Whereas the OCP is the umbrella document for the whole Corporation outlining the community’s values, vision and goals within a long-term policy framework, the Strategic Plan maps out specific actions that the municipality will carry out to achieve them within that specific Council four-year term (Figure 1).

Other master and strategic planning exercises take place on several different levels across the Corporation. Departments such as Parks, Recreation and Community Services, Engineering, Sustainability and Strategic Initiatives, Corporate Services, Police, and Fire, prepare and oversee long range planning documents that are an important component of creating a healthy and vibrant community. The OCP applies to the entire Municipality and provides the principal policy framework for development and regulation within an overall municipal perspective. All plans and strategies must comply with the principles and policies of the OCP.

Area-based plans (i.e., Centre, Corridor, and Village Plans, Action Plans, Local Area Plans), are developed within the framework of the OCP, and capture issues unique to each area. These plans provide a higher level of detail and articulate how the broader OCP vision is implemented at the local level. Collaborating with the community and integrating local conditions during plan development is a key strategy to maintain the diversity of Saanich’s neighbourhoods.

Development Permit Area Guidelines provide direction on how to design buildings and developments that are sensitive to the existing character of an area, enhance livability, and add to the community through improved streetscapes, active transportation facilities, and quality green or open spaces. In addition, Development Permit Guidelines can provide guidance on land use issues in and around sensitive ecosystems, and within hazard areas such as flood plains and areas susceptible to wildfires. Development Permit Guidelines work together with other tools such as the Zoning Bylaw and Subdivision Bylaw to implement the OCP vision at the application level.

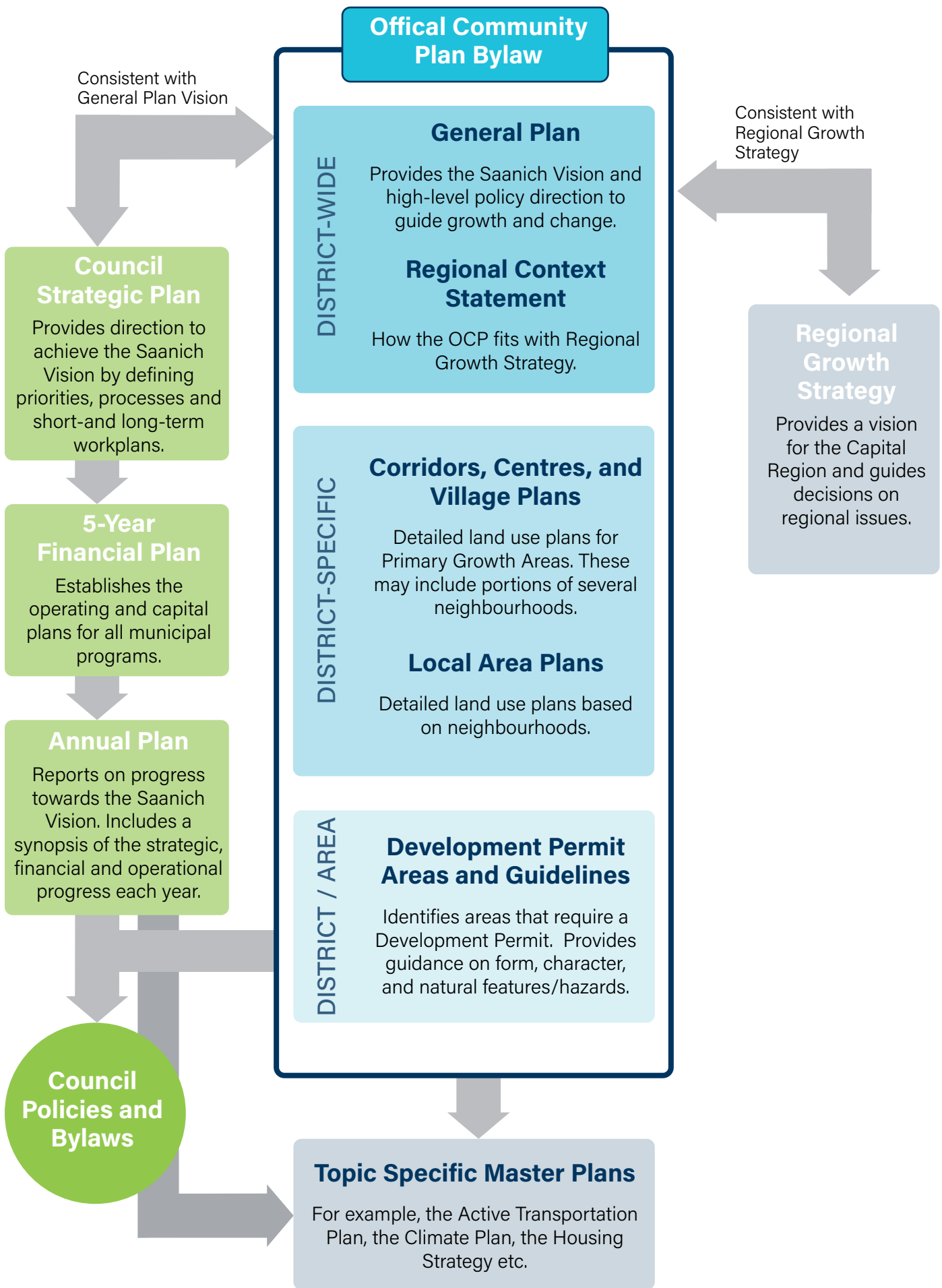


Figure 1. Saanich Strategic Policy Framework
OCP - DRAFT PLAN

1.3 Strategic Update Process

About the Process

This OCP was updated in 2023 through a “Strategic Update” process and used the previous OCP (2008) as its basis in terms of overall vision, community values and policy direction. The Strategic OCP Update applied a streamlined approach to consultation and engagement which reflects the limited scope of the update as well as the extensive consultations completed as part of other recent Council work (e.g., Housing Strategy, Climate Plan, Active Transportation Plan).

The project had a limited scope focusing on:

- Incorporating recent district work and demographic data/statistics;
- Refining the sustainability framework;
- Updating the land use framework to strengthen the focus on complete, sustainable communities; and,
- Strengthening monitoring and implementation.

Emerging priorities considered through this process were:

- Adding “Corridor” designations to the land use framework;
- Clarifying the location of Centres, Villages and Major Corridors;
- Updating the Neighbourhoods designation to support new infill housing forms; and,
- Strengthening policies to create complete communities, including making Saanich a walkable 15-minute community.



1.4 How to Use the OCP

The Official Community Plan (OCP) provides a vision and policy framework to guide growth and change in Saanich. The OCP provides broad direction and is supplemented by area plans, master plans and other Saanich and regional documents. All works undertaken or bylaws enacted by Saanich must be consistent with the OCP.

The OCP (General Plan) is organized into four primary sections:

- Background and Context – identifies OCP role, planning framework, relevant history and contextual planning information;
- Vision and Plan Foundations – establishes the vision and fundamental sustainability principles that guide decision making;
- Focus Areas – includes core content of the OCP, specifically objectives and policies by subject area; and
- Taking Action & Tracking Progress – outlines priorities for implementation and the monitoring and evaluation framework.

The sections are linked by an overall emphasis on sustainability and livability. When considering concepts in the OCP and how policies apply to specific projects or decisions, the integrated nature of the document is important to recognize. For example, a decision about a housing project would consider policy elements from several sections, e.g., land use, transportation, infrastructure, natural environment/climate change, and housing. Building on this framework, Area Plans provide additional policy direction for specific geographies while implementation tools such as the Design Guidelines, the Zoning Bylaw, and the Subdivision Bylaw impact how a specific decision or development is realized on-the-ground.





2.0 Planning Context

2.1 Physical Setting

Saanich is the largest municipality in the Capital Region. It occupies a central position within the region – immediately north of the City of Victoria and sharing boundaries with Highlands, View Royal, Esquimalt, Oak Bay, and Central Saanich. As the gateway to the metropolitan core, Saanich provides key transportation links to the airport, ferry terminal, Western Communities, Saanich Peninsula, and the rest of Vancouver Island. Saanich's

physical setting contains a mix of marine shoreline, freshwater lakes, natural watercourses, and diverse rolling topography with elevations ranging from sea level to 355 m. The landscape includes glacially scoured rock outcroppings, farmland, dense woodlands, and an extensive system of open space and parkland. Approximately half the Municipality is urban and half rural/agricultural – a dual role that has influenced its character and development.

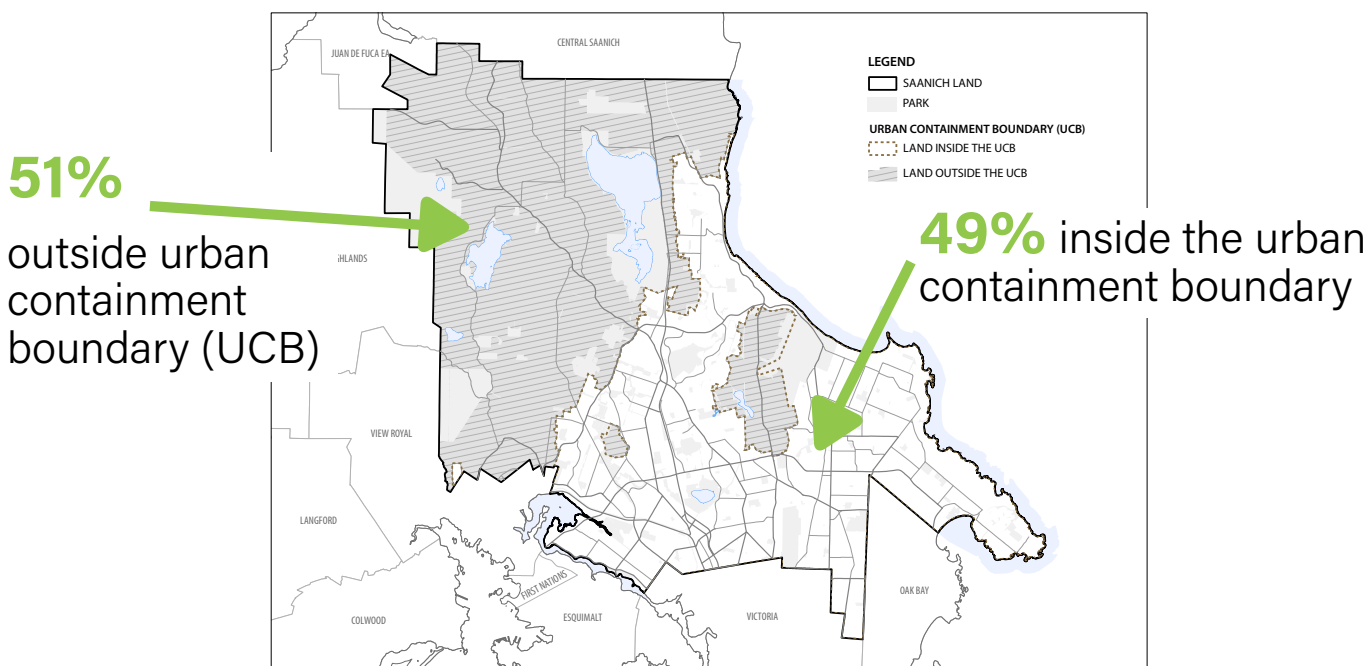


Figure 2. Regional Context



Primary Growth Areas **9%**



Agriculture Land Reserve **18%**



SAANICH TOTAL AREA
10,344 ha (103.44 km²)
Largest in Capital Region



FOREST CANOPY COVER
within Saanich **43%**
within the UCB **31%**



171 parks within Saanich

8% of Saanich consists of parks

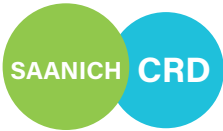


29.61 km of marine shoreline



Mixed topography - sea level to **355 m**

2.2 Demographics and Trends



117,735 Population (2021)

Proportion of Saanich population to the Capital Regional District (CRD) **31.4%** (2006)
28% (2021)

KEY TRENDS



Saanich's population is aging but is slightly younger than the CRD.



Population increases are coming primarily from migration, in particular from other places in BC and Canada.



One in five residents has a mother tongue other than English or French.



The Indigenous population is increasing.



Saanich is growing at a slower pace than other CRD communities and its share of the total CRD population has declined.

Over the next 20-30 years, Saanich's population is projected to grow to 147,500 people requiring 12,300 net new housing units.

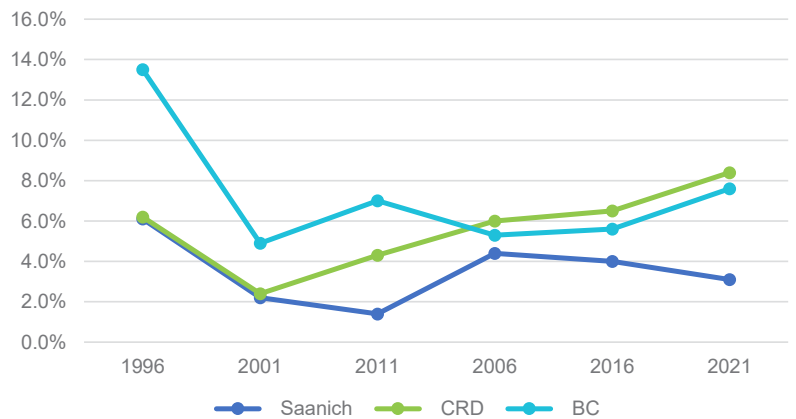


147,500
Projected total population

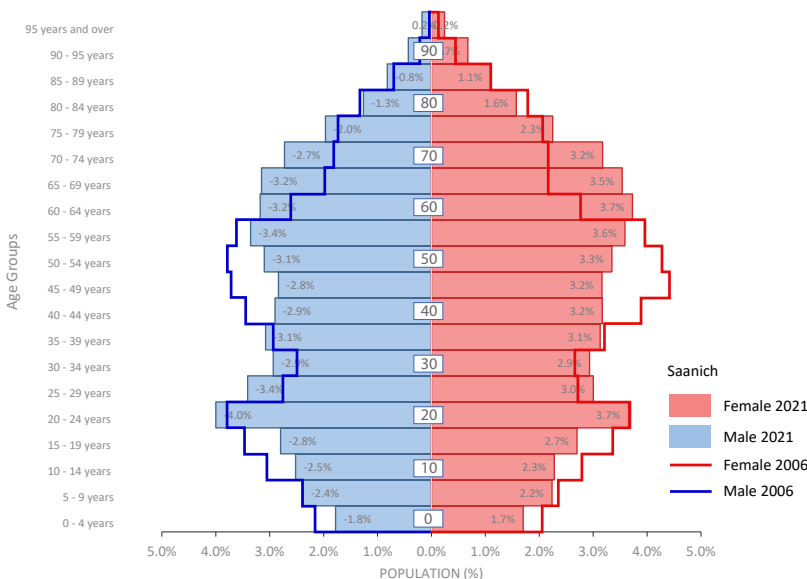


12,300
Net new housing units

Population Change



Saanich Age Structure - 2021 vs. 2006



Median Age - Saanich



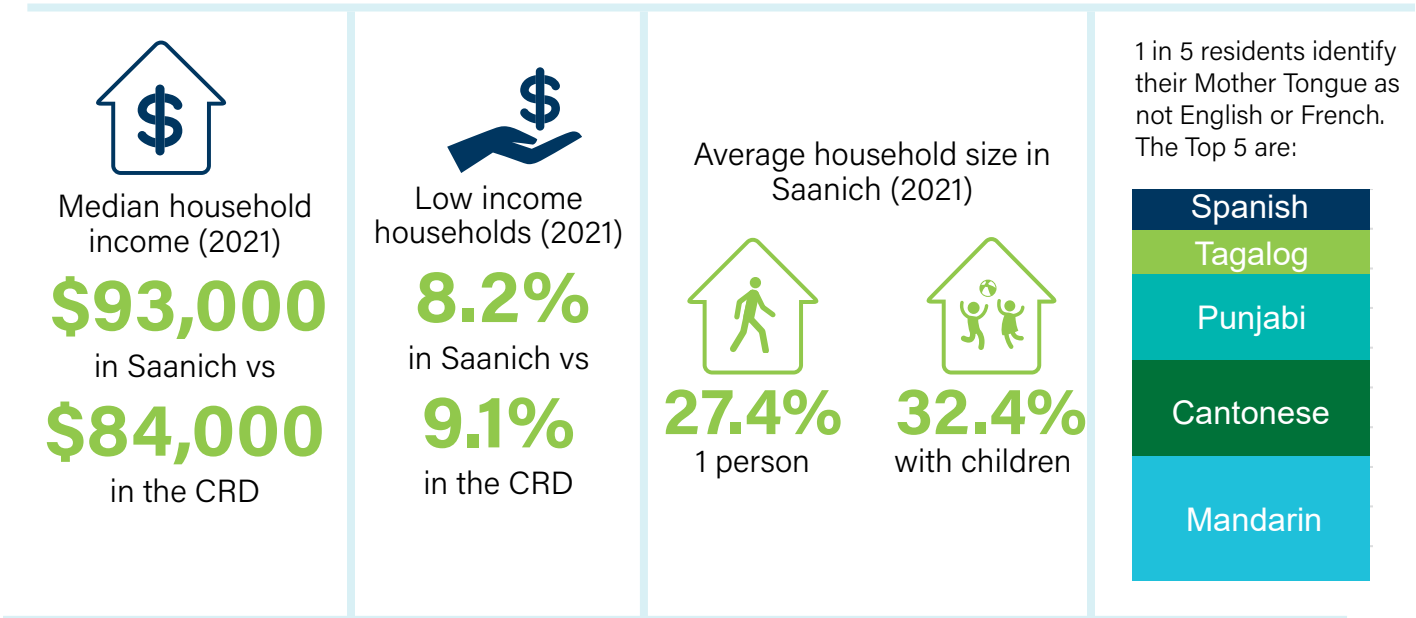
42.9 yrs (2006)

44.4 yrs (2021)

Indigenous Population (2021)

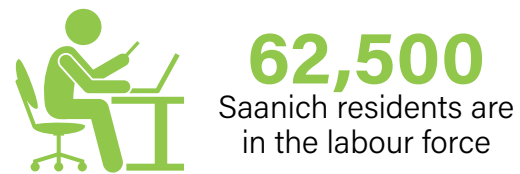
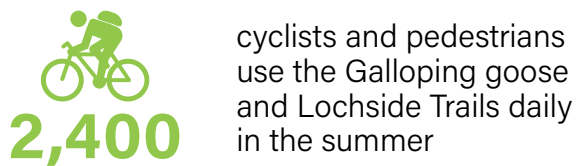
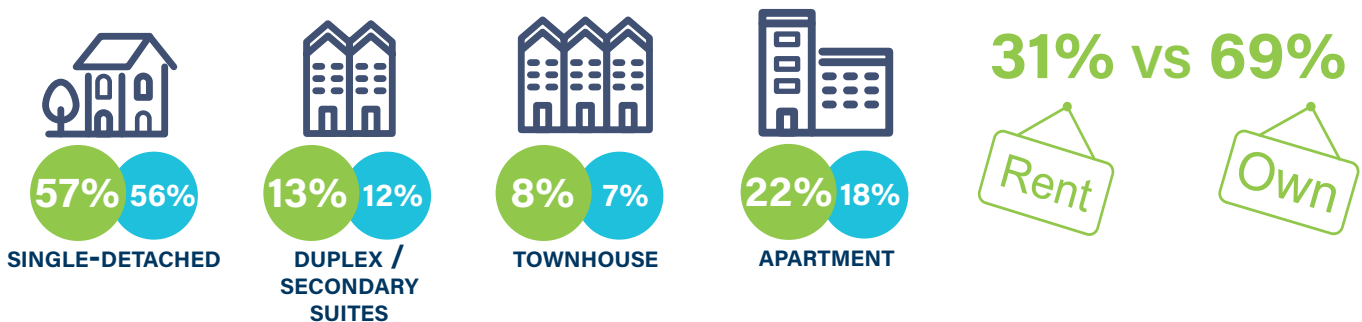


3.5% **5%**



Housing Types

Saanich's housing stock is dominated by single-detached housing forms. Recent trends indicate a shift towards more apartments getting constructed. To respond to demand identified in the Housing Needs Report, Saanich will need to add more diversity to its housing stock including smaller units for one-person households, larger family-sized units, as well as rental and non-market housing options.



INFORMATION PRIMARILY OBTAINED FROM 2021 CENSUS AND INTERNAL DATA SOURCES. PROJECTION ANALYSIS IS IN DRAFT FORM.

2.3 History

The history section was developed by District staff using the sources identified at the end of this section. As part of the Draft Plan review process, staff will be exploring opportunities to have the draft language reviewed by local First Nations.

First Peoples/Nations

The oral histories of the **Ləkʷəŋən** and **ŪSÁNEĆ** peoples tell of their presence in the region since time immemorial. Following the end of the last ice age some 14,000 years ago, the glaciers that covered south Vancouver Island had retreated. Indigenous people's history of living on the south coast from these times and onwards is reflected through oral histories and visible in the archaeological record. While hundreds of archaeological sites within the Saanich area have been recorded, very few have been systematically documented or dated. Many of these sites have been obscured by changing sea levels or destroyed by urban development. The sites that have been documented within Saanich and the surrounding area show that since the glaciers retreated, Indigenous peoples have been living here, in societies that have emerged from this land. Today, over 135 archaeological sites from across these thousands of years have been documented within the District of Saanich, revealing fragile glimpses of the rich lives of the First Peoples of the area.

Ləkʷəŋən peoples

The **Ləkʷəŋən** peoples today are the people of the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations. Prior to the creation of Indian Reserves by colonial officials, **Ləkʷəŋən** families lived in several villages sites, including within the District of Saanich at the village of **sŋɛʔqa** in Cadboro Bay, and in the village of **sxʷsɛ psəm** along Portage Inlet. Among numerous other prominent historic **Ləkʷəŋən** villages and camps in the wider area were **sʔiča'nat** at Willows Beach and **sxʷiŋxʷəŋ** in the Inner Harbour of Victoria. People from these **Ləkʷəŋən** peoples worked together to care for, use and occupy many significant places throughout the region, including prominent landmarks like **míqən** at what is now Beacon Hill Park which is important for foods like camas, and the duck hunting grounds of **q'ama'səŋ** along the Gorge waterway. The **Ləkʷəŋən** teachings of care and respect for their territories resound in the oral histories:

"After the flood the transformer, Haylas, was travelling with Raven and Mink teaching the people how things were to be done. When they reached a grand waterway cutting through the land, they came upon a young girl named **q'ama'səŋ**, and her grandfather. She was crying, so Haylas asked her why. "My father is angry with me" she replied, "and will not give me anything to eat."

Having travelled far and wide, Haylas knew of many foods so he asked her if she liked sturgeon. When she answered 'no' he threw the sturgeon to the Fraser River, and that is why there are sturgeons there and not here. He asked her if she liked cranberries. When she answered 'no' he threw them into Shawnigan Lake, and that is why there are cranberries there now.

She refused many things that were offered, but she accepted duck, herring, coho and oyster, and that is why these were plentiful on the Gorge waterway. Unimpressed by her greed and lack of gratitude, Haylas told her she would look after the food resources for her people and he turned her and her grandfather into stone" (Source: Songhees by Ron Sam, Beth Dick, Jeannie Pelkey and Christina Clarke, 2013)

ŪSÁNEĆ peoples

The **ŪSÁNEĆ** oral history places the **ŪSÁNEĆ** people in this region when **XÁ,EL,S** (the Creator) formed the landscape and recalls the events of a great flood that correlates with Western geological history. The name **ŪSÁNEĆ** means "emerging people" and refers to their new home emerging after a great flood which the First Peoples survived by floating in their canoes tied with a rope to an arbutus tree at the top of a **LAU, WEL, NEW** (Mount Newtown).

The traditional territory of the **ŪSÁNEĆ** peoples includes the east and south coasts of the Saanich Peninsula, the Saanich Inlet and forested lands to the west, as well as the San Juan and Gulf islands. The **ŪSÁNEĆ** peoples speak **SENĆOTEN**. Their descendent are members of the **ŪJOŁEŁP** (Tsartlip), **BOKÉCEN** (Pauquachin), **STÁUTŪ** (Tsawout), **ŪSIKEM** (Tseycum) and **MÁLEXEŁ** (Malahat) First Nations. Like their **Ləkʷəŋən** neighbours, not every **ŪSÁNEĆ** village was set aside as reserves during the colonial era, including the village at **TEL,ŁĆE** in Cordova Bay within the District of Saanich, and numerous important village and camp sites in the Gulf Islands.

All the Indigenous peoples living in the region utilized local marine resources, and the wealth of the region's impressive cedar forests and the habitats they supported. Families had extensive relations to, and connections with, other Indigenous communities throughout the region. **WSÁNEĆ** and **Lək̓ʷəŋən** communities were closely linked by a network of trails over lands in the District of Saanich and of course by sea. Depending on the season, regular activities included hunting, camas picking, medicine gathering, selective use of large cedars for ocean canoes and buildings, fishing, crabbing and other marine harvesting on the region's beaches, ceremony, education and recreation at cultural sites across the landscape, as well as caring for deceased loved ones in burials along the shore.

Early Colonial Settlement

The population of the **Lək̓ʷəŋən** and **WSÁNEĆ** peoples immediately prior to the introduction of European diseases to the region in the late 18th century is conservatively estimated to be in excess of 2,600 peoples. Over the following century, heavy population losses were sustained in **Lək̓ʷəŋən** and **WSÁNEĆ** communities through infectious diseases like smallpox and influenza and to which local people had no immunity. By 1929, the entire Indigenous population on Vancouver Island had dropped by 85% and the census of **WSÁNEĆ** and **Lək̓ʷəŋən** peoples numbered 394 individuals.

The Spanish were the first Europeans to explore and chart the waters off the coast of Saanich beginning in the late eighteenth century. In 1842, Fort Victoria was established by the Hudson Bay Company as a trading post and fort under James Douglas. In 1851, the lands of Vancouver Island were granted to the Hudson Bay Company for settlement as a Crown Colony.

The Crown entered into treaty relationships with the **Lək̓ʷəŋən** in 1850, and with the **WSÁNEĆ** in 1852. While the written texts of these treaty documents identify a transfer of land, the First Nation oral histories describe peace agreements between the parties. The implications of these treaties are still emerging today.

With the introduction of British land tenure, the vast and culturally rich lands of the local First Peoples was disregarded as the built form of Saanich as we see it today gradually began to take form. During this time, many of First Nations people were moved to reserve lands located away from traditional villages with limited access to the land and sea and away from their burial grounds and other significant cultural sites and sources of food and medicine.

By the mid-1850s, Hudson's Bay Company employees and the first colonial settlers began transforming the area's forests into farmland, the timber which fueled the economy and the agricultural food becoming a vital and familiar source for the region's expanding settler population. This rural history and the associated settlement pattern are a continuing legacy, evident throughout the community in many buildings, structures, transportation links, and place names.

In 1858, gold discoveries along the Fraser River changed Fort Victoria from a fur trading post to a colonial settlement. By 1863, the stagecoach to Saanich became a daily service, leaving the City of Victoria in the morning by way of the west road to North Saanich and returning in the evening by the east road. More frequent service encouraged farming, logging and land speculation. Saanich forests supported several sawmills – at Royal Oak, Prospect Lake, Cordova Bay, and Durrance Lake.



Lum family home and Young Bros. Greenhouses, Shelbourne St. 1927



Traditional clam bake circa 1900

Source: Image G-04230 courtesy of the Royal BC Museum and Archives

Saanich in the 1900s and Early 2000s

The latter part of the nineteenth and first part of the twentieth centuries saw increasing settlement and the extension of services in Saanich. Elk Lake was established as the main domestic water source. Beginning in 1896, three railroads (the Victoria and Sidney, B.C. Electric Interurban, and Canadian Northern Pacific) were built through Saanich in response to the pre-World War I land boom. Improved road connections led to the demise of the railroads, but some rail beds have since become part of the regional trail system.

To meet the burgeoning needs of the early settler community, Saanich was incorporated as a Municipality on March 1, 1906. In 1949, the most northerly and rural part of the Municipality became the District of Central Saanich. Saanich expanded its western boundary to include all of Heal's Rifle Range and the Hartland Landfill in 1995. The original municipal hall was in Royal Oak until the current municipal hall was built in 1965. It has since been designated as a heritage structure.

Following World War II, Saanich became a major residential area within a suburban community serving Greater Victoria. In 1966, Saanich's population surpassed Victoria's making it the largest municipality in the region. As the population grew, new services, amenities and infrastructure were developed to support it. The District celebrated its centennial in 2006.

During this time, the **Ləkʷəŋən** and **W̱SÁNEĆ** peoples have endured the complicated legacy of Canadian colonialism, including residential schools, land dispossession, and imposition of legal and social orders which have impacted many parts of their lives. In spite of these distinctive hardships, these communities have endured and their rights and jurisdictions are a vital part of the Greater Victoria community.

Over time, a significant urban Indigenous population living off-reserve formed; while some of these people have **Ləkʷəŋən** and **W̱SÁNEĆ** roots, many have come to live in the region from other First Nation, Inuit and Métis communities from across Canada and beyond. Started in the early 1970s, the Victoria Native Friendship Centre serves the urban indigenous community of Greater Victoria. Located in Tillicum, it has grown from a one-room office to a 38,000-ft² facility offering a range of supports and programs.

Early Non-European Immigration

For nearly 200 years, immigrants from across the world have chosen to make Saanich their home and, in the process, have helped shape Saanich into the community it is today. The gold rush era of the late 1850s and 1860s brought the first large wave of immigration to BC. Chinese and black settlers began to arrive in the Capital Region at this time and were followed shortly thereafter by Japanese and Indian immigrants. These settlers played a key role in early community building in Saanich, working to establish churches, schools, and other institutions. Many of those who settled in Saanich became farmers or farm labourers, establishing Saanich as a rural agricultural region.

Most early black settlers were free blacks from the USA who immigrated to the Victoria area seeking greater freedom from discrimination. While many ended up opening businesses in Victoria, quite a few moved to Saanich and beyond to farm. Fielding Spotts, for example, arrived in Victoria in late 1858 / early 1859 and settled on 98 acres of land near what is now the northern border of Saanich near the Patricia Bay Highway and Tanner Road. Spotts raised cattle and chickens, orchard and field crops on the property until his death in 1902. Spotts also played an instrumental role in the formation of several churches in the Capital Region and served as a school trustee at two early Saanich schools.

Due to discriminatory Canadian immigration policies such as the 1885 Chinese Immigration Act, early Chinese communities in the Victoria area were largely bachelor societies. Chinese men would immigrate alone, find work in dangerous or low-status positions, hoping to save enough money to bring their families over. Saanich resident Lum Young Chow, for example, arrived in Victoria alone in 1903 at the age of 18. He found work as a houseboy for a wealthy coffee magnate, working 14 to 16 hours per day earning \$3 per month. He eventually saved enough money to bring his three brothers over from China and, in 1924, he purchased land on Shelbourne Street and established a greenhouse. In 1928, he and his wife Lee Don Gui welcomed their eldest son, Edward Lum. Ed served on Saanich Council for many years and was mayor of Saanich from 1975 until 1978.

As with early Chinese immigrants, most early Japanese immigrants were young men and usually hailed from fishing or farming villages. Upon their arrival in the Victoria area, many found work as low-paid farm labourers for white landowners on

Saanich farms. Between the 1910s and the 1940s, for example, the Rowland Family leased land to Japanese immigrants Rinzo Ono and Jenkichi Nishimoto for farming operations. Rinzo Ono and his wife Tora operated the Tillicum Dairy at what is now 3157 Tillicum Road from the 1920s to 1942, while Jenkichi Nishimoto and his wife Shimoko grew vegetables and strawberries at what is now 3080 Albina Street from 1914 to 1938. Nishimoto also offered popular sight-seeing tours along the Gorge waterway in a sampan (a flat-bottomed, covered, wooden boat) that he built.

The early 1900s marked the first wave of South Asian immigration to the Capital Region. The vast majority were Sikhs from the Punjab region of India who came from farming backgrounds and who found work as labourers in resource sectors. A large Sikh community developed on the Saanich Peninsula between 1906 and 1915, providing labour to the Butchart cement plant and limestone quarry. The Sikh men who worked for the Butchart family developed a strong community. They would take turns walking to the Prospect Lake Store and to nearby farms to purchase groceries. A committee was formed to arrange finances for the purchase of food and supplies and each men's share was calculated at the end of the month. Due to poor working conditions and the prevalence of disease, the Sikh workers left all together in 1910 to work in a mill in the BC interior. They later returned to the Victoria area in 1930.

Since these first waves of immigration Saanich welcomed an increasingly diverse range of immigrants who continue to shape the development of our community. Today one in five Saanich residents identify a Mother Tongue as a language other-than English or French.

2.4 Indigenous Relations

Saanich initiated a renewed effort at rebuilding positive, respectful government-to-government relationships with neighbouring First Nation governments in 2018 as part of its response to the June 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Report's "Calls to Action".

One of the first milestones in the work to build new relationships came in 2021 with a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the **WSÁNEĆ** Leadership Council (WLC) and the District



Sources:

The colonial settler history is sourced from the 2008 OCP.

First Nations:

1. Songhees by Ron Sam, Beth Dick, Jeannie Pelkey and Christina Clarke, 2013.
2. Salt Water People as told by Dave Elliott Sr. , Edited by Janet Poth., 1983.
3. Cordova Bay Local Area Plan and supporting process documents.
4. Official websites: **WSÁNEĆ** Leadership Council, the Songhees, Esquimalt, **WJOLEEP** (Tsartlip), **BOKEĆEN** (Pauquachin), **STÁUTW** (Tsaywout), **WSIKEM** (Tseycum) and **MÁLEXET** (Malahat) Nations, and the Victoria Native Friendship Centre.
5. Support from Dr. Brian Thom, University of Victoria Faculty of Archeology.

Non-European Settlement:

1. Diverse Saanich: Early Settlement of Saanich Peninsula [online exhibit], District of Saanich Archives, 2020.
2. Earliest Pioneers (1858-1988), BC Black History Awareness Society, 2023, <https://bcblackhistory.ca/firsts/>

of Saanich. The MoU is called **ÁTOL, NEUEL** (“Respecting One Another”) in the **SENĆOŦEN** language, and formalizes commitments to reconciliation and to pursuing opportunities for collaboration. The MOU outlines key areas of interest and priority for the **WSÁNEĆ** Leadership Council and Saanich within the following themes:

- Recognition of **WSÁNEĆ** rights, history, and culture;
- Governance and implementation of MOU;
- Environmental concerns;
- Protection of ancestral sites;
- Public art and education projects;
- Economic development opportunities, including housing; and
- Parks management.

In addition, priorities identified by the **WSÁNEĆ** Leadership Council included the District’s Recognition of Douglas Treaty Rights and Oral History of the Douglas Treaties and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Saanich Council and staff are working to address these priorities.

The District recognizes that reconciliation is more than a ceremonial acknowledgement of its territories. It is an opportunity to learn the true history of this area and acknowledge the unjust treatment of the people whose lands it occupies. The process forward will take patience as the District takes a hard look at its colonial past and works toward decolonization and reconciliation with the **WSÁNEĆ**, **Ləkʷəŋən**, and Urban Indigenous populations.

2.5 Regional Context

Saanich is one of thirteen member municipalities and three electoral areas that make up the Capital Region District. With a population of over 430,000, the region is highly interconnected with residents, visitors, and goods moving freely across municipal borders. Infrastructure and transportation systems are highly integrated. Saanich is the largest member municipality in terms of population and size.

The Capital Regional District adopted its Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) in 2018. The RGS was developed to guide decisions on growth, change, and development within the regional district to promote socially, economically, and environmentally healthy human settlement

that makes efficient use of public facilities and services, land, and other resources. Ten objectives were identified to assist Saanich and other local governments in the region in making day-to-day decisions that are sustainable and work towards maintaining and improving the quality of life for residents. As part of the RGS implementation, member municipalities are required to prepare a regional context statement that indicates how each Official Community Plan conforms with the Strategy (see Section 16 for the context statement required under the “Local Government Act”).

For Saanich to achieve the vision outlined in this plan, it needs to work closely with other municipalities in the region both individually on specific localized issues as well as with the full CRD Board on broader issues such as climate change, biodiversity, food security, and infrastructure and transportation planning. Working with local First Nations through government-to-government relationships is also an important component of regional collaboration.

2.6 Global Context

No community functions in isolation. Global environmental, political, social, economic and demographic challenges shape local lives and have direct impacts on local government. Examples include global economic shocks, geopolitical crises, severe weather events, supply chain constraints, inflation, and pandemics; these scenarios are all outside the District’s control however taking steps to increase Saanich’s resiliency means it will be better positioned to respond effectively.

Building on this, the OCP recognizes global linkages by encouraging and empowering Saanich residents to “act locally” while “thinking globally”. This concept builds on the “One Planet Saanich” initiative which advocates for Saanich residents and business to take-action on living within the limits of the planet. One Planet Living is one of the foundational principles in the Plan (Section 4) and speaks to the global equity dimensions of living within planetary boundaries.



3.0 Opportunity & Challenges

As a community, Saanich is in a time of significant and accelerated change. The ways in which Saanich manages the challenges and opportunities of the next few years and decades will be critical to the health and well-being of Saanich, the region, and beyond. This section presents challenges and opportunities together rather than as separate lists; this recognizes that every challenge presents an opportunity. It's important to recognize that these challenges and opportunities are integrated; responses to one will impact others. To achieve a sustainable pathway forward, Saanich must pursue innovative multi-faceted strategies that tackle multiple issues at the same time.

Committing to Reconciliation

Following the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action, the District initiated work to respond. Important first steps were taken towards reconciliation with the First People through the initiation of formal government-to-government relationships with neighbouring First Nations governments and the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the **WSÁNEĆ** Leadership Council. Significant work remains however on the part

of both the District as an organization and its residents as a community, towards decolonization and reconciliation with both the **WSÁNEĆ** and **Lək̓ʷəŋən** peoples, whose traditional territories they occupy, as well as the local Urban Indigenous population.

Taking Action on Climate

Saanich is experiencing a global climate emergency. The latest climate science confirms the grave and mounting threat of climate change and that the greatest impacts will be on our most vulnerable populations. These impacts are no longer future possibilities that Saanich can avoid; the province, region and community is already experiencing devastating extreme weather events fueled by climate change that have resulted in hundreds of deaths, thousands of evacuations, destruction of infrastructure, buildings and homes, major disruptions to supply chains and millions of dollars of damage. Saanich has a long history of climate action. Most recently, Saanich Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and adopted the *Climate Plan: 100% Renewable & Resilient Saanich* in 2020. This plan set targets to limit global warming and transition to 100% renewable energy.

The focus for Saanich now must be on reshaping the community's shift off fossil fuels while adopting a range of adaptation strategies to increase its resilience.

Responding to Housing Supply, Diversity and Affordability Gaps

Saanich is experiencing gaps in housing supply, diversity, and affordability while also facing low rental vacancy rates, escalating rents, and an aging housing stock. Recent local and global trends have intensified the urgent need for adequate housing in Saanich to a point beyond which the District has experienced before. Within the region, the increase in the cost of housing has far exceeded growth in wages. At the same time, high land prices, redevelopment costs, and complex approval processes make building new housing difficult. Adopted in 2021, the Saanich Housing Strategy demonstrates a commitment to working with the community and a range of partners to increase housing supply and diversity, including non-market and rental options. Applying flexibility and creativity in decision-making to support individual projects which meet Saanich's broader housing and policy objectives will be needed.

Directing Future Growth to Build Complete Communities

Saanich and the broader Capital Region continue to face steady growth pressures. Accommodating most of the new housing and employment growth in Centres, Villages and Corridors and integrating it with sustainable transportation linked to amenities and services will be important. As part of this, focusing public and private investment on community services, parks, housing, transit, and sustainable transportation infrastructure in these areas will be essential to livability. At the same time, maintaining the Urban Containment Boundary will support the protection of agricultural lands and natural areas. This approach to growth through compact, complete community development is critical for achieving the District's climate targets, yielding significant co-benefits such as improved social networks and improved community health outcomes.





Providing Sustainable Community Services & Supporting Infrastructure

A growing regional population is putting increasing pressure on community services, amenities and supporting infrastructure. Factors such as access to and quality of parks, recreation and cultural facilities, health services, shopping and other amenities have an impact on the livability of the community. The safety and convenience for people and goods to move around the community is also significant. As Saanich continues to grow, the District has the opportunity to grow its community services, amenities and supporting infrastructure to continue to provide a high quality of life for residents. Key to this will be incorporating a sustainable service delivery model to manage existing and plan for new District services, assets, and infrastructure. This includes supporting growth through effective asset management by balancing services, risks, and costs.

Changing Demographics and Households

Recent census data highlights the aging population of the region combined with some of the lowest fertility rates in the country. Household sizes are also shrinking and changing which creates greater demand on existing housing stock and the need for a range of options to accommodate trends such as more one-person, multi-generational and non-related roommate households. At the same time, Saanich has a higher rate of households with children than other regional communities pointing to the need for more family housing. The proportion of renters is also increasing. Census data shows greater diversity in the community and an increasing Indigenous population. The Housing Needs Report will be an essential tool in understanding changing demographics and identifying future housing needs.

Strengthening Natural Areas and Biodiversity

In the past decades, rapid growth coupled with a lack of environmental understanding and sensitivity has led to a decline in biodiversity and environmental quality. As the regional population continues to grow, increasing pressure will be put on Saanich's natural areas such as forests, waterways, wetlands, beaches, and the park system. The health and function of these places are vital to protecting biodiversity in the region, supporting community health and well-being, First Nations culture and food sources, adapting to and mitigating climate change, and providing ecosystem services such as clean air and fresh water to communities. While the approach will look different in urban and rural Saanich, applying strategies to protect and enhance Saanich's natural areas, biodiversity, and ecosystem function is essential.

Creating a Diverse, Equitable and Inclusive Community

While Saanich has strived to be an inclusive and accessible community for all residents, the COVID-19 global pandemic amplified existing inequalities. Heightened awareness of issues of systemic, institutional and structural racism faced by Indigenous, Black and People of Colour (IBPOC), and other marginalized groups highlights the need for the District to increase its understanding of how these issues can manifest themselves in the District's policies, programs and services. Moving forward, adopting strategies related to diversity, equity, and inclusivity will be paramount to ensuring Saanich is a community for everyone.

2 Vision & Plan Foundations





4.0 Sustainability Foundations

4.1 Overview & Vision

With the adoption of the 2008 OCP, Saanich established a long-term vision for a livable community based on shared values and sustainability. Significant community input went into developing this vision and identifying community values as part of the 2008 process. The 2023 Strategic Update recommits to this vision which is formed around three pillars: environmental integrity, social well-being and economic vibrancy (Figure 3).

Supplementing the long-term vision, the 2023 update incorporates additional lenses to frame the conversation and support implementation. These elements help ensure a robust sustainability approach and are woven into the overall policy framework and related evaluation and monitoring processes. Table 1 provides an overview of the different components of the OCP's integrated vision.



Figure 3. Saanich Vision

Table 1. Sustainability Approach

Component	Role	Description
Three Pillars of Sustainability	Guiding Framework	Core sustainability approach guiding the OCP vision. It integrates three pillars - Environmental Integrity, Social Well-being, and Economic Vibrancy – into overall policy direction and decision making.
One Planet Living	Policy Lens + Engagement Tool	Based on the three pillars, One Planet Living expands these into ten principles which support living within the capacity of the planet’s resources. It provides a policy lens and engagement tool to assess global impacts of individual actions and local policy decisions. It recognizes global inequities with regards to access and use of resources.
15 Minute Community	Policy Lens + Implementation Tool	Planning approach to make Saanich a 15-minute community where all households within the Urban Containment Boundary are within a 15-minute walk (or 1.2 km) of key amenities that support daily living. Where these amenities do not exist, long-term planning to guide land use change will occur to meet community needs. Integrates One Planet Living and three pillar principles at a local scale.



4.2 Integrated Three Pillar Approach to Sustainability

The OCP's integrated three pillar approach to sustainability is based on the seminal work of the United Nations Brundtland Commission. The report "Our Common Future" released by the Brundtland Commission (1987) articulated the need for economic development to be done differently and for it to support social and environmental objectives without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This foundational work has been expanded on and adapted over time, but still forms the basis for much of the present-day discussion around sustainability.

Building on the overarching Saanich Vision adopted in 2008 as part of the Plan, corresponding sub-visions were also adopted to provide further clarity on what each of these pillars means within the Saanich context. Only minor changes were made to the sub-visions as part of the 2023 Strategic OCP Update.

"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

--- Brundtland Report 1987

Environmental Integrity

Saanich is a model steward working diligently to improve and balance the natural and built environments. Saanich restores and protects air, land, and water quality, the biodiversity of existing natural areas and ecosystems, the network of natural areas and open spaces, and urban forests. The challenges posed by climate change are responded to. "Centres", "Corridors" and "Villages" accommodate the majority of future growth, using sustainable development practices.

Vibrant, distinct neighbourhoods provide a high quality of life for a variety of households. A variety of travel modes connect neighbourhoods and businesses, allowing for the effective, efficient, and safe movement of people, goods, and services. Walking, cycling, and transit are viable and popular travel options, resulting in less car dependence. Rural and farm land is protected by adherence to the Urban Containment Boundary.

Social Well-being

Saanich offers opportunities for balanced, active, and diverse lifestyles. Housing, public services and amenities are affordable, accessible, equitable and inclusive. Residents enjoy food security through the safeguarding of agricultural land and the promotion of community gardens and urban farming. The community's heritage is valued and promoted. Residents take advantage of a diverse range of recreational, educational, civic, social, arts, and cultural services.

Community activities and events generate inter-generational and inter-cultural interest, participation, and social integration. Land-use planning, infrastructure design, and service delivery continue to address public safety issues. Resident awareness, education, and collaborative involvement promote shared responsibility and ownership of community development.

Economic Vibrancy

Saanich's economy is connected locally, regionally, and globally, providing diverse economic opportunities, ranging from high technology to agriculture. Our economy and labour force is responsive and has the ability to adapt to change. Saanich's clean, appealing environment, skilled workforce, responsive public services, and excellent community infrastructure make it an ideal location to live, work, and conduct business.

Implementation of strategic economic development strategies sustain and enhance the economy, and ensure long-term financial sustainability, while meeting social and environmental commitments. Saanich ensures sustainability through the provision of efficient, affordable, accessible, and reliable public services, programs, and utilities that meet community expectations, and are achieved through careful management, fiscal responsibility, innovation, progress monitoring, community involvement, and meaningful consultation.

4.3 One Planet Living Principles

The One Planet Living framework expands the integrated three pillar approach into ten principles which support living within the capacity of the planet's resources (Figure 4). Developed in 2002 by BioRegional UK, it focuses on individual and collective action making it a strong engagement and policy assessment tool. It is also aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The One Planet Living Principles were utilized as part of the 2023 Strategic OCP update to ensure the OCP's sustainability content was contemporary and reflected a broad range of sustainability outcomes. The One Planet Living approach also supports community engagement through the development of One Planet Living Action Plans for individuals, schools, businesses, community groups, and other organizations. The One Planet Living approach considers global inequities in resource use; at its foundation is the need for all people to only use their fair share of global resources.

To support moving towards One Planet Living, the ecological footprint for the District will be tracked as part of the ongoing monitoring program. The ecological footprint approach assesses how many planets are needed to support an individual's or population's lifestyle. The ecoCity Footprint tool, developed by BCIT's Cities Unit, measures the ecological footprint at the community scale using local data inputs where available. While a 2016 baseline analysis was completed in advance of the Climate Plan, an update is in progress using a refined methodology to incorporate provincial and federal government services.

	Health and happiness	Encouraging active, social, meaningful lives to promote good health and wellbeing
	Equity and local economy	Creating safe, equitable places to live and work which support local prosperity and international fair trade
	Culture and community	Nurturing local identity and heritage, empowering communities and promoting a culture of sustainable living
	Land and nature	Protecting and restoring land for the benefit of people and wildlife
	Sustainable water	Using water efficiently, protecting local water resources and reducing flooding and drought
	Local and sustainable food	Promoting sustainable humane farming and healthy diets high in local, seasonal organic food and vegetable protein
	Travel and transport	Reducing the need to travel, encouraging walking, cycling and low carbon transport
	Materials and products	Using materials from sustainable sources and promoting products which help people reduce consumption.
	Zero waste	Reducing consumption, re-using and recycling to achieve zero waste and zero pollution
	Zero carbon energy	Making buildings and manufacturing energy efficient and supplying all energy with renewables

Figure 4. One Planet Living Principles

How Many Planets? How the Ecological Footprint Works



The ecological footprint is an estimate of how much biologically productive land and water area an individual or population needs to produce all the resources it consumes and to absorb the waste it generates. It is measured in global hectares (gha) per capita, where a global hectare is a biologically productive hectare with globally averaged productivity for a given year. Based on current global population and biological productivity levels, an average of 1.7 gha is available for each person on the planet (2016 data).

An initial ecological footprint analysis was completed for Saanich in 2016. This data is currently being updated and will be included with the Final Plan. It is anticipated this value will increase from the 2016 findings as the methodology has been refined to incorporate provincial and federal government services.



Figure 5. How the Ecological Footprint Works



4.4 15-Minute Community

Integrating a walkable 15-minute community approach into Saanich's planning framework enhances and elevates the importance of building compact, complete and resilient communities. A 15-minute community provides people walkable access to essential amenities such as jobs, schools, childcare, grocery stores, pharmacies/ health services, parks, natural areas, recreation and cultural facilities, restaurants, and other shops and amenities. They support community cohesion and strengthen resilience at the neighbourhood level. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the value of strong resilient neighbourhoods offering a range of amenities became increasingly apparent. The "15-minute" radius is based around the average distance a person can walk in 5-minutes (400-metres) and 15-minutes (1,200-metres).

The "15-minute community" concept takes the

"complete communities" component of the 2008 OCP and 2018 Regional Growth Strategy one step further by linking it with time and distance to help guide plan implementation. Within the Saanich context, the focus is on creating a walkable community where all households within the Urban Containment Boundary are within a 15-minute walk (or 1.2 km) of key amenities that support daily living. Where these amenities do not exist, long-term planning to guide land use change will occur to meet community needs.

While walking is the base form of transportation in this approach, a 15-minute community also relies on access to frequent transit service and high-quality biking amenities to support linkages across neighbourhoods and to higher order services located in larger centres. A 15-minute community includes a range of housing options and provides the opportunity for people of all ages and abilities to engage effectively with and move around the



Figure 6. 15-Minute Community

neighbourhood.

Potential benefits of the 15-minute community approach include:

- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution;
- Lower levels of natural resource use;
- Increased activity and improved physical and mental health outcomes;
- Enhanced neighbourhood livability and satisfaction;
- Stronger social connections and neighbourhood cohesion;
- Supports age-friendly communities;
- Improved equity outcomes and greater awareness of neighbourhood deficits;
- Increased resiliency to climate change impacts at the local level; and,

- More efficient use of resources.

Saanich, like many of the communities in the Capital Region, has limited undeveloped land available within its urban growth area. As a result, within the Saanich context the transition to a walkable 15-minute community will occur gradually through long-term planning to guide land use change, redevelopment, and revitalization. As this process occurs, existing nodes will intensify as more housing, jobs, services/amenities, transit, and walking/biking infrastructure are added; in areas with service/amenity gaps, new neighbourhood-serving nodes will be identified through discussions with local communities as part of detailed planning.







5.0 Climate Change Response

Objectives

- A. Transition Saanich to be a 100% renewable energy, zero carbon community by 2050 or before.
- B. Incorporate adaptation strategies into land use, building and infrastructure planning and design, emergency response, natural areas management, and other services to create a more resilient community.

Saanich Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 in response to decades of scientific research demonstrating the need for urgent action to reduce global warming and adapt to climate change. A central component of this scientific research was the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) which identified significant and severe global impacts associated with moving from a 1.5°C increase in global temperature from pre-industrial levels to a 2.0°C increase. The Climate Emergency declaration was part of a broader movement in the region, initiated by the Capital Region Board, to recognize the escalating impacts of climate change as well as the role of local governments to inform, influence, and lead climate action and accelerate the region's move towards a zero carbon future.

5.1 Anticipated Impacts

Saanich, and British Columbia more broadly, is already experiencing devastating and increasingly costly impacts from climate change. The 2021 heat dome led to over 600 excess deaths across the province, while later that year an "atmospheric river" caused extensive flooding and landslides, cutting Metro Vancouver and Vancouver Island off from critical supplies. The Capital Region has experienced frequent droughts in recent years as well as air quality advisories due to wildfire smoke. Localized climate projections for the Capital Region project hotter and drier summers, sea-level rise, and increased numbers and intensity of winter storms. Figure 7 provides selected climate and sea-level projections for the region.

Top vulnerabilities to climate change in Saanich, as identified in the 2019 Climate Risk Assessment include:

- Loss of biodiversity and ecosystem stress;
- Health impacts from severe heat and wildfire smoke;
- Inundation of buildings and infrastructure from sea-level rise;

- Compromised food production; and
- Wildland-urban interface fire risk.

Climate risk and vulnerability assessments are iterative processes that must be repeated regularly as the District monitors changes in its adaptive capacity and improves its understanding of climate risks over time.

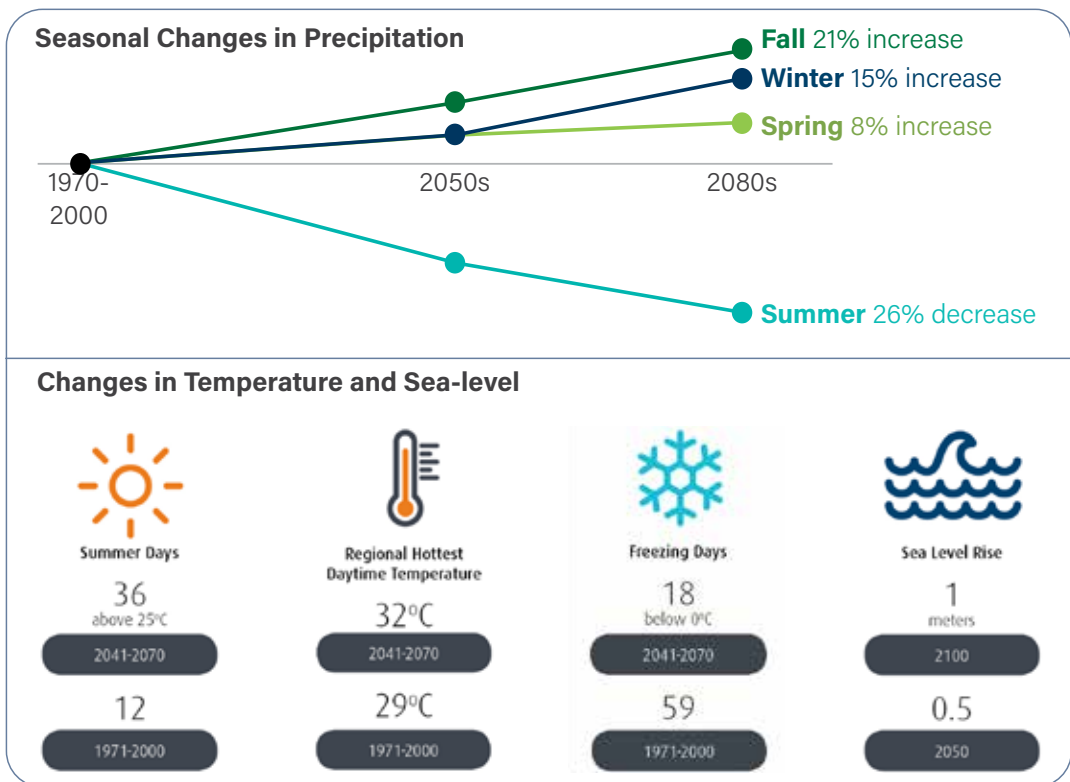


Figure 7. Climate and Sea-Level Rise Projections for the Region



5.2 Links with Land Use and Transportation Planning

Land use and transportation planning is one of the most significant policy areas impacting the ability of the District to meet its climate and sustainability goals and targets. Transportation is the largest source of GHG emissions in Saanich, followed closely by buildings. Sustainable land use, delivered through compact, complete communities means individuals are able to travel shorter distances to meet their needs; this is a core principal behind Saanich's transition to a 15-minute community.

Compact communities greatly increase the ability to use active transportation (walking, cycling) and transit and reduces car dependence, which is the District's largest source of transportation emissions. It makes the construction and maintenance of cycling and transit infrastructure more affordable by serving a greater population with a more compact system that requires less resources. It also means that a higher level of service and quality (e.g. transit frequency and priority and AAA bike lanes) can be provided with the same resources, further supporting sustainable transportation choices and ensuring tax-payers dollars are used most efficiently.

Further, building more attached housing forms like apartments, duplexes, and townhomes improves building energy efficiency by reducing heat loss by sharing walls. It also reduces the amount of building materials used for each unit, and the amount of paved surface per person for vehicles, compared with a single detached home, reducing embodied emissions. In addition, compact,

complete community development (when well designed) yields significant sustainability co-benefits, such as improved social networks and community health outcomes, and protection and enhancements of our ecosystems.

The District's urban forests, natural areas, agricultural and rural areas play an important role in climate adaptation and mitigation through the provision of ecosystem services such as shade, air quality, drainage, carbon sequestration and pollination. The protection and enhancement of these areas relies upon a sustainable approach to development that directs growth to key nodes and corridors but which also retains, enhances and integrates natural areas, trees and green infrastructure within development and protects and enhances important areas of biodiversity. This is critical to ensure that people living in urban areas have access to nature and the services it provides and to mitigate the urban heat island effect but also to ensure natural areas are connected and our urban ecology and biodiversity is resilient and continues to thrive.

As a coastal community, it is important to ensure growth and development is directed away from areas that will be subject to future sea level rise, flooding and permanent inundation. New infrastructure must be 'future-proofed' for climate changes and existing infrastructure upgraded to be resilient to extreme weather events and future projections. This will require regular updates to climate projections and associated engineering and design standards and specifications.



5.3 Targets & Approach

Responding to the Climate Emergency declaration, the *Climate Plan: 100% Renewable and Resilient Saanich*, adopted in 2020, revised the District's greenhouse gas emissions targets to align with the reductions needed to limit global warming to 1.5C. Three plan goals were identified (Figure 8).

The Climate plan addresses both mitigation (reducing greenhouse gas emissions) and adaptation (preparing for a changing climate) in the wider Saanich community as well as in District operations. Applying an integrated approach, strategies are identified in six focus areas:

- Mobility;
- Buildings and infrastructure;
- Food and materials;
- Ecosystems;
- Community wellbeing; and,
- Leadership in District operations.

To achieve its Climate Plan goals and targets, the District needs action from residents, businesses, community organizations, institutions, neighbouring governments and, in particular, the Provincial and Federal governments. Recognizing the cross-cutting nature of the District's response to climate change, relevant sustainability and climate change policies are integrated throughout the OCP. However overarching policies, including reaffirming the accelerated GHG emissions reduction targets, are included below.

Climate Adaptation

Actions taken to help our community cope with or adjust to a changing climate.

Climate Mitigation

Actions taken to reduce climate change, primary by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

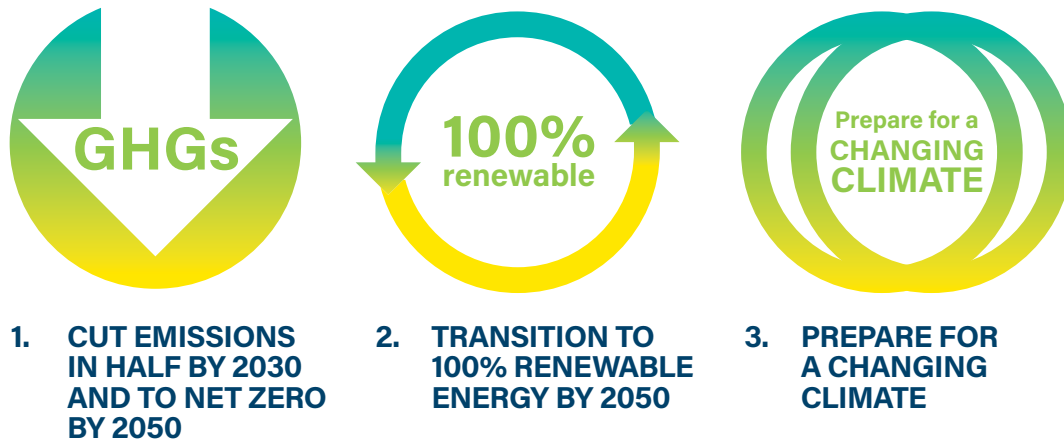


Figure 8. Three Plan Goals

Overarching Policies

- 5.3.1 Implement Saanich's Climate Plan to:
 - a. Reduce Saanich's Greenhouse Gas Emissions to 50% of 2007 levels by 2030 and to net zero by 2050;
 - b. Transition to 100% Renewable Energy by 2050; and
 - c. Prepare for a changing climate.
- 5.3.2 Monitor and report on progress towards achieving the District's climate goals and targets and update targets as needed based on new scientific information and global equity objectives.
- 5.3.3 Lead by example and incorporate climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies into day-to-day operations and strategic long-term planning initiatives across the organization.

- 5.3.4 Regularly update climate risk and vulnerability assessments to incorporate changing conditions and updated climate projections into operations, asset management, service delivery and long-term planning.
- 5.3.5 Support Saanich's work towards reconciliation with local First Nations through collaboration on climate action.
- 5.3.6 Empower Saanich residents, businesses, organizations, institutions and the broader community to take climate action.
- 5.3.7 Support and encourage senior levels of government to enact legislation and implement policy and programs required to meet our climate goals and targets and to provide local governments with the necessary tools, funding and resources to address the climate emergency.



3 Focus Areas





6.0 Natural Environment

Objectives

- A. Protect and enhance Saanich's unique natural features, biodiversity, and ecosystem services.
- B. Improve the health of watersheds and freshwater/marine shoreline habitat.
- C. Grow the urban forest using the 3:30:300 Rule (see Figure 10).
- D. Recognize the vital importance of a healthy natural environment to supporting community health and well-being, ecosystem health, and climate resilience.
- E. Support environmental stewardship, public education, awareness, and participation.
- F. Enhance meaningful community connection with nature in ways that foster the well-being of both people and the natural environment.

Related Plans & Strategies

- Resilient Saanich
- Climate Plan
- Biodiversity Conservation Strategy
- Urban Forest Strategy
- Integrated Stormwater Management Planning

Environmental protection and climate action are priorities for the District of Saanich and fundamental components of a healthy, resilient, and sustainable community. Maintaining adequate greenspace, biodiversity, and well-functioning natural areas is important to both ecosystem health and human health. It is also a central component of One Planet Living.

Saanich is home to some of BC's most unique and rare ecosystems and species. These include biological diverse areas of intact Coastal Douglas-fir forests and pockets of Garry Oak ecosystems. Saanich also has a long and rich marine foreshore, large productive lakes and wetlands, long river systems and a diversity of plant communities that support healthy wildlife populations. The natural areas in Saanich provide unique ecological characteristics and are home to many rare and threatened species. They also provide important ecosystem services that benefit both humans and the broader community such as filtering water, purifying the air, reducing flooding, regulating climate, and storing carbon that would otherwise contribute to global warming.

Resilient Saanich: Draft Environmental Policy Framework Goals & Guiding Principles

Principles

1. Recognize the intrinsic value of nature.
2. Learn from and appropriately apply Indigenous knowledge, perspectives and practices to better protect lands, water, plants and animals. Indigenous knowledge offers deep understanding of the environment. Indigenous knowledge, cultures, and traditional practices are recognized for their contribution to environmental and social sustainability.
3. Use best available management and decision-making tools in support of the future environment. Evidence-based decision-making and being precautionary in the absence of evidence can both support good decisions. Adaptive management is the continuous evolution of practices based on careful observation. Learn from the past and plan for the future.
4. Lead by example through innovation and improving on best practices.
5. Look beyond our borders to achieve results at a bioregional scale.
6. Address climate adaptation and mitigation in all that we do.
7. Collaborate with diverse interests to achieve outcomes that realize multiple values and benefits.
8. Safeguard diversity, equity and inclusivity. Create safe and welcoming public services and spaces for everyone including open environmental data for public oversight and research.
9. Enhance community capacity and knowledge. Create a passionate, informed and skilled community that can help to create a more resilient Saanich.

Goals

1. Protect, rehabilitate and enhance the ecological function and biological diversity of Saanich.
2. Develop and implement complimentary and coordinated policies, strategies, regulations, and incentives ground in and consistent with the Environmental Policy Framework guiding principles.

Model

Relationship between the Official Community Plan, the Environmental Policy Framework, and other policy areas impacted by the framework.

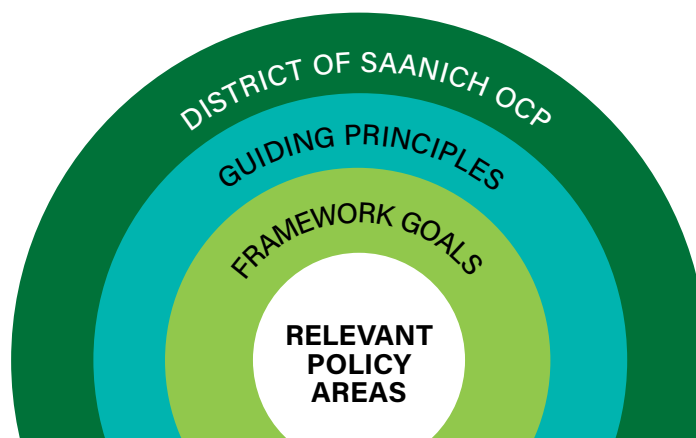


Figure 9. Framework Principles and Goals

6.1 Ecosystems

Protecting and enhancing natural areas ensures they will continue to provide these services and makes them more resilient to urban development and climate change. There are numerous threats to the integrity of natural areas. These can include direct permanent impacts such as the clearing of natural features for urban development, indirect impacts from human activity such as the establishment of invasive species, and natural threats such as wildfires. Often, these threats are interconnected and compounding such as the effect on plant stress caused by climate change, which can increase the susceptibility and spread of diseases. Urban development may lead to increased disturbance and fragmentation, which can facilitate the spread of invasive species. Some of these impacts are permanent while others can be mitigated through restoration.

An integral component of the District's response to biodiversity loss, climate change, and threats facing its natural areas, is the Resilient Saanich process. Initiated in 2020, Resilient Saanich will develop an overarching policy framework for existing and new environmental policies and programs. Council received the framework principles and goals in 2022 (Figure 9).

Ecosystem services

The many and varied benefits to humans provided by the natural environment and from healthy ecosystems. Carbon sequestration, recreation potential, water filtration, and pollination are all examples of ecosystem services.

Natural asset

Natural assets are the stock of natural resources or ecosystems that are relied upon, managed or could be managed by a local government for the provision of one or more services to a community.

Healthy ecosystems are vital to the health and well-being of Saanich's community, a vibrant economy, and the sustainability of the region and planet. Plants and trees clean the air, build soil, and regulate temperature. Wetlands clean and hold water essential for life, and healthy soils support biodiversity. Healthy oceans, lakes, and streams support fish and other aquatic life. In addition, quiet, natural places, and opportunities for viewing and experiencing nature contribute significantly to the quality of life within Saanich.

Saanich is fortunate to contain some of British Columbia's most unique and rare species and ecosystems. The Coastal Douglas- fir climatic zone, which covers most of the District, is the smallest and most at-risk zone in BC. It includes Garry Oak ecosystems which contain over 200 species at risk, many of which are found only in these ecosystems.

Saanich and its residents place significant value on protecting, restoring and enhancing the natural environment. District efforts include raising awareness, gaining public support, and encouraging residents, businesses, and institutions to protect and restore the natural environment for the well-being of future generations. However, some practices will need to improve if the community is to continue making progress in this area.

Ongoing and effective care of the environment in the future calls for a renewed and enhanced commitment to protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems, increasing efforts to control and eradicate invasive species, partnering and supporting Indigenous communities, and fostering sustainable land use practices. Sustainability principles also need to be embedded into all corporate and community decision-making especially those related to growth and development.

Policies

- 6.1.1 Following the completion of the Resilient Saanich process and the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, update the Strategic Policy Documents to reflect their outcomes. This may include:
 - a. Development of new or updating existing bylaws, policies, and/or practices regarding protection and enhancement of biodiversity and the natural environment.
 - b. Ongoing data improvements to fill gaps and allow for deeper analysis to assess conditions and identify future trends including revising related mapping; and,
 - c. Partnering with Indigenous communities and incorporating Indigenous perspectives on land use and management.
- 6.1.2 Complete and implement the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.
- 6.1.3 Monitor and report on progress towards achieving the District’s environmental goals and targets, and update targets as needed based on new scientific information and global equity objectives.
- 6.1.4 Support the direction in the Regional Growth Strategy with respect to Managing and Balancing Growth; Protecting, Managing, and Balancing Ecosystem Health; and Climate Action.
- 6.1.5 Protect natural areas by maintaining the Urban Containment Boundary (UCB) and encouraging compact urban development inside the UCB.
- 6.1.6 Continue to protect and restore habitats that support native species of plants and animals, and address threats to biodiversity such as invasive species.
- 6.1.7 Protect and restore rare and endangered species habitat and ecosystems, particularly those associated with Coastal Douglas-fir and Garry Oak ecosystems.

- 6.1.8 Preserve “micro-ecosystems” as part of proposed development applications, where possible.
- 6.1.9 Require restoration plans, prepared by a qualified environmental professional where an environmentally sensitive area has been disturbed through unauthorized activities.
- 6.1.10 Link environmentally sensitive areas, riparian areas, and green spaces, where appropriate, using “greenways”, and design them to maintain biodiversity and reduce wildlife conflicts.
- 6.1.11 Support the use of native species and climate change resistant plants for landscaping on both public and private lands and continue to promote the principles of Naturescaping.
- 6.1.12 Continue to update and improve environmental data sets to incorporate new information and refinements/ adjustments in methodological approaches.

What is Biodiversity?

Biodiversity is a term used to describe the variety and variability of life on Earth. It encompasses every living thing on the planet, ranging from microorganisms to plants, animals, and fungi. Biodiversity is typically interpreted as the number of species that inhabit an area and can be used as an indicator of ecosystem health and integrity.

Protecting biodiversity is important for many reasons, including supporting all life and human well-being, the economy, and the many ecosystem services humans receive from functioning natural areas. Biodiversity is interconnected with climate change in both impacts and solutions.

Resilient Saanich identified eight types of habitat elements to guide conversations:

1. Coastal Douglas-fir Forests
2. Greenspace
3. Garry Oak Ecosystems
4. Backyard Biodiversity – Rural
5. Backyard Biodiversity - Urban
6. Wetlands, Lakes, and Hydroriparian Streams
7. Coastal Sand Ecosystems
8. Marine Shorelines

6.2 Urban Forest

Saanich's urban forest includes all trees within the District of Saanich, including those in private yards, public parks, conservation areas, boulevards, natural areas, and other locations in urban areas and Rural Saanich. The urban forest provides benefits that support the health and well-being of Saanich residents and enhance community livability. These benefits, sometimes called ecosystem services, include providing habitat for wildlife, stabilizing steep slopes, water filtration, pollination, storing and sequestering carbon, and cooling streets and homes.

Saanich's forest cover is estimated to be 43% (2019). This cover is unevenly distributed across the District. Rural Saanich has the highest forest cover at 56% and the most natural state forest while areas within the Urban Containment Boundary (UCB) have 31% cover. The UCB and related policies are a key driver of this finding while Agricultural Land Reserve designations still pose risks to rural tree protection.

Within Urban Saanich significant discrepancies exist between neighbourhoods, with some areas having canopy covers lower than the 30% target adopted by Council as a guiding principle as part of the broader 3:30:300 Rule (Figure 10). Compounding the issue, many of the areas with lower canopy covers are also associated with Primary Growth Areas. As these areas intensify, it will be important to retain and plant trees where possible to support both urban biodiversity and improve the overall livability of these areas.

Climate change projections for Saanich are likely to have significant impacts on the health and vitality of existing trees and forests in the community. Several native tree species are already experiencing declines in health connected to climate. While the urban forest plays an important role in the District's climate resiliency, it will also need support to adapt to climate impacts such as hotter temperatures, extended droughts, new and increasing invasive species and tree diseases, and more variable and severe weather events that elevate rates of tree damage.



Figure 10. 3-30-300 Rule

Policies

- 6.2.1 Complete and implement the updated Urban Forest Strategy.
- 6.2.2 Following the completion of the updated Urban Forest Strategy, revise the OCP to reflect its outcomes. This may include developing new or updating existing bylaws, policies, and practices regarding protection and enhancement of the urban forest.
- 6.2.3 Improve equitable access to the urban forest in Saanich by implementing the 3-30-300 Rule in urban forest management.
- 6.2.4 Retain and plant trees, with a focus on native species offering shade and ecosystem services, along boulevards and municipal properties, in parks and on private lands, to protect and expand the urban forest and improve climate resilience.
- 6.2.5 Promote and encourage the protection of native trees and wildlife trees.

6.3 Freshwater/Marine Shoreline Habitat and Water Quality

Water is a critical element for all life on Earth. Whether it is flowing through Beaver Lake or passing over a rocky outcrop on its way into the headwaters of the Colquitz River, water shapes Saanich's landscapes and the ecosystems that have evolved there. Saanich is home to a wealth of freshwater and marine ecosystems which provide habitat for aquatic life and for terrestrial life that rely on this valuable resource. Aquatic ecosystems range in scale from small, ephemeral wetlands and seasonally flooded fields to lakes and rivers that meander through urban areas. These water systems support some of the highest levels of biodiversity in the region and are among the most susceptible to change.

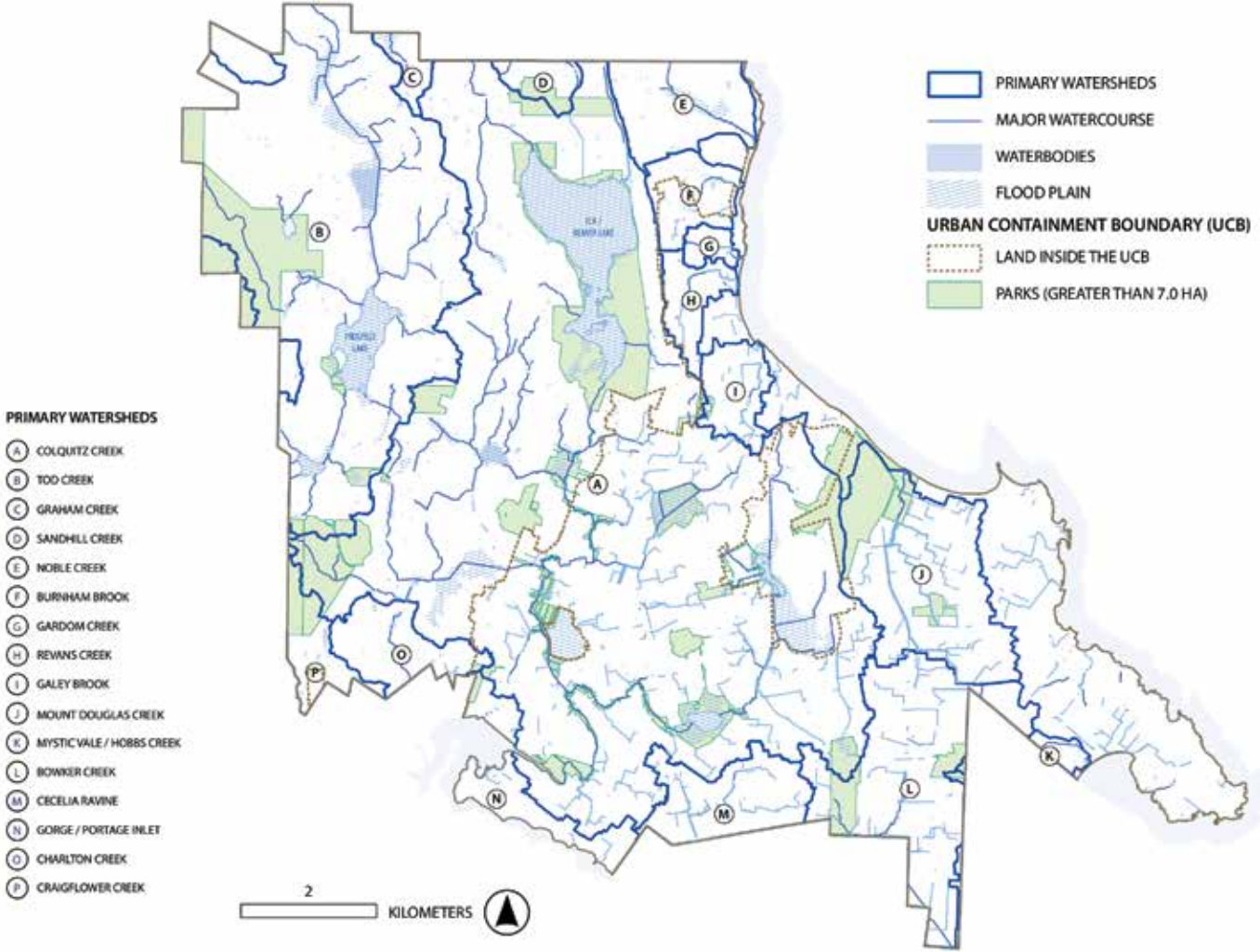
Saanich has approximately 350 ha of lakes and ponds, 31 ha of wetlands, and 29 km of marine shoreline. These features provide habitat for aquatic, terrestrial and marine species and are significant contributors to Saanich's overall biodiversity. As urbanization fragments Saanich's natural landscape, smaller aquatic ecosystems have become significant contributors to preserving biodiversity. These spaces act as refuges for small mammals, insects, and birds that need to rest and feed while they travel. Even smaller waterbodies in neighborhoods and on golf courses act as linkages supporting the greater ecological network in Saanich.

Marine shorelines are some of the most popular natural places in Saanich for residents and visitors as well as biodiversity hotspots; high recreational use, development, and invasive species threaten the integrity of these highly sensitive ecosystems. Climate change impacts such as sea level rise, extreme weather events, flooding and increased erosion will further increase the pressure in these areas.

Taking an integrated approach to stormwater management is an important component of enhancing and protecting water quality. More information on the District's approach to stormwater management is found in Section 10.3.

Policies

- 6.3.1 Support an integrated watershed planning approach to surface water, drainage and groundwater that promotes low impact development and healthy stream and coastal ecosystems.
- 6.3.2 Work with senior levels of government, First Nations, and stakeholders to protect and enhance the marine, intertidal, backshore, wetland and riparian habitats.
- 6.3.3 Encourage the retention or planting of native vegetation in the coastal riparian zone.
- 6.3.4 Support the Capital Regional District and the Island Health Authority to continue monitoring the water quality of the region's principal lakes and streams and publishing of information on trends in water quality.
- 6.3.5 Work with the Capital Regional District, local and senior governments, business and stakeholders, as appropriate, to improve source control and reduce contamination entering our watercourse and marine environment.
- 6.3.6 Harmonize Saanich's policies and regulations respecting stormwater management with the development approval process where appropriate.



Map 1. Watersheds, Water Courses & Floodplains

Natural Environment



6.4 Air Quality

Air quality is an important health and ecological consideration. While the District has limited involvement in direct monitoring of air quality, actions taken in other areas of municipal jurisdiction do directly impact pollution levels in the air. Examples include urban forestry, transportation, and land use planning. In addition, ensuring buildings meet code requirements for ventilation and air filtration helps provide clean indoor air spaces during poor air quality events, such as during wildfires.

Policies

- 6.4.1 Support regional initiatives to address air quality concerns.
- 6.4.2 Initiate and support actions that improve air quality, such as encouraging low/no emission transportation options, increasing our urban forest cover, and coordinating planning of land-use and public transportation.

6.5 Environmental Stewardship

Supporting stewardship in Saanich recognizes the important role that residents, businesses, institutions, First Nations, and governments play as stewards of the natural environment.

Stewardship programs can be grouped into six categories:

- Local government-led programs for private land;
- Local government-led programs for public land;
- Local government-led education and awareness;
- Local partnership programs;
- Local government funding programs; and,
- Programs that governments can adopt.

Saanich has been engaged in stewardship programs in all six categories and has many longstanding programs such as Pulling Together

that enhance stewardship of sensitive areas and build community capacity and awareness. A key element of Resilient Saanich will be to continue to build and enhance stewardship programs.

Policies

- 6.5.1 Continue to support stewardship programs and advance implementation of Resilient Saanich to enhance direction for stewardship programs.
- 6.5.2 Work with School Districts 61 and 63, and post-secondary institutions, to educate students about the environment and stewardship.
- 6.5.3 Foster and support public awareness, engagement, and participation in community environmental stewardship initiatives.
- 6.5.4 Work with private landowners to encourage stewardship that protects, preserves, and enhances natural systems and to protect riparian or environmentally significant areas.
- 6.5.5 Work with the community to build awareness on the impact of invasive species, mitigation measures, and opportunities to participate in volunteer eradication programs.



Related Plans & Strategies

- Regional Growth Strategy
- Housing Strategy
- Climate Plan
- Active Transportation Plan
- Transit Future Plan

7.0 Land Use

Objectives

- A. Maintain the Urban Containment Boundary as the principal tool to protect agricultural land, natural areas, and rural character while also supporting efficient service and infrastructure provision and climate resilient communities.
- B. Plan for most new housing and employment growth to be accommodated in Primary Growth Areas.
- C. Support the evolution of Primary Growth Areas into walkable, mixed-use places through prioritizing public and private investment in transit, community services/amenities, infrastructure, and high-quality urban design/landscaping.
- D. Integrate land use with transit and active transportation networks to make it easier and safer for people and goods to move around the community while also working towards the District’s net-zero emissions target and Vision Zero goal.

- E. Support infill within Neighbourhoods that fits with community scale in order to broaden housing choices.
- F. Support land use changes that enable progression towards a walkable 15-minute community inside the Urban Containment Boundary.
- G. Increase the supply and diversity of housing options, including non-market, supportive, and affordable/market rental units, in both Primary Growth Areas and Neighbourhoods.

Saanich is a unique community that contains a mix of rural areas, diverse neighbourhoods, major regional destinations, agricultural lands and engaging mixed-use centres. The way in which Saanich’s land base is organized and managed significantly impacts the community’s ability to collectively respond to the climate crisis, as well as expand housing options, protect biodiversity and agricultural lands, improve sustainable transportation options, and address demographic trends.

The policies in this section are designed to respond to these and other challenges by applying an integrative approach. This approach involves directing most new growth to Primary Growth Areas while also preserving the Urban Containment Boundary and linking land use with safe and sustainable transportation systems. The approach to land use also necessitates working with other orders of government, First Nations, and Capital Region District municipalities to advance joint priorities and increase community resilience. Together, these policies support Saanich’s sustainability vision by taking concrete steps towards implementing One Planet Living and supporting Saanich’s transition to a 15-minute community within the Urban Containment Boundary.

Historically, development in Saanich has followed topography, with the major road pattern based on rights-of-way that were constrained or enhanced by natural features. For decades, suburban development was mainly limited to the south part of the Municipality, near the more urban City of Victoria. Gradually development extended into what was formerly countryside.

In more recent times, the Urban Containment Boundary has prevented further suburban sprawl and subdivision expansion into rural areas. Saanich and the Capital Region District have adopted growth management policies and strategies aimed at keeping urban settlement compact and enhancing the region’s sustainability and resilience. As a result, the traditional view of outward growth as inevitable and necessary no longer holds true.

Containing and concentrating growth using the Urban Containment Boundary provides for better protection of rural areas and farmland as well as environmentally sensitive areas and green spaces. It allows for more cost-effective servicing and makes sustainable transportation more viable, while reducing non-renewable energy use. It provides the opportunity for walkable, dynamic residential and commercial areas. At the same time, it puts greater pressure on parts of the existing urban area to accommodate new development. To foster livability, sustainability and vibrancy, it is important that development continues to support efficient land use and a climate resilient community.

With the adoption of its 2008 OCP Saanich prioritized the concept of directing higher density housing and employment opportunities into vibrant mixed-use Centre and Village areas. This approach is consistent with the Capital Regional District’s Regional Growth Strategy. The initial Centre and Village locations were selected in 2008 because they represented existing commercial hubs and were in locations served by public transit and major roadways. The 2023 update of the OCP introduces Corridors to strengthen the linkages between Centres and Villages, support additional density and housing options, and more effectively integrate land use with transit and active transportation. Directing most new development into Primary Growth Areas while working towards making Saanich a 15-minute community creates vibrant mixed use neighbourhoods, supports sustainable transportation choices and investment, and fosters One Planet Living.

Sustainable Transportation

Sustainable transportation refers to travel modes with low to zero carbon emissions per person. These include public transit (transition to electric buses by 2030), electric car-share programs, electric micro mobility (e.g., e-bikes, e-kick scooters), and active transportation including walking, biking, and rolling.

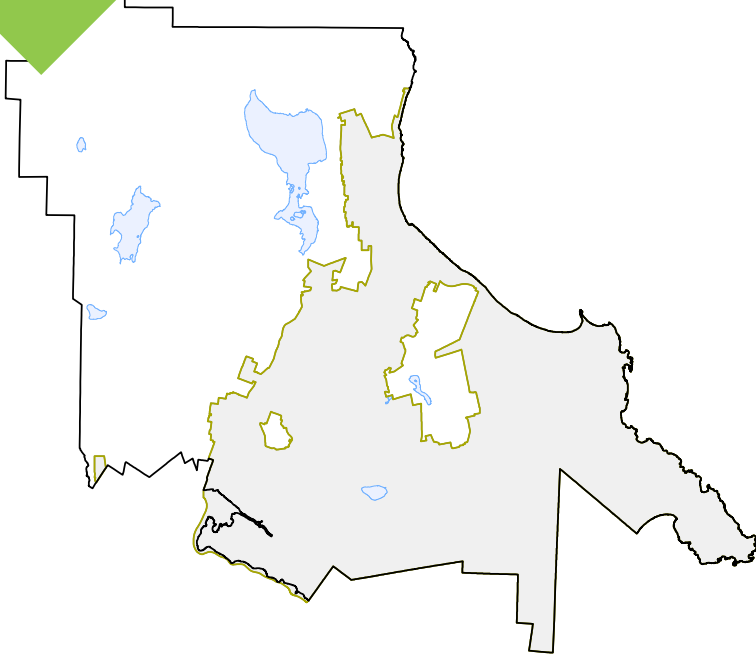


Four strategic land use directions guide the Official Community Plan. While focused on land use elements, these are closely linked with the District’s sustainability goals and greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. Together the strategic directions

foster One Planet Living by supporting efficient use of land and resources and creating livable communities close to services, amenities and jobs and supported by transit and active transportation options.

1

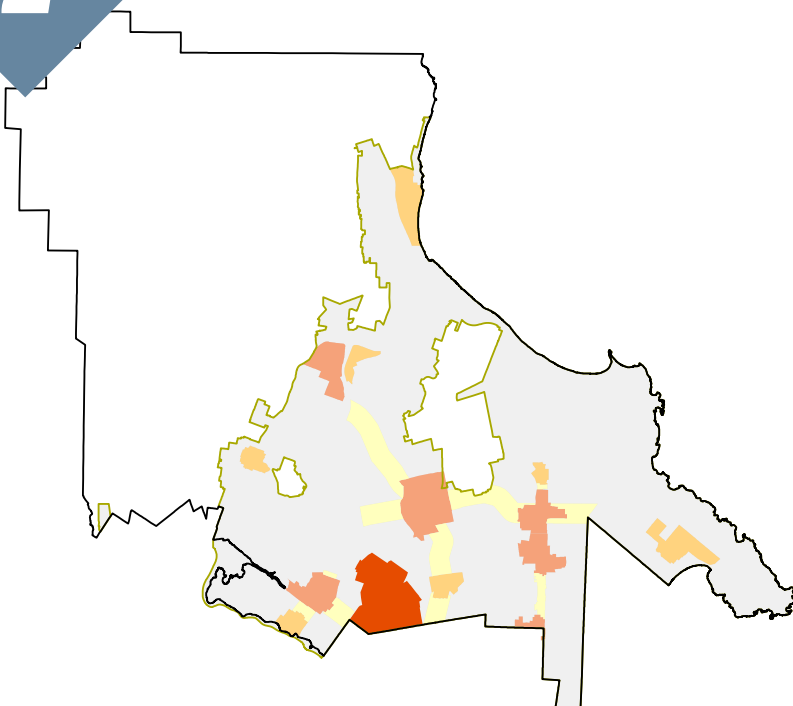
Maintain the Urban Containment Boundary



Maintain the Urban Containment Boundary (UCB) to support the retention of agricultural land and natural areas while also reducing urban sprawl, supporting sustainable transportation options and encouraging efficient use of infrastructure and public investment.

2

Accommodate most New Development in Primary Growth Areas



Plan for most of the District’s new housing and employment growth to be accommodated in vibrant walkable Centres and Villages linked by Corridors, frequent transit service, and All Ages and Abilities cycling infrastructure. Continue to improve the range of services, amenities, active transportation connections, and higher density housing and employment opportunities in these areas.

3

Expand Housing Diversity in Neighbourhoods



Support a broader range of housing choices in Neighbourhoods through infill to better meet community needs and provide housing opportunities for all stages of life. Support the inclusion of a mix of ground-oriented houseplexes, low-rise apartments, and townhouses offering different tenure types and affordability levels.

4

Make Saanich a 15-minute Community



Building on the existing network of Centres and Villages, make Saanich a walkable 15-minute community where all households within the Urban Containment Boundary are within a 15-minute (or 1.2 km) walk of key amenities that support daily living. Where these amenities do not exist, long-term planning to guide land use change will occur to meet community needs.

7.1 Growth Management and Regional Collaboration

At a high level, growth management is about maintaining the Urban Containment Boundary and directing growth strategically while also protecting natural areas and agricultural lands for both Saanich and the broader Capital Region. It involves assessing the capacity of infrastructure and services when different growth options are considered. Effective growth management requires consultation and collaboration with neighbouring municipalities and First Nations governments on shared issues as well as on regional planning and infrastructure/services decisions. It also involves planning for and adapting to a changing climate and rethinking how land use and transportation systems are integrated.

Policies

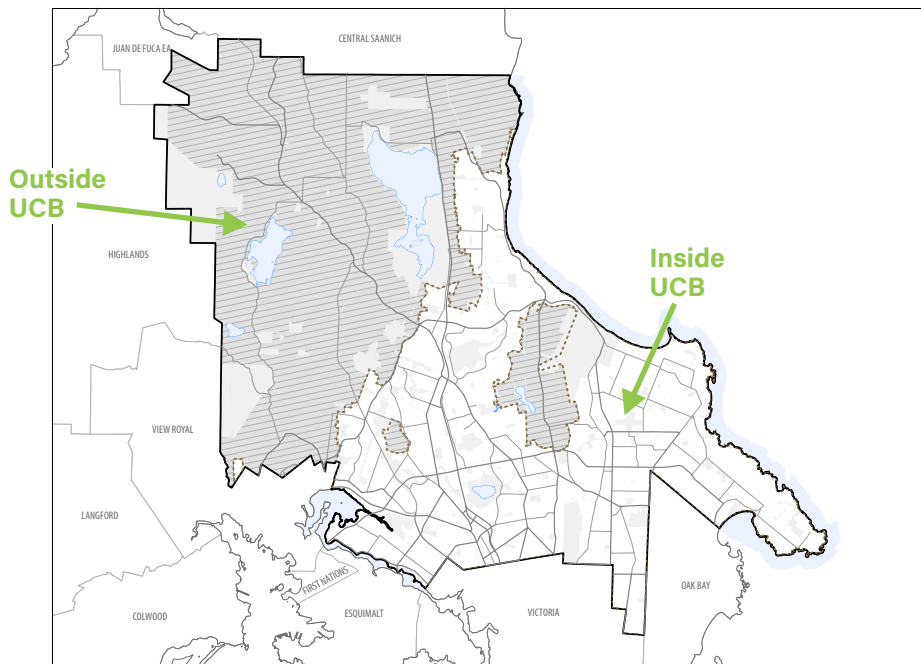
- 7.1.1 Support and implement the ten strategic objectives of the Regional Growth Strategy, namely: keep urban settlement compact; protect the integrity of rural communities; protect, conserve and manage ecosystem health; manage regional infrastructure services sustainably; create safe and complete communities; improve housing affordability; improve multi-modal connectivity and mobility; realize the region's economic potential; foster a resilient food and agriculture system; and, significantly reduce community-based greenhouse gas emissions (Regional Context Statement, Section 16).
- 7.1.2 Maintain the Urban Containment Boundary as the principal tool for growth management in Saanich, and direct new development to locate within the urban area.
- 7.1.3 Do not consider major changes to the Urban Containment Boundary except as an outcome of a comprehensive review of the Regional Growth Strategy.
- 7.1.4 Do not adopt any bylaw or resolution providing for a major expansion to the Urban Containment Boundary without first obtaining the assent of the electors through a referendum or plebiscite.

- 7.1.5 Consider the capacity of all types of infrastructure including municipal services, schools, social services and park space when reviewing growth options.
- 7.1.6 Consult with neighbouring municipalities and/or major institutions when considering changes along common boundaries.
- 7.1.7 Consult with First Nations governments when creating new and/or updating major strategic plans, including land use documents.
- 7.1.8 Work with neighbouring municipalities and First Nations governments when undertaking planning studies that have inter-municipal implications and would benefit from a cohesive planning approach.
- 7.1.9 Direct growth and development away from areas that will be subject to future sea level rise, flooding and permanent inundation.

7.2 Land Use Framework

The OCP's Land Use Framework articulates an overarching approach for managing uses of land in Saanich. Land use designations identify desired policy outcomes for specific areas of the District as it evolves over time through redevelopment. In Saanich, the Urban Containment Boundary (UCB) is a key driver behind this framework and clearly delineates urban and rural areas (Figure 11).

Within urban areas, Primary Growth Areas are identified for higher levels of housing and employment density and greater investment in transit service, community amenities, and infrastructure, including elements such as sidewalks, bike lanes, and parks/plazas. These growth areas take the form of Centres, Villages and Corridors. Supporting the growth areas are Neighbourhoods providing a range of ground-oriented housing options and local-serving Hubs. Over time, areas within the UCB will transition towards a 15-minute community. This process will occur gradually through long-term planning to guide land use change, redevelopment and investment in infrastructure and amenities/services.



First introduced in 1968 the Urban Containment Boundary delineates the boundary for urban and rural Saanich and the extent for urban infrastructure and service standards. While there have been changes over time, successive Councils have shown a strong commitment to maintaining this boundary. Protection of the UCB across the Capital Region is a key principle underlying the 2018 Regional Growth Strategy.

Figure 11. The Urban Containment Boundary

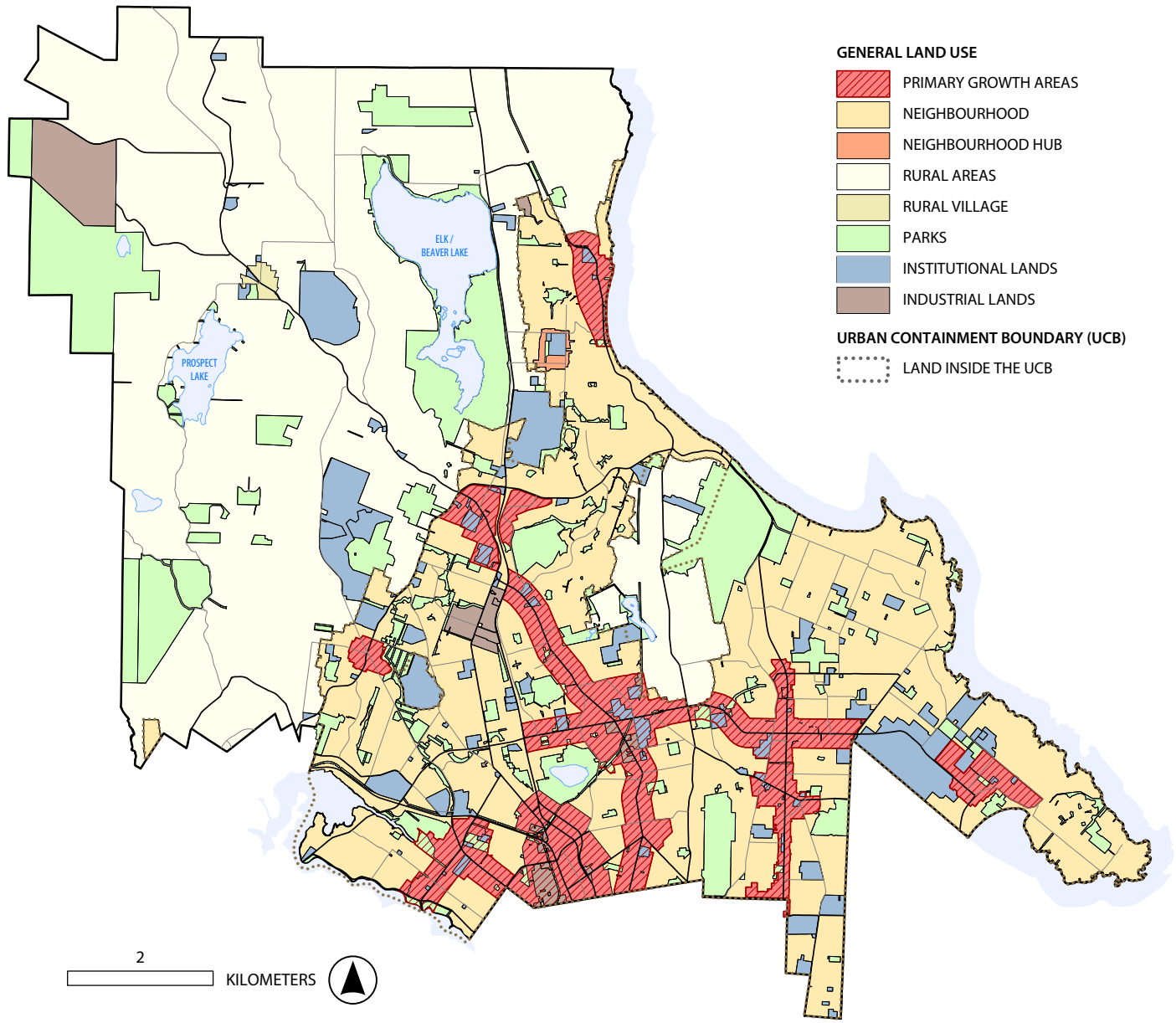
Rural areas in turn are characterized primarily by agricultural uses, natural areas, and limited single-detached housing on large lots (2+ hectares). These areas typically are not serviced by regional water and sewer infrastructure; they are generally car-dependent with limited transit and pedestrian/cycling infrastructure. A Rural Village located in the Prospect Lake area provides a small concentration of services and amenities serving this area of rural Saanich.

Complementing these uses are lands designated for institutional uses such as hospitals and education and research centres, as well as industrial lands. While primarily located within

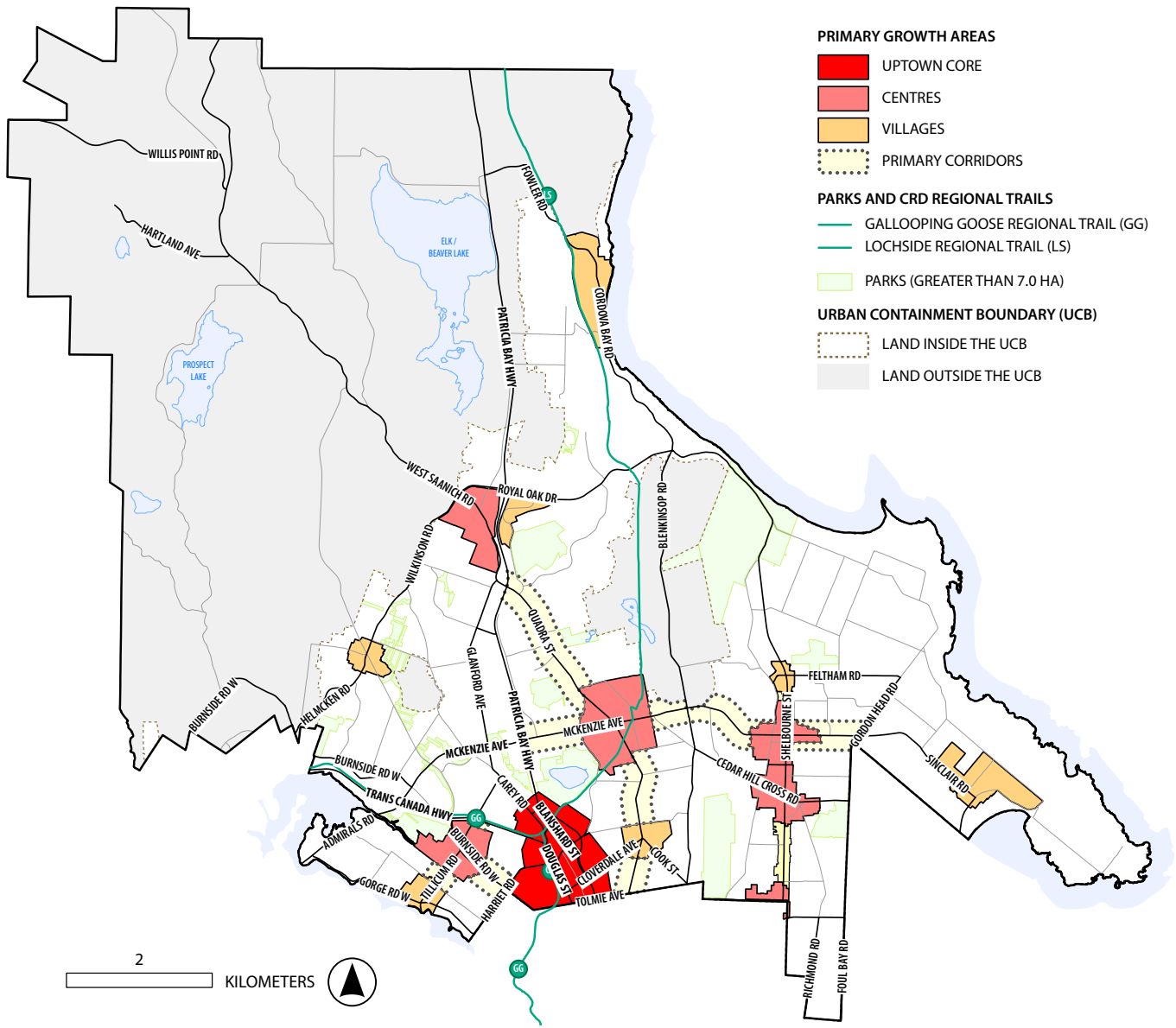
the UCB these uses are also found in rural areas. Commercial uses are found throughout the District but are concentrated in Primary Growth Areas. Parks are present in all areas of Saanich and protect natural areas and biodiversity and provide the community access to green space, beaches/water features, and a range of recreational opportunities.

Map 2 and Map 3 illustrate the future land use designations for Saanich while Table 2 provides a summary of their characteristics.





Map 2. Future Land Use Designations



Map 3. Primary Growth Areas

Table 2. Future Land Use Designations

Primary Growth Area Designations (Map 2 and Map 3)

Uptown Core

Description	Urban core of Saanich identified for significant growth and change. Supports highest levels of housing density, employment options and diversity of services/ amenities. Includes key transportation corridors and hosts a regional multi-modal transportation hub. Envisioned to become the central gathering place and “heart” of Saanich. Uptown Douglas Plan provides detailed policy direction for this area.
Uses	Mixed-use, commercial, residential, light industrial, mixed institutional, light industrial, parks/open space
Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High-rise buildings ▪ Mid-rise buildings ▪ Low-rise buildings ▪ Townhouses, including stacked and row house forms ▪ Houseplexes ▪ Industrial buildings
Height Maximum	As per the Uptown Douglas Plan, up to 18-storeys in the urban core with limited opportunity for buildings up to 24-storeys.

Centres

Description	Meet a broad range of community and regional commercial and service needs and contain significant employment and housing opportunities. Supported by sustainable transportation infrastructure, public spaces and high-quality urban design.
Uses	Commercial and mixed-use, civic and institutional, residential, live/work studios and office, residential, parks/open space
Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High-rise buildings (in limited locations) ▪ Mid-rise buildings ▪ Low-rise buildings ▪ Townhouses, including stacked and row house forms ▪ Houseplexes
Height Maximum	Up to 8-storeys. Up to 12-storeys considered where Centres overlap with Primary Corridors as per Policy 7.3.18 (Mckenzie-Quadra, Tillicum, University, Shelbourne, Hillside)

Villages

Description	Neighbourhood-serving activity centres that meet a range of local residents’ basic commercial and service needs. Provide a limited amount of multi-unit residential buildings and employment opportunities. Supported by sustainable transportation infrastructure, public spaces and high quality urban design.
Uses	Mixed-use (commercial/residential), residential, civic and institutional, live-work studios and office, parks/open space.

Table 2. Future Land Use Designations

Primary Growth Area Designations (Map 2 and Map 3)

Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mid-rise buildings (in limited locations) ▪ Low-rise buildings ▪ Townhouses, including stacked and row house forms ▪ Houseplexes ▪ Small lot Single Detached Dwelling with suite
Height Maximum	Up to 4-storeys in general however up to 6-storey mixed-use buildings considered where Villages overlap Primary Corridors as per Policy 7.3.22 (Gorge, Four Corners, Feltham).

Primary Corridors

Description	Sections of Major Roads that integrate high frequency transit service, active transportation infrastructure, and higher density housing options. Connect Centres and Village with each other and to major regional destinations/key transportation routes. These are primarily residential but include mixed-use development generally focused in small-scale Corridor Hubs.
Uses	Mixed-use, residential, institutional, commercial, parks/open space.
Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High-rise buildings (strategic sites where overlap exists with Centres) ▪ Mid-rise buildings ▪ Low-rise buildings ▪ Townhouses, including stacked and row house forms ▪ Houseplexes
Height Maximum	Up to 6-storeys overall Up to 12-storeys considered where Primary Corridors overlap Centres as per Policy 7.3.18 (Mckenzie-Quadra, Tillicum, University, Shelbourne, Hillside).

Corridor Hubs (Not mapped - to be identified through detailed planning)

Description	Local hubs which are located on a Primary Corridor and provide access to a small range of amenities that support daily living. These can include commercial/ service uses in mixed use developments, community facilities, and gathering places including a park or plaza. Buildings forms are at a scale consistent with Primary Corridors. A key network location for sustainable transportation infrastructure.
Uses	Mixed-use, residential, institutional, commercial, parks/open space
Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mid-rise buildings ▪ Low-rise buildings ▪ Townhouses, including stacked and row house forms
Height Maximum	Up to 6-storeys.

Table 2. Future Land Use Designations

Other Land Use Designations (Map 2)

Neighbourhoods

Description	Lower density residential areas providing housing choices in ground-oriented and low-rise apartment forms with convenient and safe access to sustainable transportation options. Commercial, institutional, and mixed-use developments will be considered at major intersections and/or adjacent to existing uses to provide access to amenities that support daily living.
Uses	Residential, institutional, commercial/mixed-use, parks/open space.
Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low-rise buildings ▪ Townhouses, including stacked and row house forms ▪ Houseplexes ▪ Single Detached Dwelling with suite
Height Maximum	Up to 4 storeys

Secondary Corridors (Not mapped - to be identified through detailed planning)

Description	Sections of Collector or Major Roads that integrate transit service and active transportation infrastructure with multi-unit housing forms. Connect neighbourhoods to Villages, Centres, and Hubs and are primarily residential.
Uses	Residential, mixed-use, commercial, institutional, live-work studios, parks/open space.
Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low-rise buildings ▪ Townhouses, including stacked and row house forms ▪ Houseplexes ▪ Small lot single-detached dwelling with suite
Height Maximum	Up to 4 storeys

Neighbourhood Hubs

Description	Small hubs which are typically located on a Secondary Corridor and provide access to amenities that support daily living. These can include small-scale services, community facilities, and a central gathering place including a park or plaza. Building forms are consistent in scale with Secondary Corridors. Function as an important local location for multi-modal sustainable transportation connections.
Uses	Residential, mixed-use, commercial, institutional, live-work studios, parks/open space.
Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low-rise buildings ▪ Townhouses including stacked and row house forms ▪ Houseplexes ▪ Small lot single-detached dwelling with suite
Height Maximum	Up to 4 storeys.

Table 2. Future Land Use Designations**Other Land Use Designations (Map 2)****Institutional Lands**

Description	Provide essential community services and contribute to community vibrancy. Support learning and research opportunities as well as local employment. Important network location for sustainable transportation options.
Uses	Includes but not limited to research/post-secondary institutions, clinics/hospitals/support homes, community facilities such as libraries, cultural venues, and recreation centres, and places of worship.
Forms/Heights	Mix of forms and heights dependent on use and context.

Industrial Lands

Description	Dedicated lands to support industrial and related uses. Important employment generator and network location for sustainable transportation options when located within the Urban Containment Boundary.
Uses	Mix of industrial and business park uses.
Forms/Heights	Mix of forms and heights dependent on use and context.

Rural Areas

Description	Support agricultural uses and food production. Protect natural areas and biodiversity and rural character/lifestyles. Located outside the Urban Containment Boundary.
Uses	Agricultural related uses, including accessory sales, larger lot residential, limited home-based businesses
Forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agriculture related structures, including for keeping animals and storing equipment ▪ Single Detached Dwellings

Rural Villages

Function	Small local activity centre providing basic commercial amenities for nearby residents. Located outside the Urban Containment Boundary.
Uses	Commercial, accessory residential
Forms	Small-scale commercial buildings
Maximum Height	Up to 2 storeys

Parks

Function	Protect natural assets and provide community recreation opportunities. Includes both Saanich and Capital Regional District parks.
Uses	Recreation, institutional, accessory agriculture (community gardens), natural areas protection.
Building Forms	Structures limited to support parks and recreation use.
Maximum Height	Up to 2 storeys

Examples of Building Forms

Houseplexes (up to 3-storeys)



Townhouses (up to 4-storeys, includes row and stacked forms)



Low-Rise (up to 4-storeys)



Mid-Rise (4 to 11-storeys)



High-Rise (over 12-storeys)



Mixed-Use and Commercial



Industrial (urban and standard)



General Policies

- 7.2.1 Evaluate applications for new development that seek changes to use, form and density in Saanich based on the future land use designation and corresponding heights identified on Map 2 and Map 3 and Table 2, as well as policies contained in all sections of this plan and other relevant Saanich policies and strategies.
- 7.2.2 Consider OCP amendments for increased residential density/height where proposed developments:
- Advance overall plan objectives;
 - Demonstrate architectural and site design excellence;
 - Meet applicable Design Guidelines with respect to building design, site layout, parking, access, and open space;
 - Are located in close proximity to services/amenities and frequent transit service; and,
 - Incorporate significant community contributions above what is required as per Council policy (a secured non-market or supportive housing component is strongly encouraged as part of these contributions).
- 7.2.3 Integrate land use planning with sustainable transportation options to reduce transportation-related carbon emissions and reduce total vehicles travelled in Saanich.
- 7.2.4 Enhance the active transportation and mobility network as part of development proposals, including through new connections, road dedications, and streetscape improvements as outlined in the Active Transportation Plan, area plans and/or other applicable plans.
- 7.2.5 Increase awareness of the responsibility of developers to protect archeological sites and artifacts and encourage compliance under the Heritage Conservation Act.
- 7.2.6 Assess potential impacts of proposed developments, including through studies that analyze impacts on transportation networks, parking, infrastructure capacity, natural areas and ecosystems, land use and building transitions, public views, shadowing, and shading.
- 7.2.7 Encourage land assembly that avoids isolating individual parcels that would be unable to meet development potential and/or the Design Guidelines associated with the proposed land use.
- 7.2.8 Discourage development applications that do not meet the development potential of the site based on its land use designation in the OCP and/or detailed plans.

7.3 Primary Growth Areas

Within the Urban Containment Boundary, most of Saanich's growth will be accommodated in walkable mixed-use Centres and Villages connected to each other and regional destinations by Corridors. As Saanich accommodates a higher proportion of its population in Centres, Villages, and Corridors (Primary Growth Areas) over time, the livability of these areas will be vital to Saanich's future success as a sustainable, resilient community.

To accommodate future population growth and support current residents, these Primary Growth Areas will require additional public and private investment in infrastructure, services and amenities. Viable alternatives to single-vehicle travel will be essential, including planning for and investing in transit and active transportation infrastructure concurrently or in advance of major redevelopment. Higher standards of urban design, active streetscapes, and public gathering spaces are needed to create a vibrant public realm.

Public access to quality green space and natural areas in accordance with the 3-30-300 principle (Section 6.2) will be important for mental and physical well-being as housing forms planned for Primary Growth Areas typically have lower levels of private outdoor space and will be more reliant on public open space and green space. Incorporating trees, green space and natural areas is also essential for the provision of ecosystem services such as shade, maintenance of air quality, drainage and carbon sequestration and to ensure that key natural areas in the community are connected and Saanich's urban ecology and biodiversity is resilient and continues to thrive.

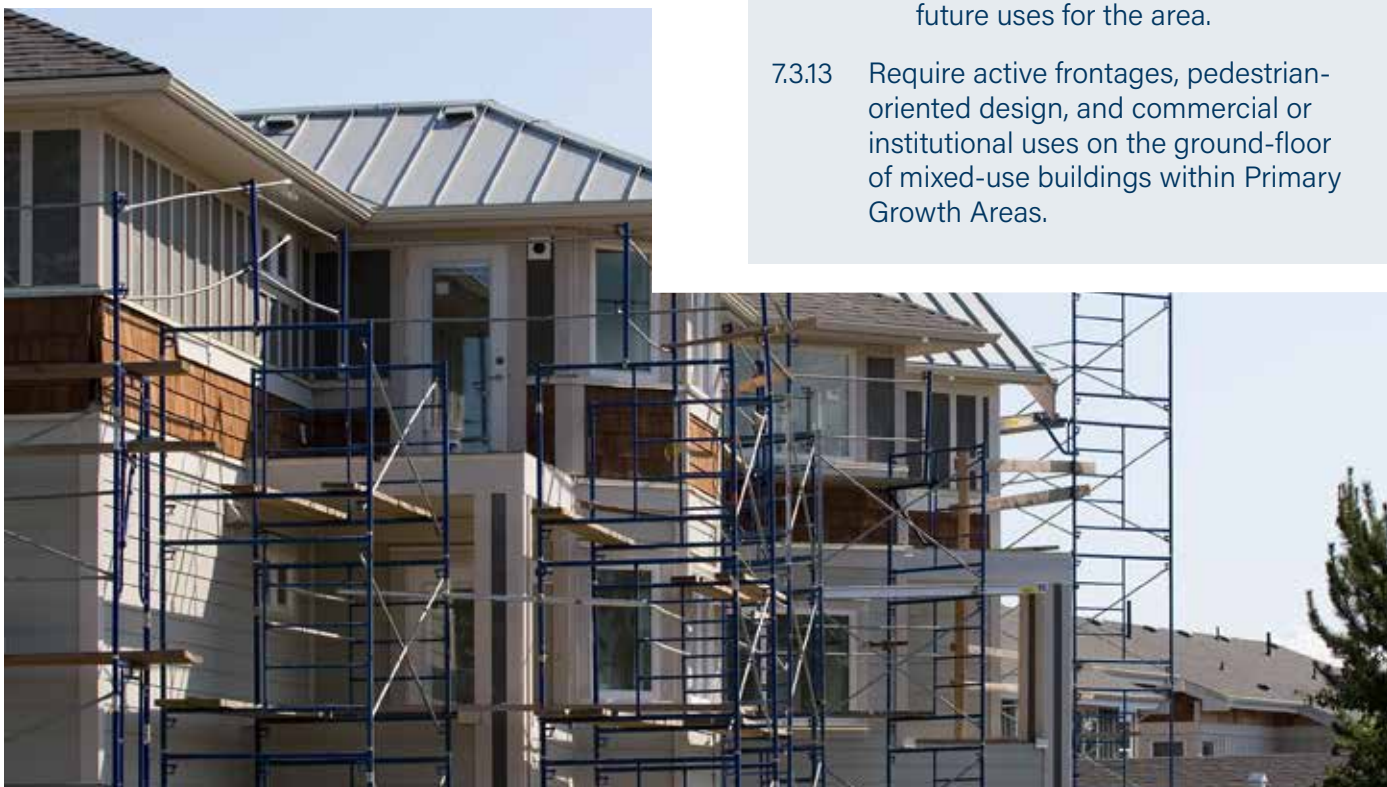
An important component of planning for Primary Growth Areas is also planning for building form and density transitions within the growth area and into adjacent Neighbourhood areas. While these transitions will be implemented largely at the individual project level, this plan provides guidance on desired transition patterns for Primary Growth Areas as a whole. Recognizing the 50+ year lifespan of new developments and realities of incremental site by site redevelopment, decisions will be made based on supporting desired long-term uses; transitions may be sub-optimal in the short-term as the area moves towards the long-term vision.

Policies

- 7.3.1 Direct the majority of Saanich's residential and employment growth into Centres, Villages and Corridors and support these areas with higher levels of investment in infrastructure, community services, parks, and public spaces.
- 7.3.2 Complete detailed plans for all Primary Growth Areas in consultation with the community and update these on a five-year cycle.
- 7.3.3 Support developments in Centres and Villages that:
- Encourage a diversity of lifestyle, housing, economic and cultural opportunities;
 - Enhance the mix of uses that supports area vibrancy;
 - Provide publically accessible open space that complements the public realm, and create identifiable focal points within each growth area;
 - Set aside land for public open space in the form of natural areas, parks, playgrounds, open air plazas, and other assembly and activity spaces;
 - Encourage the integration of residential, commercial, and institutional land uses both within buildings and between adjacent sites;
 - Support the integration of institutional uses as community focal points to maximize opportunities for accessing essential social amenities and services; and,
 - Create or enhance a unique "sense of place".
- 7.3.4 Develop Primary Growth Areas to be pedestrian-oriented including through generous sidewalks, places to sit, active building frontages, high quality urban design and landscaping/shade trees with a focus on accessibility.

- 7.3.5 Assess development applications through an urban ecology lens, including through assessing how projects contribute to ecosystem services, climate resiliency, biodiversity, and the urban forest.
- 7.3.6 Develop potential tools including regulations, policies, and Design Guidelines to incorporate biodiversity and ecosystem services into Primary Growth Areas.
- 7.3.7 Work with BC transit to ensure land use policies and transit investments reinforce the development of complete Centres, Villages, and Corridors through convenient, safe and comfortable access to transit
- 7.3.8 Develop Primary Growth Areas with multi-modal transportation connections where different forms of sustainable transportation options are integrated.
- 7.3.9 Provide for a range of housing options by location, type, tenure, and affordability levels throughout Primary Growth Areas to increase housing options for a diverse range of households.

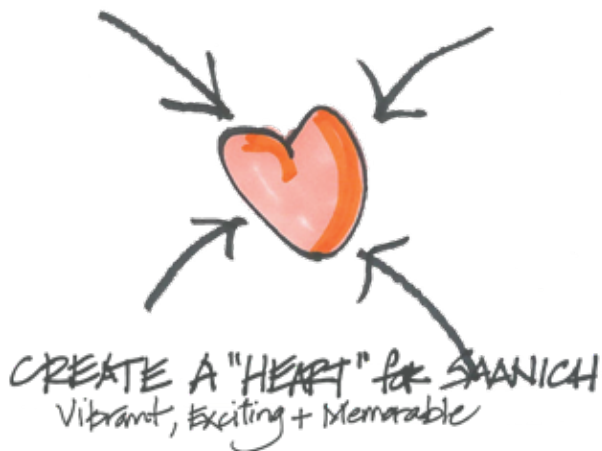
- 7.3.10 Consider the use of variances, housing agreements, covenants, phased development agreements and density bonusing to secure public amenities such as open space, playgrounds, landmarks, focal points, activity centres or cultural features as part the development application process.
- 7.3.11 Concentrate the greatest densities of residential and employment activity near the centre or focal area of each Centre/Village and locate lower densities near the periphery of the Centre or Village area.
- 7.3.12 Further to Policy 7.3.11, assess development applications that do not follow this general transition pattern based on the following contextual considerations:
- Site access and road classification;
 - Size of site (preference for large sites and/or land assemblies)
 - Adjacency to services/amenities (either existing or planned in future);
 - Proximity and suitable access to a frequent transit route; and,
 - Compatibility with the desired future uses for the area.
- 7.3.13 Require active frontages, pedestrian-oriented design, and commercial or institutional uses on the ground-floor of mixed-use buildings within Primary Growth Areas.



Uptown Core

The **Uptown Core** is located in the middle of the Capital Region and is a strategic location for significant growth and regional movement. The broad diversity of land uses and level of intensity make this a unique and dynamic area which is home to:

- Close to 10,000 employment opportunities with over 600 individual employers;
- Diverse retail, public and institutional services such as the Saanich Municipal Campus (Municipal Hall, Fire Station, and Police Station), the regional school board offices, a regional library and four shopping centres (Uptown Shopping Centre, Saanich Plaza, Island Home Centre, and Gateway Village);
- Regionally significant multi-modal transportation corridors including a major transit hub for several Rapid, Frequent and Local routes, the intersection of the Galloping Goose and Lochside Regional Trails, and key road network connections essential to the movement of goods and personal vehicles; and,
- An evolving housing stock to support a rapidly growing population that is anticipated to double as new residential and mixed used developments are built.



While Saanich is a community of highly identifiable and valued neighbourhoods, it lacks a singular, shared space for its residents to gather. The Uptown Core is envisioned to become this central location and function as the heart of the community. The Uptown Douglas Plan provides detailed policy guidance on future development in this area. This includes creating a vibrant public

realm and livable neighbourhood with high quality pedestrian-oriented design, housing options, access to green space/infrastructure, a wide range of amenities to support both daily living and District-level services, and a multi-modal transportation hub linked to a broad network of sustainable transportation options.

Policies

- 7.3.14 Support development which reinforces the primacy of the Uptown Core as per the Uptown Douglas Area Plan to provide a central growth area and create an urban core for Saanich.
- 7.3.15 Support the following forms and uses in the Uptown Core as per the Uptown Douglas Plan:
- High-rise mixed use or commercial buildings (up to 18 storeys);
 - Mid-to-high rise multi-unit residential building and/or mixed use (up to 12 storeys);
 - Light industrial (up to 8 storeys);
 - Mixed institutional (up to 8 storeys);
 - Low-to-mid-rise residential buildings (up to 6 storeys); and
 - Ground-oriented multi-unit residential including houseplex, rowhouse and townhouse (up to 3 storeys).
- 7.3.16 In addition to Policy 7.3.15, support applications within the Uptown Douglas Plan "Core" land use designation seeking to construct buildings up to 24 storeys where conditions identified in the Uptown Douglas Plan have been satisfied.
- 7.3.17 Implement land use, transportation and urban design policies for Significant Street Corridors identified in the Uptown-Douglas Plan, including Douglas Street, Blanshard Street, Vernon Avenue and Saanich Road.

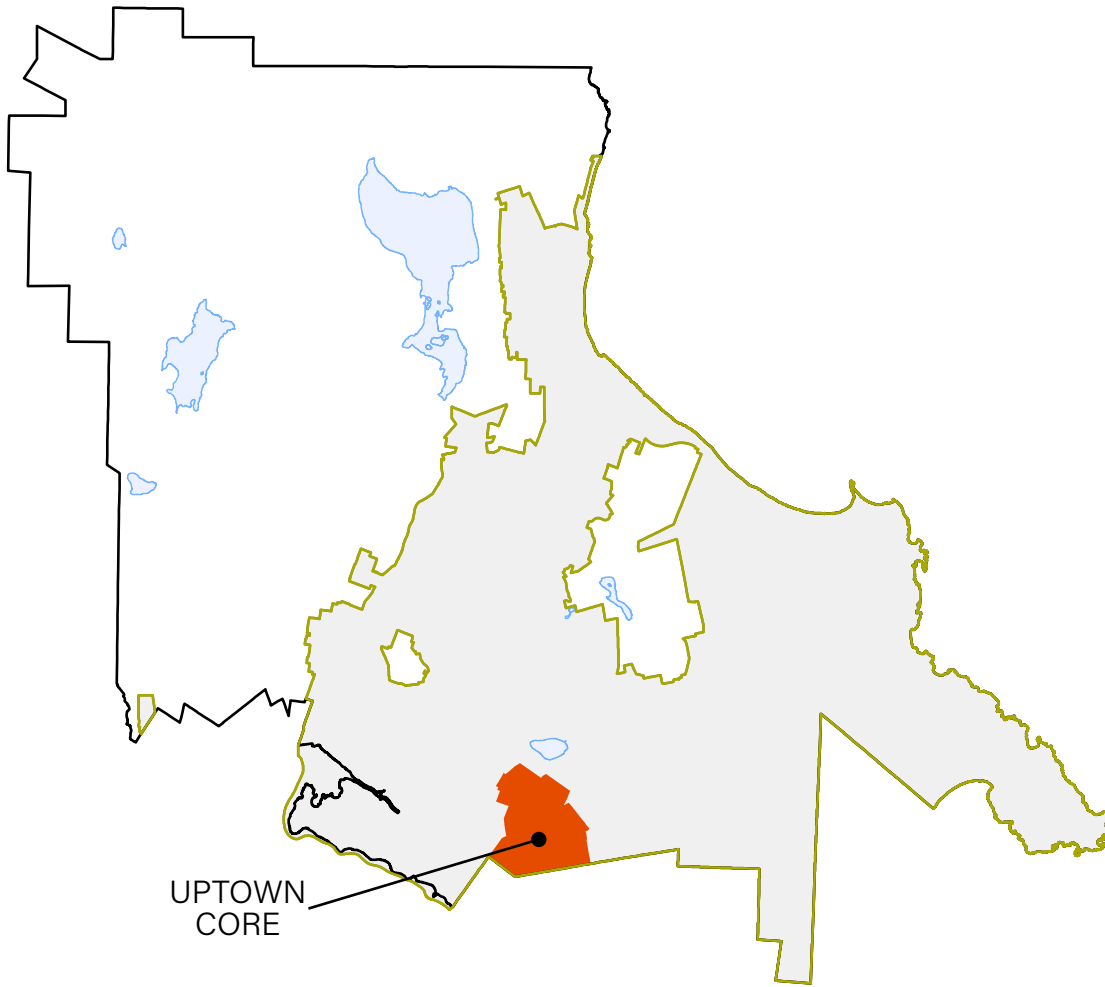


Figure 12. Uptown Core



Centres

Centres are intended to meet a broad range of community and regional commercial and service needs and contain significant employment and housing opportunities. They are vibrant pedestrian-oriented spaces and include public gathering places, green spaces and green infrastructure, and high-quality urban design. These typically include major transportation corridors and are served

by multiple transit routes integrated with active transportation (walking/biking/rolling) networks. Centres provide a range of multi-unit housing forms, including non-market and rental options, and accommodate institutional uses such as community centre and library.

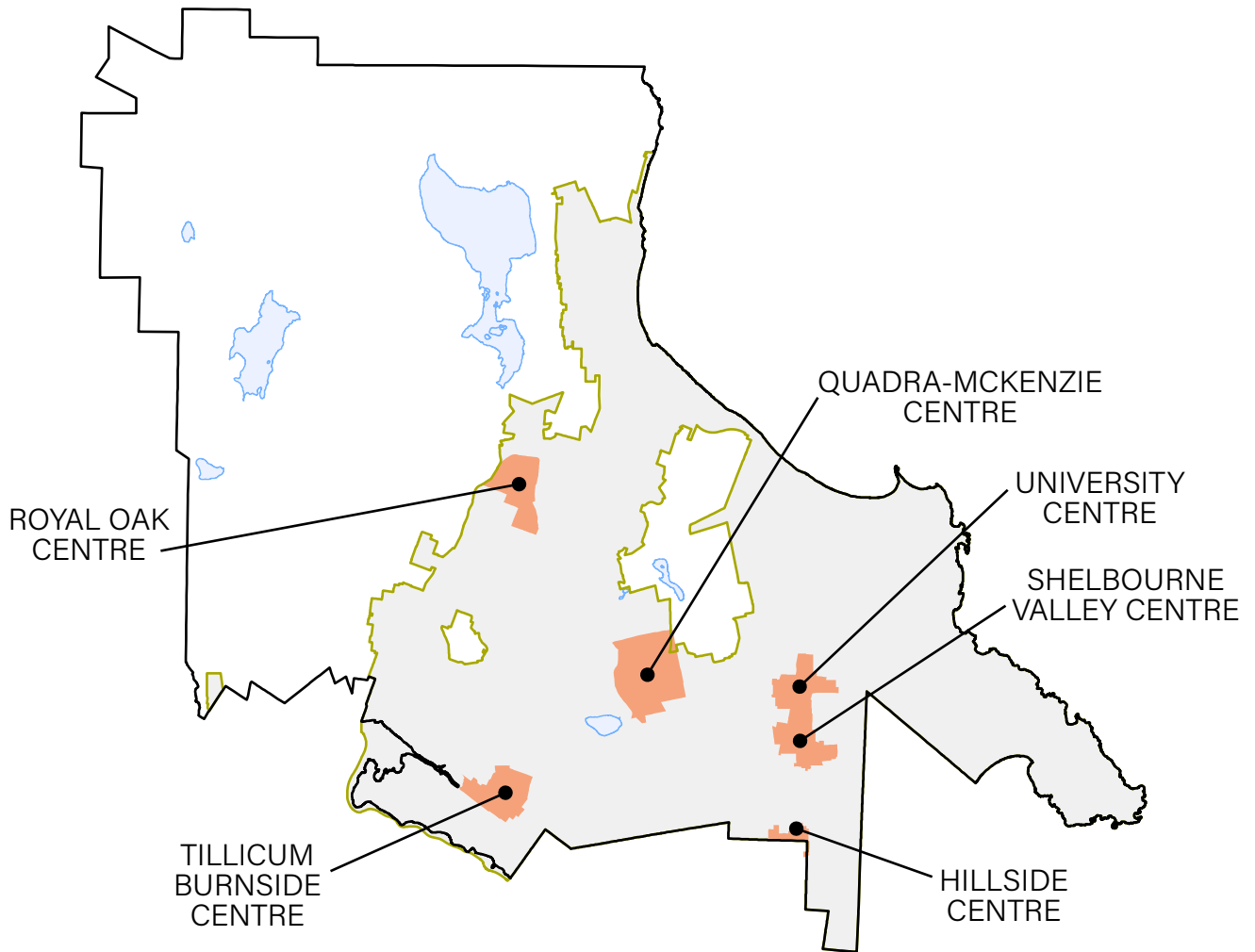


Figure 13. Centres

Policies

7.3.18 Support the following used and building forms in Centres:

- a. Commercial and mixed-use (up to 8 storeys);
- b. Civic and institutional (generally up to 8 storeys);
- c. Live/work studios & Office (up to 8 storeys);
- d. Mid-rise residential (up to 8 storeys);
- e. Low-rise residential and stacked townhomes (up to 4 storeys); and,
- f. Townhomes/row houses (up to 3 storeys).

7.3.19 In addition to Policy 7.3.18, consider applications for mixed use, institutional, or commercial high-rise building forms above 8 storeys in areas where Centres overlap with Primary Corridors provided they meet the following criteria:

- a. Are a maximum of 12 storeys in height;
- b. Are located at key intersections/ focal points or on central large sites;
- c. Demonstrate advancement of Plan objectives, as appropriate to the site;

- d. Demonstrate how increased building height can contribute to on-site open space and public realm improvements;
- e. Include pedestrian generating ground-floor commercial or institutional uses; and,
- f. Provide an appropriate level of community amenities for a project of this scale as per the Community Amenity Contribution and Inclusionary Housing policy.

7.3.20 Assess mid and high-rise building forms (developments greater than four storeys) based on the following considerations:

- a. Demonstrated application of good urban design for the applicable form as per the Design Guidelines;
- b. Location on a large enough site to incorporate adequate transition in building form, massing, siting, and height to adjacent parcels based on future land use designations;
- c. Provision of ground-floor commercial or residential units (depending on building type) with individual exterior accesses to each unit; and,
- d. Provision of all parking underground, with the exception of limited visitor and/or commercial parking.



Urban Villages

Urban Villages are neighbourhood-serving activity areas that meet a broad-range of local residents' basic commercial and service needs. They provide housing options in multi-unit residential buildings as well as employment opportunities. Villages are pedestrian-oriented and are an important component of making Saanich a 15-minute community, as they provide walkable access to services and amenities for adjacent primarily residential areas. Villages are typically serviced

by at least one frequent transit route and provide links to the broader active transportation network, including AAA cycling facilities. Villages also include at least one central public gathering place in the form of a park and/or plaza as well as green infrastructure. Saanich has seven Urban Villages. Saanich has one Rural Village (Prospect Lake Village) discussed in Section 7.7.

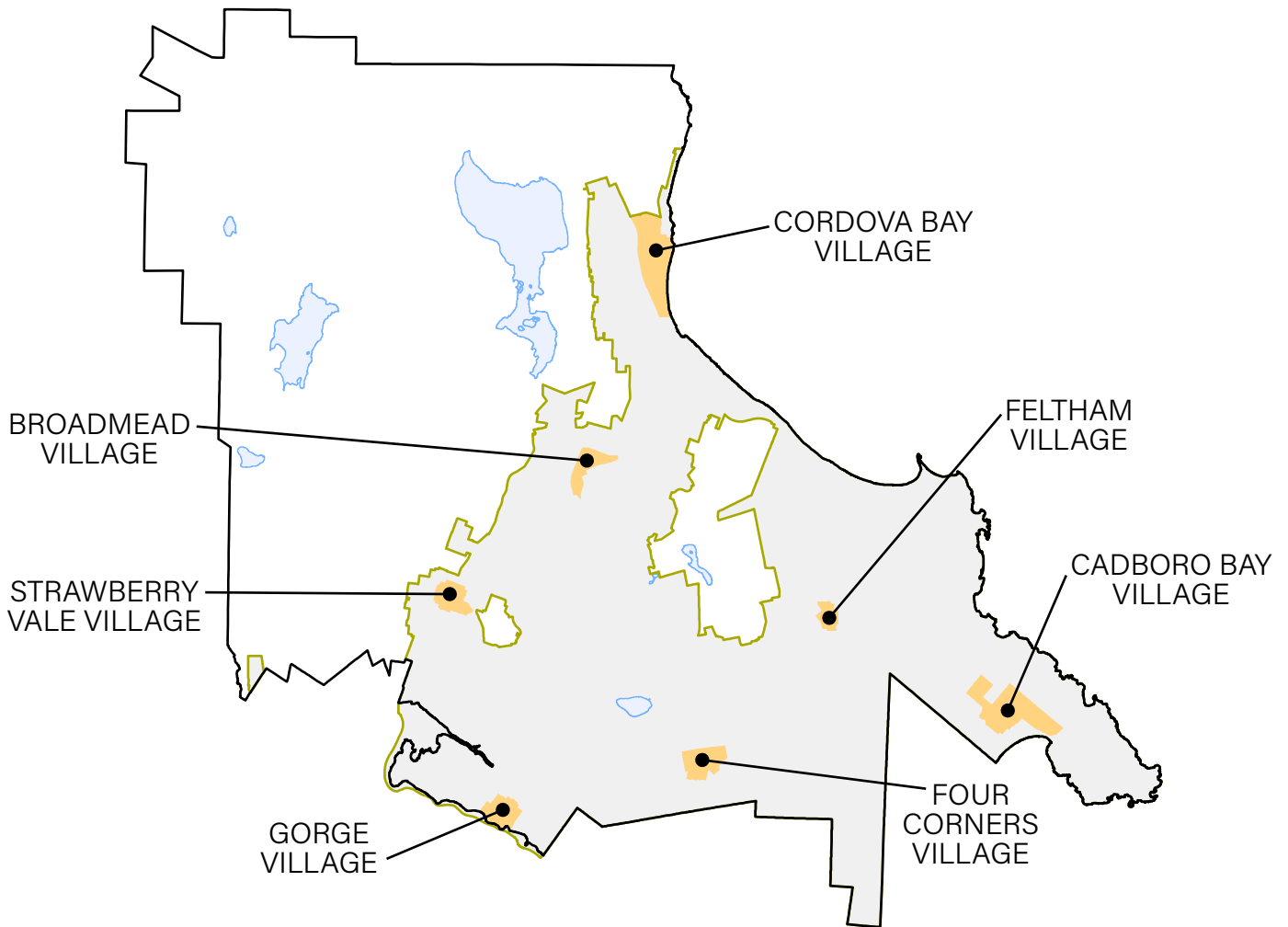


Figure 14. Villages within the Urban Containment Boundary

Policies

7.3.21 Support the following used and building forms in Villages:

- a. Mixed-use (commercial / residential) (up to 4 storeys);
- b. Low-rise residential and stacked townhouses (up to 4 storeys);
- c. Civic and institutional (generally up to 4 storeys);
- d. Live-work studios & Office (generally up to 4 storeys)
- e. Town houses, including row houses (up to 3 storeys);
- f. Houseplexes and other ground-oriented housing forms (up to 3 storeys); and,
- g. Small lot single-detached dwelling with suite (up to 2 storeys).

7.3.22 In addition to Policy 7.3.21, consider applications for mixed use (residential and commercial/institutional) mid-rise building forms above 4 storeys in areas where Primary Corridors overlap with Villages provided they meet the following criteria:

- a. Are a maximum of 6 storeys in height;

- b. Demonstrate advancement of objectives in all sections of the Plan, as appropriate to the site;
- c. Demonstrate how increased building height can contribute to on-site open space or public realm improvements;
- d. Include pedestrian generating ground-floor commercial or institutional uses; and
- e. Provide an appropriate level of community amenities for a project of this scale as per the Community Amenity Contribution and Inclusionary Housing policy.

7.3.23 Require pedestrian generating commercial or institutional uses on the ground-floor of mixed use buildings within core areas of Villages.

7.3.24 Support a diverse mix of innovative ground-oriented housing forms within a five-minute walk (400-metres) of Villages.



Primary Corridors

Primary Corridors connect Saanich’s Centres and Villages to each other and to major regional destinations/key transportation routes. They provide diverse higher density housing options integrated with frequent transit service and linked with active transportation infrastructure, notably the All Ages and Abilities cycling network. High-quality built form, public realm design, green infrastructure and landscaping supports a pedestrian-oriented streetscape. In Saanich, Primary Corridors are primarily residential in nature but provide easy access to services/amenities in nearby Centres and Villages. Significant Streets within the Uptown Douglas Plan area, such as Douglas Street and Blanshard Street, are addressed in the Uptown Core section.

Local serving mixed use Corridor Hubs will be identified along Primary Corridors outside Centres and Villages through future detailed planning. These Hubs will be smaller in scale than Villages or Centres, but will provide access to a small range of amenities to support daily living and are part of Saanich’s transition over time to a 15-minute community. They could include commercial/service uses in mixed use developments, community facilities, and gathering places including a park or plaza, and provide a location for greater community activity. Building forms will be at a scale and intensity consistent with Primary Corridors. These Hubs will become a key network location for sustainable transportation infrastructure. There are currently no Corridor Hubs identified in Saanich.

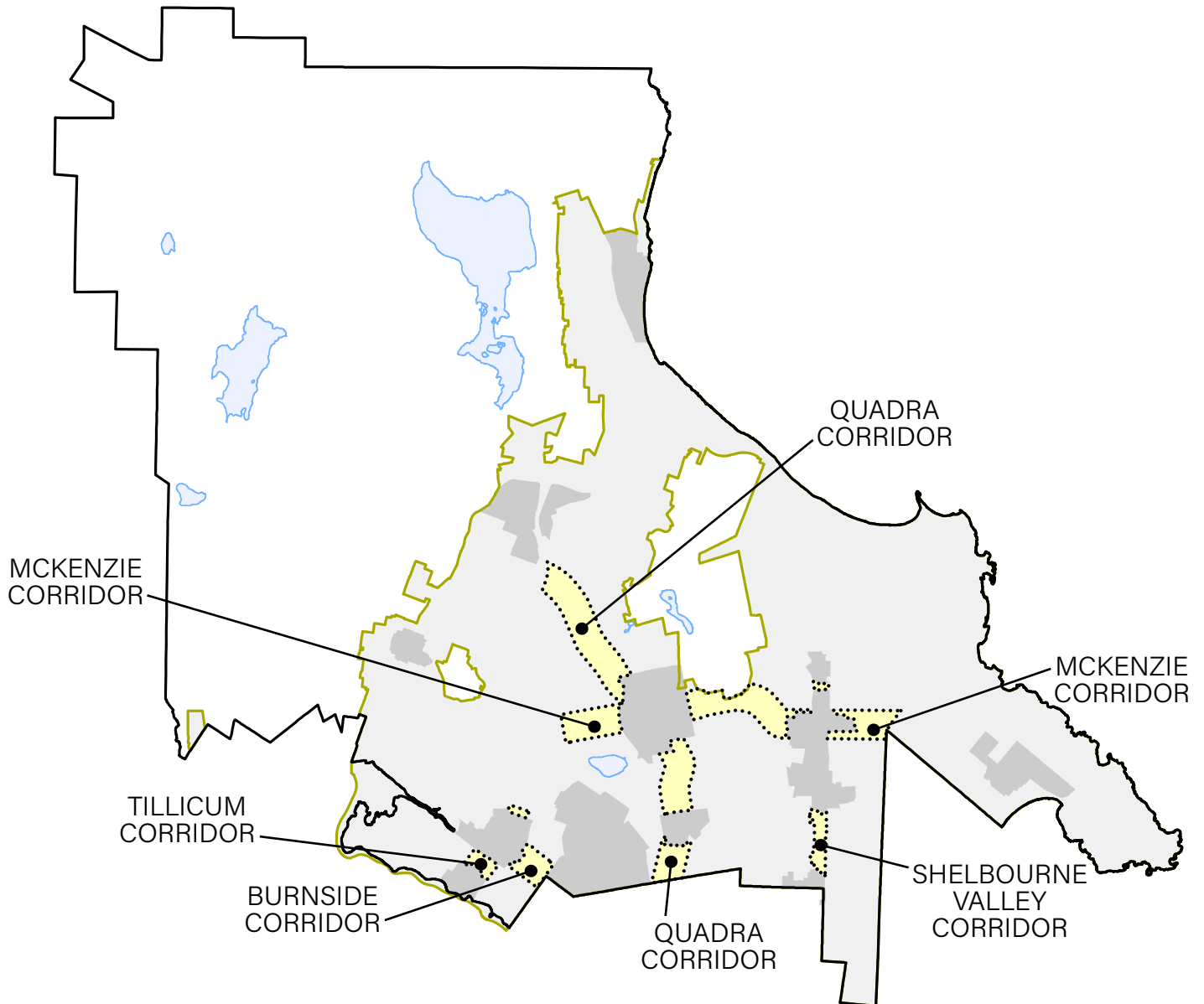


Figure 15. Primary Corridors

Policies

- 7.3.25 Support the following uses and building forms within Primary Corridors:
- Mixed-use with commercial and residential (up to 6 storeys);
 - Mid-rise residential (up to 6 storeys);
 - Low-rise residential and stacked townhouses (up to 4 storeys);
 - Townhouses, including row houses (up to 3 storeys); and,
 - Houseplexes.
- 7.3.26 Further to Policy 7.3.25, consider applications for mixed-use / residential up to 12-storeys where Primary Corridors overlap with Centers as per Policy 7.3.18.
- 7.3.27 Support redevelopment and renewal on Primary Corridors to offer a mix of housing types and tenures at densities which support transit and active transportation investment.
- 7.3.28 Design all Primary Corridors to safely and comfortably accommodate walking, cycling and transit facilities for all ages and abilities.

7.3.29 Where Primary Corridors overlap with Centres and Villages, apply policy direction from both relevant sections when assessing proposed applications and land use changes.

7.3.30 Work with adjacent municipalities to identify and plan for Primary Corridors which cross or abut municipal boundaries. Potential considerations include but are not limited to land use types and intensities, building forms and heights, traffic impacts, transit service, parks and other community amenities, intermunicipal shared services and infrastructure, drainage, and active transportation connections.

7.3.31 Focus the greatest intensity and growth of employment activity in Centres and Villages with Primary Corridors having intermittent employment uses primarily located in Corridor Hubs and/or in a mixed-use residential building.

7.3.32 Identify new Corridor Hubs in locations that build on existing community destinations / commercial uses and/or respond to gaps in the walkable 15-minute community network through detailed planning and community consultation.

7.3.33 Encourage the retention of corner stores and local service centres as a means to support a walkable 15-minute community and act as a potential catalyst for new Villages or Corridor Hubs as identified through detailed planning.



7.4 Neighbourhoods

Neighbourhoods represent Saanich's suburban, lower density residential areas. These typically include residential areas, parks and beaches, trails, and institutions such as schools, daycares and recreation facilities. Single detached homes are the dominant housing form in Saanich's Neighbourhoods, with a limited number of duplex and townhouse developments and a small number of low-rise apartment buildings primarily located along established transportation routes and/or adjacent to a significant amenity. Almost all Neighbourhood areas permit secondary suites and garden suites, which provide an important source of rental housing in the community.

Many of Saanich's Neighbourhood areas have curvilinear street patterns and cul-de-sacs, making it challenging to walk to nearby services and amenities, and to provide frequent and efficient transit service. This street pattern is also costly to build, maintain, and service.

This suburban form and limited housing diversity is the result of zoning practices over the last decades, which explicitly excluded all forms and uses other than detached homes, and limited properties to one dwelling unit. This type of zoning is now being criticized for the high cost of infrastructure relative to the density of housing, the lack of flexibility in housing types and forms, street patterns that increase car-dependency, and excluding the uses that create complete communities.

However, Neighbourhood areas also provide important amenities such as green space, parks, and schools. Established areas are well-loved for their abundant green space and access to nature. Additionally, they are well serviced with District water and sewer. Large lot sizes provide adequate space for adding additional dwellings, such as garden suites, while maintaining privacy. There is a range of walkability within Saanich neighbourhoods, and some have good access to public transit, multi-use trails, and/or close proximity to Primary Growth Areas. These opportunities well-position Neighbourhoods to support additional infill development - promoting more sustainable land use patterns and increasing housing options.

With an increased focus on creating a walkable, climate resilient community in Saanich, Neighbourhood areas can evolve to provide more diverse housing and sustainable transportation options. While the Primary Growth Areas will

take most of the new growth, Neighbourhoods see new growth through diverse, residential infill development (e.g., houseplexes and townhouses) that fits within neighbourhood scale and helps meet Saanich's housing objectives. Low density mixed use, and small-scale commercial uses can further support a walkable 15-minute community making Neighbourhoods more livable. Cycling and pedestrian infrastructure serving Neighbourhoods will continue to grow with the ongoing implementation of the Active Transportation Plan.



Infill Development

Infill development is new construction or renovations which make use of vacant or underutilized parcels, and which may be substantially different from the present or previous use of the parcel.



Policies

- 7.4.1 Support Neighbourhoods as primarily residential areas while also working towards making Saanich a 15-minute community where all households are within a 15-minute walk (1.2 km) of key amenities that support daily living.
- 7.4.2 Ensure Neighbourhoods include a mix of housing tenures, including non-market, rental, ownership and co-operative housing.
- 7.4.3 Support a range of mostly ground-oriented housing forms in Neighbourhoods, including:
- Single detached dwelling and secondary suites / garden suites;
 - Houseplexes (up to 3 storeys);
 - Townhouses/rowhouses (up to 3 storeys);
 - Small-scale apartments;
 - Live/work and home occupations; and
 - Other innovative, ground-oriented housing forms.
- 7.4.4 Assess the suitability of increased residential density through infill applications in Neighbourhoods based on the following criteria:
- Proximity to transit, services/ amenities, community facilities and the Active Transportation network;
 - Size and orientation of the parcel and ability to provide sustainable transportation options, maintain mature trees and provide adequate open space to enable livability and privacy;
 - Compatibility with existing neighbourhood context in terms of setbacks, massing, building materials, and access;
 - Provision of a mix of unit sizes and types;
- Underground infrastructure service capacity.
- 7.4.5 Further to Policy 7.4.4, consider 4-storey residential or mixed- use forms in limited locations in Neighbourhoods where:
- The site meets one of the following locational criteria:
 - Along a Major Road or a frequent transit route;
 - Within a 800-m (ten minute walk) of the core of a Centre;
 - Within a 400-m (five minute walk) of the core of a Primary Corridor or a Village; or
 - Within a Neighbourhood Hub or on a Secondary Corridor, as identified through detailed planning;
 - The site is large enough to accommodate the proposed use, as well as required access, open space/green infrastructure, parking, and design guideline considerations;
 - The site has convenient access to a Major or Collector Road; and,
 - Underground service capacity exists or can be provided.
- 7.4.6 Undertake a neighbourhood infill study to support the provision of additional housing consistent with neighbourhood scale.
- 7.4.7 Reduce barriers to infill housing in Neighbourhoods through regulatory and zoning changes.
- 7.4.8 Update the Zoning Bylaw and Design Guidelines to develop new zones and guidelines so that infill development is well-designed and compatible with neighbourhood scale.



- 7.4.9 Support improvements to neighbourhood and community parks, beaches, and community/recreation facilities to reinforce their role as local gathering spaces and focal points in the community.
- 7.4.10 Enhance neighbourhood connectivity and walkability through adding new and improving existing pedestrian and cycling connections, including through the development process, to make active travel forms safer and more convenient.
- 7.4.11 Where heritage or Indigenous cultural assets are potentially impacted through redevelopment, require applicants to explore opportunities and innovative tools to protect, rehabilitate, restore and/or formally designate these assets as appropriate.
- 7.4.12 Support new and existing institutional land uses that provide amenities that support daily living within a 15-minute community.
- 7.4.13 Support home-based businesses that are compatible with residential neighbourhoods.
- 7.4.14 In areas where Neighbourhood Hubs are not yet identified:
- Consider small scale commercial uses and services at high profile intersections, near high activity transit-stops and along the All Ages and Abilities cycling network; and,
 - Discourage commercial uses mid-block unless adjacent to an existing commercial use.

Secondary Corridors and Neighbourhood Hubs

While none are identified yet, Secondary Corridors will connect Saanich's Centres and Villages to adjacent Neighbourhood areas. Located on sections of Collector or Major Roads they will function as important local transportation routes, integrating sustainable transportation options with land use, including multi-unit housing forms up to

four-storeys. They are primarily residential in nature but support small-scale commercial/services in mixed use developments and provide convenient access to Centres, Villages, and Hubs. Secondary Corridors will be identified in consultation with the community through upcoming detailed planning processes.

Neighbourhood Hubs, which are typically located on a Secondary Corridor, provide access to amenities that support daily living and support Saanich's transition to a 15-minute community. These can include small-scale services, community facilities, and a central gathering place including a park or plaza. Building forms are consistent in scale and intensity with Secondary Corridors. These hubs are important local network locations for sustainable transportation infrastructure. Cordova Ridge, identified in the 2021 Cordova Bay Local Area Plan process, is Saanich's first Neighbourhood Hub. Additional Neighbourhood Hubs will be identified in consultation with the community through detailed planning processes.

Policies

- 7.4.15 Identify Secondary Corridors and additional Neighbourhood Hubs through upcoming detailed planning in consultation with the community.
- 7.4.16 Support the following uses and building forms along Secondary Corridors and in Neighbourhood Hubs:
- Mixed-use with small-scale commercial and residential (up to 4 storeys);
 - Live-work studios & office (up to 4 storeys)
 - Low-rise residential (up to 4 storeys); and
 - Townhouses, including row houses (up to 3 storeys); and,
 - Houseplexes (up to 3 storeys).
 - Small lot single-detached dwelling with suite (up to 2 storeys).

7.5 Schools, Knowledge Centres and Institutional Lands

Knowledge workers are an essential resource for creating and sustaining a strong economy, society and culture. A Knowledge Centre works to create and support an environment of information and technology transfer that nurtures the start up, incubation and development of innovation-led knowledge based businesses. Saanich has three such Centres, namely: The former Glendale Lands which combines the Vancouver Island Technology Park (VITP), the Pacific Horticultural Centre, the Glendale Garden and Woodlands and Camosun College's Interurban Campus; the University of Victoria; and the Camosun College Lansdowne Campus. Individual institutional land uses (Map 4) also play an important role in the life of the community and its physical appearance. Saanich has several major institutional uses of regional and community-wide significance, including the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory and the Royal Jubilee Hospital.

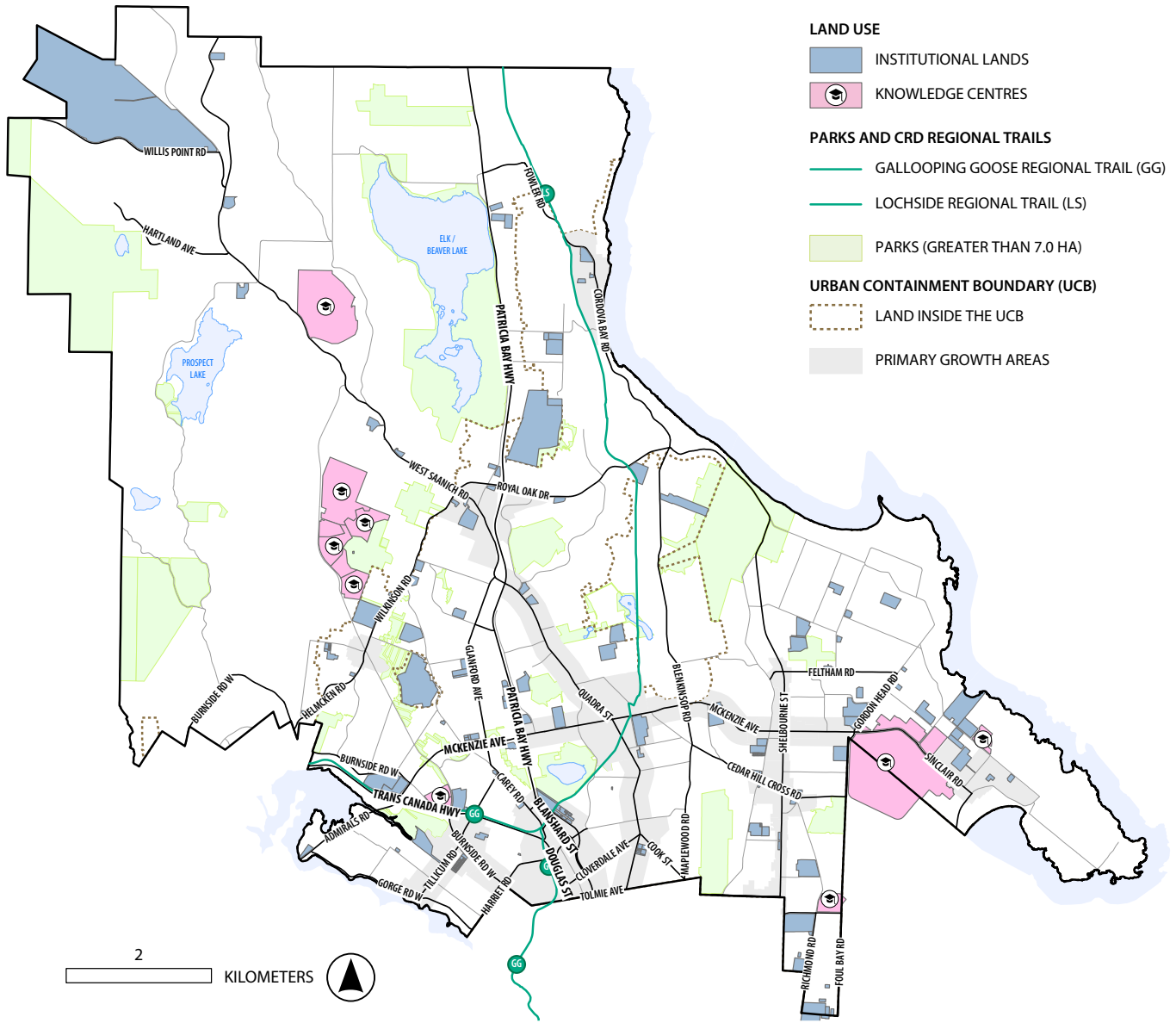
Knowledge Centres and larger institutional uses generate significant employment activity with thousands of people travelling to and from these sites every day. Providing high levels of transit service and active mobility infrastructure to these sites will support Saanich's transition to a net-zero community while also supporting individual health and well-being. These large uses are also typically in a position to play a leadership role in exploring innovative sustainable design strategies to increase building efficiency and resilience.

Smaller institutional uses such as places of worship, schools, daycare centres, nursing homes, community residential facilities, and government facilities are located throughout the community. These add to community vibrancy, provide local employment opportunities, and support walkable 15-minute neighbourhoods.

Historically, most institutional uses have been accepted as integral parts of their neighbourhoods. However, because larger institutions can have an impact on adjacent areas, they need to be sensitively integrated with their surroundings. Key elements such as traffic generation, access, lot size, open space, environmental impact, and building scale and design need to be considered in siting institutional buildings, along with an understanding of the proposed use.

The redevelopment of institutional lands can also have a significant impact on the community in terms of loss of valued open space and a neighbourhood social focal point. At the same time, this redevelopment and/or intensification of institutional sites generates opportunities for new partnerships and ideas to incorporate non-market and/or affordable rental housing units into the community.







Policies

- 7.5.1 Review development applications for institutions considering such factors as: intended use, servicing, multi-modal access, integration of active transportation into site design, traffic generation, proximity to transit routes, lot size, open space, scale, neighbourhood context, accessibility, and environmental impacts.
- 7.5.2 Work with institutional land owners to incorporate non-market housing and/or affordable rental housing into site redevelopment and/or intensification projects. This includes identifying potential non-profit partners and government funding sources for the land owners to consider and explore as part of their application process.
- 7.5.3 Require institutional uses to locate within the Urban Containment Boundary and outside the ALR, except where they preserve large amounts of land as open space or provide other community amenities.
- 7.5.4 Liaise with the institutional land owners to address operational and neighbourhood concerns, as required.
- 7.5.5 Encourage institutional land owners to preserve on-site open space and make it publicly accessible.
- a. That rezoning of existing public school sites to allow for non-institutional uses shall only be supported where the proposed use would result in:
 - i. The setting aside of at least 50% of the site as publicly-accessible open space or;
 - ii. Provision of other significant neighbourhood public amenities,

- b. That consideration be given to amending the institutional zoning of public schools by introducing restrictive maximum lot coverage and increased setbacks in order to encourage the retention of existing open space.

7.5.6 Continue to support the research capabilities of the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory by enforcing the lighting regulations and establishing municipal policy for playing field lighting and consider regulations for residential outdoor lighting.

7.5.7 Work with the CRD, member municipalities, First Nations governments, and other stakeholders, to identify suitable locations for significant regional institutions.



7.6 Industrial Lands

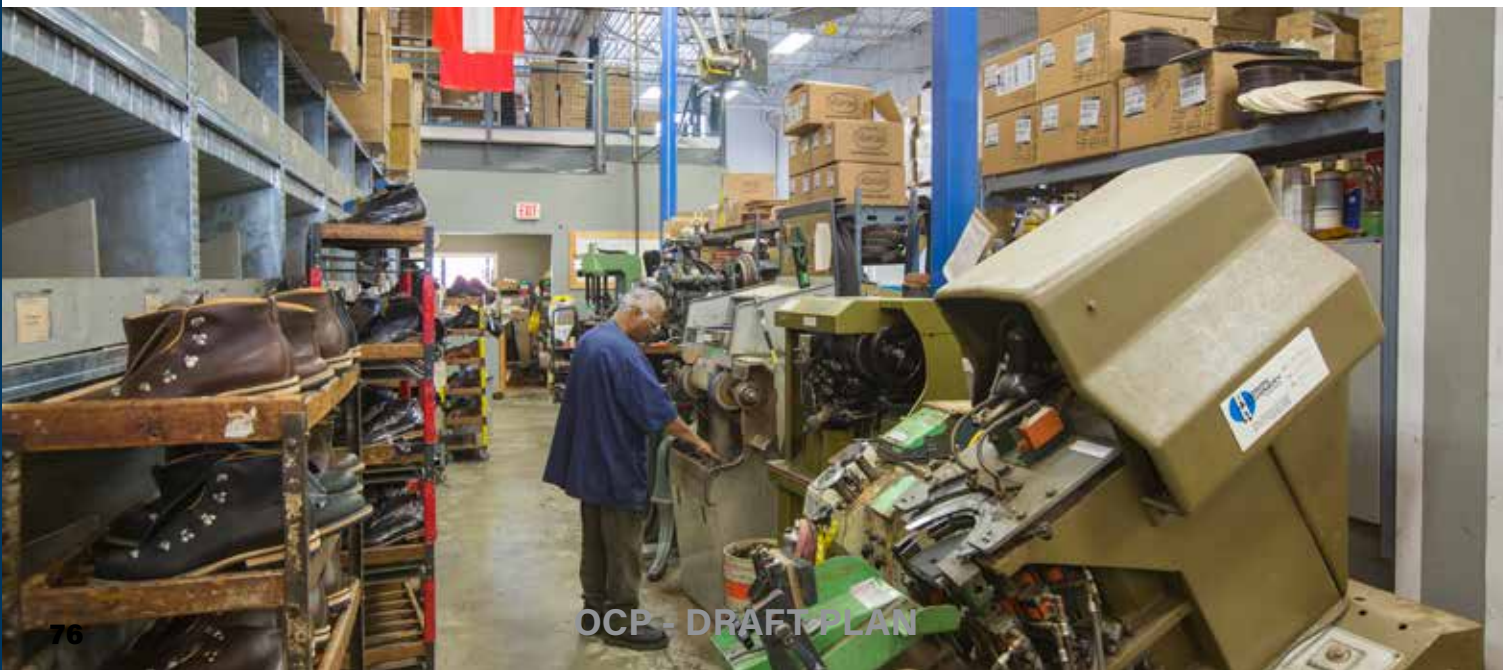
Industrial land uses comprise a significant part of Saanich's built environment (Map 5) and play an important role in our local economy. Industrial areas include the Royal Oak Industrial Park and Tennyson Industrial Quarter in the Uptown Douglas Area. In addition to these areas, industrial-type uses occur on a number of properties in Saanich, including the Hartland Landfill, operated by the Capital Regional District.

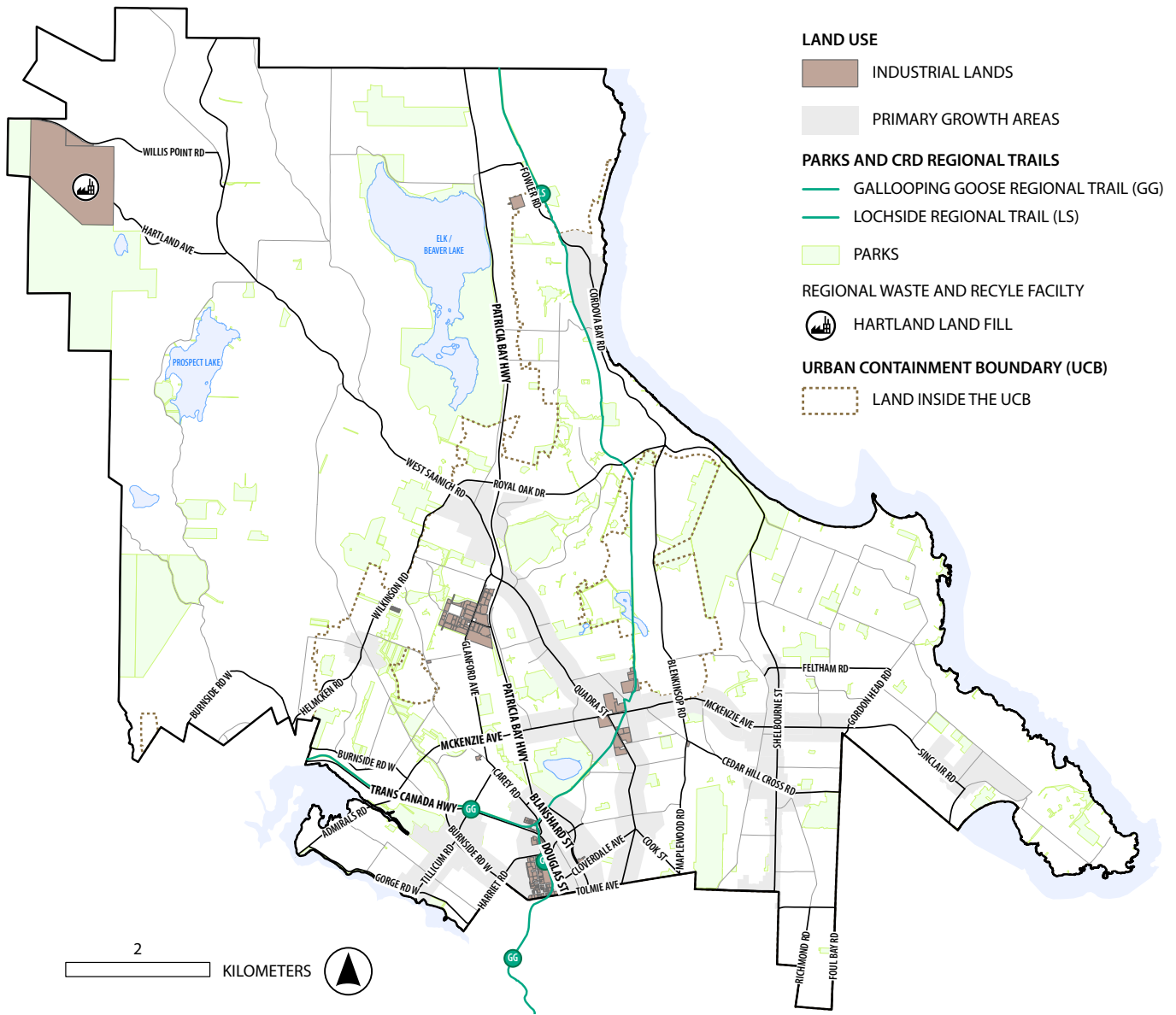
The Royal Oak Industrial Park and Tennyson Industrial Areas are almost fully developed, and few opportunities remain to accommodate new businesses without substantial intensification and redevelopment. In recent years, industrial area vacancy rates have been declining in the region. Finding suitable industrial space is a region-wide concern.

Industrial uses, like institutional uses, frequently impact immediate neighbours, and need to be sensitively integrated with their surroundings. Key elements such as traffic generation, access, lot size, and building scale and design, together within an understanding of the proposed use, need to be considered in their siting.

Policies

- 7.6.1 Preserve the integrity of our industrial land base by:
- Making better, more efficient use of existing industrial properties through intensification and redevelopment; and,
 - Limiting retail activity in industrial parks to service commercial which meets the basic needs of employees, for example a café or corner store; and
 - Permitting office only as an ancillary use to the main industrial activity.
- 7.6.2 Use the following criteria when assessing development applications for industrial uses: access, traffic generation, transit routes, lot size, scale, neighbourhood context, accessibility, environmental impacts, economic impact and employment generation.
- 7.6.3 Ensure that the zoning and regulatory controls respecting industrial areas continue to encourage and support their economic viability.
- 7.6.4 As part of the Saanich Economic Development Strategy, identify priorities and provide direction for Industrial land and future employment opportunities.





Map 5. Industrial Lands

7.7 Rural Areas

Rural Saanich is valued by its residents and by those from outside the area for its natural beauty, diverse environments, high biological diversity, agricultural and well-forested lands, and rural lifestyle. The diversity of the natural environment and variety of environmental features remain today, primarily as a result of ongoing stewardship by local residents and Saanich's leadership in implementing growth management, environmental protection, and other planning concepts to retain the character of the area and the health of its natural systems. The link between rural areas, agricultural land and food security is considered further in Section 12: Agriculture and Food Security.

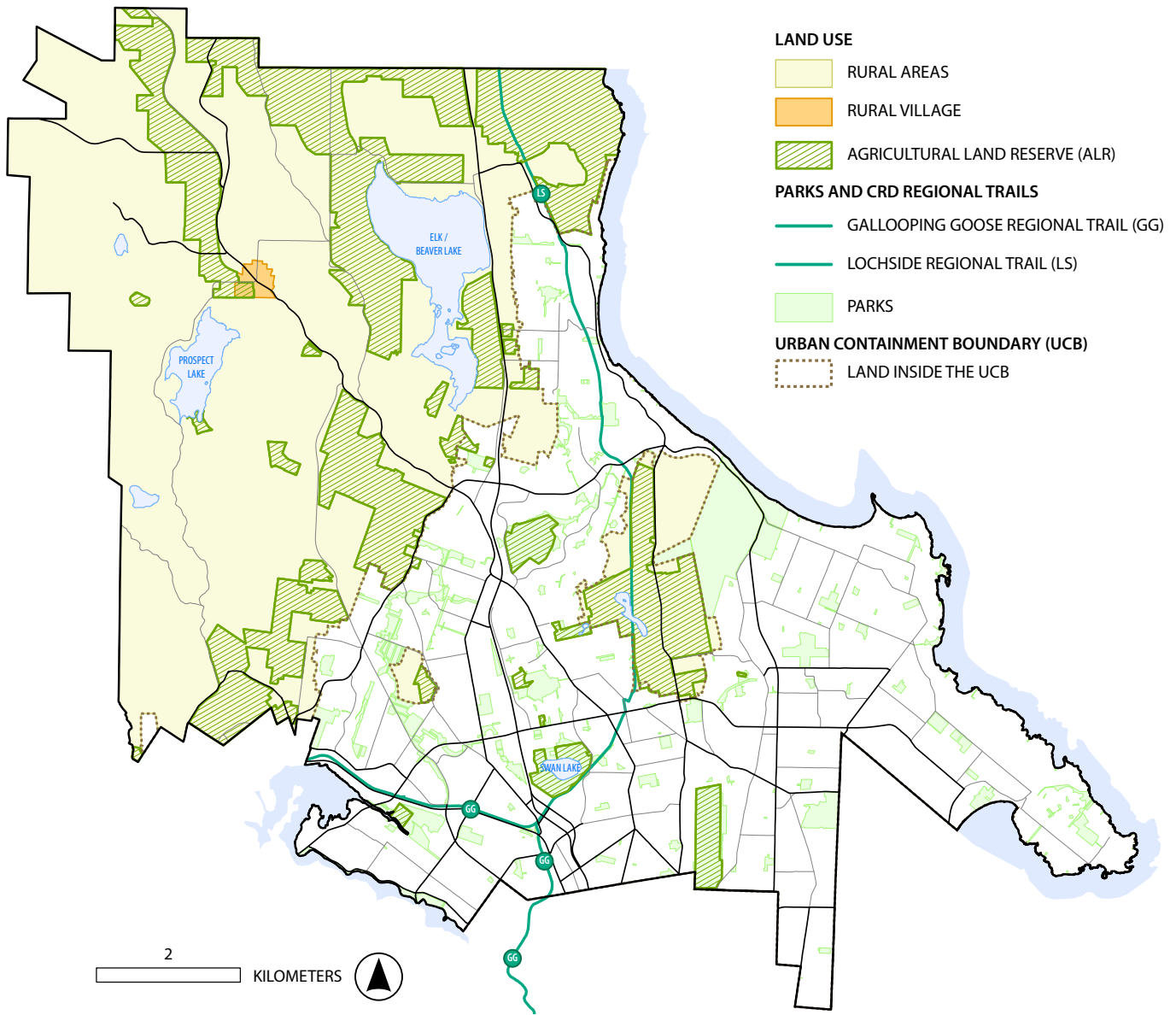
Rural Village is a distinct type of local activity centre that acknowledges the unique character of Rural Saanich. A Rural Village is meant to primarily serve the basic commercial needs of local residents. A Rural Village does not include multiple family housing. A Rural Village is located in the Prospect Lake area at the intersection of Prospect Lake Road, Sparton Road & West Saanich Road.

While single-vehicle travel is anticipated to be the primary form of travel in Rural Saanich in the short-to-medium term, opportunities to enhance active transportation (walking/biking/rolling) and increase transit ridership along key rural transportation routes exist.



Policies

- 7.7.1 Support the retention of rural and farm lands through adherence to the Urban Containment Boundary policy and preservation of the Agricultural Land Reserve (Map 6).
- 7.7.2 Maintain farming, food production, and large lot residential as the predominant land use in rural areas.
- 7.7.3 Maintain a minimum parcel area of 2.0 ha for the A-1 (Rural) zone and 4.0 ha for the A-2 (Rural) and A-4 (Rural) zones.
- 7.7.4 Support home-based businesses that fit with the character of rural neighbourhoods.
- 7.7.5 Support the following building types and uses at the Prospect Lake Rural Village:
 - a. Commercial buildings (up to 2 storeys)
 - b. Accessory Residential
- 7.7.6 Limit opportunities for expansion of the Prospect Lake Rural Village by supporting rezoning only for uses that are consistent with the rural character, having regard for the visual, environmental, and traffic impacts.
- 7.7.7 Work with BC Transit to continue to support transit service on key connections in Rural Saanich including maintaining service to the Prospect Lake Rural Village and looking for opportunities to promote Park & Ride facilities to rural residents.
- 7.7.8 Implement improvements to support active transportation enhancements in Rural Saanich as per the actions and priorities identified in the Active Transportation Plan.



Map 6. Rural Areas and Agricultural Land Reserve

7.8 Design and Accessibility

Urban Design is the art of making places for people. It is concerned with both how urban spaces function and how they look. Urban Design addresses such issues as the connections between people and places, movement and urban form, nature and the built fabric, and the processes for ensuring successful places are developed and maintained. Urban Design also brings together three primary components of “place-making” – environmental concerns, social equity, and economic viability – to create places that work and are sustainable in the long term. Successful communities are welcoming, safe and accessible for all its residents.

Municipalities use Development Permit (Design) Guidelines to guide the form and character of new development and the redevelopment of existing buildings and sites. Design guidelines typically address safety, accessibility, aesthetics, characteristic elements, social and cultural history, technical infrastructure, environmental sustainability, economics, and all mobility modes. Perhaps most importantly, design guidelines address how to accommodate change and future growth in positive and appropriate ways.

Design guidelines are not intended to restrict design flexibility or creativity. However, they present some basic ground rules for development that fit into the community’s coordinated vision. The guidelines represent an integrated approach to addressing the form and character of Saanich’s Primary Growth Areas and Neighbourhoods. Focusing on the relationship between public and private spaces, they foster the creation of vibrant, human-scale, pedestrian, bicycle and transit-oriented neighbourhoods which are accessible to all residents.

General Policies

- 7.8.1 Use the Development Permit Area Guidelines to direct building and urban design in Saanich as part of the development application approval process, seeking to advance core urban design and sustainability objectives.
- 7.8.2 Consider the use of variances to development control bylaws where they would achieve a more appropriate development in terms of streetscape, pedestrian environment, view protection, overall site design, and compatibility with neighbourhood character and adjoining properties.
- 7.8.3 Through the development review process consider the use of variances and density bonusing to secure public amenities such as open space, playgrounds, landmarks, focal points, activity centres or cultural features.



Saanich's Core Urban Design Principles

Saanich's Development Permit Area Guidelines are under review. The principles included are in draft form and subject to revision.

Create Great Streets and Public Spaces

Development should define and activate streets and public spaces to support their intended use encourage pedestrian activity and social interaction.

Design Buildings to the Human Scale

Buildings and site features should be designed to the human scale – optimized to be used by people and oriented towards pedestrian activity.

Use Placemaking to Strengthen Neighbourhood Identity

Development should contribute to a local sense of place by considering neighbourhood context and character, linkages, and future land uses at each scale of design – from site layout to landscaping to building details.

Grow the Urban Forest and Enhance Green Infrastructure

Development should respond to natural surroundings and utilize opportunities to improve ecological function by growing the urban forest, implementing green infrastructure, and connecting to green spaces.

Facilitate Active Mobility

Site and building design should ensure connectivity, safety and comfort for people walking, rolling, and cycling, both within the site and to / from the surrounding neighbourhood.

Support Low Carbon High Performance Buildings

Buildings should be designed to support the achievement of Saanich's Climate Plan and goals for emissions reduction.



Zero Carbon and Sustainable Building Practices

The Province has introduced and committed to several legislative changes that support zero carbon and sustainable building practices and deliver on the provincial CleanBC Plan, climate targets and Roadmap to 2030. This includes the BC Energy Step Code and Zero Carbon Step Code; the part of the BC Building Code that regulates energy efficiency and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from new buildings. While the Province outlines an implementation timeline for new buildings to be net zero by 2030, Saanich has shown leadership and adopted an accelerated timeline to 2025 that aligns with our climate targets.

The Zero Carbon and Energy Step Codes apply to new buildings, however, the existing building stock accounts for a considerable portion of our community-wide GHG inventory. In addition, the hotter, drier summers and increased wildfire events projected under our climate change scenarios and recent experience during the 2021 fatal heat dome, mean that passive and mechanical cooling and ventilation systems are no longer considered a luxury, but a necessity for public health. Retrofitting existing buildings from fossil fuel space and water heating systems such as natural gas, oil and propane, to renewable electric heat pumps make buildings healthier and more comfortable for occupants, provides cooling, and reduces monthly energy costs, improving affordability. Further, investments in retrofits support the longevity of buildings and Saanich's housing stock, helping to maintain existing rentals, increasing the ability to age in place, reducing embodied carbon, and providing well-paying local jobs that help to stimulate the local economy.

While the Development Permit Area Guidelines provide further direction on zero carbon and sustainable building practices, high level policies are included below.

Policies

- 7.8.4 Accelerate renewable energy and energy efficiency upgrades in existing buildings.
- 7.8.5 Accelerate adoption of zero carbon new construction to meet Saanich climate targets.
- 7.8.6 Transition towards a climate-ready building stock by designing and retrofitting buildings for future climate projections.
- 7.8.7 Implement the BC Energy Step Code and Zero Carbon Step Code as per Council Policy where these exceed the BC Building Code.
- 7.8.8 Identify and remove municipal barriers to building low-carbon/high-performance buildings to achieve the District's zero carbon targets.
- 7.8.9 Advocate for the incorporation of climate adaptation considerations into the BC Building Code.
- 7.8.10 Advocate for the development of a building retrofit Code.
- 7.8.11 Incorporate and promote sustainable building and site design practices that:
 - a. Lower water consumption;
 - b. Incorporate naturescaping;
 - c. Reduce impervious surfaces (e.g., through the provision of on-site open green space, green roofs, bioswales, pervious pavers);
 - d. Work with local topography and protect natural assets;
 - e. Preserve and enhance on-site biodiversity;
 - f. Minimize embodied emissions;
 - g. Use low impact, healthy materials, and/or,
 - h. Minimize waste generated and impacts associated with the extraction, processing, transport, maintenance and disposal of building materials.

Accessibility

Designing communities and buildings so that they can be accessed, understood, and used by all people regardless of their age, size, and ability is an important urban design and planning principle. Saanich is committed to incorporating best practices into key implementation tools such as the engineering standards and development permit guidelines.

Policies

- 7.8.12 Encourage accessibility through the incorporation of “universal design” in all new development and redevelopment.
- 7.8.13 Continue to incorporate best practices into the Saanich Subdivision Bylaw and the Development Permit Guidelines to support people of all ages, sizes, and abilities.
- 7.8.14 Support BC Transit initiatives to increase accessibility for the mobility challenged, including low-step and lift-equipped buses, HandyDART service, and suitably designed bus stops and shelters.
- 7.8.15 Liaise with private and public agencies to address the needs of people with differing cognitive and physical abilities.

View Corridors

View corridors to vistas of hill tops, lakes, the ocean, and open spaces add to the character and beauty of Saanich – for example, the view of the Olympic Mountains from many public roads or the view of Cadboro Bay from the top of Sinclair Hill. To ensure views from public places and roadways are not lost or blocked, the impact of new development needs to be carefully considered.

Policies

- 7.8.16 Support the protection of significant public view corridors where identified through detailed planning.
- 7.8.17 Protect the scenic values of the principal transportation corridors into the Capital City as identified in “View Corridor Study”.



7.9 Asset Management

Saanich delivers a wide range of services to its residents, using the physical assets that it owns, operates, and maintains (e.g., draining, facilities, information technology, natural assets (e.g. natural areas, urban forest, wetlands), park and trail structures, transportation, vehicles and equipment).

Asset management is an integrated, lifecycle approach to effective stewardship of assets to maximize benefits, manage risk and provide satisfactory Levels of Service to the public in a sustainable manner. Building on the Asset Management policy adopted by Council in 2019, the District is developing an Asset Management Strategy to guide the development of a formal, systematic approach to asset management applied consistently across the District. This approach will be essential for the District to move toward service, asset, and financial sustainability.

The District’s asset management program is based on the Asset Management BC Framework: Asset Management for Sustainable Service Delivery which is an iterative process of continuous improvement. The focus of the framework is sustainability, which means meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

How the District grows and changes over time, guided by land use policy, drives the demand for new services and directly influences the District’s ability to achieve sustainable service delivery.

Policies

- 7.9.1 Complete and implement the Asset Management Strategy for the District.
- 7.9.2 Integrate asset management considerations into planning processes and development approvals.

Land Use

Land use regulations support assessment management by:

- Directing development to areas that can be serviced affordably;
- Increasing densities to improve economies of scale (i.e. spreading costs over more users);
- Ensuring an appropriate and affordable level of service to support planned land uses;
- Protecting natural assets;
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions;
- Adapting to climate change impacts; and,
- Minimizing development’s impact on assets.

Source: Land Use Planning and Asset Management, Asset Management BC, 2019.





Figure 16. Sustainable Service Delivery





Related Plans & Strategies

- Saanich Housing Strategy
- Housing Needs Report
- Regional Housing Affordability Strategy

8.0 Housing

Objectives

- A. Increase overall housing supply to meet Saanich’s needs.
- B. Increase the supply of affordable and supportive housing.
- C. Expand the diversity of housing choice in terms of type, tenure and price.
- D. Protect existing and increase new rental housing supply.
- E. Strengthen partnerships to improve housing strategies and outcomes.

The provision of a range of housing that can accommodate people of different ages, incomes, household structures, and physical and social needs is a fundamental element of a healthy, inclusive, and sustainable community. Housing plays a critical role in well-being and ensures that all Saanich residents can participate in community life. A healthy supply of affordable housing across the housing spectrum is critical to the District’s goals for social, economic and sustainable prosperity now and into the future.

Saanich has supported numerous local and regional initiatives to increase housing supply, affordability and diversity. However, recent local and global trends have intensified the urgent need for adequate housing in Saanich to a point beyond which the District has experienced before. Within the region, the increase in the cost of housing has far exceeded growth in wages. Reduced household buying power has made homeownership out of reach for many Saanich households seeking to enter the housing market. This has put additional pressures on rental housing which has not seen any material growth since the 1990s. As such, rental vacancy rates have reached historically low levels resulting in rapidly increasing rental prices.



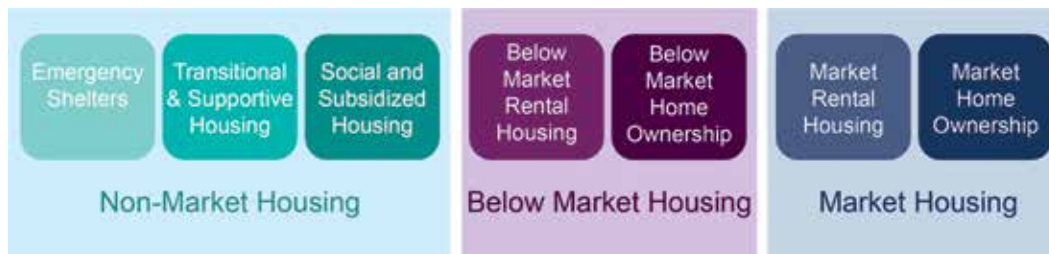


Figure 17. Housing Spectrum

In response to these needs and informed by the District's Housing Needs Report, Saanich adopted its first Housing Strategy in 2021. Based on a ten-year framework with seven focus areas, the strategy provides a comprehensive approach to working toward a healthy housing supply for Saanich. Saanich will work to achieve its housing goals through the implementation of the Housing Strategy, in collaboration with regional and government partners, to increase housing in vibrant, amenity-rich Primary Growth Areas and in Saanich Neighbourhoods through well-integrated infill.

8.1 Housing Supply

An adequate supply of housing options is essential to a healthy community. Options across the housing spectrum range from non-market and below-market units that provide housing for those households unable to participate in the market to a healthy supply of market rental and ownership units.

While housing is needed across the housing spectrum, the need is especially serious for lower and median-income households struggling to find secure and affordable homes. Over the past 20 years, the rate of core housing need has steadily increased within Saanich and the region. Some groups within Saanich face additional barriers to housing including Indigenous people, people requiring supportive housing, those with mobility challenges, young adults, and new immigrants.

Policies

- 8.1.1 Increase new housing units across the housing spectrum that are integrated into livable, active and sustainable neighbourhoods.
- 8.1.2 Prioritize housing that fulfills the needs identified in the Saanich Housing Needs Report.
- 8.1.3 Update the Housing Needs Report every five years in alignment with Census data releases to:
 - a. Incorporate up-to-date Census data;
 - b. Update population forecasts and housing projections;
 - c. Refine needs assessments;
 - d. Reflect local housing market trends;
 - e. Assess demand and inventory existing housing stock; and,
 - f. Guide priorities around the types of new housing units needed.



- 8.1.4 Continue to implement and update the Housing Strategy and use it as the primary strategic document for prioritizing and directing housing actions.
- 8.1.5 Measure progress towards Housing Strategy goals through annual reporting on the progress of the Strategy, housing outcomes, and trends and indicators.
- 8.1.6 Increase housing supply through intensifying residential density in Primary Growth Areas and supporting infill within Neighbourhoods that fits with neighbourhood scale.
- 8.1.7 Implement regulatory changes, including zoning and development process changes, to improve the efficiency of approvals for development projects that align with Saanich housing outcomes.
- 8.1.8 Make efficient use of serviced urban lands and amenities by reducing barriers to new infill and increased density in Neighbourhoods through regulatory and policy changes.
- 8.1.9 Assess opportunities to co-locate housing with District facilities, including through redevelopment or upgrade projects.
- 8.1.10 Encourage integration of housing with community facilities, such as recreation facilities, childcare, elder care and health services.
- 8.1.11 Work with Indigenous communities, agencies, and partners to support Indigenous housing projects.
- 8.1.12 When implementing new housing policies and/or reviewing Saanich’s regulatory and policy frameworks, apply an equity lens to ensure actions lead to equitable housing outcomes.



8.2 Rental Housing

Due to an extremely low vacancy rate, aging rental stock, and a large dependence on the secondary rental market, increasing the supply of secure rental housing is a key priority in Saanich. A healthy supply of secure, purpose-built rental housing is a critical component of a stable and sustainable housing market.

Older rental housing has provided a more affordable housing option to Saanich residents for many years. Approximately 30% of Saanich households rent; rental households report household incomes that are about half of ownership households. As the cost of ownership has risen beyond what most households can afford, there is added pressure on rental housing. Recently with high demand for rental and little new supply, rental rates have been rising dramatically, widening the gap between the cost of rental housing and what many can afford.

Many of Saanich's purpose-built rental buildings, built in an era of Federal funding programs prior to 1990, are nearing end of life and need major investment or replacement.

Redevelopment of apartment sites creates additional challenges as tenants can be displaced and struggle to find stable housing based on current market conditions.

Following 30 years of no-net-increase in rental housing in Saanich, there have been commitments from the Federal and Provincial governments to fund new rental supply and upgrade existing older stock. After a generation of under-investment in rental housing, it will take some years and a cooperative effort by all housing partners to add enough rental housing to reach a healthy vacancy rate (3-5%) and stabilize rents.

Increasing the amount of rental will add to the District's resilience and long-term housing affordability. Ensuring rental housing is available in all areas of urban Saanich, and in a variety of sizes and forms, will allow Saanich residents to find housing that suits their needs. To achieve these goals, Saanich will need to use a variety of tools to attract purpose-built rental, within both the market and non-market housing sectors, and to further leverage senior government support to the rental sector.

Policies

- 8.2.1 Support the retention, renewal, and development of all forms of rental housing across the housing spectrum including market, below market, and non-market options.
- 8.2.2 Support the development of secure, purpose-built rental housing in all Primary Growth Areas as a key priority for residential intensification.
- 8.2.3 Consider incentives to encourage market-rental developments to include affordable units.
- 8.2.4 Support upgrades in older purpose-built rental apartments to retain existing secure, rental housing that is affordable to a broader range of households.
- 8.2.5 Support the acquisition of older purpose-built rental apartments by non-market housing providers and other partners to protect the supply of more affordable, secure rental housing.
- 8.2.6 Monitor and revise as needed the tenant assistance policy to ensure that it is working effectively to protect tenants who are displaced during redevelopment or renovation of older rental buildings.
- 8.2.7 Do not support the conversion of rental buildings with three or more rental units to strata when the rental vacancy rate is below 4% (as provided by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation).
- 8.2.8 Continue to expand opportunities for rental housing in all residential areas including through exploring allowing additional suites on residential lots, suites within attached housing developments such as houseplexes and townhouses, and new forms of shared accommodation.

8.3 Affordable and Supportive Housing

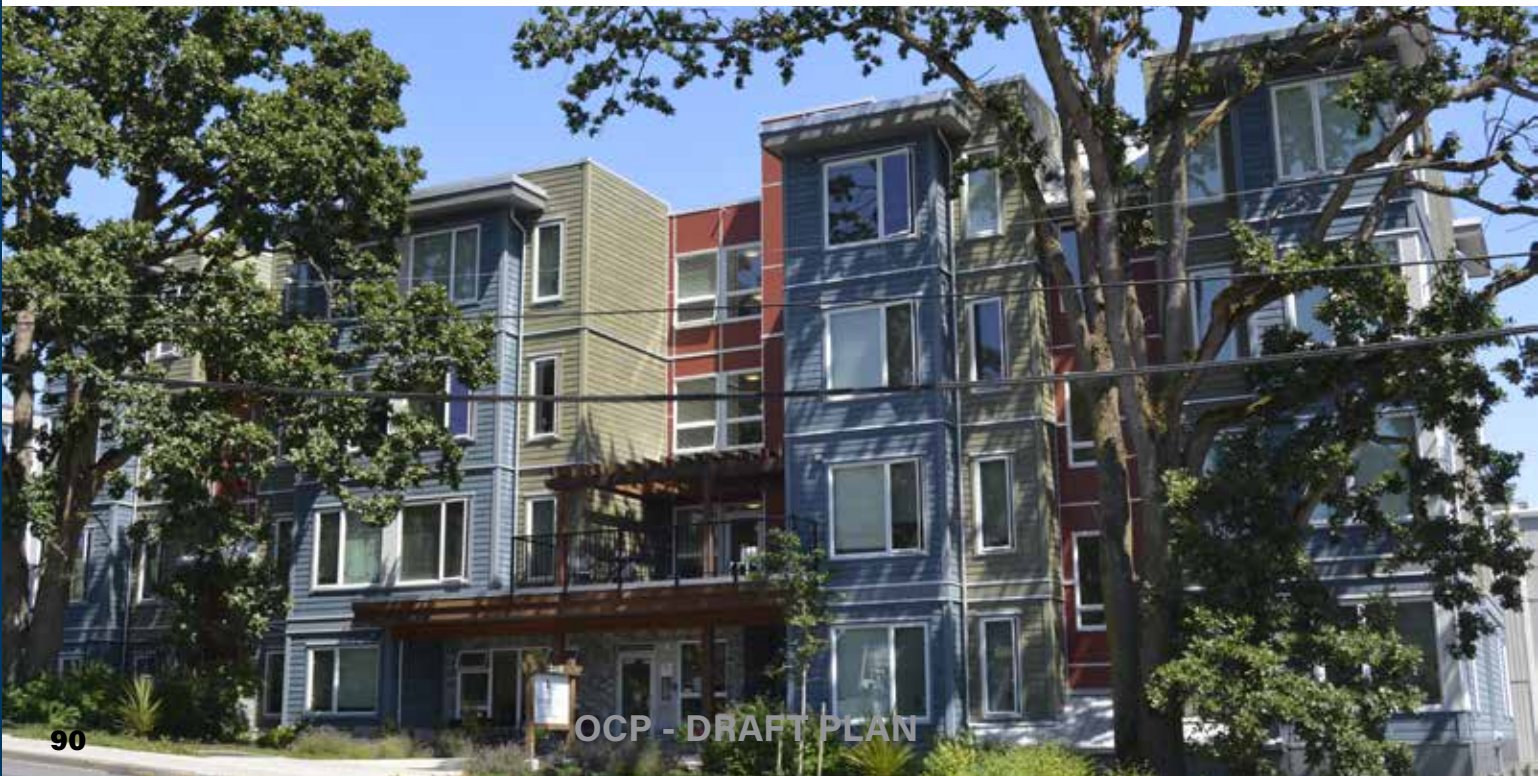
Housing affordability is a significant problem in Saanich with 40% of renters and 17% of owners paying more than 30% of their income on housing costs. Affordability concerns have deepened with rising house prices, upward pressure on rental rates, inflation and increasing construction costs. Certain vulnerable household types such as lone-parent households (and particularly female-led ones) have been impacted the most.

New market housing in all forms is unaffordable to many Saanich households. In order to meet the supply of housing that is affordable where need is greatest at the lower end of the income spectrum, housing will need to be provided by the not-for-profit sector.

A long period with limited Federal and Provincial support to the not-for-profit housing sector has contributed to an undersupply of affordable housing. With a higher proportion of Saanich residents requiring affordable and/or supportive housing, non-market affordable housing providers and co-ops have been unable to meet the growing demand for these units. In addition, many non-market housing developments in Saanich are reaching the end of their building's life cycle and are needing to begin redevelopment processes that require significant staff and financial resources.

Supportive housing for populations with specific support needs and levels of care are also greatly needed. These types of projects can be challenging to site and can receive significant community push-back when they try to locate in neighbourhoods. A number of faith-based organizations who have land are interested in offering affordable/supportive housing as a community service, but do not have the experience or resources to undertake it.

Federal and Provincial funding and support for non-market housing is now increasing. Saanich needs to see itself as a partner in attracting non-market housing projects and leveraging funding. Saanich can support the development of non-market housing by reviewing and implementing strategies to expedite the development approvals process, and by offering additional financial support through factors such as reduced parking requirements, tax exemptions, partial DCC and CAC waivers, grants through the Saanich Affordable Housing Fund, and reductions in other development fees. Some housing affordability, particularly for moderate income households, can be achieved through market development. Federal housing financing and funding programs are working to incentivize rental and ownership housing that targets certain income levels. Saanich also can use tools such as density bonusing and community amenity contributions to negotiate for below-market rental and ownership inclusionary housing.



Policies

- 8.3.1 Continue to assess the full range of municipal tools available to attract, encourage and incentivize non-market housing, including:
- Providing additional support to potential applicants;
 - Supporting additional density and building heights;
 - Prioritizing, reducing, and streamlining approval processes;
 - Reducing parking requirements;
 - Providing financial support through the Saanich Affordable Housing Fund;
 - Considering partial waivers of Development Cost Charges;
 - Waiving CACs;
 - Reducing other development fees;
 - Considering property tax exemptions;
 - Providing municipal land; and,
 - Supporting funding through other grant programs
- 8.3.2 Consider OCP amendments for secured non-market or supportive housing projects for increased residential density where significant community benefits and housing opportunities are realized.
- 8.3.3 Prioritize affordable housing development for those populations more represented in core housing need such as low-income seniors, recent-immigrant households, persons with disabilities, Indigenous households, and lone-parent households.
- 8.3.4 Strengthen and formalize the Saanich Affordable Housing Fund as a means to collect and use amenity contributions to fund non-market housing developments in Saanich.
- 8.3.5 Explore opportunities to use District-owned properties for non-market and supportive housing projects.
- 8.3.6 Support not-for profit housing providers in the redevelopment or renovation of existing non-market housing sites in order to increase the number of affordable housing units, improve supports for residents, and/or enhance energy performance and climate resiliency.
- 8.3.7 Encourage larger market developments to provide below-market ownership and rental housing units as amenity contributions.
- 8.3.8 Support projects led by institutional landowners, including faith-based organizations, that incorporate secured non-market or supportive housing into proposed redevelopment projects, through financial incentives and streamlined approval processes.
- 8.3.9 Support the development of critical housing to rapidly re-house those experiencing or at risk of homelessness including shelters, transitional housing, and supportive housing for mental health and addictions.
- 8.3.10 Incentivize the development of affordable units within market projects through tools such as pre-zoning, rental tenure zoning, and density bonusing.
- 8.3.11 Support opportunities to site affordable housing projects in areas that are well served by transit and walkable to shops, services, schools, and amenities.
- 8.3.12 Support housing initiatives to directly reduce the number of Saanich residents in core housing need including Indigenous, youth, lone-parent households, low-income seniors, and new immigrant households.



8.4 Housing Diversity

Single detached housing makes up a large percentage (57%) of Saanich's housing stock and takes up over 80% of Saanich's urban residential land base. Apartments make up 20% of housing stock and there are few housing choices in between these two forms. Lower-density ground-oriented housing forms, such as townhouses and houseplexes (i.e. the "Missing Middle") have been excluded from many neighbourhoods based on zoning practices over the past decades. Reducing barriers and supporting the addition of diverse housing forms, including apartments, townhouses, attached housing, and garden suites, to Saanich's housing stock is a key strategy to improving housing outcomes.

Saanich's housing needs are evolving to reflect changing demographics which include a more diverse population, a higher proportion of older adults and smaller household sizes. New housing will have to meet this range of needs. Diverse housing supply ensures that Saanich residents can stay in their neighbourhood when their circumstances change, for example when seniors downsize to a smaller home, when young people move out on their own, or when families split into two households.

Saanich's Primary Growth Areas provide an opportunity to increase housing supply through a mix of unit types and tenures. Focusing growth in these areas allows for efficient use of infrastructure and provides urban livability as residents are within walking distance to commercial areas, services, schools, community facilities, and transit. By locating housing close to existing services and amenities, demand for vehicle use drops and greenhouse gas emissions are lowered.

Saanich has been taking steps to expand the range of infill growth opportunities in Neighbourhoods. This includes recent changes to regulations supporting secondary and garden suites, which provide additional rental opportunities for residents and income for owners, as well as broader policy updates through detailed area planning processes.

A healthy and resilient community has a diverse range of housing types to accommodate residents of all ages, incomes, abilities, and household types. Providing a range of housing benefits affordability levels as well as supports economic prosperity and age-friendly communities. Municipalities have a range of regulatory and policy tools that can be used to influence and expand housing diversity.

Policies

- 8.4.1 Support a range of higher-density building forms in Primary Growth Areas to add to the diversity of housing types in Saanich.
- 8.4.2 Support ownership, rental, and co-operative housing to continue to expand the diversity of tenure options in Saanich.
- 8.4.3 Support a range of infill options in Neighbourhoods in forms that are compatible with neighbourhood scale.
- 8.4.4 Increase opportunities for both rental and owner tenure when considering infill housing within Neighbourhoods to improve equitable housing outcomes.
- 8.4.5 Within Neighbourhoods, support additional density and a broader range of housing types in hubs and secondary corridors that are walkable to local amenities and transit service.
- 8.4.6 Support family housing by targeting a minimum of 20% two-bedroom and 10% three-bedroom units in multi-unit residential buildings.
- 8.4.7 Continue to monitor unit mix (number of bedrooms) in new development to ensure that Saanich's housing needs are being met.
- 8.4.8 Encourage housing projects to include adaptable and accessible dwelling units for those with mobility challenges.
- 8.4.9 Support the inclusion of features such as larger unit sizes, common areas, and cultural spaces within housing projects to support the unique needs of special cultural groups and populations.

8.5 Partnerships and strategies

Saanich cannot address its housing needs on its own. To achieve success in housing outcomes, a collaborative approach is needed to involve a broad range of partners including other orders of government, funders, non-profit organizations, market developers, non-market developers, property owners, and residents.

Some Saanich residents face additional barriers to finding and securing safe and affordable housing, including recent immigrants, visible minorities, and youth aging out of care. Partnering with other organizations increases responsiveness – an essential component for building a community with diverse housing opportunities and reducing paths to core housing need and homelessness.

Saanich will continue working strategically with all partners in finding solutions to the housing crisis. This includes a range of activities such as taking advantage of peer-to-peer learning opportunities, facilitating robust public and stakeholder engagements, and stepping up to provide support on innovative housing projects.

Policies

- 8.5.1 Within the District of Saanich, work internally to streamline and coordinate development review and approval processes to attract the partners and projects that will help Saanich meet its housing targets for Saanich residents.
- 8.5.2 Educate and engage community members on the District's housing needs and strategic goals to improve the success of housing partners investing in Saanich.
- 8.5.3 Work collaboratively with other levels of government, non-market/non-profit organizations, Indigenous housing partners, institutional partners, the development community, and residents to support a broad range of housing in Saanich.
- 8.5.4 Work with senior governments, the health authority, the private sector, and non-profit organizations to build supportive housing in Saanich.
- 8.5.5 Support the regionally-coordinated response to homelessness to improve

access to dignified housing and networks of support by working with senior levels of government, the Capital Regional District, and neighbouring local governments.

- 8.5.6 Connect not-for-profit housing providers with developers to support the incorporation of secured non-market or below-market housing into development and redevelopment projects.
- 8.5.7 Work with senior levels of government to reduce speculative investment in housing to limit upward pressure on housing costs.
- 8.5.8 Through communication and promotion of housing objectives, work with residents to integrate their perspectives into policy and reduce resistance to market, non-market and supportive housing projects.
- 8.5.9 Collaborate with social service providers to reduce paths to homelessness through identifying opportunities for supportive housing, transition housing, and non-market housing.
- 8.5.10 Work with regional partners to improve access to rental housing for those experiencing barriers or challenges to securing housing.
- 8.5.11 Work in partnership with First Nations governments, the Victoria Native Friendship Centre, and other community and government partners to provide housing for Indigenous populations in Saanich.
- 8.5.12 Work with the Capital Regional District and other stakeholders to implement the Regional Housing Affordability Strategy and continue to support and contribute to regional housing initiatives and programs.
- 8.5.13 Advocate to the provincial and federal governments for additional financing and funding for infrastructure upgrades and non-market/rental housing projects, and for expanded local government development approval authorities to meet local housing needs.





9.0 Transportation & Mobility

Related Plans & Strategies

- Active Transportation Plan
- Road Safety Action Plan
- Climate Plan
- BC Transit Futures Plan
- CRD Regional Transportation Plan

Objectives

- Integrate land use and transportation planning.
- Prioritize walking, cycling, public transit, and the movement of goods.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by shifting transportation off fossil fuels to sustainable transportation options.
- Eliminate all traffic related fatalities and serious injuries.
- Reduce total vehicle kilometers travelled in Saanich.

Sustainable and equitable transportation networks are critical to achieving climate change goals, ensuring livability and enabling residents to function and thrive in a community. Mobility refers to the ability to move around the District and wider region easily and efficiently. It is an integral part of a sustainable community fabric; how it is integrated with land use has significant environmental, social and economic impacts. Travel modes include active forms (e.g., walking, cycling, rolling), public transit,

personal vehicles, and commercial vehicles. Electric mobility options are increasing in popularity as the District transitions off fossil fuels to zero-emission vehicles.

Conventional mid-twentieth century development patterns, based predominantly on vehicle use, have created several challenges including:

- Costly low-density suburban sprawl;
- Air, noise and visual pollution;
- Greenhouse gas emissions;
- The loss of environmentally and culturally significant areas; and,
- For some (particularly people who do not drive or own a car), social and economic isolation.

As traffic congestion increases, there is added pressure to build more roads or widen existing ones. Research indicates however that increasing road capacity leads to increased traffic, and ultimately more congestion. As the population continues to grow in Saanich and the Capital Region, moving people and goods efficiently on limited road infrastructure is a priority for both the

Multi-modal transportation

Multi-modal transportation refers to linking together different forms of transportation, such as walking, cycling, transit, and vehicle travel, to move around the community safely and conveniently. For example, an individual:

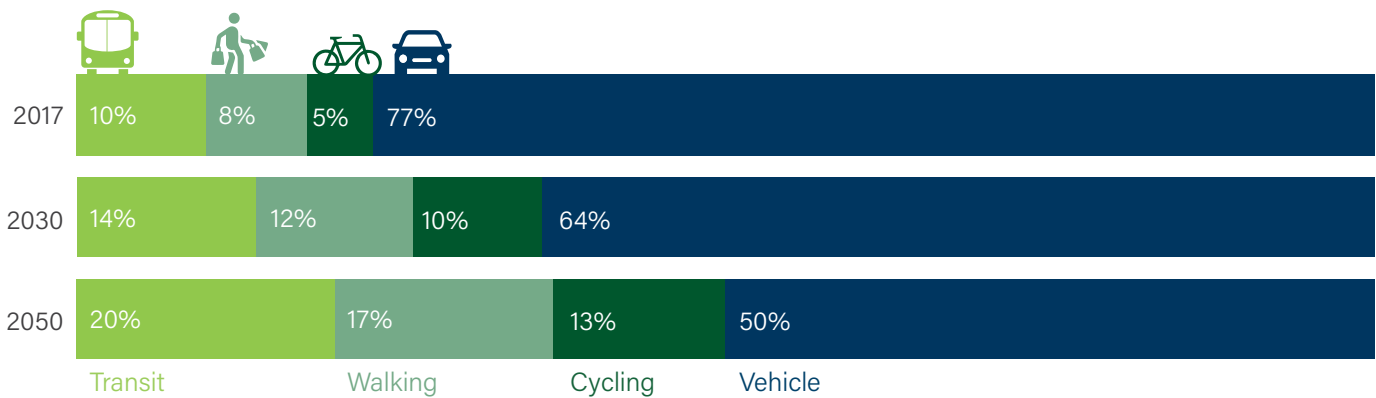
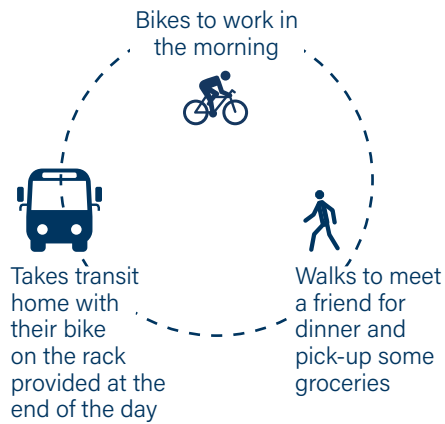


Figure 18. Percentage of trips by mode in Saanich

(Actual and modelled percentage of trips by mode in Saanich to remain within emissions limits)

livability and economic vibrancy of the region. In addition, traffic contributes to contamination of stormwater runoff which can negatively impact water quality while vehicle exhaust degrades air quality.

Compounding this, transportation is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Saanich, responsible for more than half of its total emissions. To meet the District climate targets, it is imperative that current transportation choices switch from those heavily reliant on fossil fuels to sustainable transportation forms. Moving towards a walkable 15-minute community means individuals can travel shorter distances to meet their needs. This greatly increases the ability to use active transportation and transit and reduces car dependence. A more

compact community makes the construction and maintenance of cycling and transit infrastructure more affordable by serving a greater population; it also means that a higher level of service and quality (e.g., transit frequency and All Ages and Abilities bike lanes) can be provided with the same resources.

Through the Climate Plan and Active Transportation Plan the District has adopted mobility targets to align with its greenhouse gas emissions targets. These targets are based on the percentage of trips (refers to resident's daily movement around the community) by the form of transportation used: transit, walking, cycling, and vehicle.

9.1 General

While specific policies are needed to capture the nuances of different components of the transportation system, several of these apply across all components and mobility options. This includes policies related to identifying mobility priorities, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, cooperating with other regional partners, and implementing network safety improvements.

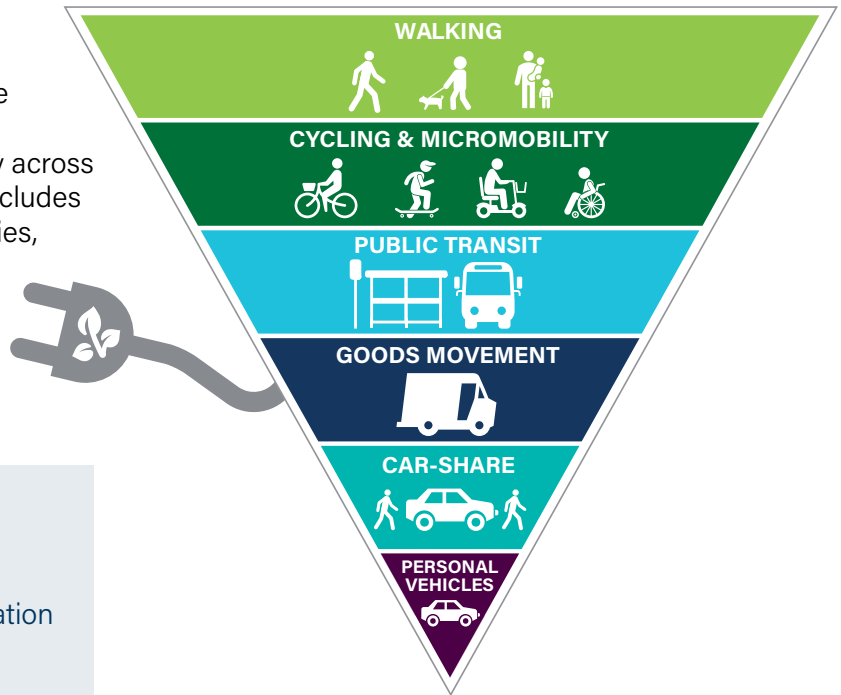


Figure 19. Mobility Priority Pyramid

Policies

- 9.1.1 Continue to work with the CRD to implement the Regional Transportation Plan along the five theme areas:
 - a. Integration of land use and transportation;
 - b. Creating exceptional environments for walking and cycling;
 - c. Taking transit to the next level;
 - d. Getting the most out of our roads and trails; and,
 - e. Influencing travel behaviour.
- 9.1.2 Reduce transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions by fostering a shift off fossil fuels to sustainable transportation options.
- 9.1.3 Prioritize mobility modes within the transportation network based on the Mobility Priority Pyramid (Figure 19) with walking as the highest priority followed by cycling and micro-mobility, public transit, car-shares, goods movement, and personal vehicles.
- 9.1.4 Reduce the total vehicle kilometers travelled in Saanich over time to achieve the District’s greenhouse gas emissions targets by providing high quality sustainable transportation and goods movement options and implementing strategies to reduce personal vehicle ownership.
- 9.1.5 Integrate different forms of sustainable transportation options with land use to enable residents to seamlessly link

these different options together as part of their daily routine, including through:

- a. Ensuring different travel modes work together (e.g., key transit stops connected to the trail network);
 - b. Continuing to improve the pedestrian/cycling network and end of trip facilities with a focus on linking to destinations such as parks, services, amenities and employment areas;
 - c. Incorporating new pedestrian connections as part of infill and redevelopment where feasible; and,
 - d. Continuing to work with BC transit to improve service and identify priorities while supporting these routes with increased residential density.
- 9.1.6 Protect former railroads and rights-of-way for future transportation, utility or recreation purposes.
 - 9.1.7 Implement Vision Zero by applying a systems-based approach to road safety to eliminate all traffic injuries and fatalities while ensuring safe, healthy, and equitable mobility for all road users.

- 9.1.8 Consider the CRD Origin Destination Household Travel Survey when establishing priorities to upgrade and maintain municipal roads and other transportation infrastructure.
- 9.1.9 Discourage drive through businesses to reduce unnecessary car idling and support more pedestrian friendly development.

Council adopted the Vision Zero Approach to Road Safety in 2022.

Vision Zero is an ambitious goal to eliminate all traffic injuries and fatalities while ensuring safe, healthy, and equitable mobility for all road users. This includes people who walk, ride a bike, take a bus or drive. Vision Zero is a new paradigm for road safety that recognizes that human error is inevitable and a systems-based approach (called a Safe-Systems approach) is needed to ensure that actions targeted to achieve safe speed limits, safe road design, safe people and safe vehicles work together to achieve this aim.



9.2 Active Transportation - Walking, Cycling, and Rolling

Council adopted its first Active Transportation Plan in 2018. The plan includes three overarching themes:

- Connections – build off existing infrastructure that is already in place to enhance the connectivity of Saanich’s network of pedestrian and bicycle routes;
- Convenience – recognizes that for active forms to become more attractive they need to be as convenient as possible; and,
- Culture – incorporate ‘soft’ measures such as education and awareness to help encourage people to use active forms.

Increasingly, the importance of equity in active transportation (AT) is emerging as a key consideration. Applying an equity lens when making decisions around infrastructure and programming investments targets these investments into neighbourhoods and for specific user groups which may have been overlooked in the past and/or will benefit the most from these investments.

What is Active Transportation?

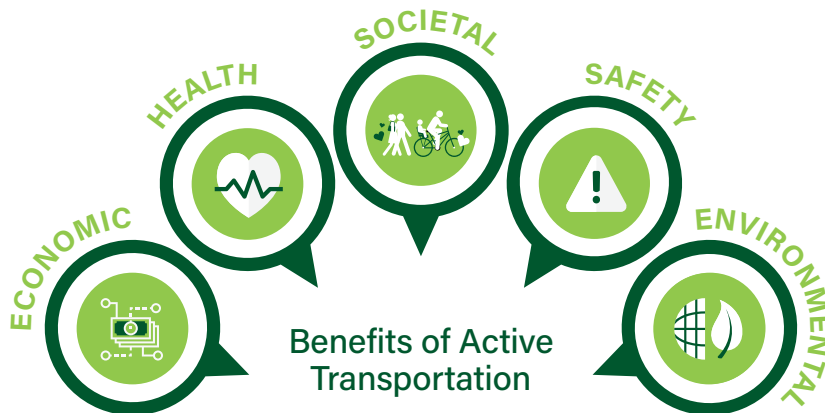
Active Transportation is any active trip you make to get yourself, or others, from one place to another, whether it is to work, school, the store, or to visit with friends and family. Active Transportation includes any form of human powered transportation. Walking and cycling are the most popular and well-known forms of active transportation. However, the definition extends much further than that—as long as it is ‘active,’ you choose the mode. This can include skateboarding, wheeling, riding a horse, in-line skating, using a mobility aid, or even riding the bus, since it’s active to get to and from the bus stop! Saanich adopted its first Active Transportation Strategy in 2018 and will adopt an update in 2023.

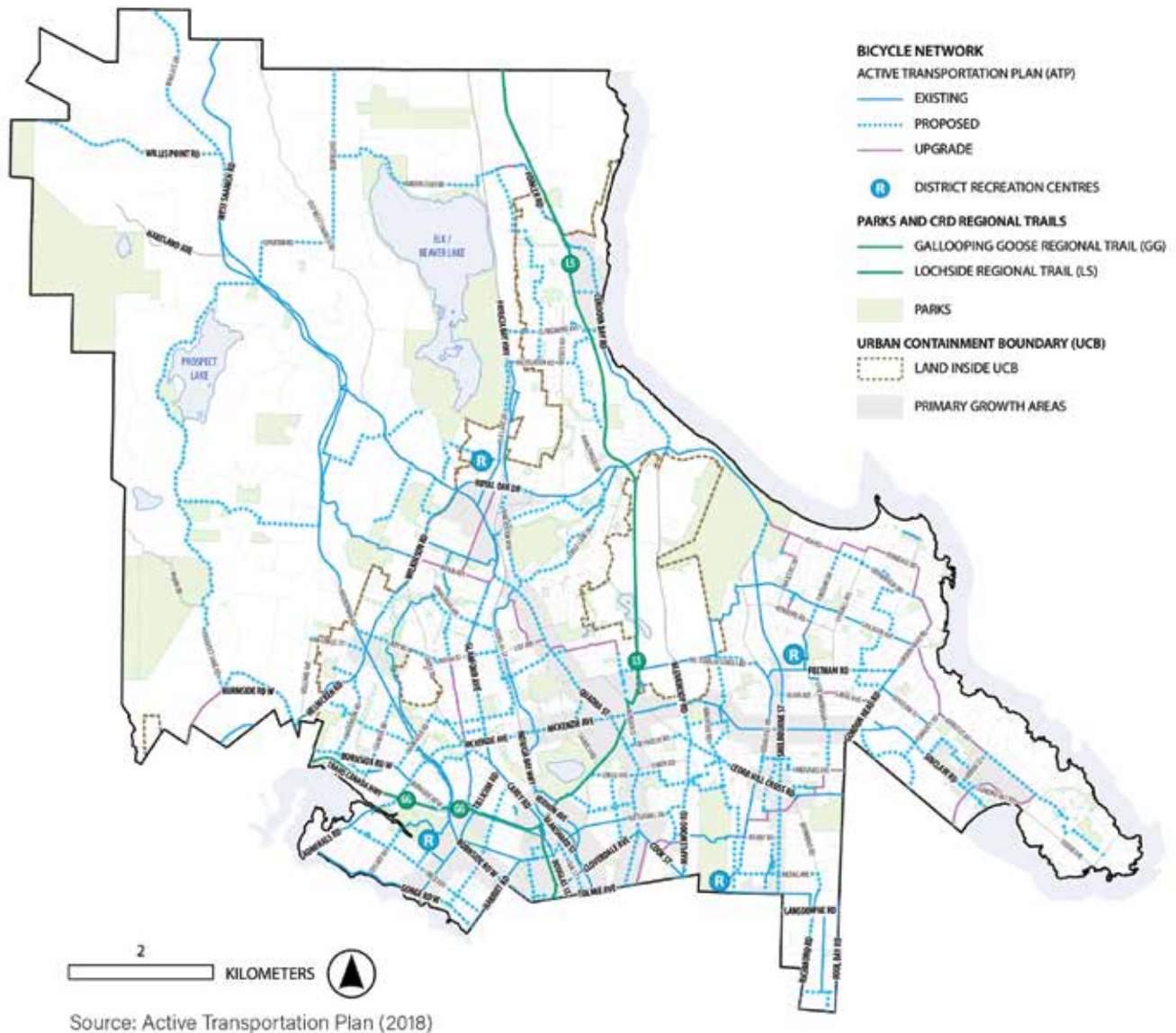


Policies

- 9.2.1 Encourage and support non-vehicular transportation by providing a safe, interconnected, accessible and visually appealing cycling and walking network (Map 7).
- 9.2.2 Complete the update of the Active Transportation Plan.
- 9.2.3 Construct pedestrian and cycling improvements when upgrading major roads or collector streets as prioritized in the Active Transportation Plan and the transportation capital plan.
- 9.2.4 Leverage opportunities created through redevelopment and land use change to achieve construction of the Active Transportation network.
- 9.2.5 Require that new sidewalks be separated from the pavement by a curb and boulevard, except where implementation is considered impractical because of natural topography, inadequate right-of-way, trees, or open ditches.
- 9.2.6 Continue to support the Active and Safe Routes to School program, in conjunction with school districts and parent associations.
- 9.2.7 Require bicycle parking/storage/charging, and encourage change and shower facilities where appropriate, in commercial, institutional, public, recreational, and multi-family residential buildings.

- 9.2.8 Identify future trails, footpaths, and bikeways and acquire rights-of-way or easements at the time of rezoning or subdivision, to create high quality pedestrian and bicycle networks throughout the community.
- 9.2.9 Follow the established priorities in the Active Transportation Plan for constructing sidewalks, footpaths, and bikeways and upgrading the visibility of pedestrian crosswalks.
- 9.2.10 Support ongoing pedestrian and bike safety education and awareness programming to increase overall road safety and build a culture of active transportation in the community.
- 9.2.11 Support the continued development of route maps and the installation of wayfinding signs, to encourage and promote walking, cycling and public transit use.
- 9.2.12 Ensure the pedestrian and cycling network in Primary Growth Areas is designed to accommodate projected population and employment densities, with features that support an enjoyable experience, such as sidewalk cafes, public art, street furniture, and boulevard plantings.
- 9.2.13 Require that the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure build high quality pedestrian and cycling infrastructure along ministry controlled roads as part of other planned projects, and advocate for the upgrading of existing substandard infrastructure as part of new Ministry projects.





Map 7. Bicycle Network

Map notes:

- The final Bicycle Network Map will be revised to reflect the Active Transportation Plan which is undergoing an update at this time. Learn more at: saanich.ca/atpupdate
- The Saanich bike network is constantly being upgraded in accordance with best practices. This means that from time to time, some routes may be removed from the overall bike network if they do not meet the classification requirements set out by the documents such as the BC Active Transportation Design Guide. For an updated map please visit the Saanich website.

9.3 Public Transit

Transit has tremendous potential to contribute to stronger, more sustainable communities. A strong transit system has the potential to improve equity outcomes, reduce reliance on private vehicles and support sustainable land use planning. Continued work with BC Transit, the region's transit provider, will be essential to support population and employment growth, ensure alignment with active transportation networks and improve quality of life outcomes.

The need to realize this potential in Saanich and the broader Capital Region is increasingly important because of factors such as climate change, population growth, increasing traffic congestion and an aging demographic. The Capital Region has an estimated population of 415,000 residents with well over 1 million trips (all modes of travel) made each day throughout the region. An estimated population of 453,000 by 2038 is expected to create a 40 per cent increase in daily trips equating to 1.7 million trips per day in the region. Meeting the demands of the forecasted population and traffic growth in the region requires a shift in focus from moving vehicles to moving people.

In its Transit Future Network Plan, BC Transit identifies four layers of transit service which together create a comprehensive network:

- Rapid Transit Network (RTN) service is designed to move high volumes of passengers between major regional destinations along key transportation corridors. Service is more frequent with less stops than traditional service.
- Frequent Transit Network (FTN) service provides medium to high density mixed land use corridors with a convenient, reliable, and frequent service. The goal is to allow customers to spontaneously travel without having to consult a travel schedule.
- Local Transit Network (LTN) connects neighbourhoods to local destinations and to the rapid and frequent transit network. The service allows customers to plan a trip by transit with route frequency and vehicle capacity selected based on demand.
- Target services are a collection of services that respond to the specific needs of customers. They include interregional services, handyDART services, express service, and rural para-transit with flexible transit routing in rural areas.

Important transit routes and infrastructure in Saanich includes three RTN routes, several FTN routes, and a multi-modal transportation hub in the District Centre (Map 8).



Policies

9.3.1 Work with BC Transit to coordinate transit planning and investments with land use policy and development decisions with a focus on providing residential densities supportive of frequent transit service in Primary Growth Areas and on major and collector routes.

9.3.2 Work with BC Transit to implement strategic transit infrastructure in the District including the:

- a. Multi-modal transportation hub in the Uptown Core;
- b. McKenzie Corridor East-West Rapid Transit Route;
- c. Douglas Corridor North-South Rapid Transit Route; and,
- d. Highway 17 Rapid Transit Route.

9.3.3 Support BC Transit to:

- a. Maximize opportunities for transit use;

- b. Up-grade transit facilities; and,
- c. Work towards a zero-emissions bus fleet by 2030.

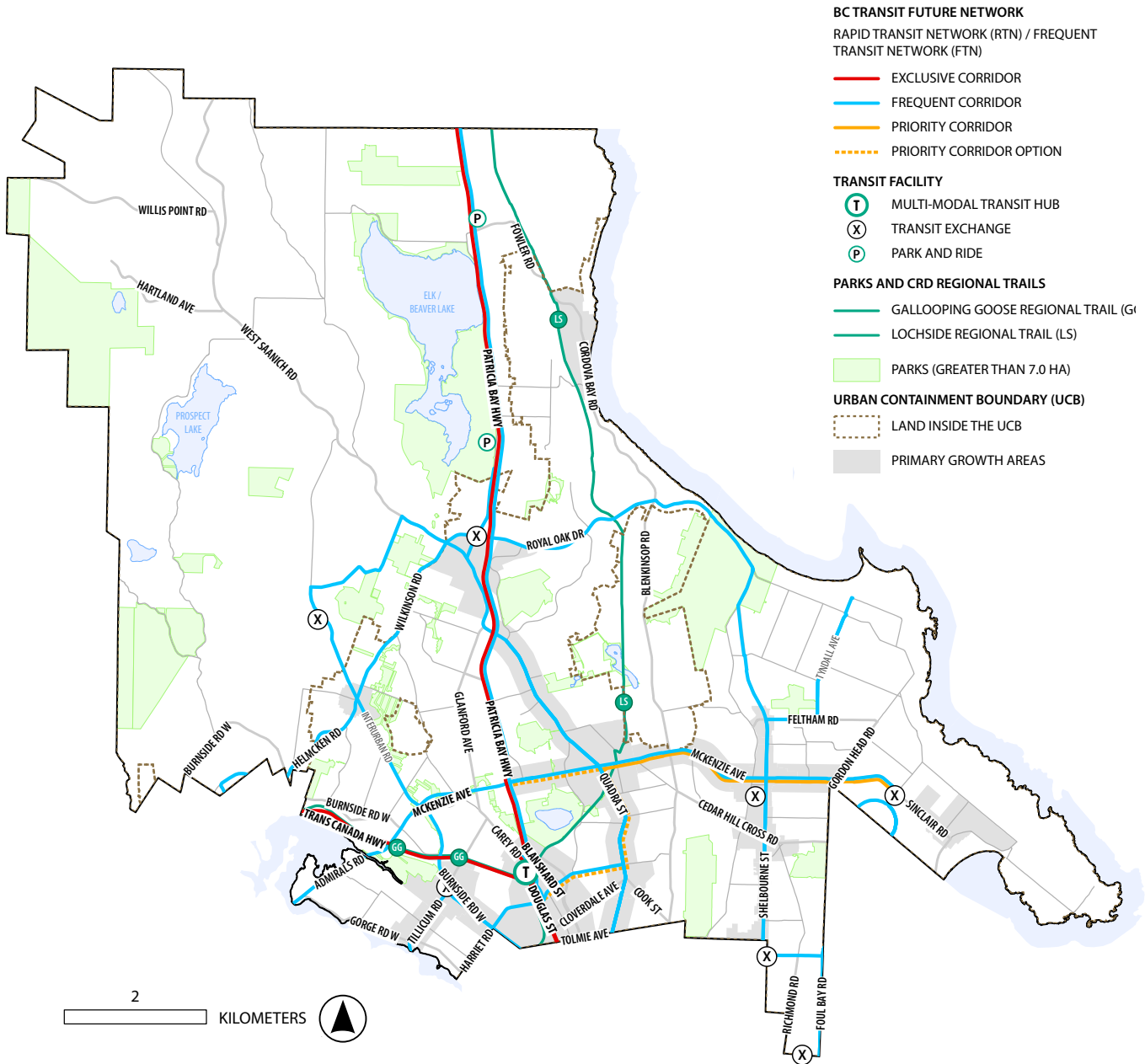
9.3.4 Encourage BC Transit to give priority to providing service to major institutional and employment centres and along the corridors with the highest ridership potential.

9.3.5 Continue to work with BC Transit to promote the transit pass program for major multi- family, commercial, industrial and institutional developments.

9.3.6 Ensure future Light Rapid Transit (LRT) options are not eliminated when considering development along major transportation corridors.

9.3.7 Work with BC Transit and the Capital Regional District Board to create Park and Ride facilities in strategic locations to reduce personal vehicle traffic.





Source: BC Transit - Transit Future Plan (May 2011)

Map 8. Frequent and Rapid Transit Network

9.4 Electric Mobility and Zero Emissions Vehicles

On-road transportation is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Saanich, primarily from personal vehicles. While the focus is to shift to active transportation and transit due to the many benefits they provide beyond emissions reductions, the District's mixed rural and urban community and the need for efficient distribution of goods, means that vehicular travel will still form a part of its daily operations. The way the community is designed will reduce the number and length of those vehicle trips, but it is important that individuals also switch to zero emission vehicles.

Zero emissions vehicles such as electric vehicles and e-mobility devices, improve affordability, air quality, noise reduction and health benefits (when using e-bikes and other forms of active electric mobility). Provincial and Federal regulations and programs, alongside action by the District, are driving the market and supporting electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure needed to realize the transition.

Policies

- 9.4.1 Support a rapid transition off fossil fuels to electric vehicles and bikes by implementing identified actions in the E-Mobility Strategy's five focus areas:
 - a. Electric bikes;
 - b. Electric vehicles;
 - c. Home and workplace charging;
 - d. Public charging network; and,
 - e. District leadership.
- 9.4.2 Work with regional partners to plan and implement infrastructure improvements that support e-bike riders and other active transportation users, including:
 - a. Widening multi-use trails that are becoming congested or projected for higher use;
 - b. Creating pull-outs and parking for cargo/delivery e-bikes;

- c. Providing secure bike/e-bike parking in commercial areas; and,
- d. Posting speed limits on congested trails.

- 9.4.3 Work with regional partners to implement additional electric vehicle (EV) public charging infrastructure, informed by the Capital Region EV Infrastructure Road Map, that supports access for residents of Multi-Unit Residential Buildings and car share organizations amongst others, and includes on-street EV charging infrastructure in the public right of way.
- 9.4.4 Support retrofits to existing buildings to implement 100% EV-ready charging infrastructure and access to convenient and secure charging for the use of e-bikes and other e-mobility devices.
- 9.4.5 Work with BC Hydro and the provincial and federal governments to ensure the electrical infrastructure needed is in place to support the transition to electric vehicles, including the expansion of DC Fast Chargers in Saanich, in locations that are convenient for travelers and residents of existing multi-family buildings and as part of a larger regional, provincial and national network.
- 9.4.6 Complete the Saanich Zero Emission Fleet Strategy to transform the municipal, fire and police fleet to 100% renewable energy by, or before, 2040.



9.5 Transportation Demand Management and Parking

An important component of transportation network planning is managing demand through a range of strategies to increase the efficiency of the overall network. Known as Transportation Demand Management (TDM), this approach seeks to influence people's behaviour and transportation decisions by encouraging and incentivizing certain outcomes while discouraging other outcomes. A key lever available is parking; decisions made to provide, require, prioritize and price both on and off street parking spaces affects mode choice.

Policies

- 9.5.1 Support the use of Transportation Demand Management by schools, institutions and major employers, to help reduce the reliance on automobiles, and make more efficient use of available parking and transportation resources.
- 9.5.2 Incorporate Transportation Demand Management strategies within Municipal operations and as part of the Saanich Zero Emissions Fleet Strategy and the Climate Friendly Commuter Program.
- 9.5.3 Support programs such as car-sharing, carpooling, and ridesharing to help reduce personal vehicle ownership.
- 9.5.4 Encourage the incorporation of car share vehicles and memberships as part of residential, commercial and institutional developments.

- 9.5.5 Update off-street parking standards to limit the total amount of parking provided and reflect current development practices while improving land use efficiency, for example:
 - a. Review off-street parking and loading area regulations in relation to Transit Demand Management strategies; and
 - b. Update off-street parking and loading area standards in relation to the function of Primary Growth Areas as identified through detailed planning.
- 9.5.6 Consider parking variances where one or more of the following apply:
 - a. Transportation Demand Management strategies are implemented;
 - b. A variety of alternative transit options exist within the immediate vicinity of the proposed development;
 - c. There is a minimal reduction in required parking;
 - d. The development is located in a Primary Growth Area; and,
 - e. Availability of on-street parking.
- 9.5.7 Investigate location and financing options for parking structures in Centres.



9.6 Road Network

Saanich road network provides the backbone of the District's transportation system. With an increasing focus on alternative modes of travel to personal vehicles, roadways need to be redesigned to incorporate supporting infrastructure for walking, biking and public transportation. In many cases, reallocation of existing road space and/or additional right-of-way will be required to accommodate these uses along with additional elements such as boulevard trees and in some areas, on-street loading. Roads in Primary Growth Areas also play an important role as public spaces and require a higher level of pedestrian-oriented building design and high quality public realm improvements. Any example of this is the Significant Streets identified in the Uptown Douglas Plan.

Policies

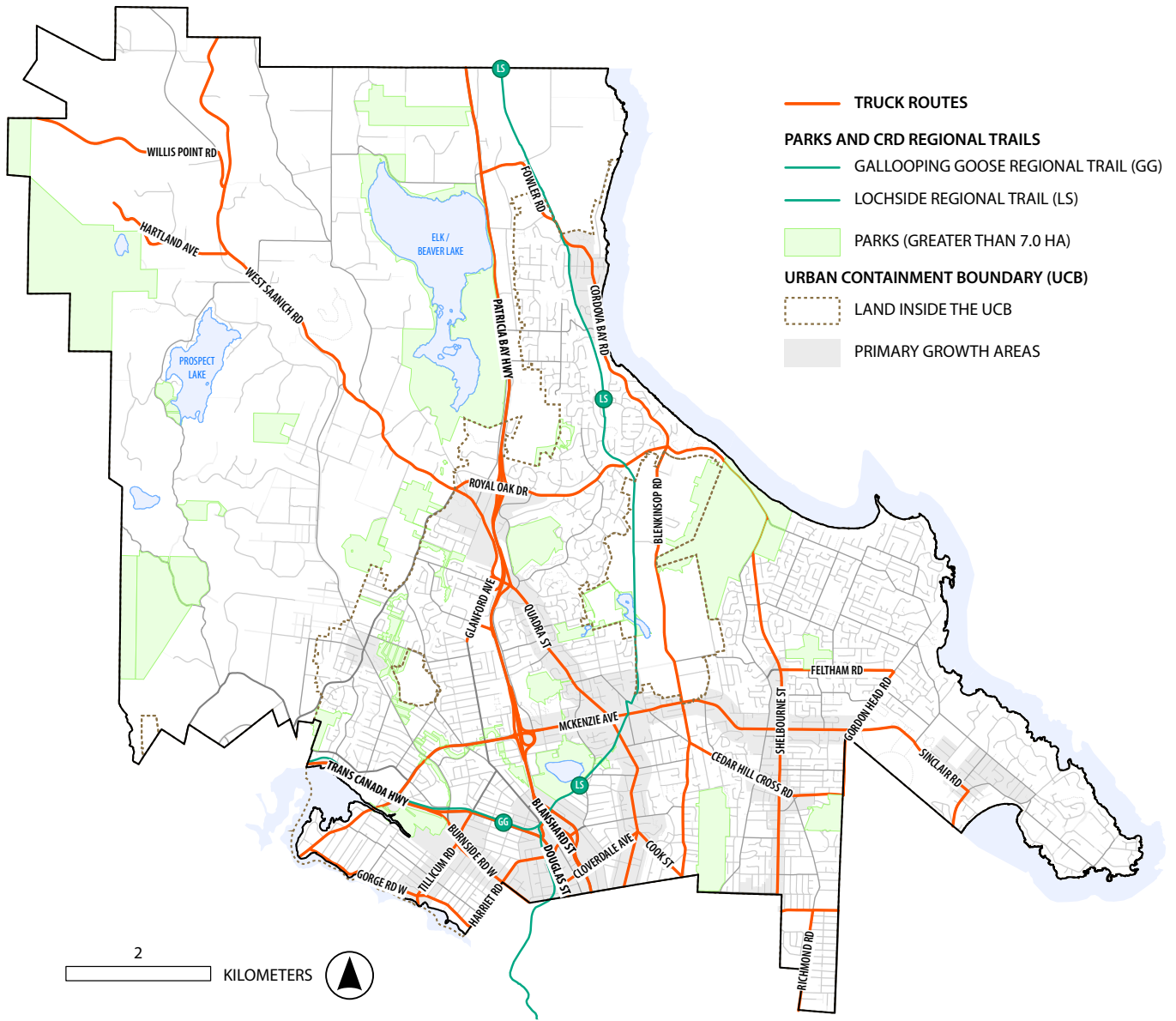
- 9.6.1 Apply a hierarchical approach to the road network to identify appropriate roles, design treatments and engineering standards (Map 9).
- 9.6.2 Consider alternative road designs where appropriate to retain neighbourhood character and protect environmental features.
- 9.6.3 Monitor the effectiveness of the Truck Route Bylaw (Map 10) to minimize the intrusion of truck traffic through neighbourhoods, and develop measures to mitigate the impact of Truck Route traffic, where necessary.
- 9.6.4 Ensure that transportation links allow for efficient disaster/emergency response routes throughout the municipality and region.
- 9.6.5 Encourage the Ministry of Transportation to implement sound-attenuation where appropriate along major transportation corridors (e.g., Patricia Bay Highway and the Island Highway).
- 9.6.6 After the required space for construction utilities and high-quality pedestrian and cycling infrastructure has been identified and allocated, require boulevard tree planting, landscaping, and where appropriate stormwater infrastructure improvements as part of the design, construction, and reconstruction of roads.
- 9.6.7 Utilize Transportation Demand Management strategies and other appropriate techniques to address speeding, safety concerns and short-cutting through neighbourhoods.
- 9.6.8 Support the investigation of variable cost automobile (pay-as-you-drive) insurance by ICBC and the Province, as a financial incentive to reduce reliance on automobiles.





Map 9. Road Network





Map 10. Truck Routes



10.0 Utilities & Service Infrastructure

Related Plans & Strategies

- Water Master Plan
- Sanitary Sewer Master Plan
- Core Area Liquid Waste Management Plan
- Climate Plan
- Integrated Stormwater Management Plans

Objectives

- Apply a coordinated sustainable service delivery approach to infrastructure.
- Consider the latest future climate projections in the design, upgrade, operations, and maintenance of new and existing infrastructure.
- Integrate natural assets and ecosystem services into the District's broader approach to infrastructure management.
- Design communities to support a Zero Waste target.

Infrastructure services and utilities such as sanitary sewers, storm drainage, potable water, solid waste, and energy utilities are essential elements of a community's physical fabric, ensuring individual, community, economic and environmental health and supporting growth and development. Recognizing and increasing the role of natural assets and ecosystem services as an integral component of service infrastructure supports the District's climate mitigation and adaptation response.



Infrastructure in Saanich is provided by several different agencies and levels of government. The District provides and maintains sanitary sewage, storm water, solid waste collection, and water distribution systems. The Capital Regional District provides trunk sewer services, solid and liquid waste disposal and management, and watershed and reservoir management. Public and private companies provide utilities such as energy, communication, fiber optic and cable networks.

10.1 General

Maintaining existing infrastructure services, replacing older infrastructure, resolving service deficiencies, and improving efficiency is an ongoing community priority. Complementing this, is work to upgrade and modernize infrastructure to reduce carbon emissions, and incorporate ecosystem services and natural assets to improve the District's climate resiliency. This work is happening in collaboration at the District and regional level as well as in discussion with the private sector.

As the population of Saanich and the region continues to increase the infrastructure capacity limits will also become more of a concern. Implementing One Planet Living strategies however such as reducing water use and generating less waste can extend the life of existing infrastructure and lessen the impact of growth. Spurred on by this reality, many communities are adopting alternative development standards that can lower development and maintenance costs for both private and public interests, create less waste, use less material, and enhance sensitive ecological systems and neighbourhoods.

Policies

- 10.1.1 Apply a sustainable service delivery approach as defined by the District's asset management program to adequately meet the needs of existing and new development.
- 10.1.2 Update existing and design new service infrastructure to be climate resilient and optimized for future climate impacts.
- 10.1.3 Consider natural assets and ecosystem services in the planning and provision of services.
- 10.1.4 Work with provincial and regulatory

agencies to encourage alternative energy, waste disposal and water conservations systems and transition service infrastructure to renewable energy sources where applicable.

- 10.1.5 Use the asset management plans to guide the replacement of aging municipal infrastructure, improving efficiency of existing services and increasing climate resiliency in the overall system.
- 10.1.6 Continue to use Development Cost Charges to recover a portion of the cost of installing infrastructure that supports community growth.
- 10.1.7 Investigate alternative financing options for upgrading infrastructure to support Primary Growth Areas.
- 10.1.8 Implement sustainable servicing practices, green infrastructure, and energy and resource recovery where feasible.
- 10.1.9 Incorporate technological advances and evolving best practices into municipal service provision through capital planning processes and required system upgrades and expansions.
- 10.1.10 Encourage the Province to eliminate restrictions that prevent sustainable infrastructure innovations, including consideration for alternative development standards for water use, sanitary and stormwater management, and solid waste disposal.
- 10.1.11 Work with the CRD, member municipalities, senior governments, an other stakeholders to identify aggregate materials (e.g., sand and gravel deposits).
- 10.1.12 Ensure municipal operations account for technological advances where practical and feasible.
- 10.1.13 Support the goals and commitments within the Core Area Liquid Waste Management Plan, relevant to Saanich infrastructure, in collaboration with partnering members.

10.2 Sanitary Sewer Management

The sanitary sewer system is a network of pipes, pump stations, and individual connections that convey wastewater. This material flows through the District's system into the regional trunk system where it is treated at a CRD facility. The sewer system is primarily gravity based with pump stations moving wastewater from lower to higher elevations where needed.

For properties located outside the municipal sewer system, an on-site system (e.g., septic tank and tile field) is used to manage wastewater. On-site systems are licensed and overseen by the Island Health Authority. While areas within the Urban Containment Boundary are more likely to be serviced by the municipal sewer system, some areas remain outside based on historical development and land use patterns. Map 11 shows the location of the Sewer Service Boundary and sanitary sewer infrastructure.

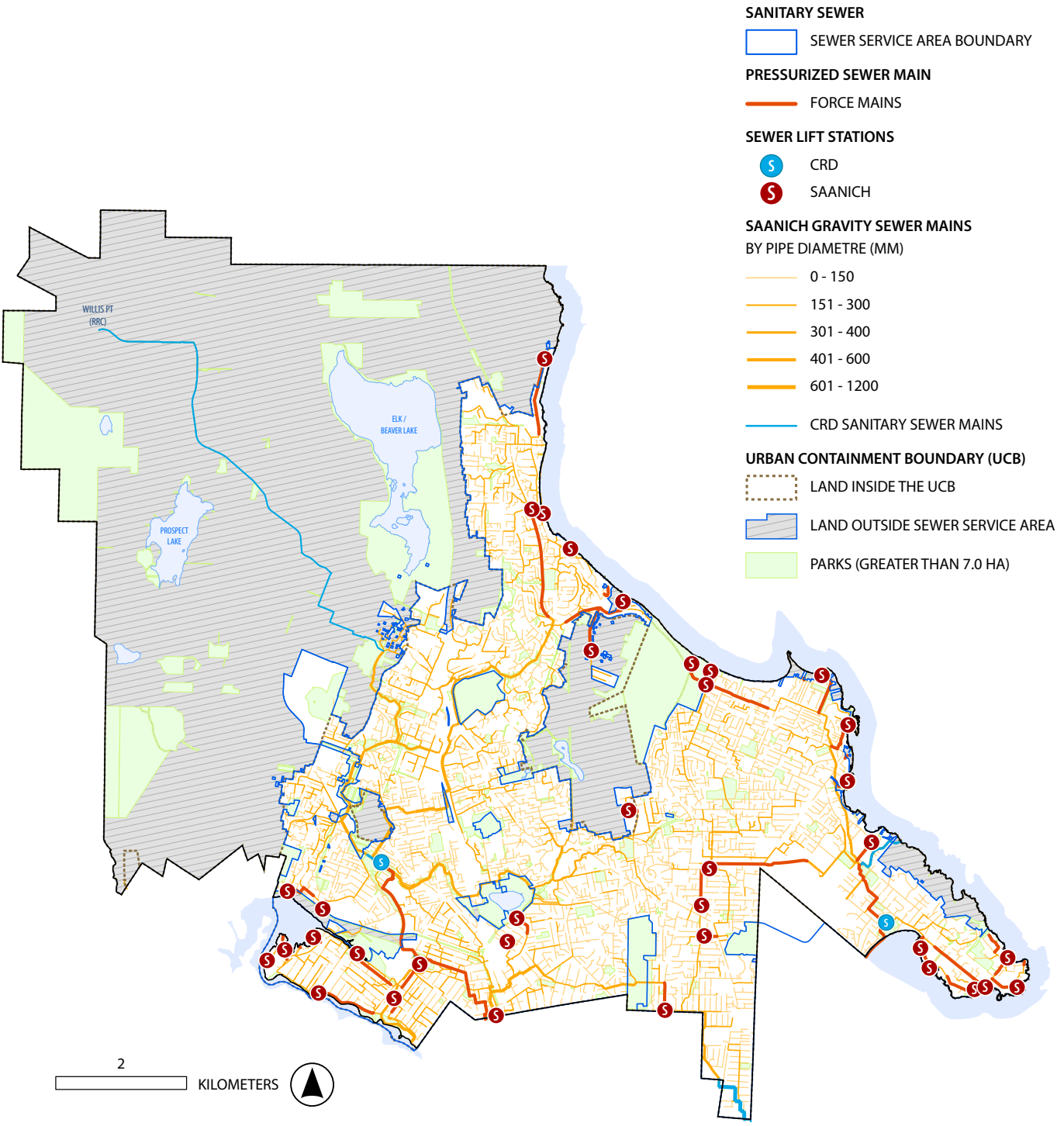
Sanitary Sewer System
- Quick Facts

- 550 km of sewer mains carry wastewater from one point to another by gravity.
- 30,000 service connections link homes and businesses to the sanitary sewer system.
- 5,240 manholes to access and maintain the system.
- 36 lift stations that pump wastewater to overcome land topography and changes in elevations.
- Approximately 90% of properties are served by the District system.

Policies

- 10.2.1 Consider extensions to the Sewer Service Area within the Urban Containment Boundary, based on health concerns, land-use policies, and cost effectiveness to the Municipality.
- 10.2.2 Consider extending the Sewer Service Area outside the Urban Containment Boundary only as a means to resolve a current health problem if no reasonable alternative is feasible.
- 10.2.3 Consider major extension of sewer service, beyond designated official community plan limits at the date of the adoption of the Regional Growth Strategy bylaw (March 14, 2018), only as part of a comprehensive review of the Regional Growth Strategy.
- 10.2.4 Support the efforts of the Island Health Authority and the Capital Regional District, to provide public education and enforce regulations respecting the correct operation, maintenance, and inspection of on-site sewage disposal systems.
- 10.2.5 Support the Core Area Liquid Waste Management Plan source control objectives to eliminate contaminants from industrial, commercial, institutional, and residential effluent flowing into the sewer system.
- 10.2.6 Support the retention of the municipal sewage collection system within the public domain.





Map 11. Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure



10.3 Stormwater Management

Saanich's stormwater management service develops comprehensive plans and responds to the runoff of rainwater, hail, and snow. Flood control and stormwater risk management are two significant and primary roles. The existing system uses an integrated array of elements to direct and hold excess rainwater, including watercourses and ditches, stormwater gravity mains and detention ponds, rain gardens, and marine outfalls (Map 12). Many of these systems also serve to enhance stormwater quality. Floodplains also perform an important hydrological function.

Stormwater management infrastructure can be overwhelmed by sudden, intense, repeated, or prolonged precipitation. Major stormwater events are set to further increase in intensity and frequency with climate change. Stormwater systems and local streams will be strained as they are forced to convey challenging and at times, unprecedented runoff rainfall events.

As part of its adaptation response, Saanich will evaluate and adopt best management practices, continue to diagnose and respond to the issues comprehensively, and implement Integrated Stormwater Management Plans (ISMPs). Four areas have been identified for ISMPs and one for a Stormwater Plan, grouping together drainage catchments with similar characteristics, such as growth patterns and environmental concerns (Map 13). This approach considers the integration of several related factors as the plans are developed and implemented including:

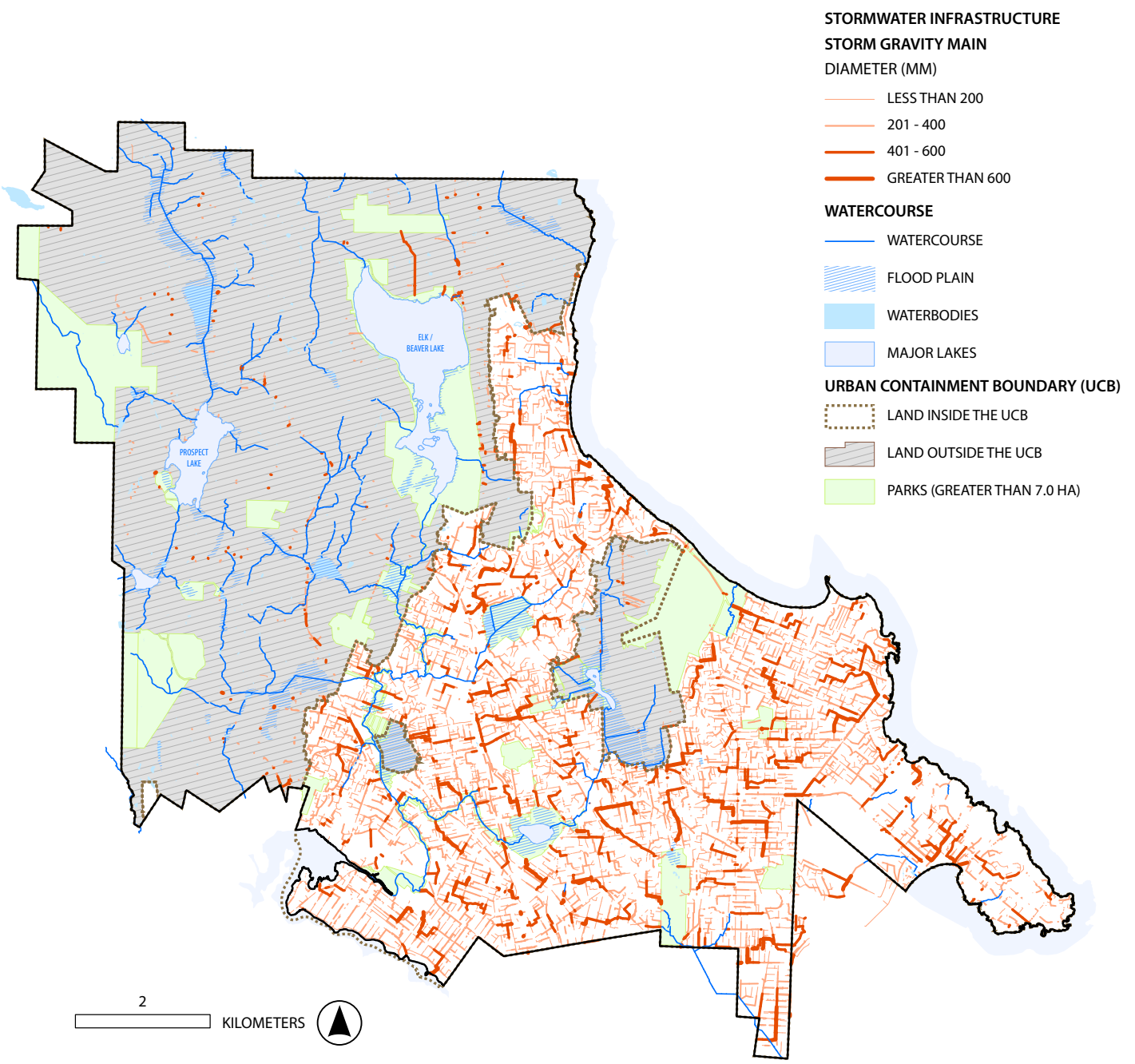
- Water quality
- Water quantity
- Drainage infrastructure
- Environmental Services
- Land use planning
- Climate change
- Adaptive development

Stormwater System - Quick Facts

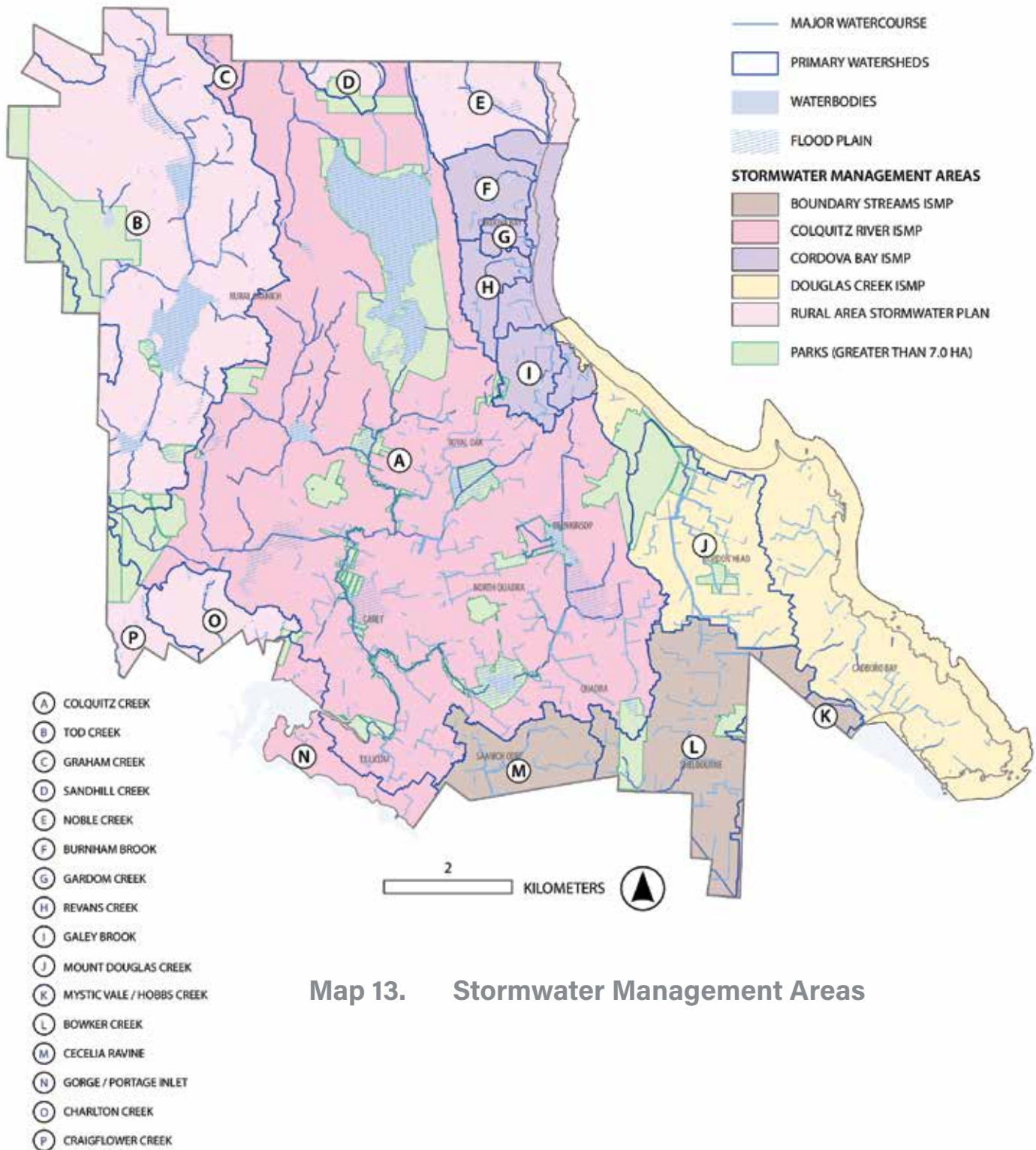
- Watercourses and ditches: 536.5 km
- Stormwater gravity main: 567 km
- Stormwater lift station: 1
- Stormwater detention ponds: 3
- Rain gardens: 17
- Outfalls to marine environment: 70

Policies

- 10.3.1 Complete and implement integrated stormwater management plans for the "Cordova Bay", "Colquitz Creek", "Douglas Creek" and "Boundary Stream" grouped catchment areas and a stormwater plan for the "Rural" catchment area.
- 10.3.2 Update floodplain mapping as part of stormwater management plans to account for extreme rainfall expected due to climate change.
- 10.3.3 Continue to maintain and improve the environmental quality of the storm water management system, to enhance watershed function and increase climate resilience.
- 10.3.4 In rural areas, retain an open-channel stormwater drainage system comprising watercourses, ditches, and other water retention and detention opportunities, to enhance water quality, support biodiversity and provide resilience to climate change.
- 10.3.5 Support groundwater recharge through the use of green stormwater infrastructure.
- 10.3.6 Strategically acquire and/or protect areas, including through partnerships, that contribute to climate change adaptation for the purpose of stormwater management and flood resiliency.
- 10.3.7 Encourage net improvements to site permeability for onsite stormwater infiltration, ground water recharge, and climate adaptation through the redevelopment of commercial, institutional, and multi-family sites.
- 10.3.8 Retain the stormwater holding capacity of natural infiltration and storage areas to reduce peak flows and enhance the quality of runoff.
- 10.3.9 Consider pursuing "day-lighting" of piped watercourses as part of watercourse restoration.
- 10.3.10 Explore alternative stormwater funding models to meet the needs of current and future costs of delivering integrated services and safeguarding resilient assets.



Map 12. Stormwater Infrastructure



Map notes:

- ISWP = Integrated Stormwater Management Plan. These boundaries are use for the District's stormwater planning.

10.4 Water Supply and Distribution

Saanich receives its potable water supply from the Capital Region District Regional Water Service with the Sooke Lake Reservoir as the primary source. The District distributes water to over 30,000 properties; to do so, it develops and maintains a distribution system using a network of watermains, reservoirs, pressure reducing valves and pumping stations (Map 14). The District also regularly samples and tests water quality.

The District's water service is defined in the Water Utility Bylaw. All properties within the Urban Containment Boundary are part of the service and some lands in the rural areas are serviced by the municipal water distribution system. In addition to the distributed water service, the Province has documented more than 700 private wells within the District's boundaries. These wells are used to provide drinking water and support irrigation.

Water System - Quick Facts

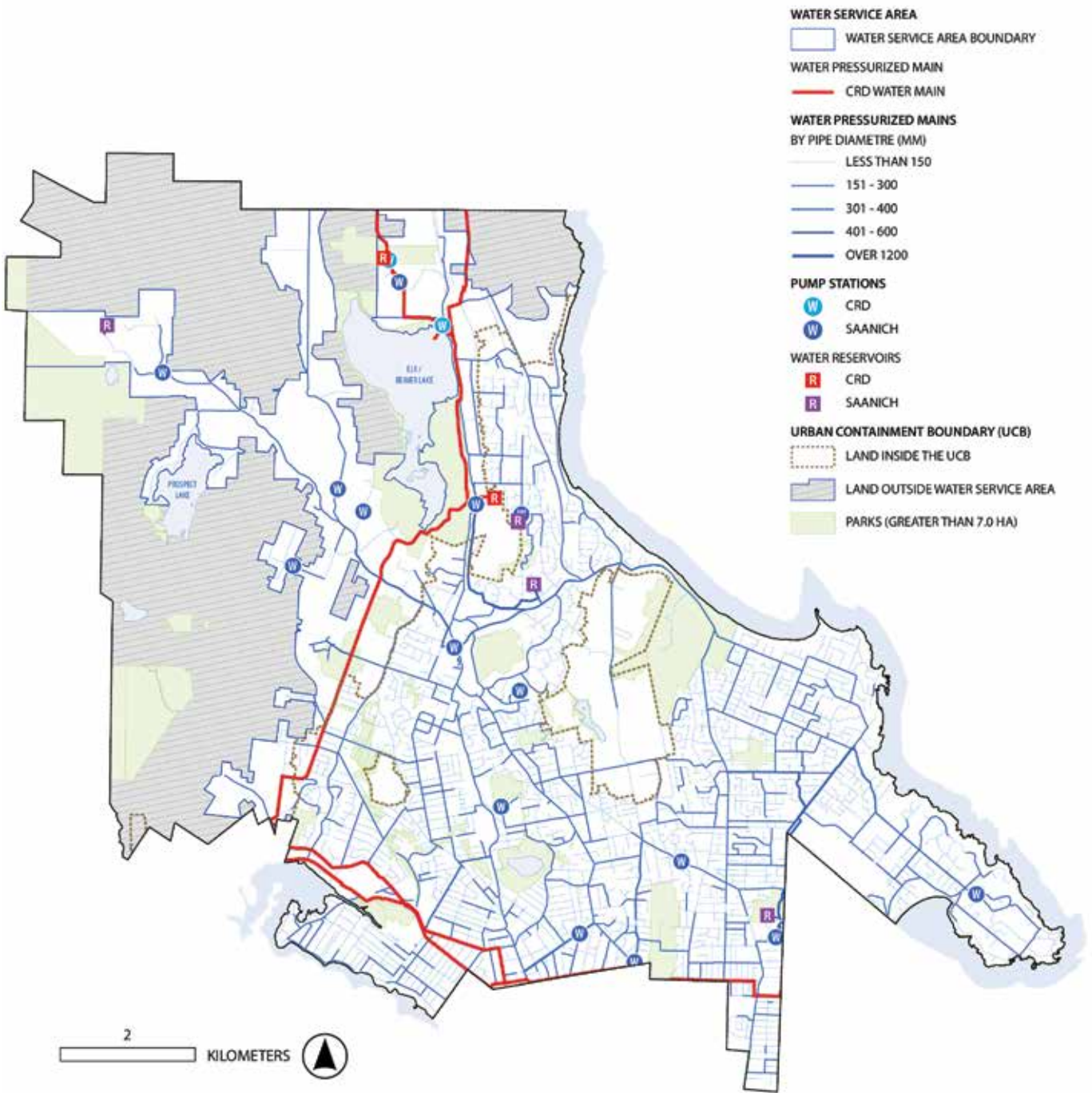
Saanich's distribution network includes:

- 575 km of watermains
- 4 Reservoirs
- 50 pressure reducing valves
- 18 pumping stations

Policies

- 10.4.1 Work with the Capital Regional District to ensure adequate water transmission and storage facilities to obtain good quality water at acceptable volumes and pressure within the water service area.
- 10.4.2 Work with the Capital Regional District to understand and plan for the impacts of climate change on the long-term stability and supply of the source water within the region.
- 10.4.3 Work with the Capital Regional District to raise awareness and reduce per capita consumption of water.

- 10.4.4 Consider major extension of water service, beyond designated official community plan limits at the date of the adoption of the Regional Growth Strategy bylaw (March 14, 2018), only as part of a comprehensive review of the Regional Growth Strategy.
- 10.4.5 Minor extensions of water service that are in keeping with the principles of the Regional Growth Strategy (to support public health, environmental issues, fire suppression, or agricultural needs) may be considered outside of the five-year Regional Growth Strategy review process.
- 10.4.6 Review public water service outside the Urban Containment Boundary in order to:
 - a. Determine future demand for service to address pressing public health or environmental concerns, to provide fire suppression or to service agriculture, and system capacity;
 - b. Identify and evaluate alternative potable water sources and delivery systems; and,
 - c. Explore funding options for potential service extensions in addition to local improvements.
- 10.4.7 Support the retention of the drinking water supply and distribution system within the public domain.
- 10.4.8 Maintain potable groundwater in Rural Saanich by:
 - a. Working with the Capital Regional District and the Province to monitor groundwater quality and quantity;
 - b. Supporting/undertaking a public education program about protecting groundwater quality, including the promotion of agricultural best practices; and
 - c. Supporting/undertaking a public education program about water conservation for private well and municipal water users.



Map 14. Water Service Infrastructure

10.5 Energy Utilities

While the District does not operate or manage community-wide energy infrastructure, the location and appearance of this energy utility infrastructure impacts community design, available space, livability and District operations and maintenance. It also plays a significant role in the District's climate goals and targets and is influenced by land use planning and climate policy. In order to meet the District's Climate Targets, it must move towards electrification of buildings and transportation while supporting design, livability, environmental and other sustainability goals. Implementing innovative strategies such as co-locating compatible buildings and services for energy and resource recovery, such as ice rinks as a source of heat and swimming pools with a high heat demand, will also be important to meeting these targets.



Policies

- 10.5.1 Encourage utility providers to remove overhead wiring and relocate it underground, with a focus on Primary Growth Areas.
- 10.5.2 Work with BC Hydro to support the retention and planting of large-scale shade trees within public rights of ways.
- 10.5.3 Work with utility providers to relocate utility poles and above ground boxes located within sidewalk and other pedestrian areas and prevent future placement of new poles/boxes in these areas.
- 10.5.4 Ensure utility providers use best management practices in the installation, maintenance, and repair of utilities within public rights of ways.
- 10.5.5 Encourage utility companies to use anti-graffiti measures including decorative wraps on their above ground utility boxes.
- 10.5.6 Work with the provincial and federal governments and utilities to incentivize and support local renewable energy generation.
- 10.5.7 Explore opportunities to co-locate compatible buildings and services for energy and resource recovery.
- 10.5.8 Consider opportunities for community-based localized energy generation.



10.6 Solid Waste

Solid waste management at the municipal level has traditionally focused on the collection and diversion of household organics, recycling and garbage while supporting broader regional initiatives for other waste streams and required transfer station and processing infrastructure. Increasingly however, the focus is evolving beyond this to advocate for residents to adopt a “lighter living” approach to reduce their initial consumption and generation of waste. This approach is closely linked with the District’s Climate Plan and One Planet Living and is an important strategy to reduce the carbon emissions associated with generating this waste. It also recognizes the embodied emissions associated with creating, processing and delivering a particular material or product.

The CRD Solid Waste Management Plan (2020) includes actions based upon the 5R Pollution Prevention Hierarchy to achieve a per capita waste disposal target of 250kg/capita/year by 2031 and a goal to surpass that to achieve 125kg/capita/year in the same timeframe. The Saanich Climate Plan includes an action to develop a Zero Waste Strategy to help achieve or exceed these targets and maximize co-benefits, including new economic opportunities for local innovation and a circular economy. Unfortunately, the amount of waste going to landfill per person is increasing and still far from these regional targets; it continues to largely consist of divertible materials such as organics, wood and paper alongside construction and demolition waste.

Policies

- 10.6.1 Complete and implement a Zero Waste Strategy.
- 10.6.2 Actively support Capital Regional District initiatives to reduce solid waste, using the 5R Pollution Prevention Hierarchy, and develop efficient and environmentally acceptable long-term waste residual management solutions, working towards Zero Waste generation.
- 10.6.3 Implement education and incentive programs to increase waste reduction, reuse and recycling participation, and compliance, integrating lighter living and zero waste generation principles.
- 10.6.4 Implement policies, regulations, restrictions, and prohibitions to help achieve zero waste and lighter living goals and targets.
- 10.6.5 Develop and initiate incentives to further reduce the volume of construction waste generated and landfilled.
- 10.6.6 Design buildings to ensure space and innovative approaches for waste storage, sorting, diversion, and collection including organics diversion from commercial and multi-family developments.

Zero waste is a philosophy and aspirational goal that envisions a point where nothing is wasted. It eliminates traditional concepts of managing waste materials and instead focuses on design for environment. It is intended as an approach to pursuing sustainability through circular economy, seeking to move materials from residual management through recovery, recycling, reuse and ultimately reduction.

Embodied Emissions - The greenhouse gas emissions produced in creating and delivering a particular material (e.g., infrastructure or consumable goods), including the energy used for extraction of raw materials, manufacturing and transportation of the end product.

Circular Economy – Minimizing waste and using waste as a resource (in contrast to a linear economy from production to use and disposal).



Related Plans & Strategies

- Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan
- Action Transportation Plan
- Recreation Market Analysis Study

11.0 Parks, Trails, and Open Space

Objectives

- Provide residents with a range of safe parks, trails, open spaces, and recreational opportunities to support active living, health, well-being and community cohesion.
- Work towards equitable and walkable access to parks and open spaces for all urban residents.
- Protect, restore and enhance natural areas, ecological function and biological diversity.

play, socialize, relax, be healthy, and learn about and appreciate nature. They also provide wildlife habitat, and support biodiversity and ecosystem services. Multi-purpose trails support healthy living by providing transportation connections as well as recreational opportunities. Together these spaces and trail connections are an important component of the District’s response to climate change supporting both mitigation and adaptation strategies.

Saanich is fortunate to have a broad range of parks, open spaces, and trails. This includes over 170 municipal, community and neighbourhood parks, supplemented by the regional park network, and more than 100 km of trails. Beyond parks, open spaces include urban plazas, beaches, woodlands, pastures, working landscapes, gardens, play areas, golf courses, multi-use trails, and viewpoints. Parks and open spaces give people places to



11.1 Parks and Open Space Network

As the District's population continues to grow and change, it will be important to ensure the parks and open space network meets the needs of residents (Map 15). While the District currently exceeds its overall per capita target for parks, their distribution is not uniform and significant gaps exist in the network. Addressing these gaps will be increasingly important moving forward as more residents live within Primary Growth Areas; many of these growth areas require additional park space to meet existing and future community needs. Compounding this issue, residents living in multi-unit buildings often have limited to no private outdoor space. As these areas redevelop it will be vital that new parks and open spaces such as urban plazas and trail connections, be identified and constructed to support the long-term livability of these areas. The 3:30:300 Rule for urban forest management adopted by Council as a guiding principle reinforces the need for equitable access to parks. Based on this rule, all homes should be located within 300m, i.e., a short-walk from a neighbourhood park.

General Policies

- 11.1.1 Acquire and develop park land to:
- Meet the recreational and social needs of existing and future residents, employees and visitors;
 - Ensure residents of all ages and abilities have walkable access to green space; and,
 - Protect, rehabilitate, and enhance ecological function and biological diversity within Saanich.
- 11.1.2 Link parks and trails with the Active Transportation network as both destinations and as key connections within the broader network, including through prioritizing pedestrian infrastructure upgrades adjacent to parks and upgrading trails and pathways in parks as identified in the Active Transportation Plan.

11.1.3 Continue to work with BC Transit to locate transit stops adjacent to parks and at connection points with the Active Transportation network to support an integrated approach to mobility and park/open space access.

11.1.4 With regards to public school sites:

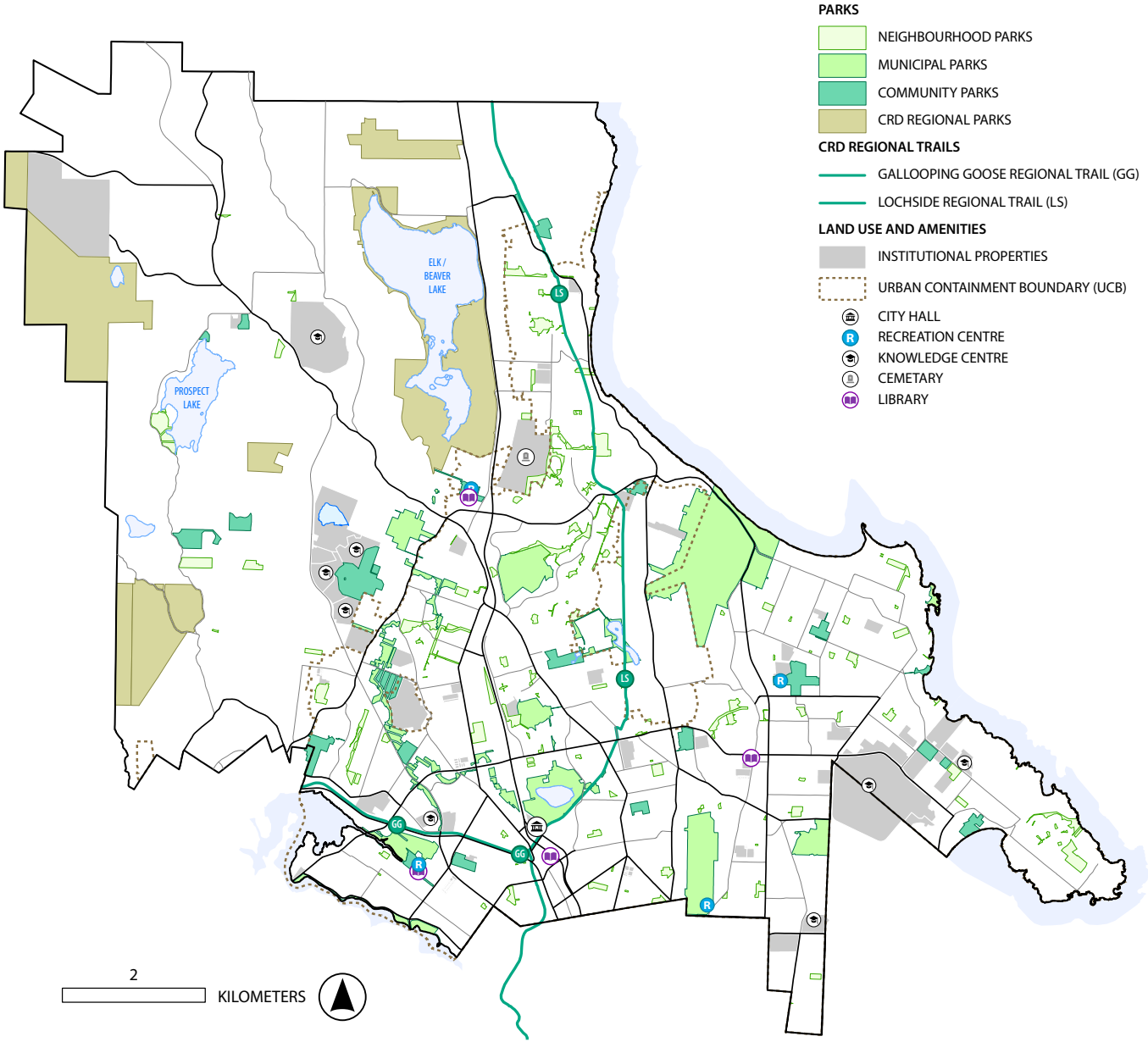
- Support the rezoning of existing public school sites to allow for non-institutional uses only where the proposed use would result in:
 - The setting aside of at least 50% of the site as publicly-accessible open space or;
 - Provision of other significant neighbourhood public amenities, as provided for under the Local Government Act.
- Consider amending the institutional zoning of public schools by introducing restrictive maximum lot coverage and increased setbacks in order to encourage the retention of existing open space.

11.1.5 Support joint use agreements with School Districts 61 and 63, and post-secondary institutions to make effective and economic use of parks, recreation, and school facilities.

11.1.6 Manage parks, trails, and other open spaces in a manner that minimizes their impact on the natural environment, agriculture, and adjacent urban areas.

11.1.7 Consider opportunities to incorporate food producing community gardens into parks and other public open spaces.

11.1.8 Work with First Nations to address archeologically important areas and ancestral remains in parks, beach accesses, and marine areas ensuring that information be kept confidential.



Map 15. Parks

Planning and Access

Saanich's parks and open space network is made up of several different types and classifications of parks which respond to a range of needs and factors. For example: some parks contain recreation centres with indoor sports facilities while others provide outdoor athletic facilities; some parks serve the needs of adjacent residents while others draw people from across the entire region; some parks are designed for intensive recreation use while others protect sensitive ecosystems and wildlife habitat; some provide beach access while others a playground; many parks combine several of these factors together creating a vibrant space which draws a range of user groups. As part of its park planning and prioritization program, the District assesses gaps in the network in terms of both location and function and works to fill these through a range of approaches.

Policies

- 11.1.9 Identify park and open space network gaps, priorities and opportunities at a local level through detailed planning processes. As part of this analysis consider:
- Park function;
 - Quality and type of amenities;
 - Local demographics; and,
 - Equitable distribution.
- 11.1.10 Use a minimum standard of 5.0 ha of parkland per 1,000 people, excluding regional parks, while considering other significant factors affecting acquisition.
- 11.1.11 Within the Urban Containment Boundary, work towards providing all households with access to a park within 300-metres of their home.
- 11.1.12 Support equitable distribution and access to high quality public parks, urban plazas, and greenways within the Urban Containment Boundary including by prioritizing new park space in deficient areas.

Community survey findings completed as part of the OCP process found over three quarters of people walk to get to their local park. The top five desired amenities in parks were:

- Trees, greenspace, and nature
- Active walking/cycling trails
- Water access
- Nature trails
- Playgrounds

Source: Survey completed between July and late September 2022 with approximately 800 participants (self-selected).

- 11.1.13 As part of the parks acquisition process, prioritize park land acquisitions within Urban Saanich in high growth areas with higher residential densities and a greater proportion of multi-unit housing forms where access to private open space is more limited.
- 11.1.14 Recognize the importance of small urban parks/parkettes and public plazas in providing open space access for residents in Primary Growth Areas. To achieve this objective:
- Update the Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan and parks acquisition process to incorporate "urban park/plaza" into the District's overall parks planning, acquisition, and management framework, including how these fits within the overall "5.0 hectare per 1,000 people" target; and,
 - Develop urban park/parkette and urban plaza criteria and design guidelines using a cross departmental collaborative approach.
- 11.1.15 Work towards a hierarchy of Parks and Open Spaces (Table 3) that accommodate a variety of uses and activities according to the purpose and scale of the park as well as the population it serves.

Table 3. Parks and Open Space Framework

Parks & Open Space Type	Ownership	Purpose	Size	Walk time (Urban)
District Ownership				
Neighbourhood Park (Urban + rural)	Public	Small local recreation opportunities, including play equipment, pathways, open grass, seating around play environments or areas of refuge for residents	Varies (Target 0.25 ha and larger) (300 m)	2-5 minutes
Community Park (Urban + rural)	Public	Provide spaces with high quality elements such as sports fields, playgrounds, skate parks, trails, urban plazas and/or natural features.	0.5 ha and larger	10-20 minutes (1-3km)
Municipal Parks (Urban + rural)	Public	Provide a range or park uses, including natural features such as beaches and forests.	20-200 ha	n/a
District or Publicly Accessible Private Ownership				
Urban Plaza (Urban only)	Public or Publicly accessible private spaces	Public gathering places in a variety of urban forms, complete with public amenities and decorative elements.	Varies	Varies
Urban Park/Parkette (Urban only)	Public or Publicly accessible private spaces	Small open spaces with green space, seating, play features, and decorative features.	< 0.5 ha	2-5 minutes (300 m)



Acquisition

The acquisition of parks is achieved using a variety of approaches. These include purchase, dedication at the time of subdivision, easements over private lands, donations, and natural state covenants negotiated with owners. Saanich has adopted standards to guide these acquisitions.

Policies

- 11.1.16 Explore innovative acquisition, financing and management strategies to expand the urban parks and open space network in Primary Growth Areas (Map 3) including through:
- Private/public partnerships to acquire, develop and maintain parks and urban plazas;
 - The Development Cost Charge Program;
 - The use of covenants, development agreements, community amenity contributions, housing agreements, density bonusing, and variances as possible mechanisms to secure public amenities and open spaces during the development review process; and,
 - Using undeveloped road rights-of-ways to future enhance the park network and overall network connectivity.

- 11.1.17 Encourage the expansion and retention of open space on private lands.
- 11.1.18 Facilitate the creation of new publicly accessible parks, plazas, and pedestrian walkways on private lands through the development review process.
- 11.1.19 Use the Five-Year Financial Plan to guide the development of parks based on the Official Community Plan, the "Park Priority Study" and the "Parks and Recreation Master Plan".
- 11.1.20 Acquire parkland through dedication at the time of rezoning or subdivision where:
- land is indicated for park use in a local area plan; or
 - land is adjacent to an existing park and will improve the configuration or function of the park; or
 - the Park Priority Study indicates a high priority for acquisition of parkland within the local area.
- 11.1.21 Continue to support the CRD in regard to regional park acquisitions.



11.2 Trails

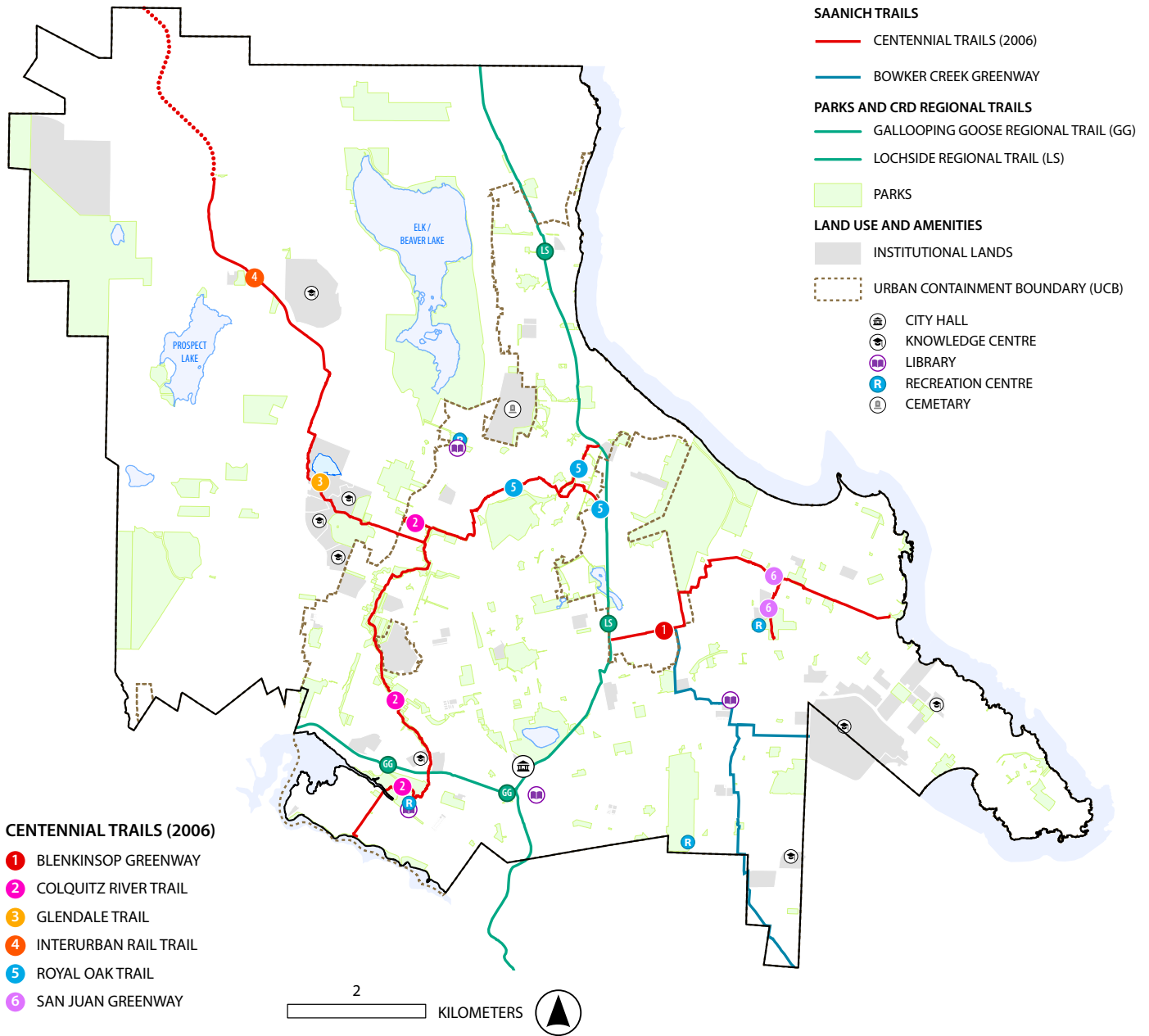
Saanich has an extensive network of pathways and trails, including the Lochside, Galloping Goose, and Centennial Trails (Map 16). These trails are key active transportation routes both within Saanich and at the regional level. They also increase access to parks, green spaces, and other places for recreation and are themselves a destination. This network is supported by additional recreation-oriented trails as well as neighbourhood trails which connect local destinations and provide access to green space. Saanich's trails also act as wildlife habitat and corridors by linking natural areas together in urban areas. While the District does not have a dedicated master trail plan, planning for trails is incorporated into the Active Transportation Plan.



Policies

- 11.2.1 Continue to identify priorities for new trails and implement improvements to existing trails, as per the Active Transportation Plan.
- 11.2.2 Continue to improve Active Transportation connections from neighbourhoods to trails.
- 11.2.3 Continue to support the CRD to widen and/or make improvements to the regional trail system.
- 11.2.4 Manage trails in a manner that minimizes their impact on the natural environment, agriculture, and adjacent urban areas.
- 11.2.5 Use the Five-Year Financial Plan to guide the development of trails based on the Active Transportation Plan.
- 11.2.6 Work with private land-owners to acquire trail right-of-ways or easements to complete the trails network and encourage the donation or bequest of privately owned lands that support the objectives of the Parks, Recreation, and Culture Master Plan and/or the Active Transportation Plan, and assist prospective donors in determining eligibility for tax deductions.





Map 16. Trail Network

Map notes:

- The Trail Network Map will be revised to reflect the Active Transportation Plan which is undergoing an update at this time. Learn more at: www.saanich.ca/atpupdate.



11.3 Beach Environments

Saanich's beach environments are defining features of the community and are among the most appreciated of the community's open space assets. A range of beach environments exist in Saanich from the white sand marine beaches of Saanich East, to lake beaches such as at Elk Lake, to the smaller pocket beaches/parks and scenic views found along the Gorge estuary.

Improving existing beach access while maintaining the environmental integrity of these areas are key community priorities. Beach areas are also often areas of archaeological and cultural significance to the First Nations requiring sensitivity and respect.

Policies

- 11.3.1 Plan for a balanced approach to beach access that considers both ecological values and recreational values.
- 11.3.2 Continue to work with partners, agencies, organizations, the First Nations, the public, and private property owners to protect the environmental integrity and ecological function of beach environments.

- 11.3.3 Seek opportunities where appropriate to make improvements to beach parks and beach accesses such as pathways, stairs, bike parking, public toilets, drinking fountains, accessibility improvements, landscaping, seating, signage, public areas, information kiosks, and other amenities.
- 11.3.4 Support pedestrian and cycling access to and from beaches through improvements to sidewalks, bike facilities, pedestrian crossings, trails and wayfinding.
- 11.3.5 Consider future sea level rise and climate change to minimize associated impacts, such as flooding and erosion, on marine ecosystems, areas of significance for First Nations, and beaches and beach amenities.
- 11.3.6 Explore opportunities to create additional beach access points through easements and property acquisition.
- 11.3.7 Use interpretative signs and public art as opportunities to educate and connect users with the cultural and natural history of the area.





Related Plans & Strategies

- Agriculture & Food Security Plan
- Climate Plan

12.0 Agriculture and Food Security

Objectives

- Protect agricultural land for current and future generations.
- Support access to a safe and nutritious food supply.
- Create opportunities for local food production in both rural and urban areas.

A community's food system is a fundamental part of our daily lives including components such as food production, processing, distribution, equitable food access and waste management. A sustainable food system plays a large role in building a strong, resilient community, supporting economic development, promoting health, and conserving the environment.

Fifty years ago, farmers on Vancouver Island produced an estimated 85% of the island's food supply. Now, island producers provide less than 10% of the food consumed on the island.



Supporting and enhancing local food production aids in building a more resilient local food system and community. A resilient food system has less reliance on imports and provides sufficient food supply to community members through climate change, severe storms events and global disruptions. Increased access to fresh foods reduces food insecurity and benefits the physical and mental health of community members.

Developing opportunities for local food production enhances the local economy by providing income and employment. Supporting local farmers fosters innovation and economic growth which aids in producing even greater amounts of local food. Environmentally, local food production reduces the amount of energy used to transport foods, contributes to a safer food supply, and provides opportunities to adopt practices that are ecologically mindful, to sustain viable agricultural lands for future generations.

Saanich is fortunate to have significant amounts of agricultural and arable land and the opportunity, through protection and the use of sustainable farming practices, to support local food production. Over the years, agricultural and arable land have been sustained through maintenance of the Urban Containment Boundary and the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) (Map 6). The ALR protects arable agricultural land by recognizing that agriculture is the priority use for these spaces. Farming in the ALR is encouraged and non-agricultural uses are restricted.

There exists opportunities to enhance food production in developed neighbourhoods by making use of private and public green spaces to grow food in gardens, public roadsides, street

boulevards, parks, and on rooftops and balconies. Agriculture in urban areas makes use of under-utilized spaces and gives community members access to food within their own neighbourhood. Community gardening can lead to neighbourhood renewal, strengthened community bonds and recreational, therapeutic, and educational opportunities. Urban agriculture has the power to strengthen relationships between farmers and non-farmers by increasing awareness on the practice of growing food and demonstrating the value of local food production.

Climate change will impact food production and food security both locally and globally. Potential impacts to Saanich's agri-food system which impact crop production, agricultural infrastructure and livestock include:

- Increased or decreased crop productivity due to temperature changes;
- Lack of water/drought conditions;
- Increased unpredictable storm events (e.g. flooding, wind damage, frost damage);
- Increased disease;
- Increased demand for irrigation infrastructure;
- Increased population and resulting pressure to convert agricultural land; and,
- Increased issues with pest management.

Changes in food production and consumption are also a factor in meeting the District's greenhouse gas reduction target and reducing its depending on fossil fuels. Reducing carbon emissions from local food production and encouraging residents to choose low carbon foods and reduce food waste are important aspects of living within the capacity of the planet.

Sustainable Food System

A sustainable community food system is a collaborative network that integrates sustainable food production, processing, distribution, consumption and waste management in order to enhance the environmental, economic and social health of a particular place. Farmers, consumers and communities partner to create a more locally based, self-reliant food economy.

Sustainable Agriculture

Sustainable agriculture enhances environmental quality and the resource base on which it depends; provides for basic human food and fiber needs; is economically viable; and enhances the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole over the longer term.

Food Security

Food Security exists when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious, affordable food to maintain a healthy and active life.

Agriculture & Food Security Plan

The District adopted the Agriculture and Food Security Plan in 2018 to provide a coordinated approach for supporting agricultural activity and improving food security in Saanich. The plan has seven themes:

1. Provide a foundation to take action on agriculture and food security.
2. Connect gaps in the local food system to improve food self-sufficiency.
3. Strengthen awareness of the local food system.
4. Improve the interconnection between food production and the environment.
5. Manage land use to protect and support farmland.
6. Support multi-generational farmers and emerging farmers.
7. Expand opportunities for urban agriculture.

12.1 Agricultural Lands

A key success in Saanich has been the protection of rural and agricultural land from development. The community continues to support the Agricultural Land Reserve and Urban Containment Boundary. The District also needs to continue to ensure regulations are in place to support the use of farm parcels that are capable of production and encourage land uses that are consistent with a productive agricultural landscape. Complementing this, sound environmental management supports future agricultural production while also protecting natural assets.

Policies

- 12.1.1 Implement the Agriculture and Food Security Plan and update periodically to reflect emerging community priorities.
- 12.1.2 Ensure a healthy, sustainable and stable food supply by working with the Capital Regional District, the Province, food producers, the Vancouver Island Health Authority, municipalities, and other stakeholders to implement the Capital Regional District Food and Agriculture Strategy.
- 12.1.3 Protect agricultural land by maintaining the Urban Containment Boundary and encouraging compact urban form.
- 12.1.4 Do not support applications to exclude land from the Agricultural Land Reserve, unless:
 - a. A qualified professional agrologist provides evidence that the property is incorrectly designated; and,
 - b. Exclusion would not adversely affect the long-term agricultural value of the adjoining land within the Reserve.
- 12.1.5 Do not forward applications to the Agricultural Land Commission to subdivide land within the Agricultural Land Reserve (Map 6) unless:
 - a. The owner has continuously owned and occupied the property as a principal residence since December 21, 1972 and no subdivision has occurred since that date; or
 - b. There are already two dwellings on the parcel; or
 - c. It would facilitate changes to an existing public institution; or
 - d. It would increase the agricultural capability of an existing farm as defined by the BC Assessment Authority and there is on-site evidence of keeping animals or land cultivation at a commercial level.

- 12.1.6 Maintain a minimum parcel area of 2.0 ha for the A-1 (Rural) zone and 4.0 ha for the A-4 (Rural) zone.
- 12.1.7 Encourage the Agricultural Land Commission to review current deposit of fill practices on ALR lands, in order to preserve the agricultural capability of ALR lands.
- 12.1.8 Discourage the deposit of fill on rural and ALR lands that results in the soil's agricultural capability being diminished.
- 12.1.9 Support the preservation and enhancement of the soil's agricultural capability on rural and ALR lands.
- 12.1.10 Develop appropriate regulations and guidelines for agri-tourism activities in consultation with farmers and other stakeholders to minimize the impact of such activities on neighbouring properties.
- 12.1.11 Develop appropriate regulations and guidelines for "intensive agriculture" in consultation with farmers and other

stakeholders to minimize the impact of such activities on rural residential neighbours.

- 12.1.12 Support the use of the dispute resolution process established in the "Farm Practices Protection Act" to resolve concerns and complaints about agricultural practices that may be inconsistent with normal farm practice.
- 12.1.13 Buffer rural and agricultural lands from adjacent urban residential development as part of redevelopment and subdivision proposals, where appropriate.
- 12.1.14 Continue to support a special water rate for agriculture.
- 12.1.15 Encourage the development of a Property Assessment policy that primarily supports local food production, and does not inadvertently result in ecological degradation.
- 12.1.16 Encourage environmentally sound agricultural practices by promoting the BC Environmental Farm Program.





12.2 Urban Agriculture, Local Food Access, and Innovation

Interest in food production in urban areas has expanded dramatically in recent years and is seen as a key way to supplement conventional agriculture and bring community members in touch with local food and natural processes. This ranges from backyard and patio gardening to community gardens and commercial small-scale agricultural operations. At the same time, incorporating innovative approaches and new technologies across the overall system can increase food production and strengthen the overall system. Increasing local production is an important aspect of responding to climate change and building community resilience.

Policies

- 12.2.1 Support small-scale agricultural and food access initiatives on lands inside the Urban Containment Boundary, while considering potential impacts on neighbouring residents
- 12.2.2 Strengthen local sustainable agriculture by supporting “backyard gardening” and community garden initiatives.

- 12.2.3 Support efforts to restore Indigenous plants and food sources, improve access to cultural foodlands, and increase public awareness of local Indigenous food systems.
- 12.2.4 Incorporate climate mitigation and adaptation strategies into Saanich's overall approach to its local agri-food system.
- 12.2.5 Support efforts of farm operators and other agencies to enhance farmland and increase crop yield, by improving water supply and undertaking drainage improvements and improving soil capabilities, while considering environmental impact.
- 12.2.6 Support the development and operation of specialty crop farms to diversify farm production, increase economic development, increase local food production, and improve farm income.
- 12.2.7 Support innovative farming and local marketing techniques such as pocket farm markets, which help improve the economic viability of food production in the community.





Related Plans & Strategies

- Parks, Recreation, and Culture Master Plan
- Arts and Culture Strategy
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Report and Action Plan
- Recreation Market Analysis

13.0 Community Well-being

Objectives

- Foster a diverse, equitable and inclusive community where all residents are engaged and feel a sense of belonging.
- Provide a range of recreation, arts, culture, and heritage opportunities for people of all ages, cultural backgrounds and abilities.
- Recognize First Nations heritage and the community's colonial past as part of Saanich's path towards reconciliation.
- Create a healthy, safe, and resilient community.
- Incorporate heritage resources and values into planning and placemaking.

Strong communities are vibrant, livable places which provide the essential social infrastructure necessary for all residents to attain health and well-being. Providing a diverse range of opportunities for recreation, arts, culture and heritage is important as is supporting civic engagement and volunteerism in the community. These community connections foster a sense of belonging and identity and encourage participation

and involvement. They also provide the means for accessing resources, services, and activities, both within neighbourhoods and the wider community. A municipality cannot legislate a sense of community, but it can provide the opportunities and supports necessary for the community to strengthen itself.

While Saanich has strived to be an inclusive and accessible community for all residents, the COVID-19 global pandemic amplified existing inequalities. Heightened awareness of issues of systemic, institutional and structural racism faced by Indigenous, Black and People of Colour (IBPOC), and other marginalized groups highlighted the need for the District to increase its understanding of how these issues can manifest themselves in the District's policies, programs and services. This work is underway with the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Strategic Report and Action Plan and the creation of the Accessibility and DEI Council Advisory Committee. This work complements the District's reconciliation work with its First Nations and Urban Indigenous populations.



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement

Saanich is committed to celebrating the rich diversity of people in our community. We are guided by the principle that embracing diversity

enriches the lives of all people. We all share the responsibility for creating an equitable and inclusive community and for addressing discrimination in all forms.

Diversity is about creating an environment that embraces diversity (differences and similarities) and where everyone is made to feel welcome, invited to participate, valued, and respected for their contributions.

Equity and inclusion mean creating an equitable and inclusive community and for addressing discrimination in all forms through shared responsibility. Inclusion is working together to create and sustain a welcoming place and community. Equity is about differences and similarities in organizations and communities to eliminate the privileges of dominant groups and removing discrimination in all forms through shared or collective responsibility and accountability for minority groups.

13.1 Community Involvement and Partnership

One of the important building blocks for creating a healthy and sustainable community is resident involvement, based on open and fair processes that are accessible and responsive to residents' concerns and interests. A knowledgeable and involved population, with opportunities to make meaningful contributions to decision-making processes, is better equipped to address community challenges and more likely to value their community. Engagement can also help residents understand the importance of sustainability and the links between social, economic, and environmental issues.

Saanich provides numerous opportunities to involve residents in civic affairs. Council meetings, held in public, give residents the opportunity to make presentations, and observe and monitor decisions. Saanich also has several advisory committees, boards, and task forces that allow for resident and expert input on a variety of issues facing the District and for liaising with groups working on specific projects.

For effective involvement, residents need to have access to information of concern or interest so they can anticipate and respond in a considered way. Saanich typically augments its legislated consultation obligations using a variety of techniques such as social media, newsletters, the internet, media articles and advertisements, informational materials, and reports. The municipal web site has become a major source and means of conveying information. Depending on the project, additional consultation opportunities frequently include public meetings, workshops, open houses, focus groups, and resident surveys. Development applicants are encouraged to consult with the public before the public hearing stage. The value of mutual trust between the public, developer, Council and staff cannot be overemphasized, as everyone can profit from open dialogue and education.

In many areas of the community, residents have formed community associations. These associations monitor proposed changes in zoning and land use that may impact their area, liaise with Council and staff, and represent neighbourhood interests on a variety of issues. The Saanich Community Associations Network (SCAN) is composed of representatives from Saanich's neighbourhood community organizations. They, and other community organizations, are valuable



resources, helping the District provide a strong community focus. Many associations or other community groups publish their own newsletters.

Volunteerism is also an important element of community life, strengthening connections and involvement. Without volunteer support, many worthwhile projects would never be undertaken. For example, groups such as the Friends of P’KOLS (Mount Douglas Conservancy) and numerous sports organizations work closely with the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department on park maintenance and development. Neighbours helping neighbours improves the quality of life for many residents. For example, the Saanich Volunteer Services Society provides drives, friendly visiting, companion walking, and a host of other services to support those in need.

Partnerships are also an essential tool for achieving the Saanich Vision. To achieve sustainability, complex and interconnected social, environmental, and economic values and actions need to be simultaneously integrated. Relying on a single body to address the challenges involved is not sufficient. Realizing the Saanich Vision requires an acceptance of shared responsibility and a commitment to continuous improvement. It means having the interest and capacity to work together, to look for creative and innovative solutions, share learning, and carefully consider the long-term consequences of decisions. Joint efforts involving the public sector, private sector, community organizations and individuals hold the promise of more efficient and effective responses.



Policies

- 13.1.1 Implement the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy.
- 13.1.2 Continue to work with Neighbourhood Associations, service organizations, sports groups, businesses and other stakeholders to support and strengthen the community.
- 13.1.3 Work with Indigenous and multicultural organizations to promote harmonious relations and access to community services.
- 13.1.4 Continue to develop and enhance community pride and identity through the creation and implementation of events and on-going community services and programs.
- 13.1.5 Support school districts, post-secondary institutions, and the faith community in allowing residents access to their facilities for community use.
- 13.1.6 Support the integration of institutional uses, amenities and services in Centres and Villages in order to create community focal points.
- 13.1.7 Continue to work with the Greater Victoria Public Library to maintain and improve services for residents and reinforce the community-building aspect of the Library.
- 13.1.8 Encourage and support a wide range of educational and learning opportunities which aid in community capacity building and strive to meet a broad range of community needs.
- 13.1.9 Continue to encourage resident involvement in civic affairs.
- 13.1.10 Enhance communication and community feedback through an interactive municipal web site and engagement platform, social media, Geographic Information Systems, community association newsletters, the media, and use of educational and informational materials for public distribution.

13.2 Community Facilities and Recreation

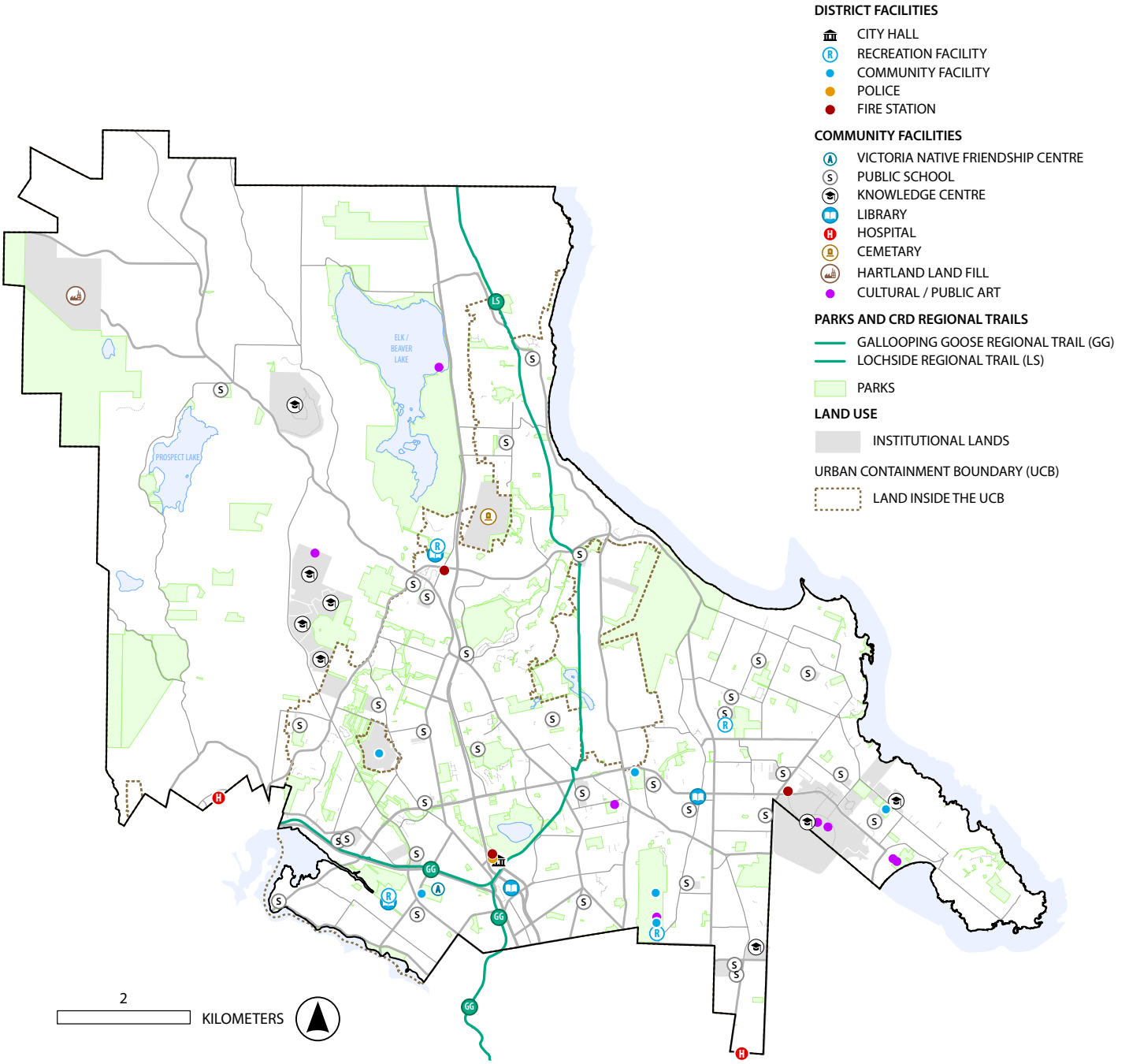
Community facilities further enhance the livability of Saanich and provide opportunities for people to come together (Map 17). The District operates four Recreation Centre campuses which offer an extensive range of programs, services, and experiences for all ages and abilities. The range of programs and services includes general health and wellness, recreation, arts and culture, aquatics, childcare, and educational seminars. Facilities also include bookable meeting space for use by community groups and organizations and the strategic co-location of related services. Complementing District facilities are several community and regionally operated facilities which further expand the diversity of programming, services, and gathering spaces available in the community and add to its overall vibrancy.

Moving away from a more traditional recreational focus, community facilities in Saanich are increasingly being viewed as community hubs and gathering spaces for people of all ages and abilities. As this broader trend intensifies, these facilities will play an increasingly important role in the community by:

- Helping to support an aging population and the rising number of children and youth;
- Reducing rates of chronic disease;
- Decreasing social isolation;
- Improving mental and physical wellness;
- Supporting arts, culture, and lifelong learning; and,
- Ensuring affordability and equitable access.

- 13.1.11 Encourage applicants with development proposals to hold public information meetings before plans are submitted for statutory review and public hearings, and to inform and consult with area residents and other stakeholders.
- 13.1.12 Continue to improve access to and availability of information regarding community services and volunteer opportunities.
- 13.1.13 Cooperate and partner with other municipalities for the delivery of select services and programs, where appropriate.
- 13.1.14 Create volunteer programs and leadership training to support the provision of community and leisure services.





Map 17. Community Facilities

Policies

- 13.2.1 Explore redevelopment and growth opportunities for the Saanich Recreation Centre campuses, all of which are in Saanich Parks.
- 13.2.2 Scale campus redevelopment plans to meet growth of neighbourhoods and provide indoor and outdoor recreational facilities that satisfy Parks, Recreation, and Community Services department recreation programming and service areas.
- 13.2.3 Review recreational programming and facilities, as necessary, to ensure they are meeting current and emerging needs.
- 13.2.4 Ensure District recreation facilities and programs are accessible to people of all ages, ethnicities, incomes, and abilities.
- 13.2.5 Undertake awareness building and education programs to encourage individuals to develop and maintain an active and healthy lifestyle.
- 13.2.6 Work with School Districts 61 and 63 to promote active living.
- 13.2.7 Consult, at least annually, with School Districts 61 and 63, and post-secondary institutions, to coordinate infrastructure, including the shared use of lands and facilities for recreation and community use.
- 13.2.8 Cooperate and consult with other municipalities and agencies within the Capital Regional District to coordinate the development of recreation services and facilities.
- 13.2.9 Use the Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan as a guide for the planning and budgeting for parks, trails and recreation facilities.

13.3 Arts and Culture

Arts and culture are intrinsic to neighbourhood and community identity, livability, and diversity. The contribution of the arts to the community goes beyond the social and aesthetic, contributing to civic pride and economic prosperity. A diverse arts community educates, entertains, generates revenue and employment, and enhances the quality of life for everyone. Support for, and recognition of the arts and associated industries may also encourage tourism and influence an individual's decision to visit or live in Saanich.

Adopted in 2009, the Saanich Arts and Culture Strategy provides strategic direction in support of the arts. Priorities identified in this strategy were:

- Provide spaces for cultural and artistic activities;
- Increase arts and culture awareness;
- Build creative capacity;
- Develop and nurture healthy, vital neighbourhoods through the arts;
- Expand youth leadership opportunities in the arts; and,
- Support economic development through the arts.

As the District looks forward to its next iteration of the Arts and Culture Strategy, these strategies will be expanded on to incorporate diversity, equity and inclusion principles including the role of First Nations and other racialized populations.

Arts

The arts include visual arts (painting, print-making, drawing, sculpture, crafts, photography, film, video, and new media) theatre, music and song, and literary arts and dance. Cultural industries – publishing, film, sound recording, video and audio-visual broadcasting- are also included.

Culture

Culture encompasses those arts, multicultural and heritage resources and activities as practiced and preserved in a community. These practices reflect the beliefs, experiences and creative aspirations of a people in a given place at a given time.

Policies

- 13.3.1 Update and continue to implement the Saanich Arts and Culture Strategy.
- 13.3.2 Support regional arts programming, policy development and facility planning through the Capital Regional District Arts & Culture Support Service and the Saanich Arts, Culture & Community Well-being Advisory Committee.
- 13.3.3 Work with other municipalities, First Nations, school districts, Chambers of Commerce, Tourism Victoria, and other agencies to plan and coordinate arts initiatives and events.
- 13.3.4 Encourage ongoing participation in the Capital Regional District Arts & Cultural Support Service funding program to support cultural facilities and initiatives.
- 13.3.5 Encourage community programming for a variety of artistic disciplines.
- 13.3.6 Continue to promote the use of parks, civic buildings and public spaces for public art, performances, festivals, and exhibitions.
- 13.3.7 Encourage and support private sector involvement in the arts.
- 13.3.8 Support the integration of public art in the design of public and private developments, with a focus on Primary Growth Areas.
- 13.3.9 Consider accommodating studio, rehearsal, and classroom or workshop space in commercial, institutional, and rural areas.
- 13.3.10 Continue to work with School Districts 61 and 63 and post-secondary institutions to promote community awareness of arts programs in the education system.
- 13.3.11 Continue to encourage opportunities for community theatre in Saanich.
- 13.3.12 Continue to support the operation of the Arts Centre at Cedar Hill Community Centre.
- 13.3.13 Support the goals of reconciliation by working with the First Nations to incorporate Indigenous art into public spaces to celebrate the culture and heritage of local First Nations and Urban Indigenous peoples and strengthen community identity.



13.4 First Nations Reconciliation

There is a rich Indigenous history in Saanich that has long been denied and at places physically uprooted or destroyed. Located in the traditional territory of the **Lək̓ʷəŋən** and **W̱SÁNEĆ** peoples, both of which are part of the broader Coast and Straights Salish peoples, their historical and cultural relationships with the land continue to this day.

The District recognizes that reconciliation is more than a ceremonial acknowledgement of its territories. It is an opportunity to learn the true history of this area and acknowledge the unjust treatment of the people whose lands it occupies. The process forward will take patience as District takes a hard look at its colonial past and works toward decolonization and reconciliation with the **W̱SÁNEĆ**, **Lək̓ʷəŋən**, and Urban Indigenous populations.

The policies included below, where appropriate, are adapted from the work completed through the Cordova Bay planning process (2021) and are intended to act as a first step in advancing the discussion of First Nations reconciliation at the OCP level. Further work is required as part of a future OCP update in collaboration with First Nations and the Urban Indigenous population.

Policies

- 13.4.1 Work with First Nations and other partners to promote the First Nation history of Saanich and First Nation cultural values and practices.
- 13.4.2 Undertake actions to welcome and meaningfully include local First Nations and Urban Indigenous in the current fabric of Saanich by:
 - a. Identifying sites of First Nations significance;
 - b. Incorporating Indigenous languages on public signage;
 - c. Renaming places of significance; Installing local Indigenous public art; and,
 - d. Supporting First Nations and Urban Indigenous cultural celebrations

13.4.3 Develop and implement Memorandum of Understandings (MOU) and/or protocol agreements with local First Nations around shared commitments.

13.4.4 Continue to improve the development review process with respect to archaeology for both external and internal development projects, recognizing that the baseline mapping held by the province is not comprehensive and for many areas in Saanich is very incomplete. Promote awareness of the responsibility of developers and other property owners to protect archeological sites and artifacts and encourage compliance under the Heritage Conservation Act.

13.4.5 Work with local First Nations to enhance District of Saanich policies for protection of archeological sites when undertaking municipal works.

13.4.6 Seek to include sites of First Nations' significance as part of a wayfinding framework in consultation with First Nations. Work to recognize and revitalize historical First Nations trails.

13.4.7 Prioritize local First Nations when considering public art in Saanich.

13.4.8 Work with local First Nations to develop interpretative panels and other educational elements in parks, public spaces, beach access areas, and other suitable locations.



13.5 Heritage Properties

The history of Saanich and its pattern of settlement are evident in many of the buildings, structures, and landscapes located throughout the community. Many homes, schools, churches, cemeteries, commercial buildings, farm buildings, and trails/roadways also reflect Saanich’s pioneer era, as well as later periods. Saanich’s heritage resources include archival material, which provide a tangible link with the past, a meaningful sense of historical continuity, and a sense of place and community character.

The 1999 “Saanich Heritage Management Plan” provides policies and procedures that direct the management of heritage resources. The 2007 “Heritage Action Plan” provides specific and attainable action items to implement and fulfill the recommendations and policies of the Management Plan.

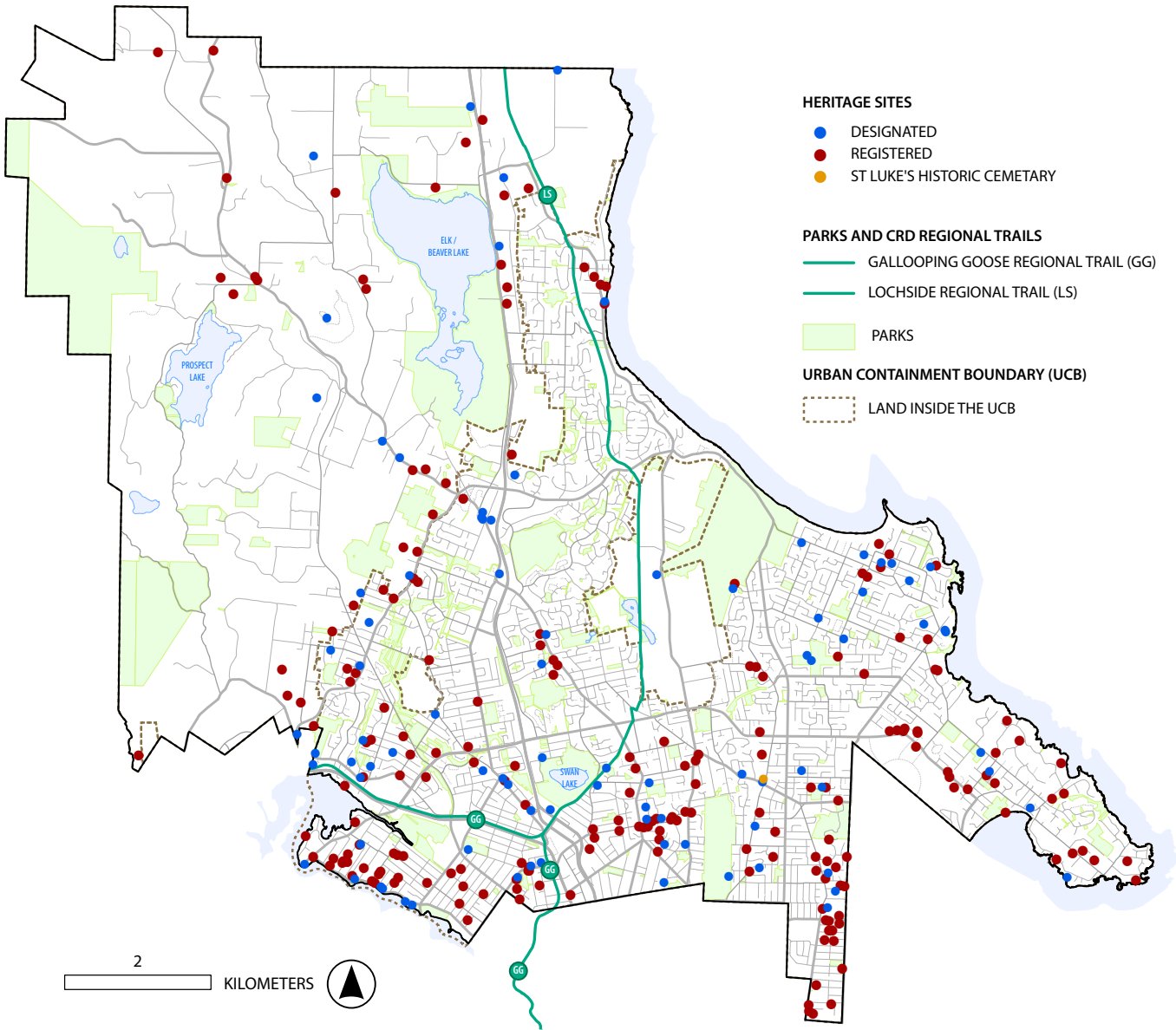
A key conservation tool is the Community Heritage Register that identifies close to 300 structures spanning all phases of Saanich’s history. Other tools include the Heritage Designation Bylaw, Heritage Alteration Permits, and Heritage Foundation. Map 19 identifies Saanich Heritage Buildings and Structures.

Policies

- 13.5.1 Monitor and encourage preservation of heritage resources according to the Saanich Heritage Resources Management Plan and Heritage Action Plan.
- 13.5.2 Continue to maintain and update the Saanich Community Heritage Register and designate appropriate District owned registered sites.
- 13.5.3 Expand the Saanich Community Heritage Register to include natural and cultural heritage resources and consider assisting in the protection of inventories-at-risk.
- 13.5.4 Consider incentives to encourage preservation and designation of privately owned heritage buildings.

- 13.5.5 Encourage and support public education on heritage resources and protection, through publications, displays, on-site interpretation, web sites, events, historic plaques and signs, and similar tools.
- 13.5.6 Continue to seek funding assistance from senior governments and community organizations to assist with identifying and protecting heritage resources.
- 13.5.7 Continue to provide funding assistance through the Saanich Heritage Foundation for maintenance and repairs of exteriors, roofs and foundations of designated heritage buildings.





Map 18. Heritage Buildings & Structures

13.6 Public Health, Safety, and Emergency Resilience

Saanich has a long-standing commitment to building and maintaining a healthy and safe community. This commitment can be seen in long range policy documents, through the work of advisory committees of Council, through the variety of outreach, capacity building, and education programs provided through the District's various departments. This work involves partnerships with numerous community groups based in collaborative community action and public awareness.

A community's health refers not only to population health outcomes, but also to the presence of the social determinants of health impacting these outcomes. Research suggests 60% of what makes people healthy is determined by their built, social, environmental and economic environments that are outside personal control. BC Healthy Communities identifies three principles to support healthy communities through community design, planning, and health promotion.

- A commitment to equity;
- Healthy public policy; and,
- Cultural safety.

Safety is also more than the absence of crime – it requires a secure physical environment, supportive social surroundings, and a strong community foundation. Safe and healthy communities are diverse, convenient, and sustainable. They have a sense of place and neighbourliness, a clean, accessible, attractive, and stable built environment, peaceful residential neighbourhoods, and improved access to health, housing, education, employment, mobility, and the arts. They offer a wide variety of community-based services that are intergenerational, accessible, prevention-oriented, supportive, coordinated, responsive to change, and effective. They provide protection and enhancement of the natural environment. Saanich's transition towards a 15-minute community aligns with many of the principles for planning healthy, safe and resilient communities.

Saanich has a strong emergency planning and community preparedness program which guides the community's response to natural and human caused disasters. The Emergency Program strives to build resilience in the community through preparedness and mitigation, and continually works to increase the District's ability to respond

and recover quickly and effectively in the event of an emergency. Saanich fosters a culture of preparedness and resilience in Local Government, workplaces, households, and businesses across the community. As the District's 2020 Climate Plan highlights, the impacts of climate change include increased storm intensity and extreme weather events. Strengthening the community's resilience at both the district-wide and neighbourhood level is vital moving forward.

Policies

- 13.6.1 Foster the development of a community that is safe, diverse and inclusive and where social interaction, physical activity, sense of place, and neighbourliness are actively promoted and supported.
- 13.6.2 Continue to implement healthy built design principles in planning and infrastructure decisions to reduce the impact of the social determinants of health on overall population health and individual well-being.
- 13.6.3 Work with residents and neighbourhood associations to address public health and safety and crime prevention.
- 13.6.4 Continue to address safety issues, and fear of crime or violence through implementation of the Police Strategic Plan.
- 13.6.5 Continue to provide high quality service, including through the preservation of life and protection of property and the environment, by implementing the Fire Services Master Plan.
- 13.6.6 Support continued education on best practices for fire prevention, including wildland- urban interface fire hazard prevention.

13.6.7 Continue to maintain and promote accessible public education materials on emergency preparedness and community climate resilience to reach a wide diversity of community members.

13.6.8 Strengthen community resiliency by promoting and supporting emergency planning and preparedness for the service providers of vulnerable populations.





Related Plans & Strategies

- Economic Development Strategy (under development)

14.0 Economic Vibrancy

Objectives

- Create a strong and diversified local economy.
- Enhance economic vitality through sustainable, supportive community infrastructure.
- Align economic development with a sustainable and equitable community.
- Strengthen the business climate and links with the business community.
- Collaborate regionally on economic development initiatives.
- Provide a supportive environment for clean, high-tech and knowledge-based business.
- Enhance opportunities for employment and workforce development.

A sustainable economy provides diverse and viable economic opportunities to meet the social needs of present and future generations, support a livable, high-quality built environment, and reduce/limit negative impacts on the natural environment. It is characterized by using renewable resources, reducing pollution and waste, and the efficient use of energy, materials, and labour. A sustainable economy is both resilient and responsive to changing circumstances.

Saanich has several strengths it can build on to further develop a vibrant local economy. These include:

- Its strategic location on the Pacific Rim and centrality within the Greater Victoria metropolitan area;
- The largest population base on Vancouver Island;
- A high quality of life and access to recreational opportunities;
- A well-educated, stable labour force;

- High quality educational, research, health care, and high technology infrastructure;
- Low carbon, renewable electricity grid;
- Efficient transportation links within the region and to Vancouver Island, Victoria International Airport, and the BC Ferries and Seaspan terminals; and,
- A strong and diverse core of economic activity in retirement services, health care, education, sports, tourism, high technology, film, research, and agri-tourism.

At the same time, a number of challenges in the local economy need to be addressed to ensure continued economic viability. These include the geographic constraints of an island location, limited availability of land for new large scale commercial and industrial development, an aging workforce, shortages of skilled workers in many sectors, significant pockets of unskilled people, a significant number of lower income service sector and tourism jobs, and a complex regulatory environment. Also, access to affordable housing is increasingly a challenge to workforce attraction and retention.

14.1 Economic Infrastructure

Communities that adapt readily to economic change are those that provide the supports or infrastructure that sustains economic activity (e.g., quality of life, human resources, and innovation). Several benefits can be achieved by aligning economic viability with social and environmental well-being. These include the more efficient use of existing infrastructure and services, long-term operational cost savings for energy and water through green building and business practices, meaningful employment and income opportunities, and mutually reinforced protection for agriculture and the environment.

Saanich is committed to maintaining, renewing and expanding community infrastructure that encourages investment in the local economy. The greatest impact and creation of tangible sustainable benefits in the local economy can be achieved by providing excellent service delivery, relevant and innovative public infrastructure and amenities, consistent, enhanced public services, a fair, timely, transparent and effective development and business regulatory framework, coordinated government through an integrative, collaborative approach, and a fostering of positive community attitudes to economic development.

Saanich Economic Development Strategy

The Saanich Economic Development Strategy will create a vision for the local economy and provide specific implementable actions to achieve economic resiliency and identify a path forward to sustain and grow a diverse and prosperous economy. This Strategy will leverage the progress, assets and investments that have already been made in the District of Saanich and identify gaps that should be filled to create a diverse economy. The initial strategy will have a 5-year timeline. Once completed, this section of the draft OCP will be updated to reflect this work.



Policies

- 14.1.1 Continue to update and streamline business policy and regulatory processes that improve customer service and maintain comparable taxes and fees with other regional jurisdictions.
- 14.1.2 Implement the Development Process Review (2021) recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of the application review process, expand stakeholder understanding and expectations and improve development application processing times.
- 14.1.3 Liaise with the business community on a regular basis to improve communication and consultation on municipal issues related to economic development.
- 14.1.4 Continue to be responsive to emerging “new economy” business sectors.
- 14.1.5 Continue to support Business Improvement Areas in Primary Growth Areas.
- 14.1.6 Support community economic development through education, trade shows, and other promotional opportunities in collaboration with the South Island Prosperity Partnership.
- 14.1.7 Support the supply of affordable workforce housing including rental, co-op, non-market and other innovative models.
- 14.1.8 Work with BC Transit and other partners on regional transportation planning to ensure adequate public transit to major employment centres, businesses and institutions.
- 14.1.9 Work with stakeholders to address mobility issues related to the efficient and timely movement of goods to and throughout Saanich and the region.
- 14.1.10 Encourage and support economic development within Centres and Villages by coordinating capital improvement projects with the projected growth of these areas.

14.2 Diversification and Enhancement

Over the last decades, Saanich has accommodated considerable economic activity – accounting for about 30% of all regional businesses (to be verified)– including several large regional commercial malls and industrial areas such as Royal Oak Industrial Park and the Tennyson Industrial Quarter in the Uptown-Douglas area. The high-tech industry, primarily located in the Vancouver Island Technology Park, is the largest non-government industry in Greater Victoria.

Another major contributor to Saanich's economy is small business. Over 70% of Saanich businesses have fewer than five employees. Many of these reflect a traditional emphasis on home occupation uses and small rural business. Home-based business is one of the fastest growing economic sectors, accounting for 52% of all business licenses in Saanich. Technological advancements, particularly in communications and computers, have made home-based businesses both viable and attractive. Agri-tourism and eco-tourism are becoming increasingly important, particularly in rural areas where they complement basic farm operations and areas of environmental interest.



It is important to align the District's economic development strategies with regional initiatives. The more that Saanich can work together with agencies such as the South Island Prosperity Partnership (SIPP) and Destination Greater Victoria, other CRD municipalities, and local First Nations to achieve common goals, the more likely it is that results will be achieved. As the largest member municipality of the SIPP, Saanich is in a unique position to provide leadership. Important opportunities for economic growth include:

- Expanding advanced technology and knowledge-based businesses;
- Expanding the tourism service sector;
- Sustaining and expanding the region's marine science and industry (e.g. ship/boat building and repair) sector;
- Expanding the sport, art, and culture sector;
- Expanding and diversifying the agriculture sector; and
- Developing and expanding education products and research.

Diversifying and enhancing Saanich's economy has the potential to lay the groundwork for future economic, social, and environmental sustainability. A strong local economy will help to provide economic stability and resilience, spin-off opportunities for the primary and service sectors, preservation of agricultural capability in rural areas, promotion of local resource value-adding, increased support for local businesses and producers, employment and income, and increased demand for locally produced goods and materials.

Policies

- 14.2.1 Complete and implement Saanich's Economic Development Strategy.
- 14.2.2 Work with the South Island Prosperity Partnership, Capital Regional District, neighbouring municipalities, First Nations, businesses and other stakeholders on regional economic cooperation.
- 14.2.3 Continue to work with other municipal economic development offices and First Nation governments in the Capital Region to retain and enhance existing businesses and attract new businesses to the region.

- 14.2.4 Support a balanced economy by encouraging a broad range of commercial, service, research, high tech and industrial uses.
- 14.2.5 Support the preparation of a regional industrial and high-tech strategy dealing with issues of future trends, related infrastructure requirements, transportation and land requirements, and options for growth.
- 14.2.6 Provide opportunities for new advanced technology and knowledge-based businesses by supporting expansion of the Vancouver Island Technology Park, and research related activities on the University of Victoria, Royal Roads and Camosun College Campuses.
- 14.2.7 Encourage market diversification of agriculture by supporting specialty agri-tourism businesses on bona fide commercial farms, in a way that continues to protect arable agricultural land from increased non-farm use.
- 14.2.8 Participate in partnerships to promote tourism.
- 14.2.9 Support tourist-related facilities, including visitor accommodation and attractions, in alignment with Saanich's growth framework and compatible with environment factors and adjacent land uses.
- 14.2.10 Work with the film industry to attract more film productions.
- 14.2.11 Encourage innovation, investment, technology development, and sustainable business practices by working with senior government, the private sector and other stakeholders.
- 14.2.12 Encourage local business to become more sustainable through means such as accommodating active transportation modes, reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, using greener forms of energy and integrating Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies.



14.3 Employment

A stable workforce is essential to the social well-being and economic health of the community and region. Attracting and retaining environmentally friendly businesses to the District and the region is essential to Saanich's sustainability. To achieve this aim, the social and physical infrastructure needs to be healthy and efficient. Recruiting and maintaining vibrant businesses can be significantly affected by the overall quality of life in Saanich, the cost and availability of accommodation – ownership and rental, support services such as child/elder care for employees, and the availability of a well-trained labour pool.

Policies

- 14.3.1 Support job creation that keeps pace with job to population ratios as identified in the Capital Regional District's Regional Growth Strategy.
- 14.3.2 Encourage new institutions and businesses to locate within Saanich that create permanent employment opportunities for local workers at a living wage.
- 14.3.3 Continue to support the work of the South Island Prosperity Partnership to retain and enhance existing businesses and attract new environmentally friendly businesses to the region.

- 14.3.4 Work cooperatively with the South Island Prosperity Partnership, school districts, post-secondary institutions, senior governments, and other stakeholders to support and improve employment and training opportunities that match the requirements of local employers.
- 14.3.5 Support the retention and recruitment of an adequate labour pool by ensuring access to appropriate and affordable housing and other necessary support services such as child and elder care.
- 14.3.6 Work with BC Transit to ensure high quality public transit to Primary Growth areas, major employment centres, businesses and institutions.
- 14.3.7 Work with the First Nations to explore economic development, job creation, and employment opportunities in Saanich and the broader region.
- 14.3.8 Work with the stakeholders to address mobility issues related to the efficient and timely movement of goods to and throughout Saanich and the region.



4 Taking Action & Tracking Progress





Related Reports & Surveys

- District of Saanich Annual Report
- District of Saanich Citizen Pulse Survey
- Capital Region Growth Strategy Indicators Report

15.0 Implementation

Objectives:

- A. Maintain the intent and integrity of the Official Community Plan.
- B. Monitor, track, and communicate progress towards achieving the Saanich Vision.
- C. Provide consistency and clarity across the Saanich strategic policy framework.
- D. Coordinate planning with other jurisdictions within the Capital Regional District

For an Official Community Plan (OCP) to be effective, its objectives and policies must be implemented. Achieving the Saanich Vision will be determined by future decisions of Council regarding priorities, funding, and implementation. Consultation and cooperation with senior governments, other local governments, First Nations, school districts, the private and not-for-profit sectors, and the community is also essential to successful plan implementation.

15.1 Plan Management

The OCP is the primary document that guides growth and change in Saanich. It establishes a long-term vision for a livable community based on shared values and sustainability. It also provides an overarching framework for other District plans, policies, and initiatives, including the District’s Strategic Plan. The OCP is a legally binding document and decisions made within its scope are required to conform to its policy direction. It is required to be consistent with the Capital Regional District Regional Growth Strategy (RGS).

The OCP will need to be amended and updated occasionally to respond to evolving community needs and remain a relevant, viable and effective tool for guiding growth and managing change. This is particularly important given the legislative process which provides the option for a development application to move forward without a Public Hearing if it is consistent with the OCP.



An important component of ongoing plan management will be ensuring consistency between the Plan document as new CCV Plans (for Primary Growth Areas) and Topic Specific Master Plans are developed. While these plans are required to align with the OCP at time of adoption, they may identify new community needs, local context details, data and information, or best practices that would be beneficial to capture in the OCP; this alignment provides improved clarity, consistency, and transparency on how the community is moving towards the Saanich Vision and how decisions are made. In the case of the CCV plans, these may be proposing changes or refinements to OCP land use designations and will require an OCP amendment as part of their initial adoption. An OCP amendment may also be proposed following the 5-year plan evaluation and/or triggered as the result of a new Regional Growth Strategy.

Different ways in which broader District-led OCP amendments could be addressed include:

- Occasional housekeeping amendments which group required changes into one process;
- Topic specific amendments which focus on a larger suite of changes to the plan based on the completion of a significant initiative or comprehensive strategy update, for example the Neighbourhood Homes Study or Resilient Saanich/Biodiversity Conservation Strategy; and,
- Plan amendments brought forward concurrently with CCV plan adoption.

Further to these types of District-led amendments, site specific OCP amendments will also be considered for proposed development applications which change the density or use permitted. In this scenario, applications will be assessed based on the criteria outlined in Policy 7.2.3. Under the current OCP Bylaw structure (which includes the General Plan and area specific plans) these amendments are required when an application is not consistent with: the General Plan; the General Plan and area-specific plan; or the area specific plan only (even if the application is consistent with the General Plan).

Any OCP amendment process requires public consultation as per the BC Local Government Act (LGA). This includes notification of specific stakeholders identified in the LGA as well as broader public notification as part of a Public Hearing process. Additional consultation beyond the requirements outlined in the LGA will be considered as part of the amendment process and in the context of the scale of the proposed changes and their relationship to other related plan consultation processes.

15.2 Preliminary Priority Actions

To successfully implement the Plan several action-oriented policies are identified throughout the document. While this list will be refined as part of the revised Draft Plan, preliminary priority actions referenced in OCP policies are identified in Table 4. These actions are identified because they play an important role in moving the community towards

the Saanich Vision and achieving One Planet Living. They also are focused on specific projects with a focused timeline. It is anticipated that the completion of some of these actions will trigger future OCP amendments to provide consistency across the District's strategic policy framework.

Table 4. Preliminary Priority Actions

Section	Policy	Action Item
Natural Environment	6.1.1	Complete the Resilient Saanich process and the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.
Natural Environment	6.2.1	Complete the Urban Forest Strategy.
Land Use	7.3.2	Complete detailed plans for all Primary Growth Areas in consultation with the community including the 5-year update for the Shelbourne Valley Action Plan.
Land Use	7.4.15	Identify Secondary Corridors and additional Neighbourhood Hubs through upcoming detailed planning in consultation with the community.
Land Use	7.4.6	Undertake a neighbourhood infill study to support the provision of additional housing consistent with neighbourhood scale.
Housing / Transportation & Mobility	8.3.1 9.4.6	Update Parking Standards for vehicles and bicycles.
Land Use	7.9.1	Complete and implement the Asset Management Strategy for the District.
Housing	8.1.3	Update the Housing Needs Report.
Housing	8.3.1	Conduct a strategic review of the full range of municipal tools available to attract, encourage and incentivize non-market housing.
Housing / Transportation & Mobility	8.3.1 9.4.6	Update Parking Standards for vehicles and bicycles.
Transportation and Mobility	9.2.2	Complete the update of the Active Transportation Plan.
Transportation and Mobility	9.3.2	Work with BC Transit to implement strategic transit infrastructure in the District including the multi-modal transportation hub in the District Centre and the three Rapid Transit Routes that travel through Saanich.
Community Well-being	13.4.3	Develop and implement Memorandum of Understandings (MOU) and/or protocol agreements with local First Nations around shared commitments.
Economic Vibrancy	14.2.1	Complete the Economic Development Strategy.
Economic Vibrancy	14.1.2	Complete the implementation of the Development Process Review (2021) recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of the application review process, expand stakeholder understanding and expectations, and improve development application processing times.

15.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

It will be important to monitor the progress towards the Official Community Plan to assess its progress towards the Saanich Vision and make sure that it continues to be an effective tool for guiding land use and planning decisions and meeting community needs.

At five-year intervals, an evaluation of the progress of the area plan will be undertaken to assess the following:

- status of the implementation of priority actions;
- progress of Strategic Land Use Directions;
- Updating demographic, housing, and household census data; and
- Alignment with other policy documents and initiatives.

To support this evaluation, a series of indicators is under development. These indicators seek to complement other District and Regional monitoring programs (e.g., Climate Plan, Housing Strategy, Annual Report, Regional Growth Strategy) by linking high-level indicators together to assess progress towards the Saanich Vision.

The five-year interval aligns with the Canadian Census and provides for greater opportunity to observe trends. The reporting will be used to help identify emerging trends and issues that may have an impact on the OCP and to inform potential changes to the OCP and other policies, plans or practices. As this progress reporting structure rests outside of the OCP bylaw, it provides greater opportunity to adapt and respond to emerging trends.

Plan Indicators

Supporting the OCP Evaluation and Monitoring program is an indicators framework which tracks progress across the Plan Foundations and Focus Areas. This framework is still under development however initial indicators will be included in Phase 2 consultation; the Preliminary Indicators Framework companion document is available at saanich.ca/ocp.





16.0 Regional Context Statement

As a one of the core municipalities within the Capital Regional District (CRD), Saanich works collaboratively with 12 member municipalities and an electoral area to achieve regional objectives. The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), adopted by the CRD Board in March 2018, provides a framework to achieve a regional vision for growth and change that enhances quality of life, sustainability and social well-being.

The RGS framework specifies ten interconnected objectives supported by principles, policies and 2038 targets to achieve regional sustainability:

1. Keep urban settlement compact;
2. Protect the integrity of rural communities;
3. Protect, conserve and manage ecosystem health;
4. Manage regional infrastructure services sustainably;
5. Create safe and complete communities;

6. Improve housing affordability;
7. Improve multi-modal connectivity and mobility;
8. Realize the region's economic potential;
9. Foster a resilient food and agriculture system; and
10. Significantly reduce community-based greenhouse gas emissions.

As required under Sections 446 and 447 of the "Local Government Act", CRD member municipalities collectively support the RGS by preparing regional context statements identifying the relationship between the OCP and RGS. The following demonstrates how the Saanich OCP aligns with and achieves the objectives of the RGS.

Objective 1: Keep Urban Settlement Compact

The land use characteristics and development patterns in Saanich are largely influenced by its central location in the region and its unique context with both urban neighbourhoods and rural agriculture lands (see Map 3). Within this context, Saanich plays an important role in the Capital Regional District as the municipality with the highest population and the largest area.

Saanich has adopted growth management policies and strategies in the OCP aimed at limiting urban sprawl while creating opportunities to develop more complete, compact and sustainable communities with access to a range of housing choices, close to employment, amenities and services. The OCP supports concentrating growth within the Urban Containment Boundary as a principal tool of growth management which contributes to the RGS target of accommodating 95% of new dwelling units within the Containment Area by 2038 (see Policy 7.1.2).

Given that Saanich is a well-established community with a strong commitment to sustainability, growth for the most part will come from redevelopment and infill. The majority of future growth is focused on walkable, mixed use Primary Growth Areas with opportunities for new multiple family residential, commercial, institutional and civic development (see Section 7.3). Residential infill in established neighbourhoods within the Urban Containment Boundary will also continue to take place to increase housing options for residents. The OCP contains infill development policies supporting secondary suites, garden suites, houseplexes, multi-family residential and mixed-use development (see Section 7.4).

The OCP population and housing needs projections, described in Section 2.2, are generally consistent with the RGS sub-regional core area population projections.

Objective 2: Protect the Integrity of Rural Communities

Rural Saanich is valued for its natural beauty, diverse environments, high biological diversity, agriculture, forested lands and rural lifestyle. Policies and environmental protection measures in the OCP help retain the character of rural communities, maintain the health of its natural systems and demonstrates Saanich's commitment to the preservation and strengthening of rural areas. Future development is expected to be consistent with the rural scale and character, contributing to the RGS goal to limit new dwelling units to a maximum of 5% outside of the Urban Containment Policy Area and within the Rural/Rural Residential Policy Area (see Section 7.7).

Containing and concentrating growth within the Urban Containment Boundary is key to better protection and retention of rural, agriculture and environmentally significant lands. Furthermore, limiting urban sprawl and the extent of rural development and subdivision is achieved through policies to maintain farming, food production and rural residential as predominate land uses. Large lot sizes are appropriate for these land uses. Most of the parcels are designated A-1 and A-4 Rural Zones which require a minimum lot size of 2.0 and 4.0 hectares, respectfully, which is reinforced through policy in the OCP (see Policy 7.7.3). The OCP also aims to minimize conflicts between rural and urban uses through the clear delineation of land uses and buffering rural and agricultural lands from adjacent urban residential development as part of redevelopment and subdivision proposals, where appropriate (see Policy 12.1.13).

Infrastructure services in rural areas includes on-site services which is in keeping with the rural character and helps limit development to the scale, form and density consistent with the intent of the rural land use designations. The OCP also limits consideration for a Sewer Service Area extension outside the Urban Containment Boundary, only as a means to resolve current health problems if no reasonable alternative is feasible or for public facilities or parks, where there would be significant community benefit (see Section 10.2).

Objective 3: Protect, Conserve and Manage Ecosystem Health

The RGS aims to protect the landscape character, ecological integrity, and biodiversity of the Capital Region. Saanich's OCP reinforces the RGS by emphasizing the importance of preserving, protecting and managing its diverse natural environment and ecosystems for the well-being of the community and the region. Saanich's natural environment is comprised of designated environmentally sensitive areas, urban forests, watersheds, water courses, floodplains, parks, open space and trails (see Maps 1, 15 and 16).

Regionally significant parks, identified in the RGS as Capital Green Lands, represent a diverse range of recreation and natural areas and include PKLOS (Mount Douglas Park), Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary, Rithet's Bog Conservation Area, Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Parks and Francis King Regional Park. Additional regionally significant parks are found throughout the municipality in both urban and rural areas (see Map 15).

Saanich's OCP supports policies related to protecting and restoring habitat and ecosystems; connecting environmentally sensitive areas and green spaces with "greenways"; promoting conservation of existing and additional tree cover; requiring restoration plans as a result of disturbance; and, prioritizing condition assessments for streams, riparian and wetland areas (see Sections 6.1-6.3).

Ongoing stewardship is seen as a foundational and fundamental tool for preserving and enhancing Saanich's natural heritage. Policies encourage habitat creation and biodiversity improvements, focus on principles of Naturescaping and landscaping that utilizes native species and climate resistant plants on both public and private public lands. Policies in the OCP recognize the importance of partnerships with CRD, First Nations, local and senior governments and other stakeholders to promote stewardship of our watercourses, groundwater and marine environments, and education initiatives (see Section 6.5).

Through partnerships to improve source control and reduce contamination entering our watercourse and marine environment as well as policies that support an integrated planning approach to restoration of and management of watercourses, surface water, drainage and

groundwater, the OCP supports the RGS objective to protect, conserve and manage ecosystem health (see Policies 6.3.1 and 10.3.1).

Through comprehensive environmental master plans and implementation tools that inform land use decisions, such as the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and the Urban Forest Strategy (both in progress), Saanich is equipped to maintain the integrity of the natural environment. Development Permit Area (DPA) Guidelines provide guidance on land use issues in and around sensitive ecosystems and within hazard areas such as flood plains and areas susceptible to wildfires. DPAs also provide guidance on conservation of water and energy, improvements to storm water management, and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. In particular, the Streamside and Floodplain DPAs are significant contributors to addressing the protection of environmentally sensitive landscapes during development and support the RGS target to reduce contaminants in water bodies. Within rural Saanich, environmentally sensitive areas and green spaces are better protected by focusing growth within the Urban Containment Boundary.

Objective 4: Manage Regional Infrastructure Services Sustainably

In order to accommodate the anticipated population increase in the region, the RGS supports long-term sustainable planning and management of regional infrastructure services that take into consideration the conservation of land, water and energy resources and the impacts of climate change and natural hazards. Regional infrastructure services include drinking water, liquid and solid waste while services in Saanich supplement this infrastructure with collection and distribution systems.

The OCP supports the RGS target of preparing long-term capital plans for CRD utilities that are cost-effective and efficient to serve.

Saanich growth management strategies promote efficient and cost-effective infrastructure planning and management through compact land use patterns, concentrating growth in Primary Growth Areas. This allows investments to be directed towards maintenance and improvements to existing infrastructure, rather than on new infrastructure (see Section 7.3). This is also supported through policies that restrict major infrastructure extensions (see Sections 10.2 and 10.4).

Buildings themselves also have a profound effect on the environment and health, as they consume large quantities of energy, water, and materials, and emit significant levels of greenhouse gases and generate other waste. These impacts can be significantly reduced by encouraging zero carbon and sustainable building practices. For example, the OCP includes policies and implementation tools for future development, requiring building and site design to reduce impervious surfaces and incorporate features that will encourage ground water recharge through methods such as green roofs, vegetated swales and pervious paving materials (Section 7.8).

Other policies contribute to sustainable infrastructure by: 1) encouraging reduced consumption of non-renewable resources; and 2) by supporting CRD initiatives to reduce solid waste and develop efficient and environmentally acceptable long-term waste disposal solutions, working towards Zero Waste generation (see Section 10.6).

Within rural areas, OCP policies emphasize low impact and low-density development approaches that help conserve environmentally significant lands and reduce public infrastructure needs with requirements for on-site services.

The OCP limits consideration for a Sewer Service Area extension outside the Urban Containment Boundary, only as a means to resolve current health problems if no reasonable alternative is feasible or, for public facilities or parks, where there would be a significant community benefit (see Section 10.2). The OCP also limits consideration of water extensions outside the Urban Containment Boundary to those that are in keeping with RGS principles and that address pressing public health and environmental concerns, provide fire suppression, or service agriculture (see Section 10.4). Additionally, the OCP supports opportunities to improve water quality and enhance environmental features through retaining open-channel stormwater drainage system comprising of watercourses, ditches, flood plains and other water retention and detention features (see Section 10.3).

Objective 5: Create Safe and Complete Communities

The OCP emphasizes the importance of building complete communities with access to a diverse range of housing types and tenure, employment options, shops, services, community amenities, and public open spaces (see Section 7.0). As part of the 2023 update, Saanich incorporated the 15-minute community concept into its planning approach which builds on the complete community approach in the 2008 version (Section 7.0- Strategic Land Use Directions). An important element in the development of complete communities is to provide mobility options that support walking, cycling and transit, and foster healthy lifestyles and safe neighbourhoods (Policy 9.1.3).

A key tool to creating complete communities is to focus future growth in mixed use Primary Growth Areas within the Urban Containment Boundary. Through the integration of transportation planning, land use and urban design, “Centres”, “Villages” and “Corridors” of various scales and levels of completeness help to establish vibrant places to live, work, and enjoy (see Section 7.2). These are supplemented by small-scale Hubs to support Saanich’s transition to a 15-minute community.

Area-based plans (Local Area Plans, Action Plans, Centre, Village and Corridor Plans) provide a policy framework to implement the vision of the OCP and guide growth and change for neighbourhoods and Primary Growth Areas (see Section 1.2). Policies in these plans help retain neighbourhood character and a sense of place by capturing issues unique to each area and provide a higher level of detail in articulating how the broader OCP vision is implemented at the local level. OCP policies further support developing a sense of place through promoting community connections and social interactions within safe, diverse and inclusive communities (see Section 13.0).

Development Permit Guidelines contribute to the development of complete communities by providing direction on how to design buildings and developments that are sensitive to the existing character of an area and add to the community through improved streetscapes, pedestrian mobility, and quality open spaces (Section 7.8). In addition, Development Permit Guidelines can minimize risk and provide guidance on land use issues in and around sensitive ecosystems, and within hazard areas such as floodplains and areas susceptible to wildfires.

Additional policies in the OCP address public safety through building community awareness and taking action. Supporting public education on emergency and disaster preparedness, the development of transportation safety infrastructure, and the implementation of crime and fire prevention programs are some examples of the means by which the OCP works to improve public safety (see Section 13.6).

The RGS directs municipalities to identify the number of people living in complete communities. Although Saanich’s OCP does not address this target specifically, consideration for this target will be included as part of work underway on the land capacity analysis and incorporated into the ongoing OCP monitoring and implementation plan. This approach is based on the Local Government Act’s provision for a regional context statement to specify how the OCP is to be made consistent with the RGS over time.

Objective 6: Improve Housing Affordability

A variety of affordable housing policies (see Section 8.0) in the OCP seek to address the RGS targets to increase the supply of more affordable housing; reduce the number of people in core housing need; and, reduce the number of people who are homeless.

The OCP recognizes there is a significant need in the community to increase affordable housing across the housing spectrum to improve quality of life, community health, and support the economy.

Policies in the OCP aim to increase the diversity of housing by type and tenure, thereby helping to ensure residents have access to housing suitable and desirable to their life stage and income, and to prioritize and incentivize those housing types that are most needed according to the District's Housing Needs Report (see Sections 8.1 and 8.4). Policies supporting residential development in Primary Growth Areas as well as residential infill in neighbourhoods, allow for increased housing diversity and supply in a way that complements the District's equity and sustainability goals by ensuring transit access, services and amenities are within walking distance and that neighbourhood areas serve a broad range of housing needs (see Sections 7.3 and 8.1).

The OCP also supports housing affordability through policies aimed at retaining, renewing, and developing all forms of rental housing across the housing spectrum and leveraging the development process as a way of gaining affordable housing units (see Section 8.2 and 8.3).

The OCP provides direction for the District of Saanich to work collaboratively with partners from the Capital Regional Housing Corporation, BC Housing, the Federal Government, non-profits, and other agencies to support the construction of supportive housing projects within Saanich and to address both immediate and long-term homelessness issues (see Section 8.5).

The District's Housing Needs Report, Housing Strategy, and Affordable Housing Fund provide a comprehensive approach to implementing the District's housing goals by providing strategies for achieving a healthy, diverse, and affordable housing supply for Saanich.

Objective 7: Improve Multi-Modal Connectivity and Mobility

The RGS supports the development of a balanced and sustainable transportation system providing residents with reasonable and affordable transportation choices that enhance the overall regional quality of life through more effective, connected, sustainable and multi-modal transportation systems. From a regional perspective, the OCP recognizes the importance of working with the CRD and member municipalities to implement the regional transportation plan which outlines priorities for a regional multi-modal network.

Increasing population growth in Saanich and throughout the CRD will continue to place increasing pressure on Saanich's transportation system. OCP policies seek to support a multi-modal transportation and mobility network for the community that will help create safe, convenient, effective, and sustainable mobility choices to move around the community (see Section 9.0 and Maps 7-10). Transportation and mobility networks that encourage and promote a range of active travel choices, such as walking and cycling, present opportunities for significant quality of life, health, safety and economic benefits.

Land use and development patterns play a profound role in shaping how sustainable, convenient, safe and attractive active transportation is. Integrating well-designed land use and transportation systems can positively affect several factors that relate to establishing more sustainable communities with people who drive less to meet their daily needs, participate more in cost-effective and active ways of moving around the community, and actively engage in social connections. Focusing growth around well-designed Primary Growth Areas defined through formal land use planning processes, is another important contributor to making active mobility more viable (see Section 7.0).

The many actions taken by the District to promote multi-modal connectivity are backed by strong policies in the OCP (see Section 9.0). Saanich's Active Transportation Plan is an implementation strategy that establishes a vision, goals and targets to improve active transportation and to ensure that walking and cycling are accessible, comfortable, and convenient transportation choices for people of all ages and abilities. Targets set in this OCP are generally consistent with the RGS target to achieve a transportation system that would see 42% of all trips made by walking, cycling, and transit by 2038.

Objective 8: Realize the Region's Economic Potential

As the population grows in the region, realizing diverse and economic opportunities to improve the region's economic potential is vital to achieving a sustainable economy (see Section 14.0). Comprehensive economic development policies integrated throughout the OCP, support a balanced economy by encouraging a broad range of commercial, service, research, high-tech and industrial uses and contribute to achieving the RGS target of 0.6 for the jobs to population ratio within the Core Subregion.

Policies in the OCP support focusing the majority of employment growth and mixed-use development in Saanich's Uptown Core and in other designated Primary Growth Areas. These locations prioritize access to active mobility options, promote improved access to jobs and services close to home, and create a network of vibrant, livable communities connected by an efficient transportation system (See Sections 7.3 and 14.2).

Protecting the region's industrial land supply is imperative to accommodate the growing economy and employment. Industrial lands are required to support a prosperous and growing regional economy and workforce. People and businesses depend on local industrial services, such as production, distribution, and repair. Industrial areas are protected and supported by OCP policies to accommodate the growing economy and employment. In addition, policies encourage improved utilization and intensification of industrial areas for industrial activities and ensure that the zoning and regulatory controls respecting industrial areas continue to encourage and support their economic viability.

Other major employment areas provide opportunities for increasing jobs and the economy. The OCP supports providing opportunities to new advanced technology and knowledge-based businesses by supporting expansion of Vancouver Island Technology Park, and research related activities at the University of Victoria, Camosun College, Royal Roads campuses.

Within rural areas, policies encourage market diversification of agriculture by supporting specialty agri-tourism businesses on commercial farms, which are in keeping with the scale and character of rural Saanich.

Objective 9: Foster a Resilient Food and Agriculture System

Saanich has a long history of farming and retains a significant amount of agriculture and arable land within its rural areas. Applying to agricultural land in both rural and urban areas, agriculture and food security policies in the OCP (see Section 12.0), recognize agriculture as a significant contributor to the region's landscape, identity and economy.

Key tools that have assisted in protecting agricultural land for current and future generations in rural Saanich are the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), the Urban Containment Boundary and the Sewer Service Area. Established by the Agricultural Land Commission, ALR designated land helps to preserve agricultural value and encourage farming (see Sections 7.7 and 12.1). Focusing future growth in compact, complete and sustainable urban Primary Growth Areas helps to limit urban sprawl, protect agricultural land from the pressure of urban development, and support the protection of the Renewable Resource Lands Policy Areas (see Section 7.0).

Land use regulations and education can help protect agricultural land and increase awareness and understanding of farm operation requirements for those living adjacent or near farms while managing potential conflict between farm operations and neighbouring landowners. The OCP supports buffering rural and agricultural lands from adjacent urban residential development as part of redevelopment and subdivision proposals, where appropriate (see Policy 12.1.13). In addition, partnerships with surrounding municipalities, the CRD, non-profit organizations, and community groups, have been and will continue to be vital in enhancing agriculture and food security in Saanich and the region.

The following OCP policies for agriculture and food security (see Sections 12.1 and 12.2), directly contribute to increasing the amount of land in crop production for food by 5,000 ha by 2038, an RGS target for municipalities: 1) supporting efforts of farm operators and other agencies to enhance farmland and increase crop yield, by improving water supply and undertaking drainage improvements and improving soil capabilities, while considering environmental impact; and 2) supporting the development and operation of specialty crop farms to diversify farm production, increase economic development, increase local food production, and improve farm income.

Objective 10: Significantly Reduce Community-Based Greenhouse Gas Emissions

In addition, opportunities for increasing food production in urban neighbourhoods are supported in the OCP (see Section 12.2). The OCP supports local sustainable agriculture by promoting urban farming initiatives that make use of private and public green spaces to produce an inexpensive, safe, and nutritious food supply. For example, the parks and opens space policies consider opportunities to incorporate food producing community gardens into parks and other public open spaces, where appropriate. Community gardens on private or public land can contribute to neighbourhood renewal and stability, strengthen community bonds, provide food, and create recreational and therapeutic opportunities.

The Agriculture & Food Security Plan provides a coordinated approach for implementing OCP policy directions, supporting agriculture and improving food security in Saanich.

Comprehensive policies integrated throughout the OCP address strategies to protect the community, improve Saanich's quality of life, support a diverse economy, and reduce local and global risks associated with a changing climate. The RGS emphasizes the importance of reducing community greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to address the effects of a changing climate.

Section 4.0 of the OCP reinforces the RGS objective of reducing community-based greenhouse gas emissions through the adoption of a guiding framework and policy lens that emphasizes sustainable development. Supporting OCP policies that encourage reducing GHG emissions include: reducing impacts from public and private buildings through green building design, energy efficiency technologies, renewable energy sources and efficient energy distribution systems; creating compact and complete communities within urban areas that encourage alternative transportation options that lead to reduced vehicle emissions; and, protecting and managing the natural environment, environmentally sensitive areas, urban forests, and aquatic habitat (see Sections 6.1-6.5, 7.1-7.4, 7.8, 9.2, 9.3, 10.1).

The RGS set targets to reduce Community Green House Gas Emissions by 33% (from 2007 levels) by 2020, and by 61% by 2038. Saanich has committed to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions with OCP targets that align with those of the RGS (see Section 5.2.1). One of the key implementation strategies, the *Climate Plan: 100% Renewable and Resilient Saanich*, adopted in 2020, seeks to implement more accelerated targets including:

- Reduce community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 50% of 2007 levels by 2030;
- Achieve net-zero GHG emissions by 2050;
- Become a 100% renewable energy community by 2050; and
- Prepare for a changing climate.

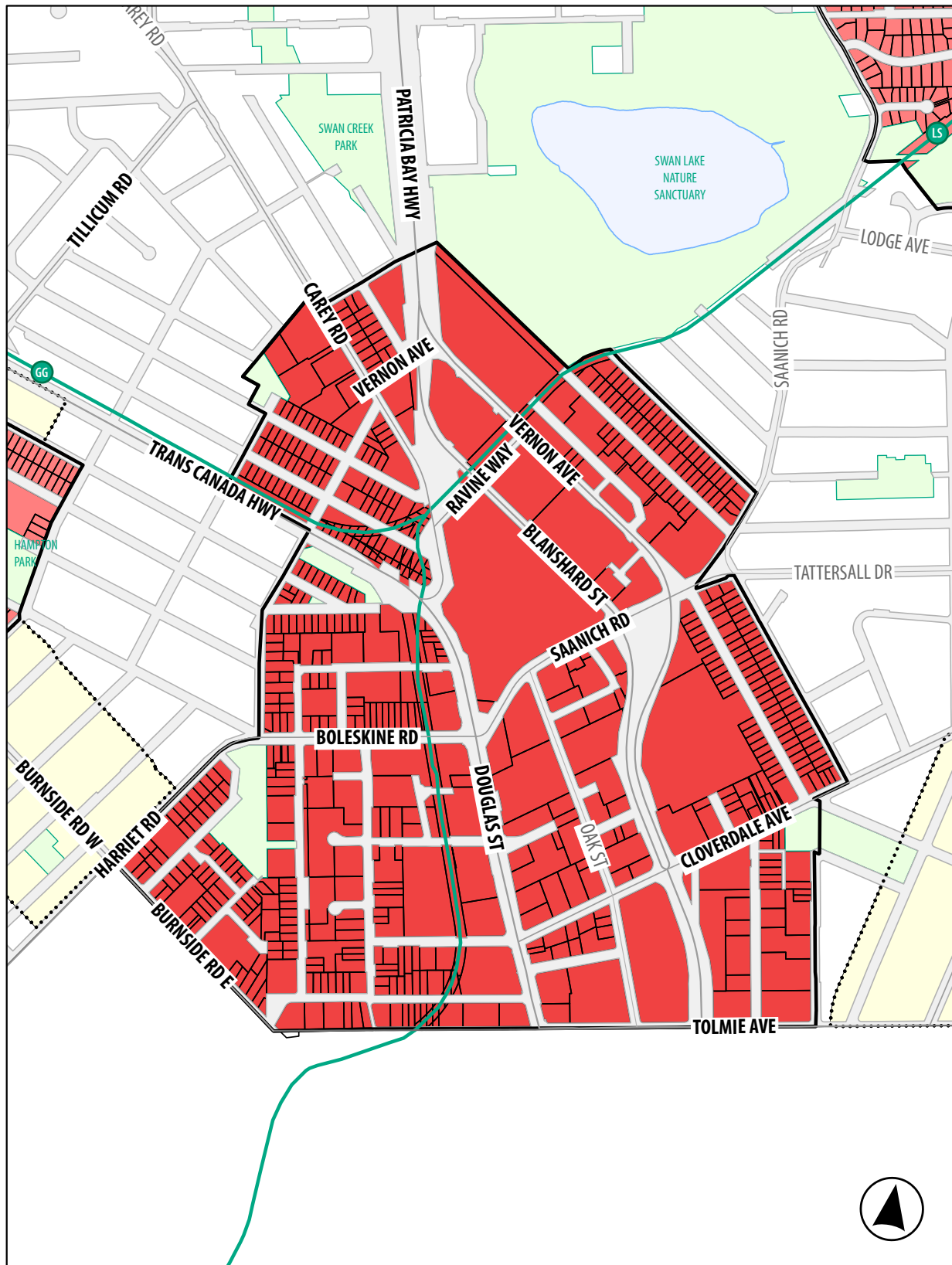
These comprehensive targets are implemented through prioritized actions established in the *Climate Plan: 100% Renewable and Resilient Saanich*; the OCP integrates both these targets as well as policies to support reaching these targets.

A

Appendices



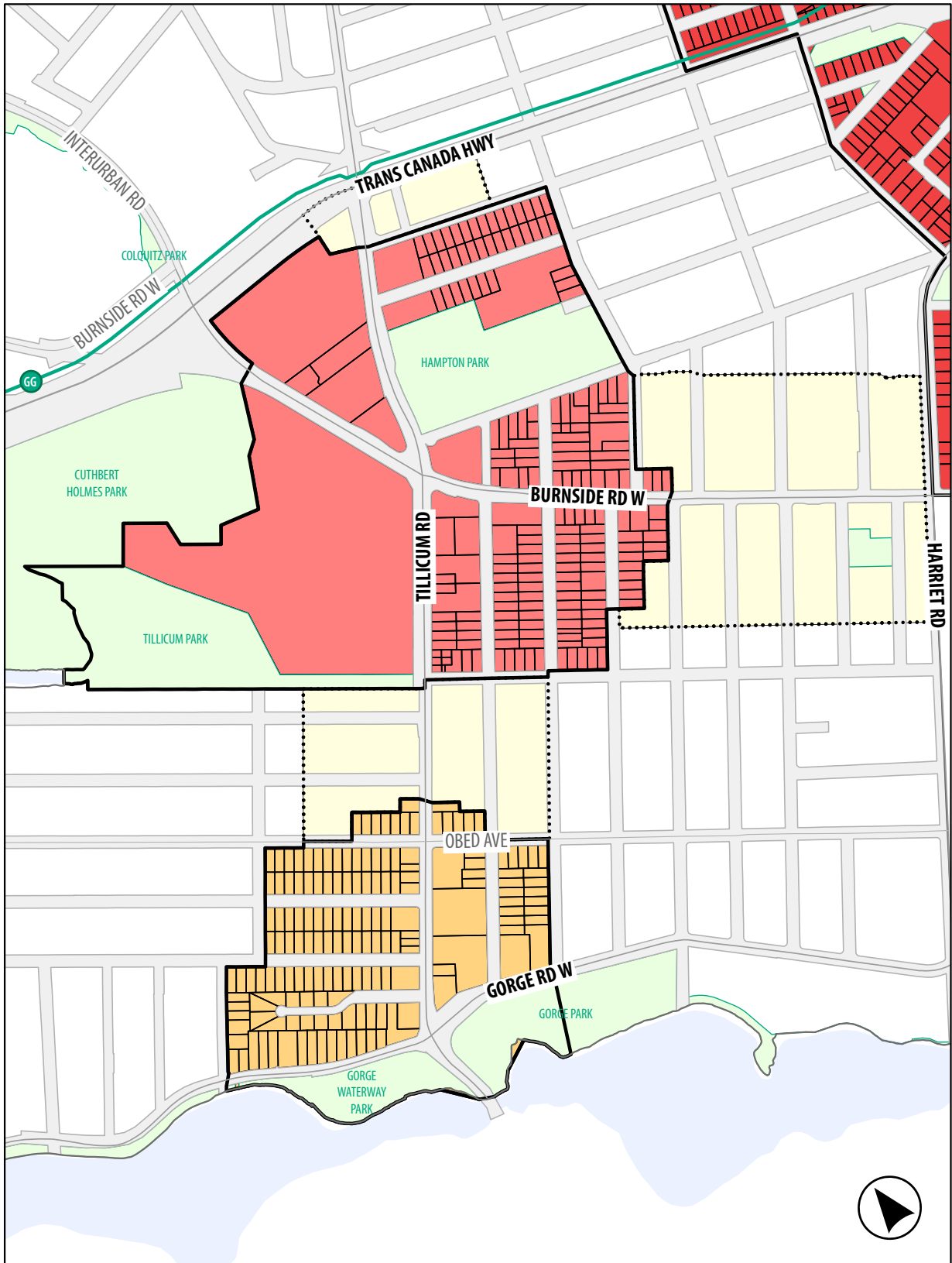
Centres and Villages Boundary Maps



Uptown Core

Notes:

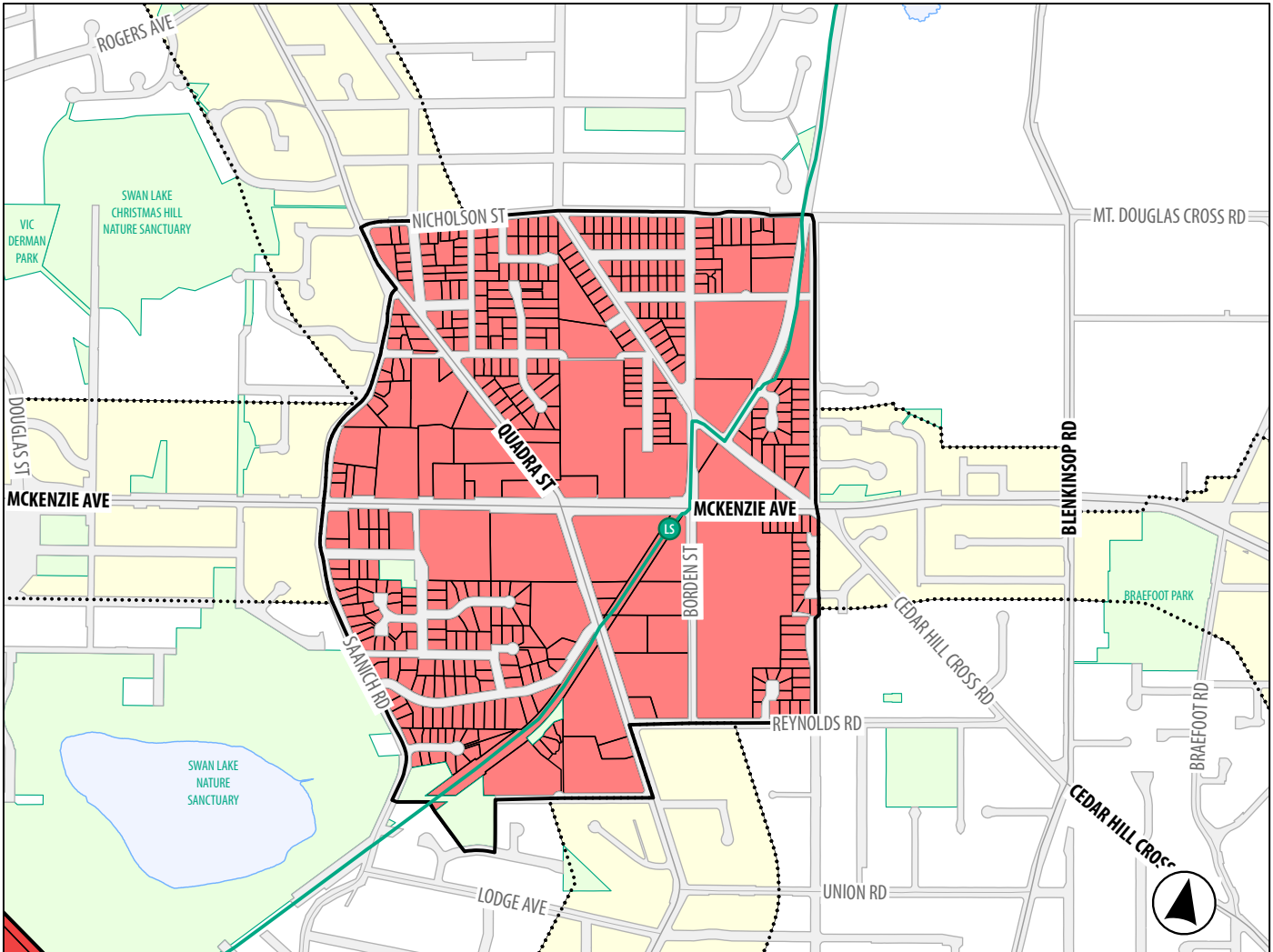
- The Uptown Core boundary was identified through the Uptown Douglas Plan process.



Gorge Village and Tillicum Centre

Notes:

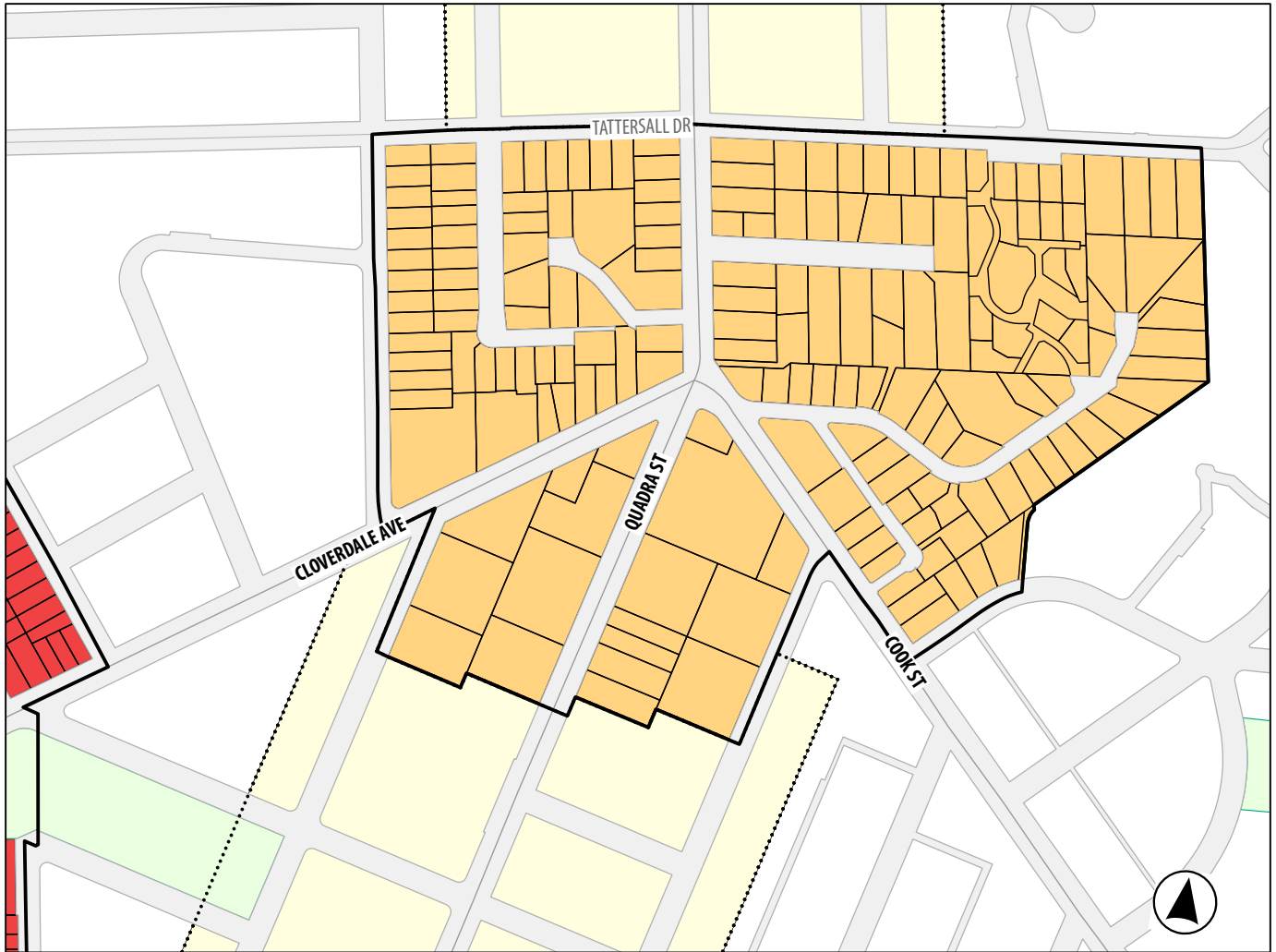
- The Gorge Village and Tillicum Centre boundaries were identified using a criteria-based approach. These boundaries will be updated through upcoming detailed planning in consultation with the community.



Quadra McKenzie Centre

Notes:

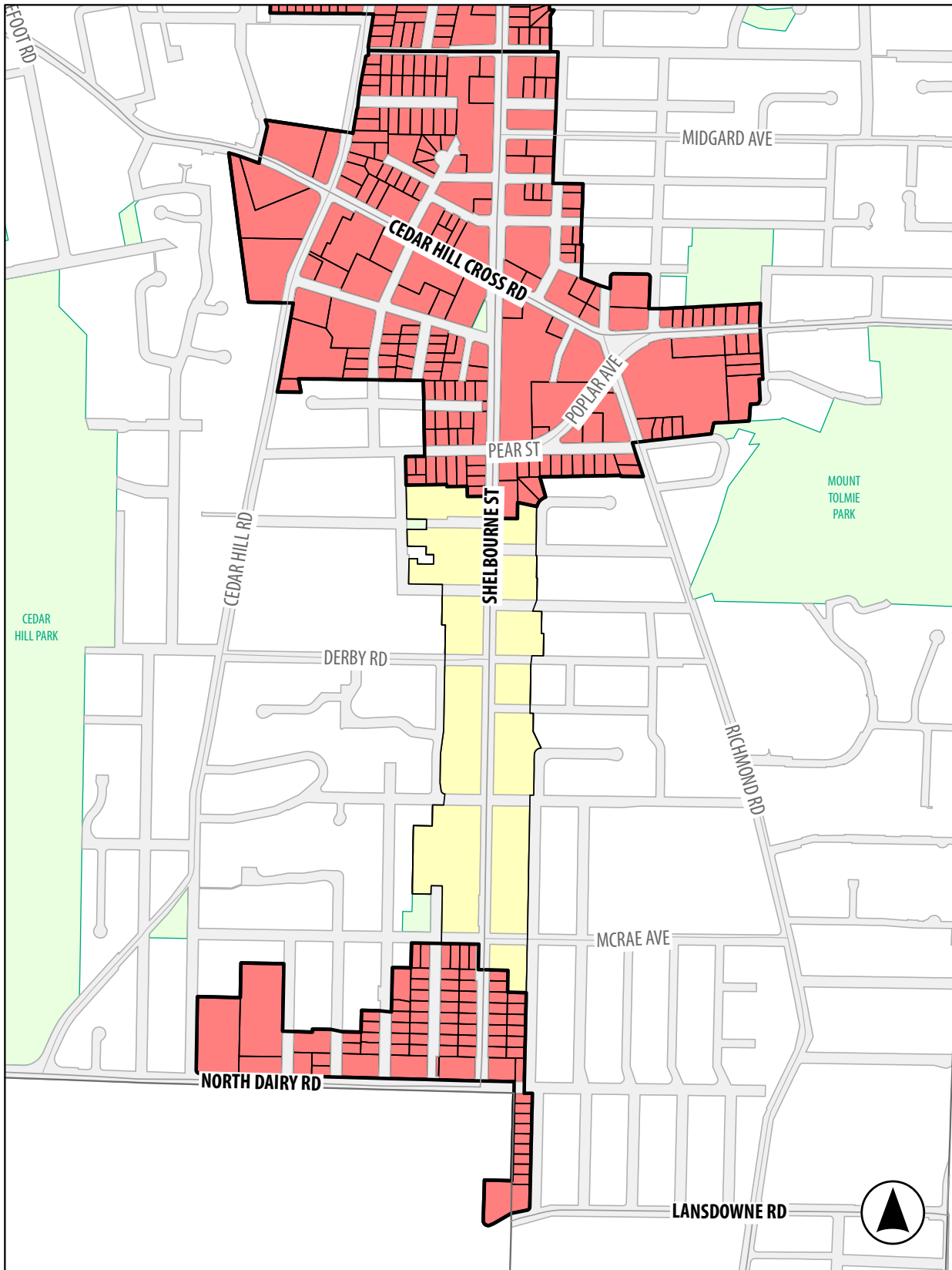
- The Quadra McKenzie Centre boundary is in draft form and will be refined through the ongoing Quadra McKenzie Study process in consultation with the community.



Four Corners Village

Notes:

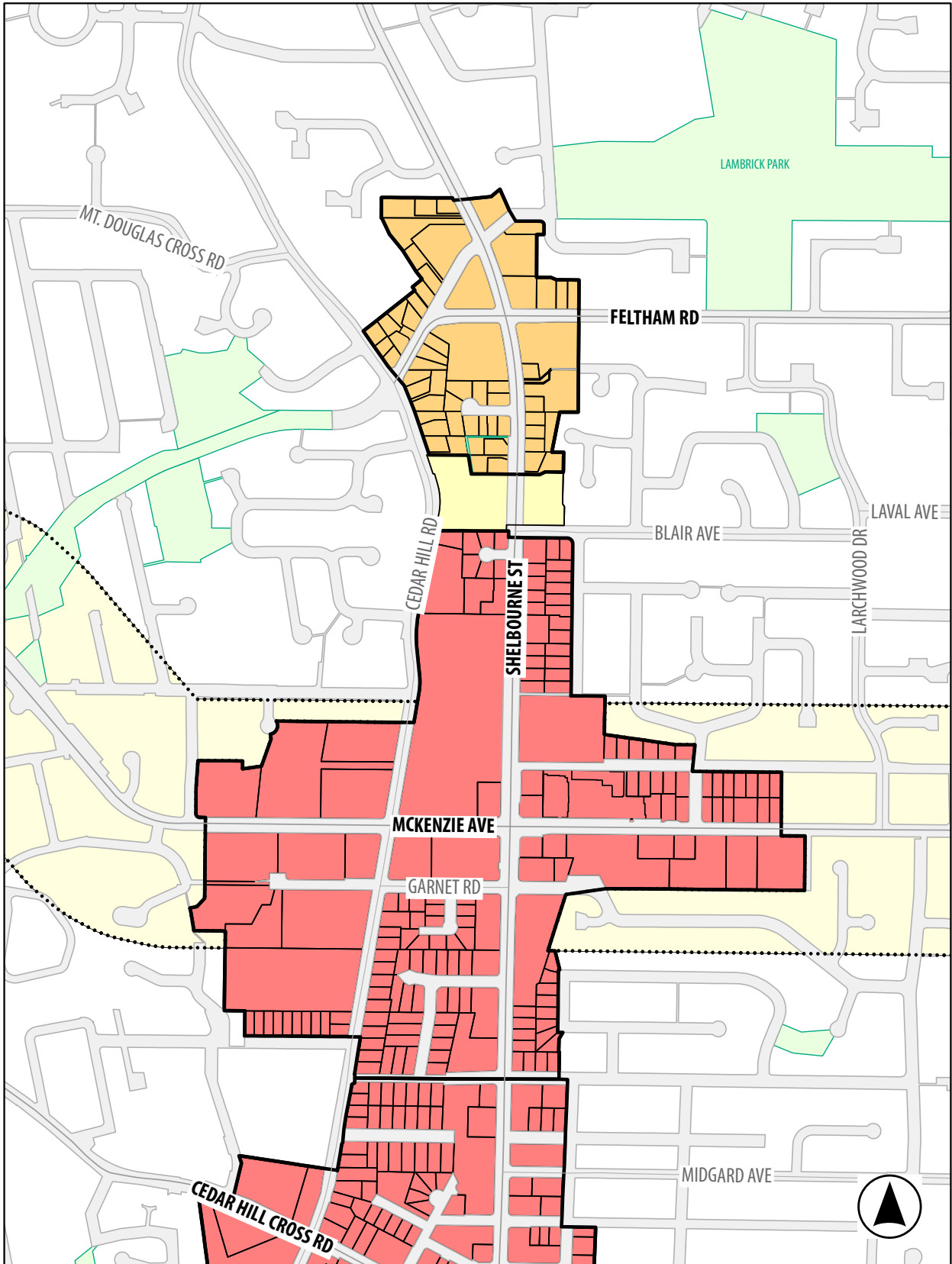
- The Four Corners Village boundary is in draft form and will be refined through the ongoing Quadra McKenzie Study process in consultation with the community.



Hillside Centre and Shelbourne Valley Centre

Notes:

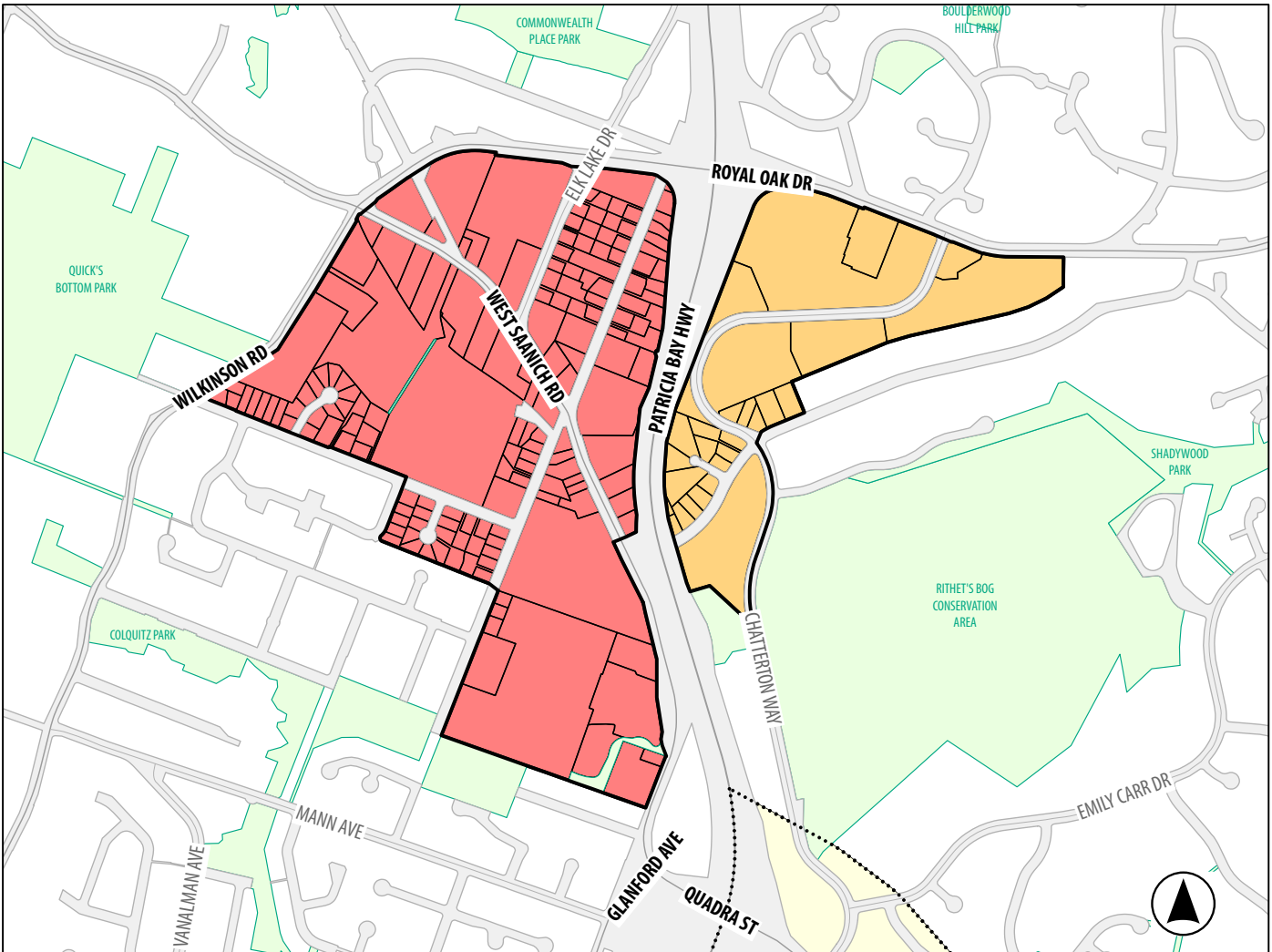
- Hillside Centre and Shelbourne Valley Centre were identified in the Shelbourne Valley Action Plan. These will be updated as part of the upcoming 5-year plan update in consultation with the community.



University Centre and Feltham Village

Notes:

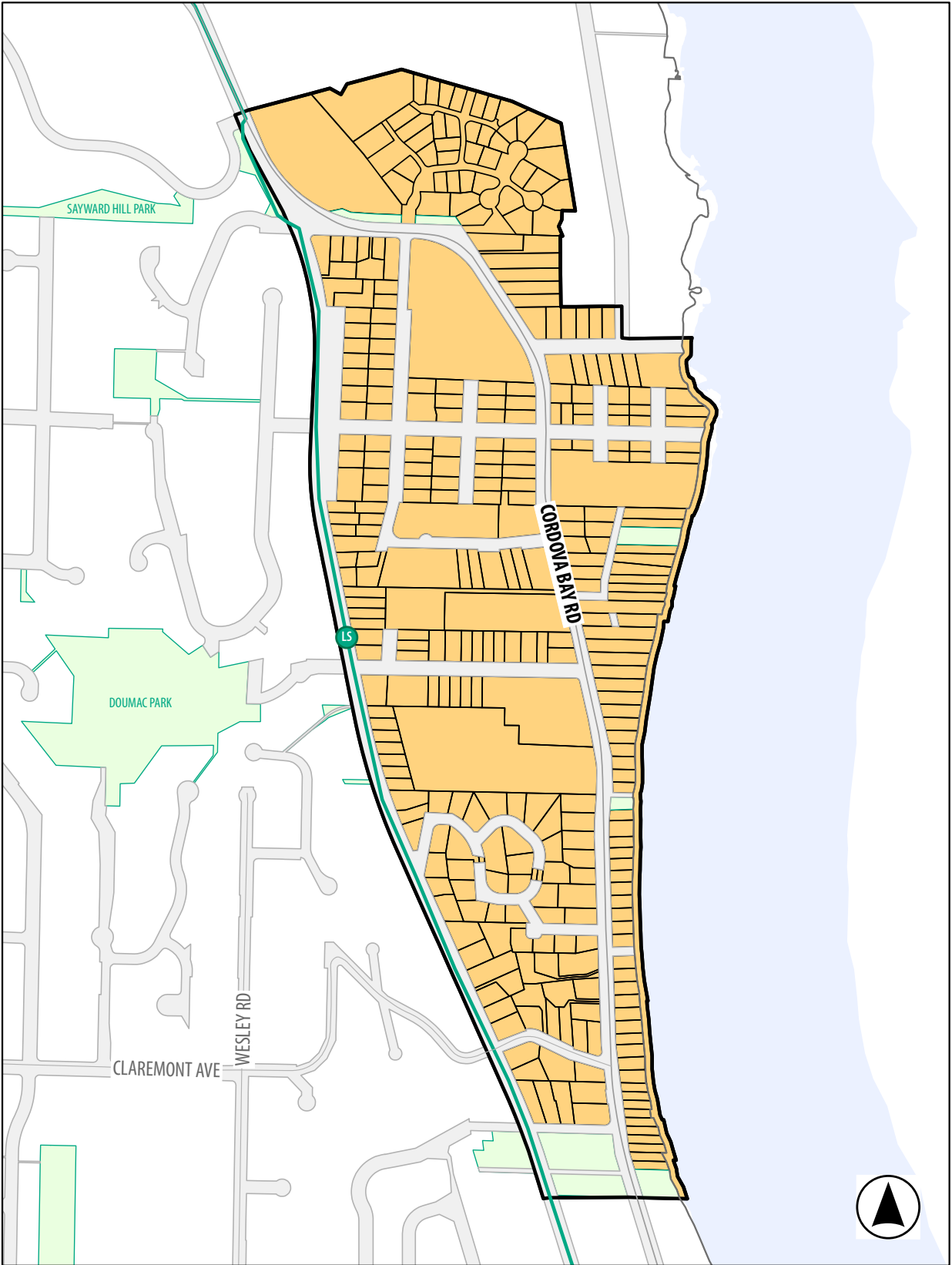
- University Centre and Feltham Village were identified in the Shelbourne Valley Action Plan (SVAP).
- University Centre is under review as part of the ongoing Quadra McKenzie Study process while Feltham Village will be considered as part of the upcoming 5-year SVAP plan update in consultation with the community.



Royal Oak Centre and Broadmead Village

Notes:

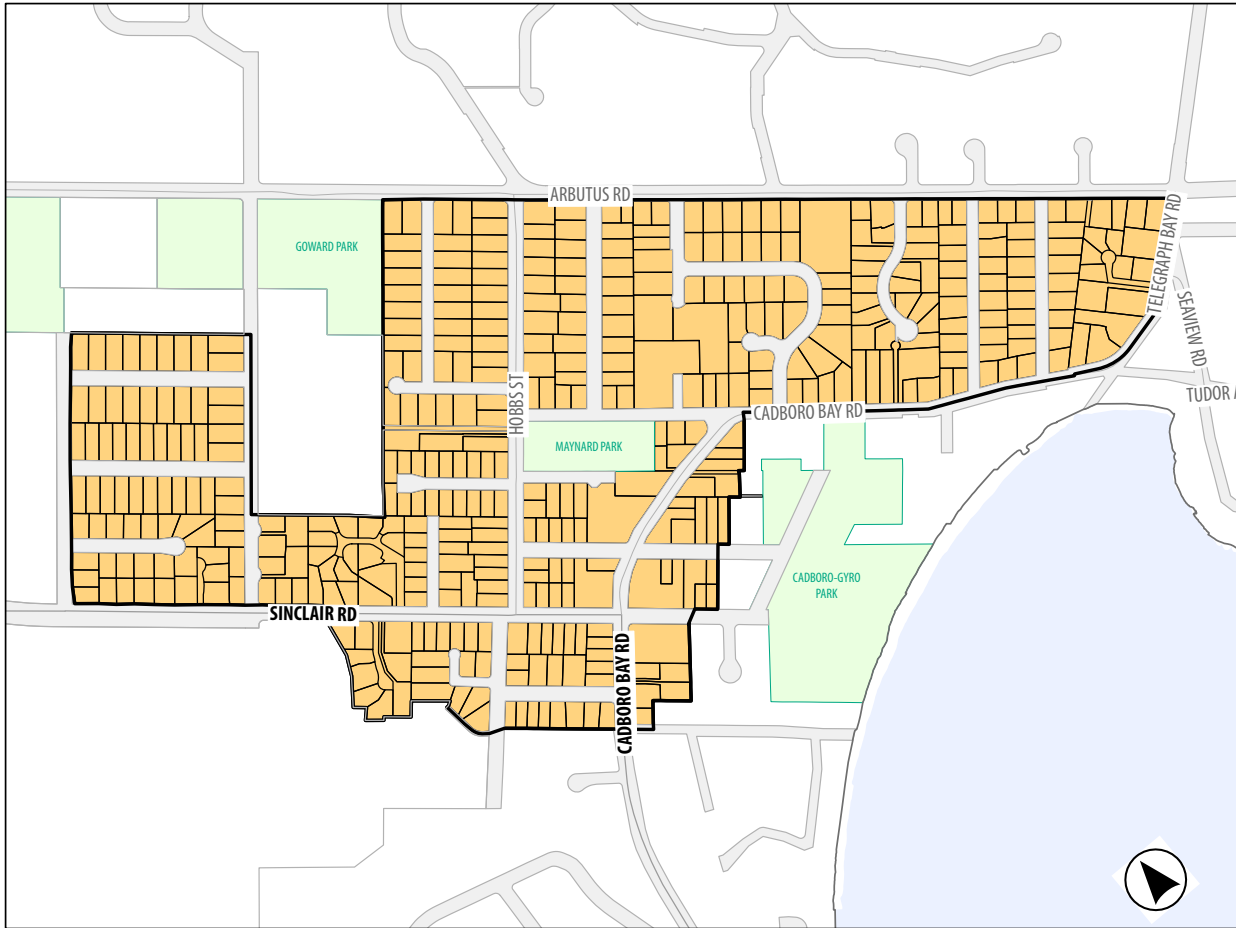
- Royal Oak Centre and Broadmead Villages boundaries were identified using a criteria-based approach. These boundaries will be updated through upcoming detailed planning in consultation with the community.



Cordova Bay Village

Notes:

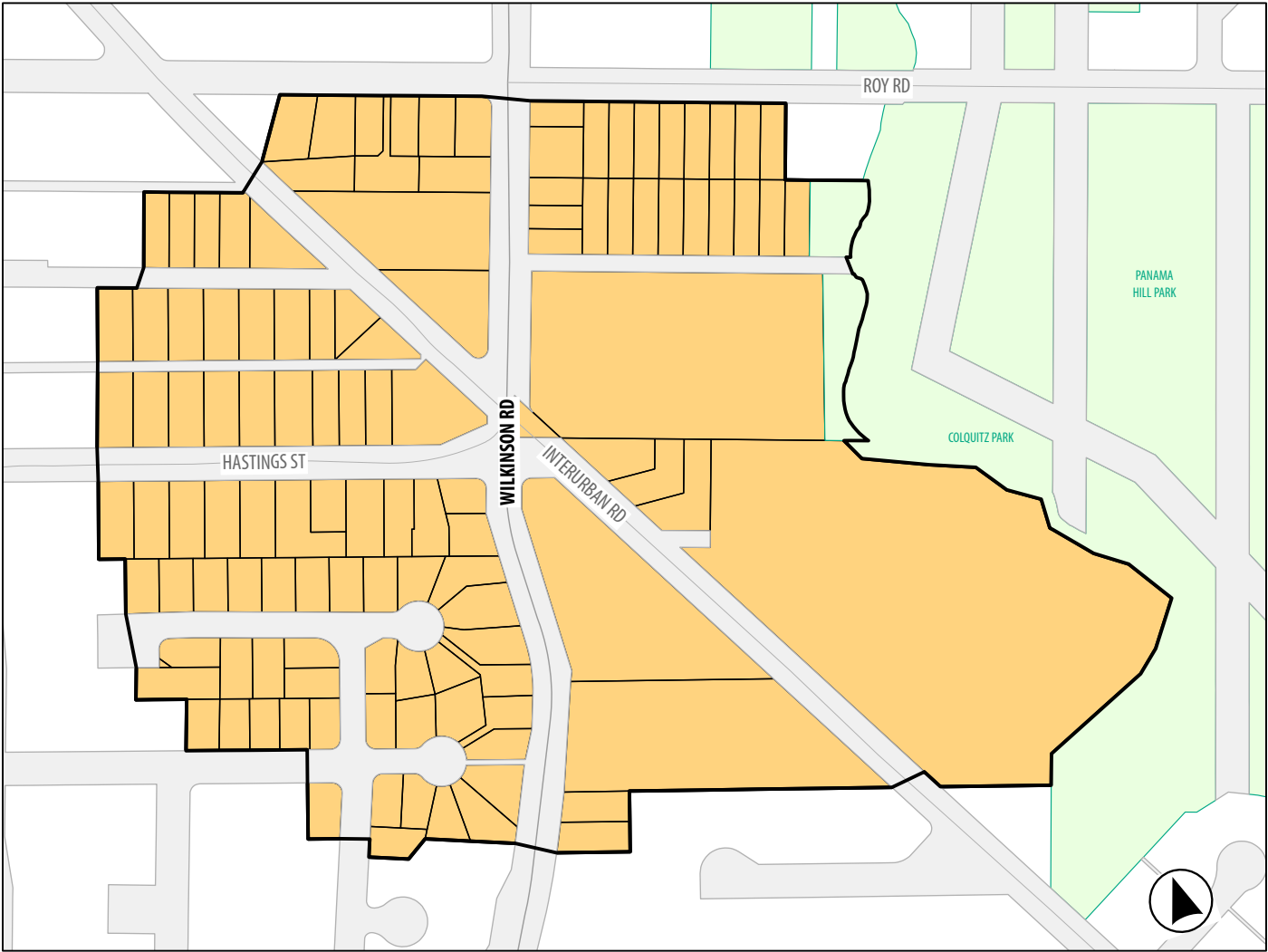
- The Cordova Bay Village boundary was identified through the Cordova Bay Local Area Plan process.



Cadboro Bay Village

Notes:

- The Cadboro Bay Village boundary was identified through the Cadboro Bay Local Area Plan process. This plan is in draft form (May 2023).



Strawberry Vale Village

Notes:

- The Strawberry Vale Village boundary was identified using a criteria-based approach. This boundary will be updated through upcoming detailed planning in consultation with the community.

Glossary

15 Minute Community	Building on existing Centres and Villages, make Saanich a 15-minute community where all households within the Urban Containment Boundary are within a 15-minute walk (or 1.2km) of key amenities that support daily living. Where these amenities do not exist, long-term planning to guide land use change will occur to meet community needs.
3-30-300 Rule	An urban forestry management tool which states: everyone can see at least three trees from their home, all neighbourhoods where people live have at least 30% canopy cover, and all homes are located within a 300m of a park or green space to ensure urban forest benefits are sufficient and accessible to all.
Accessory Residential	A use accessory to another use where the building or buildings so used include not more than one dwelling unit for the accommodation of the owner, operator, manager, or caretaker.
Active Transportation	Any active trip made to get from one place to another using any form of human powered transportation. This includes a range of methods with walking, cycling, and rolling the most common. Transit is included in active transportation as it is active to get to and from a bus stop.
Affordable Housing	Housing where the rent or mortgage plus taxes is 30 percent or less of a household's gross annual income. Households that have no option but to pay more than 30 percent of their gross income on shelter expenditures, in reasonable condition and of appropriate size, are households that are in need of affordable housing.
Agricultural Land Reserve	Agricultural land designated as an agricultural land reserve under the BC Agricultural Land Commission Act.
Amenities	Items that add to the physical, aesthetic, or functional appeal of a particular site, neighbourhood, or the community in general.
Approving Officer	A person appointed by Council under Section 77 of the "Land Title Act", responsible for the approval of subdivisions.
Asset Management	An integrated, lifecycle approach to effective stewardship of assets to maximize benefits, manage risk and provide satisfactory Levels of Service to the public in a sustainable manner.
Biodiversity	Biodiversity is a term used to describe the variety and variability of life on Earth. Biodiversity encompasses all living species and their relationships to each other. This includes the differences in genes, species and ecosystems.
Business Improvement Area	Business Improvement Area (BIA) is an area designated by municipal council in which businesses and property owners can finance effective marketing, promotional, and revitalization programs for the area. A BIA provides both the organized structure and the source of funds to enable local business communities to improve their commercial viability. Authority to create Business Improvement Areas is contained in the "Community Charter".
Canopy Cover	A measure of the extent of the urban forest based on the amount of ground covered by the foliage of trees when viewed from above.

Glossary

Capital Regional District	The provincially established federation of local governments and administrative districts providing services to the region.
Car Co-op	A system where a fleet of cars is made available for use by members of the car share group in a wide variety of ways.
Circular Economy	Minimizing waste and using waste as a resource (in contrast to a linear economy from production to use and disposal).
Climate Adaptation	Actions taken to help our community cope with or adjust to a changing climate.
Climate Change	Any long-term significant change in the “average weather” that a given region experiences. Average weather may include average temperature, precipitation and wind patterns. It involves changes in the variability or average state of the atmosphere over durations ranging from decades to millions of years. These changes can be caused by dynamic process on Earth (ocean processes, volcanoes), external forces including variations in sunlight intensity, and more recently by human activities.
Climate Mitigation	Actions taken to reduce climate change, primary by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
Community Amenity Contribution (CAC)	Amenity contributions offered by developers and agreed to by local governments, often but not exclusively as part of a rezoning process initiated by the developer. CACS typically include the provision of amenities, affordable housing, or financial contributions towards amenities, or some combination of these.
Daylighting	Restoring a watercourse that has been channelized and or contained within a pipe or man made structure, to its natural state.
Density	As defined in the “Local Government Act” S. 872: “the density of use of the land, parcel or area, or the density of use of any buildings and other structures located on the land or parcel, or in the area”
Density Bonus	An increase in the permitted number of dwelling units or gross floor area in return for the provision of certain amenities or affordable or special needs housing.
Development Cost Charge	A levy applied to new development to offset the long-term cost of providing new or extended services to the community.
Development Permit Area	An area designated pursuant to the “Local Government Act” where approval of a development permit is required before a building permit can be issued or a subdivision is approved with specified exemptions. Development Permit Areas may be established to: protect the natural environment and bio-diversity; protect development from hazardous conditions; revitalize designated commercial areas; guide the form and character of commercial, industrial, and multi-family development; and guide the form and character of intensive residential development or to protect farming.
Diversity	Creating an environment that embraces diversity (differences and similarities) and where everyone is made to feel welcome, invited to participate, valued, and respected for their contributions.

Glossary

Dwelling Unit	A self-contained set of habitable rooms with a separate entrance intended for year-round occupancy with complete living facilities for one or more persons, including provisions for living, sleeping, cooking, and sanitation.
Ecological Footprint	The ecological footprint is an estimate of how much biologically productive land and water area an individual or population needs to produce all the resources it consumes and to absorb the waste it generates. It is measured in global hectares (gha) per capita, where a global hectare is a biologically productive hectare with globally averaged productivity for a given year.
Ecosystem	A complete system of living organisms interacting with the soil, land, water, and nutrients that make up their environment. An ecosystem is the home of living things, including humans. It can be any size, but it always functions as a whole unit. Ecosystems are commonly described according to the major type of vegetation, for example, an old-growth forest or a grassland ecosystem.
Ecosystem Services	The many and varied benefits to humans provided by the natural environment and from healthy ecosystems. Carbon sequestration, recreation potential, water filtration, and pollination are all examples of ecosystem services.
Electric Mobility	The use of electric cars, electric bikes, electric scooters, electric skateboards, and other electric-powered machines to get around.
Embodied Emissions	The greenhouse gas emissions produced in creating and delivering a particular material (e.g., infrastructure or consumable goods), including the energy used for extraction of raw materials, manufacturing and transportation of the end product.
Environment	All the terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems and landscapes and their associated components, functions, and processes.
Environmental Impact Assessment	<p>A study undertaken to evaluate the impacts of a proposed development on the natural environment, including the following areas:</p> <p>Physical Environment – including soil erosion, agricultural capability, unstable slopes, streams, flooding, ground water, air quality, noise, contamination of land or water, storm water run-off and aesthetics.</p> <p>Biological Resources – including birds, mammals, food chain effects, vegetation, biological diversity, loss or reduction of habitat, rare or endangered species, and rare or representative ecosystems.</p>
Environmental and Social Review Process	The system of assessing an initiative in specified areas for the significance of its impacts.
Environmental Management System	Part of an organization's management system used to develop and implement its environmental policy and manage its environmental impacts. The overlying purpose of the system is to establish a commitment to pollution prevention, environmental regulatory compliance and continual improvement of environmental performance.

Glossary

Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESAs)	A term often used loosely to mean a site or area that has environmental attributes worthy of retention or special care. ESAs are important in the management of all landscapes and their functioning condition. ESAs range in size from small patches to extensive landscape features. They can include rare or common habitats, plants, and animals. ESAs require special management attention to protect fish and wildlife resources and other implicit natural systems or processes. They have also been broadly defined to include other scenic, historic, or cultural values, and may also include hazard lands.
Equity and Inclusion	Creating an equitable and inclusive community and addressing discrimination in all forms through shared responsibility. Inclusion is working together to create and sustain a welcoming place and community. Equity is about differences and similarities in organizations and communities to eliminate the privileges of dominant groups and removing discrimination in all forms through shared or collective responsibility and accountability for minority groups.
ESA Atlas	A series of maps published by the District of Saanich providing environmental information for new or revised bylaws, and ecological data for the development of new planning strategies.
Flex Housing	Flex Housing is a concept in housing that incorporates, at the design and construction stage, the ability to make future changes easily and with minimum expense, to meet the evolving needs of its occupants. The intention of Flex Housing is to allow homeowners to occupy a dwelling for longer periods of time, perhaps over their entire lifetimes, while adapting to changing circumstances and meeting a wide range of needs.
Floor Area Ratio (Floor Space Ratio)	The figure obtained when the total floor area of all floors in all buildings on a parcel is divided by the area of the parcel.
Food Security	Food Security exists when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious, affordable food to maintain a healthy and active life.
Granny Flat (Garden suite)	A detached suite on a single family lot, typically located above a garage or in an accessory building in the back yard.
Green Building	A systems approach to building design and construction that employs techniques that minimize environmental impacts and reduce ongoing energy consumption while contributing to the health and productivity of its occupants.
Green Infrastructure	A broad category that includes natural assets and designed and engineered elements that have been created to mimic natural functions and processes in the service of human interests.

Glossary

Greenhouse Gas (GHG)	Gases present in the atmosphere which reduce the Earth's loss of heat into space and therefore contribute to global temperatures through the greenhouse effect. Greenhouse gases are essential to maintaining the temperature of the Earth, however, an excess of greenhouse gases can raise the temperature of a planet to uninhabitable levels. Based on ice-core samples and records, current levels of CO ² are approximately 100 ppmv higher than during pre-industrial times, when direct human influence was negligible. Greenhouse gases include water vapour, carbon dioxide (CO ²), methane (CH ⁴), nitrous oxide (N ² O) and ozone.
Greenway	Linear green space corridors that connect natural areas and communities, associated with watercourses, trails, and transportation routes which provide wildlife habitat and increase recreational opportunities.
Green and Blue Spaces	Natural and semi-natural areas, both land and water, that are of ecological, scenic, renewable resource, outdoor recreation, and/or greenbelt value. These areas are considered to have high ecological and/or social value as green/blue spaces. Green/blue areas could include developed, partly developed, or undeveloped public and private land.
Healthy Communities	The Healthy Communities movement originated in Toronto in 1984, at an international conference on healthy public policy. The concept was first developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) through the European Healthy Cities Project, and has subsequently spread around the world. There is no "one size fits all" approach to creating a "healthy community." Each region has different characteristics and each community has a unique history of supporting collective health and well-being. However, experience both here in Canada and internationally has shown that there are four cornerstones for success: 1. Community Engagement; 2. Multi-Sectoral Partnerships; 3. Local Government Commitment; and 4. Healthy Public Policy.
Heritage Site	Properties and sites of historic, architectural, archaeological, palaeontological, or scenic significance to the Municipality, that may be designated under the "Local Government Act" or the "Heritage Conservation Act".
Home-Based Business	Any occupation or craft and the sale of the goods made on the same parcel where such activity is carried on as an accessory use in a dwelling or accessory building to the dwelling.
Housing Trust Fund	Established by the Capital Regional District Board in 2005, in recognition that housing affordability is a regional priority and key issue in the Capital Region. The fund provides capital for the acquisition, development, and retention of housing that is affordable to households with low or moderate incomes in the member municipalities.
Impervious surface	Any human-made graded, hardened surface covered with materials comprised of asphalt, concrete, masonry, or combinations thereof.
Infrastructure	The 'hard' services associated with development – e.g. roads, railways, storm drains, water, sewer, etc.
Infill Development	New construction or renovations which make use of vacant or underutilized parcels and which may be substantially different from the present or previous use of the parcel.
Intensive Agriculture / Intensive Farming	The industrialized production of animals (livestock, poultry and fish) and crops. The methods deployed are typically designed to produce the highest yield per hectare at the lowest cost; usually using economies of scale and modern technology.

Glossary

Invasive Species	Plants, animals, and micro-organisms that colonize and take over the habitats of native species. Most invasive species are also alien (non-native to the area) and can become dominant because the natural controls (e.g. predators and disease) that kept their populations in check in their native environment do not occur in their new location.
Landscaping	Any combination of trees, bushes, shrubs, plants, flowers, lawns, bark mulch, decorative boulders and gravel, decorative paving, planters, foundations and sculptures, decorative fences and the like, tastefully arranged and maintained to enhance and embellish the appearance of a property or, where necessary, to effectively screen a lot, site, or storage yard.
Living Wage	Living Wage is the amount of income an individual or family requires to meet their basic needs, to maintain a safe, decent standard of living in their communities, and to save for future needs and goals.
Mitigation	Measures taken during the planning, design, construction, and operation of works and development to alleviate potential adverse effects on natural habitats.
Mixed Use	Developments that combine residential, commercial, and other uses in the same building or development. Residences above shops and live-work residences are examples of mixed-use developments. Mixed-use developments enable people to live close to work and amenities.
Multi-Family Development	A complex containing three or more dwelling units on a lot, includes townhouses and apartments.
Multi-Modal Transportation	Linking together different forms of transportation, such as walking, cycling, transit, and vehicle travel, to move around the community safely and conveniently.
Natural Area	Any physical area that contains sufficient native species, ecological communities, or habitat features to support native biodiversity.
Natural Asset	Natural assets are the stock of natural resources or ecosystems that are relied upon, managed or could be managed by a local government for the provision of one or more services to a community.
Natural Environment	Natural and semi-natural areas, both land and water, that have ecological, scenic, renewable resource, outdoor recreation, and/or greenway value. The 'natural environment' may be within developed or undeveloped areas, whether publicly or privately owned, and not necessarily an undisturbed area.
Non-Market Housing	Housing designed for independent living by single persons or families who cannot afford to pay market rents or who have needs that are not being met by the market, and where the housing units are owned and operated by a government agency or a not-for-profit society and rents may be controlled by a housing agreement.
Open Space	Lands on which structures for residential, commercial, institutional, or industrial use are not located and are important to the community for their aesthetic, recreational, or ecological value. Lands may be in a 'natural' state (e.g. nature parks, reserves, or undevelopable lands such as flood plains, beaches, and wetlands) or 'developed' state (e.g., playing fields, boulevards, squares, plazas, and cemeteries). They may be in the public domain (e.g. municipal, regional, or provincial parks, roads, and pedestrian networks), or in the private domain (e.g. golf courses).

Glossary

Parkland Dedication	Under the <i>Local Government Act</i> , in some specific circumstances (e.g. on subdivision), the Municipality may require land owners to dedicate (give land) up to 5% of a parcel for park purposes when applying for subdivision of that parcel. In some cases, the Municipality may accept money in place of the parkland dedication required for the approval of subdivisions in accordance with the <i>Local Government Act</i> .
Park	Land that has a high capacity for active or passive recreation use and is potentially available for such use. Also includes land set aside for archaeological, historical or ecological purposes.
Primary Growth Area	Refers to the areas of the District where most of the its new housing and employment growth will be accommodated in vibrant walkable Centres and Villages linked by Corridors, frequent transit service, and All Ages and Abilities cycling infrastructure. These areas include a range of services, amenities, active transportation connections, and higher density housing and employment opportunities. More details on the different components of the Primary Growth Areas are outlined in Section 7 (Land Use).
Qualified Professional	An applied scientist or technologist, or a team thereof, specializing in a particular applied science or technology including, but not limited to, ecology, agronomy, biology, chemistry, engineering, geology or hydrogeology and, (a) who is a registered member in good standing in BC of the appropriate professional organization, is acting under that organization's Code of Ethics and is subject to disciplinary action by that organization, and (b) who, through suitable education, experience, accreditation and knowledge, may be reasonably relied on to provide advice only within his or her area of expertise, and (c) who carries sufficient Professional Liability Insurance and General Liability Insurance to defend any recommendations made to the Municipality in court and pay the fine if convicted, and (d) whose area of expertise is recognized in the assessment methods as one that is acceptable for the purpose of providing all or part of an assessment report in respect of that development proposal, and (e) is acting within that particular area of expertise.
Red and Blue Listed Species	<p>Red-listed species include any indigenous species, subspecies or plant community that is Extirpated, Endangered, or Threatened in BC. Extirpated species no longer exist in the wild in BC, but do occur elsewhere. Endangered species are facing imminent extirpation or extinction. Threatened species are likely to become endangered if limiting factors are not reversed.</p> <p>Blue-listed species include any native species, subspecies, or community that is considered to be Vulnerable (Special Concern) in BC. Vulnerable species are of special concern because of characteristics that make them particularly sensitive to human activities or natural events. Blue-listed species are at risk, but are not Extirpated, Endangered, or Threatened.</p>
Regional Context Statement	A statement included in a municipal official community plan, and accepted by the regional district board, that explains the relationship between the official community plan and the Regional Growth Strategy.
Regional Growth Strategy	A political agreement between a regional district and its member municipalities on social, economic, and environmental goals and priority actions, aimed at achieving a common vision of the region's future. A regional growth strategy expresses how communities have agreed to work together to enhance regional quality of life.

Glossary

Regional Urban Containment and Servicing Policy Area	Lands, at the date of the adoption of the Regional Growth Strategy bylaw, designated in official community plans primarily for urban development (including attached housing, detached and duplex housing, commercial, industrial, and large-scale institutional and utility designations). The Regional Growth Strategy proposes that the majority of future development that requires urban sanitary sewer and water services take place within this designated area. As such, the Regional Growth Strategy proposes no extension of urban-standard sanitary sewerage and water services beyond the boundary of this policy area except to address pressing public health and environmental issues, to provide fire suppression, or to service agriculture. Where expansion or increased capacity of existing sewer and water services is proposed beyond the RUCS boundary, member municipalities agree to comply with the requirements of the Master Implementation Agreement and to include guidelines for service expansion and extension in their Regional Context Statements.
Resilient Saanich	Saanich's process to develop an environmental policy framework to current policy gaps in natural environmental objectives by developing plans, policies, bylaws, and strategies to support the vision of an environmentally conscious future.
Restoration	Measures taken to re-establish habitat features, functions, and conditions damaged or destroyed by human or natural activities.
Riparian Area	The moist nutrient rich lands adjacent to streams. Riparian areas are transitional zones between aquatic and terrestrial (or upland) ecosystems and often exhibit vegetation characteristics of both; they are not as dry as upland environments and not as wet as aquatic or wetland systems.
Saanich Vision	Saanich is a sustainable community where a healthy natural environment is recognized as paramount for ensuring social well-being and economic vibrancy for current and future generations.
Secondary Suite/ Accessory Dwelling Unit	A second self-contained unit, typically in or attached to a single-family home or on the same parcel of land, smaller than the primary dwelling unit. Includes basement apartments, apartments in houses, accessory apartments, in-law suites, granny suites, nanny suites, and carriage houses. A secondary suite/accessory dwelling unit is intended for the use of a separate household and contains its own entrance, cooking facilities, and sanitary facilities.
Sense of Place	The essential character and spirit of an area. More specifically, characteristics which make a place special or unique and foster a sense of authentic human attachment and belonging.
Sewage Treatment	The primary, secondary, or tertiary treatment which purifies effluent. Primary treatment removes floating and suspended solids; secondary treatment uses biological methods to further purify sewage; and tertiary treatment removes all but a negligible portion of bacterial and organic matter.
Sewer Service Area	A line defining the area approved by Council to be serviced by municipal sewers.
Shelter Housing	Dormitory style housing intended to provide overnight accommodation, shower facilities and meals. Not intended as permanent housing but no maximum stay periods. Provides a variety of on site services and may also include off site services.

Glossary

Smart Growth	A collection of urban development strategies to reduce sprawl that are fiscally, environmentally, and socially responsible. Smart growth is development that enhances our quality of life, protects the environment, and uses tax revenues wisely.
Special Needs Housing	The residential use of a building constructed and/or managed specifically to accommodate persons with special needs including the elderly, or physically or mentally challenged.
Steep Slope Land	All lands with a slope greater than 30% for a continuous run of 6 metres or more.
Stewardship	Responsibility for the care and protection of resources so that they will be available to future generations.
Subdivision	As defined under the "Land Title Act" and/or the "Strata Property Act".
Supportive Housing	Designed to provide permanent housing. Self contained units with support services 24/7 supervision. Financial support provided. Residents may have minor mental or addiction problems requiring support.
Sustainability or Sustainable Development	The concept of meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Sustainability is based on the efficient and environmentally responsible use of natural, human, and economic resources, the creation of efficient infrastructures, and the enhancement of residents' quality of life.
Sustainable Agriculture	Sustainable agriculture enhances environmental quality and the resource base on which it depends; provides for basic human food and fiber needs; is economically viable; and enhances the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole over the longer term.
Sustainable Food System	A sustainable community food system is a collaborative network that integrates sustainable food production, processing, distribution, consumption and waste management in order to enhance the environmental, economic and social health of a particular place. Farmers, consumers and communities partner to create a more locally based, self-reliant food economy.
Sustainable Transportation	Travel modes with low to zero carbon emissions per person. These include public transit (transition to electric buses by 2030), electric car-share programs, electric micro mobility (e.g., e-bikes, e-kick-scooters), and active transportation including walking, biking, and rolling.
TDM	Transportation Demand Management (TDM) is the application of strategies and policies to influence traveler behavior with the aim of reducing automobile travel demand, as a means to save energy, reduce green house gas emissions, improve air quality, and reduce traffic congestion.
Traffic Calming	Aims to reduce vehicle speeds and/or traffic to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists, enhance quality of life for residents by reducing noise and air pollution, and recognize that streets have many social and recreational functions that can be impaired by car traffic. Examples include speed humps, lane narrowing, landscaping, chicanes, on-street parking, etc.
Transitional Housing	Single occupancy rooms with showers and microwaves. Longer term, but not permanent housing. Support services on site.

Glossary

Tree Equity	When all people experience the benefit of trees and the urban forest in proportion to their needs.
Universal Design	Universal Design (also called Inclusive Design, Accessible Design, or Accessibility) refers to facility designs that accommodate the widest range of potential users, including people with mobility and visual impairments (disabilities) and other special needs. Although Universal Design addresses the needs of people with disabilities, it is a comprehensive concept that can benefit all users. For example, people who are unusually short or tall, carrying packages, or pushing a cart, are not disabled, but their needs should be considered in facility design. Increased walkway widths, low-floor buses, and smooth walking surfaces improve convenience for all travellers, not just those with mobility impairments. Curb ramps are important for people using handcarts, scooters, baby strollers, and bicycles, as well as wheelchair users. Automatic door openers are another example of Universal Design features that can benefit many types of users.
Urban Containment Boundary	The line which separates urban from rural land uses.
Urban Forest	All trees within the District of Saanich, including those in private yards, public parks, conservation areas, boulevards, natural areas, and other locations in urban areas and Rural Saanich.
Vision Zero	An ambitious goal to eliminate all traffic injuries and fatalities while ensuring safe, healthy, and equitable mobility for all road users. This includes people who walk, ride a bike, take a bus or drive. Vision Zero recognizes that human error is inevitable and a systems-based approach to road safety (called a Safe-Systems approach) is needed.
Watercourse	A river, stream, creek, waterway, lagoon, lake, spring, swamp, marsh or other natural body of fresh water; or a canal, ditch, reservoir or other man-made surface feature in which water flows constantly, intermittently, or at any time.
Wayfinding	Wayfinding can be defined as spatial problem solving. It is knowing where you are in a building or an environment, knowing where your desired location is, and knowing how to get there from your present location. There are several elements that go into wayfinding, such as signage, architectural clues, lighting, and sight lines.
Wetland	Land that is inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and under normal conditions supports vegetation adapted for life in saturate soil conditions, including swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas.
Zero Waste	A philosophy and aspirational goal that envisions a point where nothing is wasted. It eliminates traditional concepts of managing waste materials and instead focuses on designing for the environment. It is intended as an approach to pursuing sustainability through circular economy, seeking to move materials from residual management through recovery, recycling, reuse and ultimately reduction.
Zoning	The zoning assigned to a property under the District of Saanich's Zoning Bylaw.





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