

COMMUNITY FOCUS

JANUARY 2004



NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR CENTRAL SAANICH RESIDENTS

GREETINGS FROM YOUR COUNCIL

We hope you had a wonderful holiday season and wish you health and prosperity in the year ahead. Our agenda is shaping up to be a busy one, and at the top of the list is concluding our budget planning for the District's Five Year Financial Plan. We also will be updating the District's Strategic Plan, which will help map out decision-making over the next year.

We were very pleased with the strong turnout at the District's second Town Hall meeting on Nov. 12. A wide variety of issues were discussed and we thank those who attended and contributed to this important community forum. Our thanks also to the District's town crier Allan Witcombe for the exuberant greeting he provides at our town hall meetings and other community events.

As we all know, hundreds of families in the Interior were forced to flee their homes last summer due to widespread fires. Heartfelt thanks to the District's heroic firefighters for helping combat the fires.

Congratulations to Peninsula Community Services for the successful art auction held in October for Brentwood House, the new assisted living housing complex for seniors. Thanks also to the local artists for their donations and to the volunteers, residents and business people for their support.

Our gratitude goes to The Butchart Gardens for their generous donation toward the cost of our first-time float in Sidney's Santa Claus parade and to the Saanichton Christmas Tree and Ostrich Farm for the festive greenery. Many thanks to the Public Works volunteers who built the float: Butch Chad, Norm Doerksen, Norm King, Randy Munro and Mark Verhagen.

CENTRAL SAANICH COUNCIL

BRENTWOOD BAY REVITALIZATION TAKES HOLD

Our community's vision is becoming a reality as a new look unfolds along Brentwood Bay's waterfront and in the village commercial core.

Thanks to new private sector investment, several major projects are nearing completion, including the Brentwood Bay Lodge waterfront resort; a mixed use residential and office building on West Saanich Rd. in the heart of the village; and Brentwood House, a housing complex for seniors on the edge of Brentwood Bay Village.

These projects all spell good news, and are in keeping with the Brentwood Bay Design Guidelines, adopted by Council in 2002, which set out parameters for redevelopment and new development in the core of Brentwood Bay and the Moodyville commercial area adjacent to the Brentwood ferry dock. Council is pleased that its support for new economic development has led to significant private sector

investment in Brentwood Bay. Here are some highlights from these exciting new developments:

- The Brentwood Bay Lodge replaces the former Brentwood Inn Resort, which was located on the property for over 70 years. The new facility is expected to generate more than 100 jobs and will be marketed as an eco-marine adventure resort.
- The mixed use residential and office project on West Saanich Rd. (midway between Verdier Ave. and Clarke Rd.) is the first new project of this nature to be built in Brentwood Bay's village core in more than a decade.
- The northern gateway to Brentwood Bay is now anchored by Brentwood House, an assisted living housing complex for seniors developed by Peninsula Community Services. Brentwood House is a welcome addition to the community, as it provides

DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY: FACTS & FIGURES

Central Saanich continues to have positive growth in private sector investment, outperforming almost all communities in the CRD. Building activity was up significantly in the District last year, especially in the commercial development category. Here is a breakdown on building permit activity:

- Central Saanich ranked second among all CRD municipalities in the value of commercial building permits for the January - June 2003 period, with \$8,470,000 worth of permits issued. This is nearly 65% higher than the value of commercial building permits issued in Saanich, the region's largest municipality.
- Central Saanich ranked third among CRD municipalities (excluding Victoria and Saanich) in the value of total building permits in the January - June 2003 period. Permits valued at \$20,449,000 represented a 162% increase over the previous year. This was a significant increase from the sixth place standing for the same period in 2002.

Source: Capital Region Trends, Oct. 2003

THIS NEWSLETTER IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY CENTRAL SAANICH COUNCIL

UPDATE ON PARKS, TRAILS AND GREEN SPACES

Footbridge funding enhances Adam Kerr Park

Adam Kerr Park, our little piece of paradise in the Keating business area that also serves as a major gateway to the community, got a boost with a \$10,000 donation from West Corporation. The funding is part of the District's community partnership "gifting program" with local businesses to assist in park development. The funds will be used to build a footbridge to span Sandhill Creek. Adjacent landowner Farmer Management also made a \$60,000 donation for improvements to the park in 2002.

The new footbridge will provide a connection between Adam Kerr Park and the adjacent Keating business area, perfect for lunch-time strolls. The bridge will also serve as a viewing platform overlooking a small pond and Sandhill Creek. This project complements the District's habitat restoration work in the park, which took place in 2002.

Construction of the new bridge has begun, and completion is planned for early 2004 if the weather cooperates. A dedication ceremony recognizing the generous support of West Corporation will follow. Council also appreciates very much the input and support the company has provided in attempting to address transportation issues on the busy Keating Cross Rd. corridor.

Planning underway for historic Newman farm

Preservation plans are in the works for the century-old Newman farm, which was donated to the District this year from the estate of John and Henry Newman.

The property was owned and occupied by the Newman family for over 100 years and offers a rare glimpse of turn-of-the-century farm life in Central Saanich.

Council is determining how to best manage and maintain the 16.5 acre property, which was officially transferred to the District in July.

The following short-term steps are proposed before a final management and maintenance plan is put in place:

- Conduct a structural assessment of the buildings to identify and estimate the cost of work required to stabilize and protect them from further deterioration. Repairs to be undertaken within limits of available funding.
- Ask the Royal British Columbia Museum to provide technical assistance with conservation measures.
- Begin documenting artifacts.
- Form a working group to assist the District with fundraising for initial conservation efforts.
- Actively pursue opportunities for external funding assistance for both operational and capital expenses.
- Continue networking with agencies and groups that can help support the conservation project.

Council is most grateful for this valuable donation from the Newman estate and welcomes contributions from residents and local businesses to assist with its conservation.

Head to the beach via Clarke Rd.

You'll have to wait until summer to have a swim, but there are plenty of sightseeing opportunities now at the refurbished Clarke Rd. beach access off Brentwood Dr. The improved beach access is now complete and Council held a dedication ceremony on October 16 to celebrate. The improvements include a well-marked trailhead, a new pathway, stone retaining wall and viewing area with two benches. A new set of stairs makes getting to the beach easy and the view over Brentwood Bay is, as always, spectacular.

CRD now in charge of animal control and pound-keeping services

As of January 1, 2004 the CRD has assumed responsibility for the District's animal control and pound-keeping from the SPCA. Dog owners are reminded to keep their canine companions on a leash while enjoying community streets and parks.



affordable housing for seniors right in our own backyard. The convenient location is within walking distance of the village's shops and cultural amenities.

- Plans are also underway to restore the historic schoolhouse in Pioneer Park. The Brentwood Bay Old School Hall Society is conducting a fundraising campaign to restore the school to its original condition. Known locally as the Scout/Guide Hall, the goal is to have the restoration completed by the school's 100th anniversary in 2008.

Extensive consultation with the public and local business owners in 2002 resulted in a vision for a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly village with a well-designed mix of commercial, residential and recreational facilities. To help achieve this vision, Council recently committed \$40,000 for detailed design drawings for a redesigned Brentwood Village streetscape along West Saanich Rd. between Wallace Dr. and Verdier Ave. Road improvements will also help address pedestrian safety concerns expressed by the community over the past several years.

Council looks forward to continued private sector investment in Brentwood Bay's village core and appreciates very much the work of the Brentwood Bay Revitalization Committee in both helping beautify the village core and sponsoring the many events and activities that enrich the community.

PENCILS SHARPENED FOR 2004 FINANCIAL PLAN

Budget time is fast approaching and work on the District's 2004 - 2008 Financial Plan is underway. Council is working hard to control expenditures while maintaining needed services in our community. Last year costs were trimmed to limit the tax increase to \$54.84 for the average residential property for the municipal portion of the property tax notice.

Interested in the budget process? Taxpayers are invited to attend Financial Plan meetings, held between January and May. Take a look and provide input at a public open house before the plan is adopted in May. Please check the events calendar at www.csaanich.ca for meeting dates and times.

TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS GET GO-AHEAD

Moving right along: Council has started planning a number of road and transportation projects, as recommended in the District's transportation planning study. Highlights include:

- Improvements to the West Saanich Rd. traffic corridor (Verdier Ave. to Wallace Dr.) will take place in 2005. \$40,000 has been committed to commence the detailed design drawings for this project in 2004.
- Bicycle routes and pedestrian facilities projects will be reviewed and policies adopted in 2004. Subject to more detailed budget deliberations in the Spring, Council has tentatively approved a \$50,000 annual allocation over a 20-year period for these projects.
- Council has endorsed proceeding further in 2004 with a possible heritage designation for Mt. Newton Cross Rd., including adoption of related heritage maintenance and construction standards.
- Sidewalk project for Wallace Dr. from Sluggett Rd. to the Brentwood Community Hall is planned to go ahead in 2005.
- East Saanich Rd. reconstruction project design work is projected for 2008 and construction in 2010.
- Council is also continuing to explore possible external sources of grant funding to permit the Lochside Trail (Mt. Newton North) bicycle path project to proceed as early as 2004.

NON PROFITS GET BOOST THROUGH TAX EXEMPTIONS

The quality of life for Central Saanich residents is enriched by a number of local non-profit organizations. To show its support and provide a financial helping hand, Council has granted property tax exemptions to eight non-profit community organizations this year: North & South Saanich Agricultural Society (partial tax exemption), Central Saanich Lions Club (property tax exemption for the "Lions Field" property), Central Saanich Lions Hall, Saanich Historical Artifacts Society, Brentwood Community Club, Centennial Park Fellowship Baptist Church, Central Saanich Seniors Centre, and Central Saanich Lawn Bowling Club.

REPORT ON PLANNING PROJECTS

THE SEEDS ARE PLANTED: AGRI-TOURISM TASK FORCE UNDERWAY

Agri-tourism is taking root in rural communities around the world, and Central Saanich now has its own Agri-Tourism Task Force dedicated to its cultivation.

The newly-appointed task force is studying the benefits of agri-tourism and the long-term sustainability of agriculture in the District. Members are also reviewing the new Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) regulations and their impact on local agri-tourism efforts.

Task force members are:

- Councillor Michele Haddon and Councillor Susan Mason, District of Central Saanich;
- John Currie and Jerry Mussio represent the residential community;
- Judi Sollid, Glen Pope and Malcolm Hatley represent the agricultural community;
- Grant Hilliard, Advisory Planning Commission;
- Phil Christensen, Peninsula Agricultural Commission;
- Joan Fleming, Direct Farm Marketing Association; and
- Carl Johnson, Saanich Peninsula Chamber of Commerce.

District staff and a Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries representative are also on the team, and an open house will be held this spring to gather public input. The task force will present a report to Council recommending definitions, zoning requirements, policies and other suggestions on the regulation of agri-

tourism in Central Saanich. A public hearing will be held before any new regulations are incorporated into the District's Land Use Bylaw.

If you have any questions or comments, contact any task force member.

COUNCIL COMMITS TO THE QUALITY OF LIFE CHALLENGE

Council has joined the Quality of Life Challenge, a growing movement to create affordable housing and sustainable incomes in the Capital Region.

What is the Quality of Life Challenge? It's a comprehensive community initiative led by the Community Social Planning Council of Greater Victoria, that brings people together to create solutions in the areas of housing, paid work and community connections.

Council is taking a lead role on some of the housing challenges, as we live in a region with low vacancy rates and high housing costs. Priority will be given to the not-for-profit sector for housing proposals that address the community's affordable housing needs through the creation of new affordable housing stock.

Council's commitment to affordable housing is consistent with the housing policies established in the Official Community Plan (OCP.) The District was recently recognized by the Community Social Planning Council as a leader in its support of affordable housing.

For more information about the Quality of Life Challenge visit www.qolchallenge.ca

DISTRICT TACKLES HWY 17 ACCESS ISSUES

Safe access to and from Hwy 17 is of vital importance to everyone living and working in the District. Council is actively working with the Ministry of Transportation on the Summer 2004 repaving program for Hwy 17 and has expressed its concern regarding the potential sale of lands adjacent to the highway and the impact this will have on future access improvement projects.

Council will continue to monitor the status of major highway improvement projects to ensure that good access is available for businesses in the Keating industrial area and that children who walk near Keating Elementary School are able to do so safely.

C O M M U N I T Y C A L E N D A R

Council Meetings Schedule

Regular Council meetings: 7 p.m. on the first and third Monday of the month. Regular Committee meetings: 7 p.m. on the second and fourth Monday of the month. The public is welcome to attend Council and committee meetings. An agenda package is available on the Friday before each meeting.

Museum Operating Hours

Central Saanich Volunteer Firefighters Historical Museum

Open for tours the last Saturday of each month from 1 to 4 p.m., 1903 Mount Newton Cross Rd., Saanichton.

Heritage Acres

Open daily September through May 9:30 a.m. – 12 noon; June through Labour Day weekend 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. 7321 Lochside Dr., Saanichton.

Saanich Pioneer Museum

Open every Monday and Saturday from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., 7900 East Saanich Rd., Saanichton.

Make sure Rover's legal

Dog licence renewals are in the mail and fees are due Jan. 31, 2004. A \$5 penalty will be applied to all overdue accounts. Please contact the Finance Department at 544-4205 for more information.

Plan ahead and prepay your taxes

Here's a handy tip: Taxpayers can earn interest on property tax prepayments made before March 31. For further information please call the Property Tax Department at 544-4205.

Save time with pre-authorized payments

Just a reminder that the District offers convenient pre-authorized payment programs for both property taxes and utility bill payments. Please call the Finance Department at 544-4205 for more information.

Annual flush coming up

Water mains and hydrants will be flushed from January through the end

of March. The water department advises that temporary discoloration of water and/or low water pressures may occur. The discoloration is not a health hazard. If you notice murky water from your taps, fill your laundry or bathtub and re-use the water for a non-drinking purpose such as watering plants. The department will provide advance notice of flushing on request to anyone with special requirements for water clarity. Flushing will not take place during freezing temperatures. Call 544-4224 for more information.

It'll be an egg-citing eggs-perience

The Easter Bunny extends an invitation to all local youngsters for the annual Easter Egg Hunt April 11 at Centennial Park. The hunt begins at 12 noon and three categories from small fry to age 12 can sign up. Spot two golden eggs and win a special prize! The popular event is sponsored by the Central Saanich Lions Club.



DISTRICT OF CENTRAL SAANICH

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Email: municipalhall@csaanich.ca Web site: www.csaanich.ca

COUNCIL

Mayor Allison Habkirk	Chair of Municipal Council and Central Saanich Police Board	652-9955
Councillors		
Christopher Graham	Administration and Finance Committee	652-2828
Michele Haddon	Parks and Facilities Committee	652-5727
Zeb King	Community and Protective Services Committee	652-4642
<i>(Municipal Hall office hours Monday 4:00 – 5:30 p.m.)</i>		
Rhonda Korol	Water and Waste Management Committee	652-0216
Susan Mason	Public Works, Transportation and Economic Development Committee	652-0783
Robert Thompson	Planning and Development Committee	652-4691

Visit www.csaanich.ca for additional committee, commission and board positions.

MUNICIPAL STAFF

Administrator	Gary C. Nason	544-4202
Municipal Clerk	Trish Flanders	544-4202
Director of Financial Services	Ed Sykora	544-4205
Municipal Engineer	Nirmal Bhattacharya	544-4210
Director of Planning and Building Services	Hope V. Burns	544-4209
Manager of Community Services	Bonnie McKenzie	544-4218
Fire Chief	Ron French	544-4227
Chief Constable	Paul Hames	652-4441

OTHER MUNICIPAL CONTACTS

General Information/Mayor's Office	652-4444
Building Inspections/Bylaw Enforcement	544-4217
Property Taxes/Accounts Payable	544-4205
Water/Sewer Billing	544-4206
Park Use Reservation	544-4218
Municipal Yard/Public Works - 1703 Keating Cross Road	
Public Services & Parks Maintenance	544-4224
After Hours Emergency	652-4441

EXPRESS YOURSELF!

What's on your mind? We want to hear from you if you have ideas, opinions or thoughts to share.

WRITE A LETTER TO MAYOR & COUNCIL

Letters addressed to Mayor Allison Habkirk and Council are included in the Council meeting agenda. You may also speak to your letter at the meeting. Send your letter by 12 noon on the Wednesday before a Council meeting. You can drop off your letter to the Municipal Hall, fax it to 652-0135 or email it to: municipalhall@csaanich.ca

CALL OR SEND US AN EMAIL

You're also welcome to call or e-mail Councillors directly regarding other District issues. See the adjacent column for phone numbers or send an email to: firstname.lastname@csaanich.ca

BRENTWOOD BAY – MILL BAY FERRY SCHEDULE

Enjoy the most beautiful shortcut on Vancouver Island!

Discount tickets (30% savings) available at Thrifty Foods and Payless gas stations.

Crossing Time: 25 min. Fares are payable in cash or travellers' cheques only. Commuter tickets are available.

Leave Brentwood Bay	Leave Mill Bay
* 7:30 am	* 8:05 am
8:40 am	3:00 pm
9:50 am	9:15 am
11:00 am	4:10 pm
1:15 pm	5:20 pm
	11:35 am
	6:30 pm
	1:50 pm

* DAILY EXCEPT SUNDAYS