



Strategic Plan

for the District of North Saanich

2009-2011

Updated February 20, 2011

Context

This Strategic Plan sets out Council's **focus and strategic priorities** for the next three years. We believe that the defined directions and priorities reflect the overall will of the community we serve; the Plan is based on many studies, plans, and public input opportunities over the years.

As we learn more from the community, our departments, Commissions and Committees the Strategic Plan will be enhanced and modified as required by Council. It will be reviewed and updated to ensure consistency with emerging plans and related strategic decision.

The Strategic Plan is in essence an “umbrella policy” that **sets the context** for all that we do and for more specific plans having to do with finance (e.g. 5 Year Financial Plan), land use, business plans (e.g. Solid Waste, Information Technology, Infrastructure, Parks), and departmental business plans. It also provides the basis for annual budget submissions. It is acknowledged that the Plan for the most part identifies new General Strategies and that the majority of the District's resources are devoted to its core services such as infrastructure maintenance, administration, planning etc. on an ongoing basis.

This is a Council-driven process and is supported by staff. It is a working document developed after input from each member of Council and senior management, a planning workshop held in January of the first year of a newly elected Council and workshops held annually in September during their term. This Plan was last revised in January 2011.



Our FOCUS

Vision

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

- that **rural, marine and cultural characteristics** are valued and maintained;
- the **agricultural community** is preserved and enhanced;
- the needs and priorities of our **community are supported**;
- the arts are supported;
- the community is **inclusive, accessible and culturally vibrant**;
- selected suitable, appropriately located **economic activity**;
- perceived **efficient levels of service** commensurate with appropriate taxation;
- protected **natural environments** and a demonstrated commitment to the preservation and enhancement of regionally significant green and blue spaces; and
- a **sustainable community** that plans for the potential impacts of climate change.

Mission

Leadership and good governance that protects the sustainability of our rural, marine, agricultural, cultural and environmental characteristics; and promotes and enhances the quality of life for current and future generations.

Our Core Services

We are committed to meet or exceed public expectations in each of the following service areas:

- governance leadership supported by volunteer Commissions/Committees and public consultation;
- heritage, arts and culture, community and agriculture planning and development;
- fire, police and emergency services;
- public works and engineering;
- parks, trails and preservation of green space;
- environmental stewardship and protection;
- joint recreation services with Peninsula Recreation Commission;
- accountable financial and administrative services with a focus on performance management across all functions; and
- effective communication with the public.

Values and Operating Philosophy

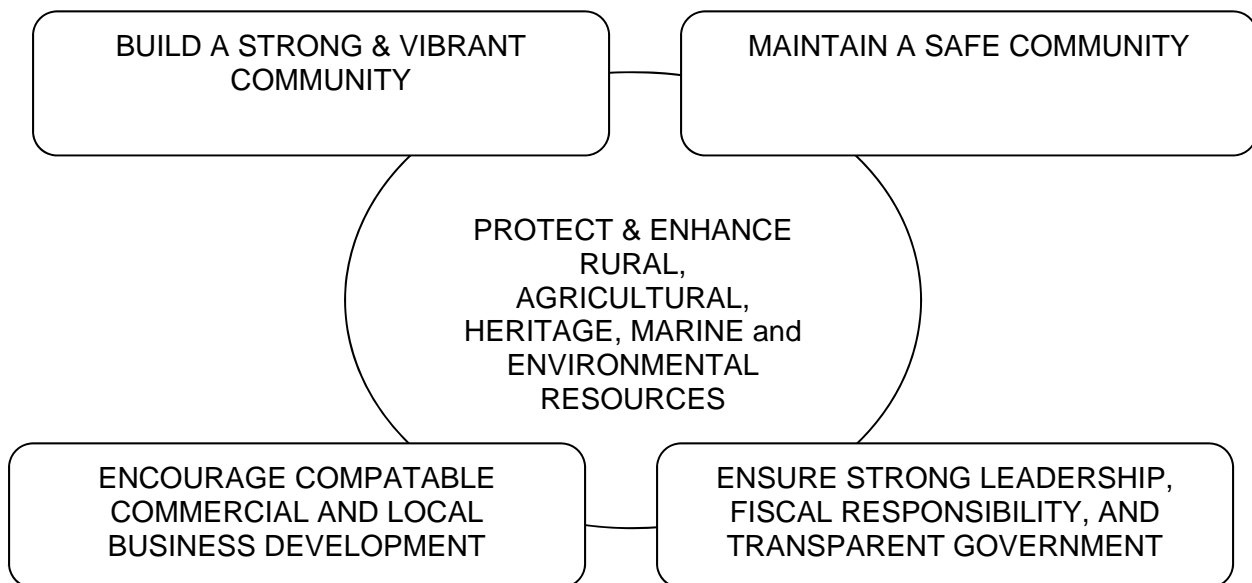
The District of North Saanich Council and staff will:

- be ethical, open, honest and fair;
- provide customer service excellence;
- collaborate as a strong team, supporting community initiatives and constructive relationships at the local and regional level;
- make decisions that reflect the overall will of our community;
- be consistent in application of policy, bylaws and regulations;
- be flexible, innovative and progressive in our efforts to improve results
- ensure outstanding stewardship of public assets and the environment; and
- be supportive of the community's strong volunteer ethic.

Our STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Strategic priorities are the **critical few** areas that must be addressed in the year or two ahead if we are to effectively respond to our mission and move towards our vision for the District. In selecting the five priorities, Council found itself focused on the need to demonstrate our commitment to our rural and marine character, the importance of building a strong sense of community, and the challenges of delivering quality services at a reasonable cost to the taxpayer.

Each priority is further explained on the following pages. The order of presentation is intended to suggest that protection of rural, marine and environmental characteristics is a top priority. The pages are updated as input from the community is received, department business plans completed, and related initiatives are completed.



These priorities are set in the context of the mandate provided to municipal or local government under the *Community Charter*.

Municipal Purposes

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

Strategic Priority #1:
***PROTECT AND ENHANCE RURAL, AGRICULTURAL, HERITAGE,
 MARINE and ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES***

North Saanich residents are proud and protective of their special place and unique environments. This strategic priority is clearly #1 for both Council and community. Through the Regional Growth Strategy, we join with the CRD and our local government neighbours to commit to the ‘conservation challenge.’ Over and above the green/blue spaces strategies to protect sensitive and significant land and marine environments, North Saanich is also determined to protect and enhance its rural, agricultural and heritage foundations and lifestyle. The District is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to address the climate change issue and will undertake necessary initiatives to achieve this goal.

<i>Desired Long Term Results</i>	<i>GENERAL STRATEGIES 2009-2011</i>
<i>Sensitive and significant environmental areas and ecosystems protected</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a process to identify sensitive and significant areas requiring protection • Ongoing application of Riparian Areas Regulation (BC Reg. 837/2004) to identify both streamside protection and enhancement areas and appropriate measures to protect these areas and fish habitat • Ongoing examination of the use of cosmetic pesticides and invasive species management options with CRD • Integrate OCP environmental policies with Development Approval Bylaw • Review environmental protection tools available to local governments and adopt those appropriate for DNS (Standard for Impact Assessment required) • Develop an action plan to address climate change
<i>The agricultural community preserved and enhanced</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Whole Community Agricultural Strategy • Identify a permanent site for a farm market and community garden



Strategic Priority #1:
Protect RURAL, AGRICULTURAL, HERITAGE, MARINE and ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES
(cont'd)

Desired Long Term Results	GENERAL STRATEGIES 2009-2011
<i>Sensitive marine and inter-tidal habitats preserved and protected</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish a Shoal Harbour Bird Sanctuary Task Force• Develop policies and criteria, in conjunction with the Parks Commission and the Parks Plan, that balance access/use and protection of the shoreline surrounding the District (a Provincial resource under the jurisdiction and control of Land and Water BC Inc.)• Prepare clear policies to guide marine and shoreline development
<i>District and Regional Trail System facilitates enhanced access to and enjoyment of natural and rural assets</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commitment to completion of the many connector, beach accesses, trails, and signage projects in the North Saanich Parks Commission Five-Year Capital Plan• Develop a Parks Master Plan and related budgets
<i>Significant cultural and heritage features and landscapes protected</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assist the Parks Commission in the development of a Parks Master Plan• Develop the Hospital Hill heritage information kiosk



Strategic Priority #2:
MAINTAIN A SAFE COMMUNITY

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

<i>Desired Long Term Results</i>	<i>GENERAL STRATEGIES 2009-2011</i>
<i>Reduction of public and/or environmental health risk related to water and waste management practices</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a regular inspection and maintenance, upgrading or replacement schedule for on-site disposal systems to eliminate health or environmental impacts on ground/surface water • Develop a watershed master plan including storm drainage systems and outfalls
<i>Loss of life and property minimized</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with RCMP to improve incident response time and continue focus on early intervention, community policing and public involvement in prevention and restorative justice. May require reallocation of existing resources (e.g. consider possibility of a storefront community police office, increased support for bylaw enforcement challenges). RCMP storefront community police office to be located in Wain Road Fire Hall. • Conduct tender process and construct Fire Hall • Update OCP interface fire policy. • Review cycling plan.
<i>Reduction in accident rates on municipal arterial roads</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify high incident locations and develop appropriate traffic management responses
<i>Active/healthy lifestyles encouraged and supported</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing improvements to roads, bike paths, pedestrian and trail systems to support ‘people powered’ travel with the District (fitness and environmental benefits)

Strategic Priority #3:

ENCOURAGE COMPATIBLE COMMERCIAL AND LOCAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

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

<i>Desired Long Term Results</i>	<i>GENERAL STRATEGIES 2009-2011</i>
<i>An operating environment supportive of local business</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to develop a competitive commercial tax rate based on the analysis and recommendations contained in the 2005 Financial Forecast review (Sussex Report)• Evaluate impact of current tax policy and establish long term tax rate policy.
<i>Selected economic development consistent with the Official Community Plan supported</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop and implement a 10 Year Economic Development Strategy and include business (agriculture, home based and conventional) attraction and retention strategies
<i>A vibrant and sustainable agricultural economy advanced</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop and implement Agriculture Strategy
<i>Home occupations compatible with neighbourhoods.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish a home-based business policy; update Home Business (Permit) Bylaw


Strategic Priority #4:
BUILD A STRONG & VIBRANT COMMUNITY

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

<i>Desired Long Term Results</i>	<i>GENERAL STRATEGIES 2009-2011</i>
<i>A strong sense of pride, identity and belonging in North Saanich</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a North Saanich brand (look, tag line, common symbols) based on the community vision and then use it consistently to reinforce a common image for our community (e.g. new design for the District's letterhead and business cards incorporating the flag) • Create community events to bring us together in celebration of the unique and special place that we share (e.g. North Saanich Days) • Enhance the District website to provide links to community information and activities • Establish a permanent farmers market
<i>Recognize and respect the diversity of neighbourhoods within our municipality.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define our neighbourhoods and design processes that give each a strong voice in community decision-making • Reinstitute neighbourhood meetings
<i>Encourage and support an active volunteer community committed to improving quality of life in North Saanich</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institute annual volunteer orientation. • Ongoing support for non-profit groups that operate at both neighbourhood and community levels in North Saanich through such programs as the District Grant-in-Aid policy • Establish policies and practices that encourage appropriate participation/feedback and dialogue with established neighbourhood and community organizations
<i>Housing policies that support local and regional initiatives implemented</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review options for secondary suites

Strategic Priority #5:
***ENSURE STRONG LEADERSHIP, FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY, and
 TRANSPARENT GOVERNMENT***

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

Desired Long Term Results	GENERAL STRATEGIES 2009-2011
<p><i>A focused, efficient and effective municipal corporation where staff implement the vision, plans, and priorities of both Council and the community</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued development of the Performance Planning and Appraisal Development Program which was established in 2004 to ensure enhancements in employee performance with measurable outcomes <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>
<p><i>Effective governance and leadership promoted and practiced</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint youth representatives to our commissions. • Partner with School District 63 in local government education • Continue development of First Nations Relationships • Updating of policies such as the “Public Involvement Handbook” to guide public participation and involvement in decision making. • Ongoing commitment to evidence-based, informed decision-making • Develop a comprehensive Communication Strategy (Internal and external)
<p><i>Improved relations with First Nations</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold Community to Community (C₂C) meetings • Define the role of the council liaison • Initiate discussions regarding communication protocols

