



# PART 1 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

This OCP is the culmination of more than five years of creative and inspiring engagement with over 2,000 touchpoints with Sooke residents representing diverse ages and backgrounds.

It paints a powerful picture of what Sooke will be like in 15 years and the steps that will be taken to get there.

As well, the plan sets the stage for the continued evolution of Sooke to 2050 and beyond, recognizing that climate change, inequity, housing affordability, community well-being, and ongoing relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples require a commitment to long-term action.

## 1.1 PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

### What is an OCP, who is it for, and why is it important?

This Official Community Plan (OCP) is for everyone with a stake in Sooke's future. It is a plan for children and elders, and everyone in-between. It is for residents whose ancestors have been here since Time Immemorial, and for residents who will some day move or be born here. It is a plan for residents who own homes and those who rent them, as well as residents who do not yet have homes at all. This plan is for developers and business owners, and for employers and employees. This document is for everyone because it will shape Sooke in a way that touches the lives of all people, as well as the ecosystems of which we are a part.

At its heart, this OCP is about managing land use and the physical growth of our community. It guides the location, type, and intensity of homes, businesses and industry, agriculture, and parks and other public spaces. As a result, this OCP influences transportation choices, housing affordability and options, community character, protection of ecological and agricultural areas, resource management, economic vitality, and financial costs associated with paying for District services such as pipes and streets.

An Official Community Plan (OCP) is an optional bylaw, prepared and adopted in compliance with the provincial Local Government Act. This is a long-range policy plan that will guide the District's decision-making related to growth and development until 2050. Changes to the Local Government Act adopted in 2023 now require municipalities to review their OCPs and Housing Needs Reports on a five-year cycle, to ensure OCPs meet anticipated housing needs over a 5- and 20- year period.

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# Who uses it and how?

An OCP is an overarching policy document for the District of Sooke, owned and implemented by all departments. It provides guidance for Council and staff, who consider and apply OCP directions and policies to a wide range of municipal decisions such as budgeting, servicing, capital projects, and in the review of land use and development proposals. The OCP is implemented by the District through ongoing planning, decision-making, on-the-ground action, and partnerships. Its implementation also relies on annual resourcing, monitoring, and reporting on progress.

Municipal partners and stakeholders play vital roles in the OCP's implementation. This includes residents, landowners, and businesses who reference the OCP when making property and investment decisions. School districts, agencies, and community organizations rely on the OCP to guide facility planning and delivery of programs and services.

This Plan is intended to continue building a culture of holistic growth management. It addresses important inter-departmental issues in an integrated way and with a shared definition of success, as defined by the vision and goals set out in this Plan.

# What is its reach?

The OCP applies to the entire municipal area within the District of Sooke and supports areas of mutual understanding between the District of Sooke and T'Sou-ke Nation.

While many voices contributed to the vision and directions contained in this document, the OCP cannot and does not represent any commitments from First Nations, other governments, or organizations to act according to community objectives.

The OCP is not intended to provide highly detailed policies on topics like financing, transportation, parks, infrastructure, buildings, and ecological protection. Rather, those detailed policies are contained within the District's other plans and bylaws and taken into consideration with the financial plan. However, as the District's umbrella document, all other District plans, strategies, and bylaws enacted, and works undertaken must be consistent with this OCP.

## OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

The OCP is a long-range planning document that strategically manages growth. The OCP defines policies for current land use and development, as well as addresses the needs of the future. Through Development Permit Areas, the OCP also provides guidelines for new buildings and subdivisions in specific areas. The guidelines provide direction for form and character, environmental protection, hazardous areas, energy and water conservation, and greenhouse gas reduction.



## ZONING BYLAW

The Zoning Bylaw is a regulatory tool that is very specific about land use, density, where buildings are located on lots and how much lot they cover, and other issues such as landscaping.

For instance, the OCP will say "this block is designated for medium density residential use" where the Zoning Bylaw will say that a building on that specific lot will be 3 storeys tall and cover no more than 50% of the lot, and will regulate required setbacks from property lines and permitted density. The Zoning Bylaw falls under the umbrella of the OCP and therefore must be consistent with it.

## 1.2 COMMUNITY CONTEXT

### Working Together

The District of Sooke will strive to collaborate and partner with T'Sou-ke Nation, Sc'ianew First Nation, the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC), provincial ministries, federal departments, Island Health, Sooke District #62, the District of Metchosin, the Capital Regional District and all other necessary agencies and groups to support reconciliation, efficient infrastructure and transportation systems, high-quality and **affordable housing**, healthy and sustainable communities and a thriving economy.

### Partnership with T'Sou-ke Nation

Through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) created in 2007 between the District of Sooke and T'Sou-ke Nation, the two governments have formalized a desire to establish a government-to-government relationship of mutual respect and cooperation.

The boundaries of the District of Sooke include lands that either form the T'Sou-ke Nation traditional territory or potential treaty settlement lands. The T'Sou-ke Nation and the District of Sooke each have distinct governance authorities and responsibilities towards their residents and members.

Through the MoU, the District and T'Sou-ke Nation commit to working together on specific areas of mutual interest including:

- Provision of services
- Land use planning and development
- Heritage sites and cultural protection
- Shared and cross-boundary issues
- Shared services
- Economic opportunities

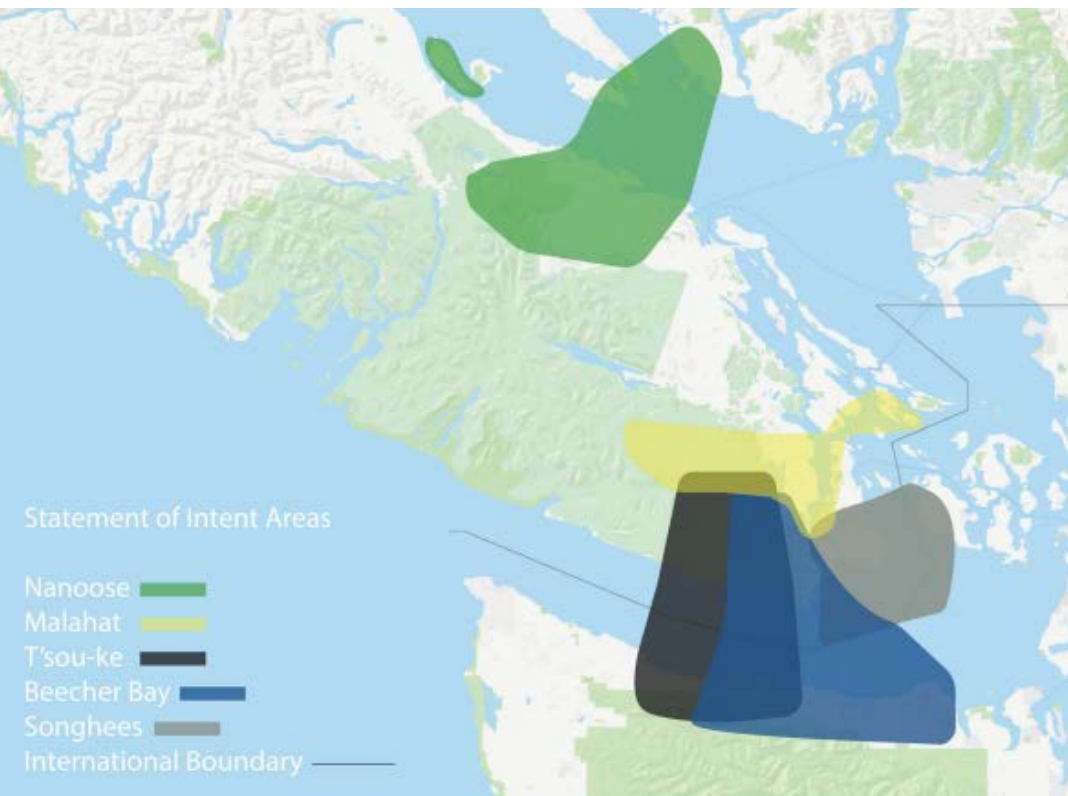


## Te'mexw Treaty Association

From the Te'mexw Treaty Association Website: <https://temexw.org/>

Te'mexw Treaty Association is a non-profit society formed of five Coast Salish Nations - Beecher Bay (Sc'ianew), Malahat, Snaw-Naw-As, Songhees and T'Sou-ke. The Te'mexw five member Nations joined to support one another and to work together under one organization to negotiate five Nation-specific modern treaties with the federal and provincial governments in the British Columbia treaty process.

The Te'mexw Treaty Association (TTA) opened its doors and filed its Statement of Intent in 1994. The negotiations are in stage five of the six-stage process to finalize treaties. Each of the member nations will vote on its own treaty and constitution. The treaties being negotiated on by TTA on behalf of the member Nations and the provincial and federal governments deal with a wide range of issues that include governance, land, harvesting, resources, and fiscal matters. The TTA negotiations are making steady progress and have successfully resolved a number of complex issues.



**Figure 1.** Map of Statement of Intent Areas. Credit: Te'mexw Treaty Association.



## Regional Context

The District of Sooke is within the Capital Regional District (CRD). The CRD delivers regional, sub-regional and local services to respond to community needs. The District of Sooke's OCP must align with the CRD's Regional Growth Strategy.

The CRD was originally formed in 1966 as a federation of 7 municipalities and 5 electoral areas. Today, the CRD is a federation of 13 municipalities that are located on the southern tip of Vancouver Island: Central Saanich, Colwood, Esquimalt, Highlands, Langford, Metchosin, North Saanich, Oak Bay, Saanich, Sidney, Sooke, Victoria, and View Royal.

Included in this federation are also 3 electoral areas, including Juan de Fuca, Southern Gulf Islands, and Salt Spring Island. The CRD provides regional governance and services for the entire Capital Region, such as distributing water supply, disposing of sewage and managing garbage and recycling. The CRD also creates partnerships between a combination of member municipalities and electoral areas for services or projects that are specific to only a portion of the region.

### In Sooke, CRD Services include:

- Regional water
- Regional parks
- SEAPARC
- Animal control
- Stormwater quality management
- Fire dispatch

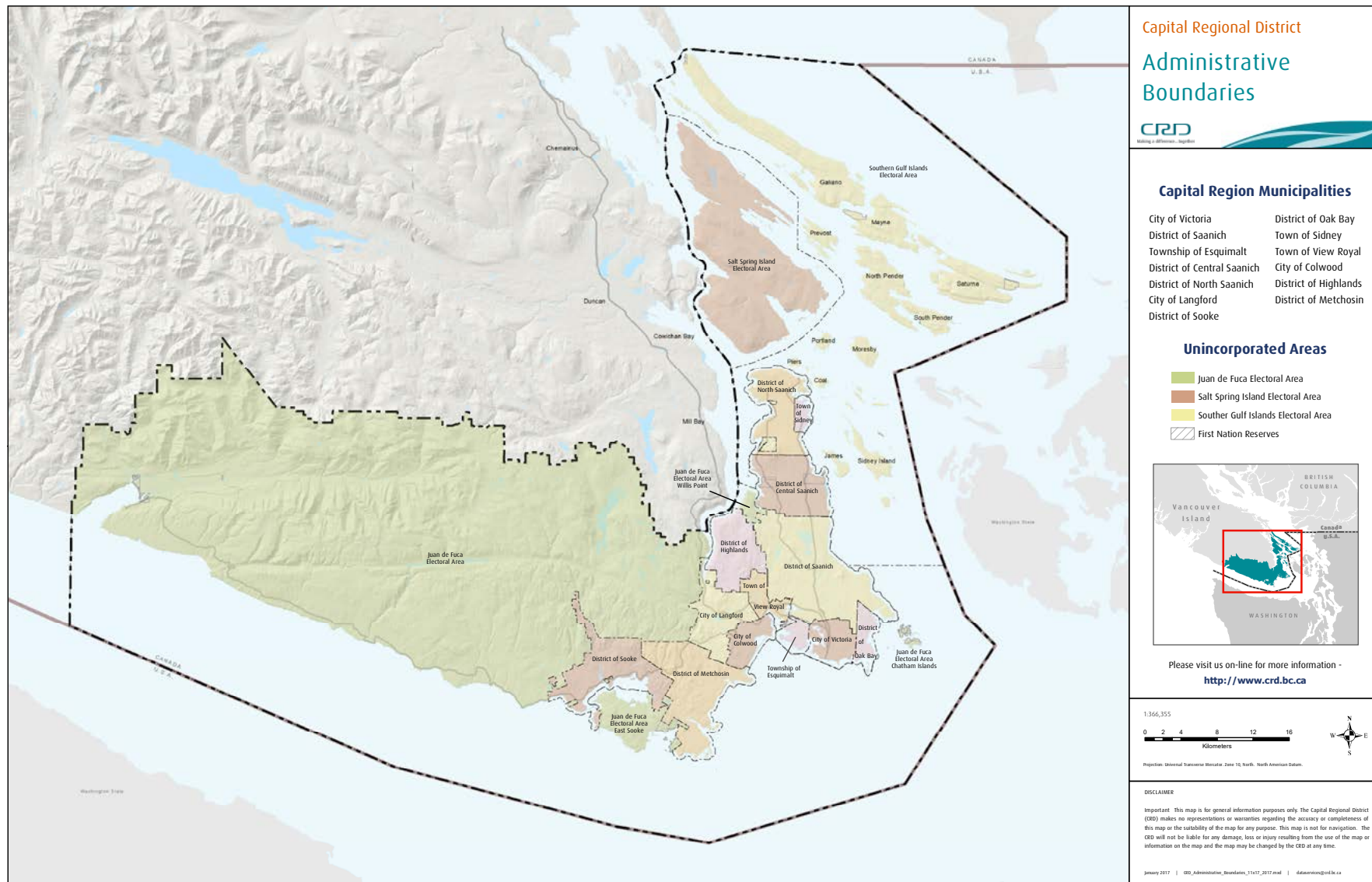


Figure 2. Capital Regional District Administrative Boundaries | Source: CRD.

## Historical Context

The land upon which Sooke has been established has been stewarded by the T'Sou-ke and Sc'ianew Peoples since Time Immemorial. In the SENĆOTEN language, the word "T'Sou-ke" (pronounced Tsa-awk) is the name of the stickleback fish that lives in the estuary of the river. The word "Sc'ianew" (pronounced CHEA-nuh) translates from the Klallum language as "the place of the big fish". These names reflect the richness of the land and waters that have sustained Indigenous communities.

When the Hudson's Bay Company's fur trading fort was established at Camosun (now Victoria) in 1843, European immigration and land acquisition followed. The Colony of Vancouver Island was established in 1849.

The first independent settler to purchase land in the new colony of Vancouver's Island, at Sooke Harbour in 1849, was Captain Walter Colquhoun Grant. Grant's property was eventually sold to John Muir who, along with his wife Anne and their four sons and daughter, had significant impact on the development of the area. The Muirs had a steam sawmill operating by 1855, established a productive farm, and built a number of ocean-going vessels. People from the T'Sou-ke worked at the sawmill, at the barrel stave production, and at gathering bark for the tanning industry.

During the early 1900s, the vast rainforest in the area's watersheds attracted the interest of far-off businessmen, and the logging of the Douglas-fir, Western redcedar, Sitka spruce, and hemlock began in earnest. Leechtown was a thriving logging community through the 1940s and 1950s, but it was slowly abandoned and little remains today.



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Muir's Sooke Sawmill



In July of 1864, gold was discovered on a tributary of the Sooke River by Lieutenant Peter John Leech. In recognition of his discovery, the river was named Leech River. Miners flocked to the area. By the end of the year, over 1,200 miners, and several thousand other people were living and working in the area, eventually named Leechtown. The gold rush reached its peak only a year later. Mining activity gradually declined over the following decade and the economy transitioned to forestry.

In 1902, the Canadian government permitted canneries to construct commercial fish traps along southern Vancouver Island, while banning fish traps designed and used by Indigenous peoples. Commercial fish trapping became the mainstay of Sooke's economy. By mid-century, fleets of independent fishing boats overtook the monopoly of the fish traps industry. Salmon continue to be a prominent piece of Sooke identity through recreation fishing and The Jack Brooks Hatchery, which began operating in 1981, and its successor, the Sooke River Jack Brooks Hatchery, which opened in 2020.

The arrival of World War I renewed an interest in mining in the region, as copper ore was required for smelting and use in manufacturing munitions and electrical components.

Although resource extraction no longer dominates Sooke's local economy, the legacy of colonization, logging, and commercial fishing is present in Sooke's urban structure, architectural character and understanding of heritage today.

Local residents have played a significant role in building the community. For example, in 1933 as a response to the economic crisis of the Depression and to stimulate interest in the community, a picnic was held on Sooke Flats to celebrate the progress of Sooke. Later this would become known as All Sooke Day. Its success prompted the formation of the Sooke Community Association. All Sooke Day expanded to include a wide variety of activities related to logging and drew participants and visitors from the entire Pacific Northwest.

The Sooke Region Museum and Information Centre currently depicts the rich history of Sooke and the surrounding region using exhibits, photos and outdoor reconstructions, tracing the region's history from its wildlife to Nations and pioneer settlement. Sooke's oldest standing pioneer home, Moss Cottage, has been reconstructed on the museum grounds.

While several incorporation studies had taken place since 1963, it was only in 1999 that the residents of the District of Sooke voted to become a municipality and, upon incorporation, elected their first Mayor and Council. This first Council began the ongoing task of establishing bylaws and policies to plan for the community's future and for the provision of services.

Since incorporation, the District of Sooke has received several requests from neighbouring property owners to be included within the municipality. Accordingly, through the boundary extension process, these properties are now included in the District of Sooke. Notable incorporations include the Silver Spray neighbourhood (2004) and west-east District boundary extension (2006).

## Climate

Climatic conditions influence our understanding of land use, transportation and built form needs. The climate of the District is characterized as a warm-summer Mediterranean climate according to the Köppen-Geiger classification system. Spring, fall, and winter seasons are wet, with high levels of precipitation mainly in the form of rain (snow is infrequent but more common at higher elevations). Summers tend to be dry, and average yearly precipitation levels for the past 30 years have been above 1400mm. Temperatures historically average between 4.3°C in December and 14.6°C in August. Climate change has changed these normals with longer, hotter summers showing less precipitation, and winters characterized by higher temperatures and more varied storm occurrences.

### Impact of Climate Change

As we plan for the future, we must consider the impacts of a changing climate. We are already experiencing these changes. Climate change modeling estimates a median increase of 1.55°C to the annual mean temperature in Sooke by 2050, relative to the 1993-2013 climate period. Extreme heat days above 30°C are anticipated to be more frequent, from less than 1 day per year, to 2-3 days per year. This is accompanied by a 9-14% increase in annual precipitation, which brings anticipated sea-level rise and increased risk of overland flooding, although dry spells are expected to increase. Annual snowfall in the region is expected to decrease substantially, resulting in a significantly reduced winter snow pack.

Seasonally, monthly temperatures are anticipated to increase for all months of the year. Winter precipitation is expected to increase, while summer precipitation is expected to decline, increasing drought and fire risk. The impacts of climate change are already being felt on Southern Vancouver Island with extreme events including wildfires, “heat dome” heat waves, and heavy rainfall, which led to a washout of Highway 14, all impacting Sooke in recent years.

	Historical (1983-2013)	Low Warming (2050)	High Warming (2050)
		Ensemble Median RCP4.5	Ensemble Median RCP8.5
<b>Growing Degree Days (above 10C)</b>	650.78	1006	1114
<b>Frost Days</b>	28.83	11	10
<b>Heating Degree Days</b>	3137.63	2528	2404
<b>Mean Temp (deg C)</b>	9.45	11	11
<b>Days above 30C</b>	0.59	2	3
<b>Total precipitation (mm)</b>	1312	1430	1491

**Table 1.** Summary of projected climate change for District of Sooke. Data Source: Climate Atlas of Canada. Sooke Climate Data.

The District of Sooke and its elected Councils have the ability to challenge, reject, and re-envision these projections.

## Population and Demographics

The provisions of policy in the past may not align with the needs of the community today, or in the future. For this reason, our understanding of present and future populations is critical. The District of Sooke had an estimated population of 15,086 as of the 2021 Statistics Canada Census with an average age of 41.4. By 2050, the population is expected to grow at an estimated annual rate of 2.9% to reach a total of 19,511 by 2030, 25,698 by 2040, and 34,561 by 2050.

The population is expected to continue aging, with substantial growth among those aged 65 and over. Although the entire province is expected to age during the projection period, it is expected that Sooke will continue to have a slightly older average age and decreasing working age population ratio when compared to larger urban centres on Vancouver Island, such as Victoria and Nanaimo, which consistently attract a younger demographic due to more employment, housing and education opportunities.

Sooke is experiencing a slowly increasing reliance on in-migration, primarily from other areas of the Province, as well as a small amount of immigration of those born outside of Canada.

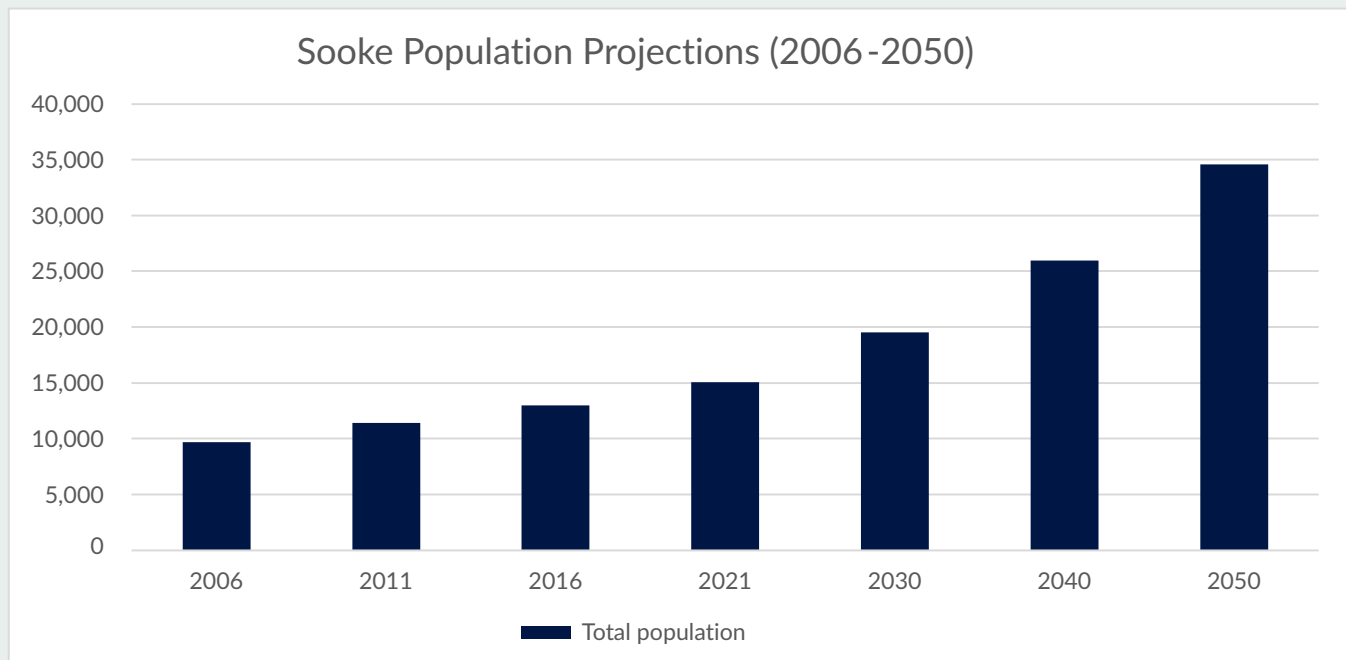


Figure 3. Sooke Population Projections (2006-2050), Colliers international

## Employment

Where people work influences how much investment occurs within the community and how people move. Sooke is expected to continue being a tertiary employment market consisting primarily of locally serving industries. This is evident from the high proportion of jobs in the public administration (12.3%), retail trade (12.1%), and health care and social assistance (11.5%) sectors. Many of these jobs exist outside of Sooke, with 63.8% of working residents commuting outside of the District for employment as per the 2021 Census.

Under the assumption that the participation rate and unemployment rate will remain relatively steady over the life of this OCP, 80 new jobs per year are expected within the District of Sooke.

Sooke Housing Statistics (2021 Census)				
Structure Type	Total	Owners	Renters	Average Value
<b>Occupied Private Dwellings</b>	6130	4925	1205	\$618,500
<b>Single-Detached House</b>	3820	n/a	n/a	\$628,000
<b>Semi-Detached House</b>	465	n/a	n/a	\$581,000
<b>Row House</b>	335	n/a	n/a	\$596,000
<b>Apartment, Duplex</b>	720	n/a	n/a	\$896,000
<b>Apartment Less Than 5 Storeys</b>	410	n/a	n/a	\$496,000
<b>Apartment Greater Than 5 Storeys</b>	20	n/a	n/a	\$631,000
<b>Other Single-Attached House</b>	10	n/a	n/a	\$615,500
<b>Movable Dwelling</b>	355	n/a	n/a	\$175,400
Period of Construction	Total	%		
<b>1960 or Before</b>	440	7%		
<b>1961 to 1980</b>	1485	24%		
<b>1981 to 1990</b>	745	12%		
<b>1991 to 2000</b>	740	12%		
<b>2001 to 2005</b>	430	7%		
<b>2006 to 2010</b>	740	12%		
<b>2011 to 2016</b>	710	12%		
<b>2016 to 2021</b>	840	14%		
Condition of Dwelling	Total	%		
<b>Only Regular Maintenance and Minor Repairs Needed</b>	5850	95%		
<b>Needs Major Repairs</b>	280	5%		

Table 2. Sooke Housing Statistics (2021 Census).



## Housing

There was a total of approximately 6,130 dwelling units within Sooke at the time of the last Census (2021). 80% were owned and 20% were rented. The large majority (62%) of homes were in the form of single-detached houses, 7% were in apartments of under five storeys, 5% were townhouses, 8% were duplexes, and 12% were **secondary suites**.

### Housing Needs

The 2024 interim **Housing Needs Report** projects the number of units needed in Sooke for 5- and 20-Year periods, starting in 2021 per the Province's prescribed housing needs methodology. As shown in **Table 3**, it is anticipated that the District will require a total of 1,430 new units of housing by the year 2026. Over 70% of these units (1,017.82) are required to accommodate anticipated growth in the community. It is anticipated that this trend will continue moving forward to 2041, with over 65% (3,164.99) of the necessary 4,737 units required to accommodate potential growth. The Report projects that local demand within the community for different types of housing will also be a factor when considering Sooke's housing needs.

The District will need to consider strategies for ensuring sufficient and adequate housing is available for those experiencing Extreme Core Housing Need<sup>1</sup>. ~5% and 6% of the total units required by 2026 and 2041 respectively (71.25 and 285 units) will need to be allocated for this purpose. Further, it is anticipated that approximately 2% of units in both the 5- and 20-year periods will be necessary to accommodate those experiencing homelessness (37.68 and 75.37 units).

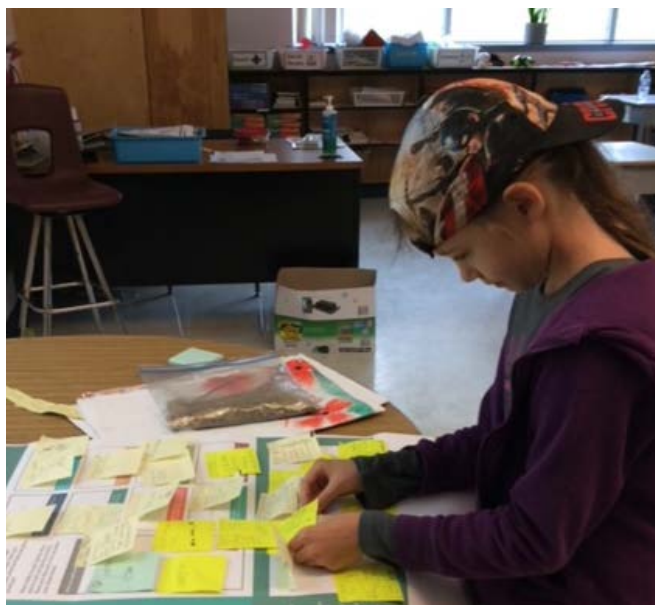
Sooke 5- and 20-Year Housing Needs		
Component	5-Year Need (2021 – 2026)	20-Year Need (2021 – 2041)
Extreme Core Housing Need	71.25	285
Persons Experiencing Homelessness	37.68	75.37
Suppressed Household Formation	83.89	335.55
Anticipated Growth	1,017.82	3164.99
Rental Vacancy Rate Adjustment	5.04	20.16
Additional Local Demand	214.06	856.24
<b>Total New Units - 5 Years</b>	<b>1,430</b>	
<b>Total New Units - 20 Years</b>		<b>4,737</b>

**Table 3.** Sooke 5- and 20-Year Housing Needs

<sup>1</sup> Extreme Core Housing Need is defined as those households with shelter costs greater than 50% of total before-tax household income in the Housing Needs Report Regulation.

## 1.3 BROAD COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

OCPs have a tremendous impact on the future of a community. Too often they feel inaccessible to community members and an OCP's role in one's day-to-day life is unclear. Through the engagement process, it was our ambition to highlight how an OCP is a useful and relevant tool for everyone it impacts. Engagement activities welcomed the imagination and creativity of all community members, stakeholders and, partners with the goal of creating an OCP document that is reflective of and responsive to current and future Sooke residents' unique needs and ambitions. This engagement occurred at community events, local schools including John Muir Elementary, École Poirier Elementary and Edward Milne Community School, parks such as Whiffin Spit and John Phillips Memorial Park, Broomhill Playground, and local businesses including coffee shops and grocery stores.



John Muir Elementary School



The Stick in the Mud Coffeehouse



Celebrate Sooke! community event







## Picture Sooke

The engagement process was given the name Picture Sooke as an invitation to residents to envisage the character of the community that the OCP should support. Community feedback was foundational to creating this document; the outcomes of each engagement milestone were combined with technical analysis to build out the Plan. The engagement events started by exploring vision and goals, then where and how Sooke might accommodate population growth, and finally reviewing the land use and policy directions of the draft OCP.

The engagement process took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, a time when individuals and communities were finding new ways to stay connected. Communications efforts and engagement activities were adaptive to public health protocols to keep residents involved throughout the process. Hundreds of residents provided their feedback through many avenues: online surveys; in-person sounding boards; school newsletters; print surveys; postcards, and more. Participation cut across age groups, gender representation, ethnic backgrounds, income groups, and represented people who live, work, study, and/or own a business in Sooke.

In 2023, Council paused the OCP process to allow for a comprehensive review and to integrate new provincial housing requirements under *Bill 44 – Housing Statutes (Residential Development) Amendment Act, 2023*. The *Final Frame* engagement, held in summer 2025, marked the culmination of this work. Residents were invited to review the clean draft of OCP Bylaw No. 800 and confirm that the revisions reflected community values and Council direction. Through open houses, pop-ups, an online survey, and meetings with the development community, participants provided focused input on housing, growth management, and environmental protection. Feedback informed the final refinements to the plan, ensuring it meets legislative requirements and remains grounded in Sooke's vision for sustainable growth.

## A Shared Community Vision

Strong themes emerged from the community input. While there were many different views, as is the case in any engagement process, consistent themes transcended engagement activities and demographic groups. These themes are the building blocks of the vision, goals, and objectives in this Plan.

# 1.4 REGIONAL CONTEXT STATEMENT

## Alignment with the CRD Regional Growth Strategy

The CRD's Regional Growth Strategy (2018) provides a framework for future decision-making, and sets basic direction for regional planning, policies, and action.

The vision for the CRD is as follows:

*In 2038, Capital Regional District residents enjoy a healthy and rewarding quality of life. We have a vital economy, livable communities, and steward our environment and natural resources with care. Our choices reflect our commitment to collective action on climate change.*

*The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) is intended to realize the region's vision, through the commitment of the CRD, the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area, and local governments to guide growth and change toward common objectives.*

This OCP helps meet this vision and is in accordance with the RGS' growth management policies and regional objectives as described in **Table 4: Alignment with the CRD Regional Growth Strategy**.



**Table 4.** Alignment with the CRD Regional Growth Strategy

## CRD REGIONAL OBJECTIVES

## OCP OBJECTIVES AND KEY POLICY DIRECTIONS

Significantly reduce community-based greenhouse gas emissions.	<p>This OCP includes the following targets: a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) by 2030 and net-zero GHGs by 2050. Policies for transportation, infrastructure, green buildings, land use, and other realms provide the means to achieve those targets in addition to guidelines established within Development Permit Areas.</p>
Keep urban settlement compact.	<p>This OCP focuses all residential and commercial growth within the Community Growth Area, which falls entirely inside the CRD's Urban Containment Boundary (UCB) which contains 38% of the land base for targeted growth.</p> <p>The primary focus of major commercial and residential growth – including the District's highest density residential development – will be in the Town Centre-Core and Town Centre-Waterfront, which are classified as part of a CRD Subregional Node.</p> <p>Overall, a higher proportion of multi-unit homes including apartments, townhouses, and duplexes will be supported by this OCP, reducing pressures on outlying areas and improving housing choice within Sooke.</p> <p>This OCP's policies contribute to supporting the RGS target of locating a minimum of 95% of the region's new dwelling units within the Urban Containment Policy Area by 2038 and it is projected that Sooke will contribute approximately 18% of growth in the Westshore-Sooke growth projections by 2038, as outlined in the RGS.</p>
Protect the integrity of rural communities.	<p>To preserve Sooke's rural community, around 62% of the District's land base is located outside of the CGA boundary in the form of park, farmland and rural residential properties.</p> <p>The Town Centre-Core and Town Centre-Waterfront has been planned as a hub for a large regional population, and aspires to provide more services, employment and amenities to the community. The rural and agricultural character of lands outside the CGA is protected by a specific OCP policy requiring a 4-hectare minimum lot size for rural residential density. Strengthening the character, quality, and economic viability of rural lands and agricultural lands is further supported by general policies in this OCP and in Sooke's 2012 Agricultural Plan. These policies are consistent with the Rural/Residential Policy Area policies of the RGS.</p> <p>Employment Lands outside of the OCP Community Growth Area will be rural in nature, will not require sewer servicing and will act as a local community node, and align with the RGS rural/rural residential land use designation.</p>

## CRD REGIONAL OBJECTIVES

## OCP OBJECTIVES AND KEY POLICY DIRECTIONS

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Protect, conserve, and manage ecosystem health.

Regionally significant parks identified in this OCP include the Sea to Sea, Ayum Creek, Sooke Potholes, Sooke River Regional Park, Roche Cove and the Galloping Goose. To ensure protection, the OCP designates Capital Green Lands and the CRD Sea to Sea green/blue belt as 'Park'. Specific actions and general objectives in the OCP support the District working with the CRD to discuss regional park land acquisition and regional/local trail network construction. For improved human health and healthy ecosystems, Sooke's Parks & Trails Master Plan and general policies in the OCP support park space, bicycle, and trail network connections.

This OCP has multiple Development Permit Areas through which natural environmental features and their associated lands are protected. Minimizing the impact on the natural environment and designing development to prevent pollutants from entering into any water system is supported by specific policies in this OCP. Sooke's Liquid Waste Management Plan is an integral part of the environmental remediation and protection of Sooke Harbour and Basin, terrestrial, fresh water, and marine environments. These land use planning mechanisms are used to contribute towards meeting the RGS targets to complete the Regional Trail Network and reduce contaminants to fresh and marine waterbodies.

Land use and growth management policies direct compact growth in existing urban areas, protecting "Renewable Resource Lands" and other natural areas from development.

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## CRD REGIONAL OBJECTIVES

## OCP OBJECTIVES AND KEY POLICY DIRECTIONS

### Manage Regional Infrastructure Services Sustainably

Access to clean, safe drinking water to all residents within the District of Sooke is a long-term intention of the OCP to address environmental issues, fire suppression, agricultural sustainability, and public health.

The extension of sewers throughout the CGA to protect the environment is encouraged. Sooke's primary population growth will be within the CGA. To help utilize infrastructure more efficiently to support the promotion of settlement patterns that are cost-effective, efficient to service, and minimize negative financial impacts to those currently serviced, this OCP includes specific policies that direct new residential development to existing areas and within the boundaries of the CGA, keep urban areas compact, and support mixed-use development.

A holistic decision-making approach will be taken when making infrastructure investments, accounting for full lifecycle costs and impacts related to public health and safety, energy and emissions, climate change **resilience**, environmental responsibility, and economic and **asset management** efficiencies, and more. New service systems will be considered as part of managed growth to new undeveloped areas. The bulk of population growth will be accommodated within the Town Centre where services currently exist and the focus will be on capacity to accommodate that growth.

### Create safe and complete communities.

Diverse housing options – including types and tenures – for diverse needs and demographics are enabled and encouraged through growth management land use policies. Land use designations within Sooke's CGA are consistent with the RGS "Complete Communities Criteria" with policies that project an estimated 50% of new residential and commercial growth in the Town Centre-Core and Town Centre-Waterfront, and specific policies that support small scale commercial nodes served well by transit, major roads, and trails.

Transportation policies support this OCP's goal of "creating a safe and resilient community for all" through an enhanced pedestrian network, all ages and abilities cycling facilities, and overall improvements to **multi-modal** traffic safety.

This OCP's Development Permit Areas, **Zoning Bylaw** No. 600 and Sooke's Floodplain Regulation Bylaw support the protection of development from **steep slopes** and areas prone to flooding.

Improve housing affordability.

Housing affordability will be enhanced through District incentives, initiatives, and partnerships. This OCP includes a key policy direction to set targets for **affordable housing** units based on the current rates of owners and tenants paying 30 percent or more of their household income on shelter.

Direction is also provided for supporting choices across the housing spectrum, including **non-market housing**, market-rate housing, rental housing, supportive housing, seniors housing, accessible housing, and family-friendly housing.

Increase transportation choice.

Transportation decisions related to investment, space allocation, and improvements will be based on the following priority mode hierarchy: walking/rolling, cycling, public transit, goods movement, multi-occupant vehicles, and single-occupant vehicles.

Policies for compact growth management and **complete streets** support transportation demand management and enable transportation choices – namely active modes and transit use – and safe, comfortable, operation conditions for all travel modes.

Growth management and land use policies support greater densities and mixes of uses in the Town Centre-Core and Town Centre-Waterfront, thereby supporting more employment opportunities within Sooke to reduce the high number of residents that commute out of the community.

The climate impacts of the transportation sector will be further minimized through expansion of the public EV charging network, and through support and encouragement of electric vehicle uptake.

Strengthen the regional economy.

A diverse, thriving and equitable local economy that respects ecological limits will be encouraged. Improvements to civic infrastructure and services will aim to attract, support, and maintain jobs and local economic activity, while economic development will be aligned with climate and equity goals. This OCP includes general and specific policies to support a diversified local economy through encouraging low impact tourism, industrial, renewable energy opportunities, businesses supportive of climate action, value added forestry, fishing and agriculture, and home-based businesses.

Economic development relationships and networks will be prioritized, including with T'Sou-ke Nation and other Indigenous peoples. Economic development direction will be sought from a diversity of perspectives, including private, non-profit, government, Indigenous, and **equity-seeking groups**.



Foster a resilient food and agriculture system.

A goal of this OCP is to foster a sustainable food culture that is rooted in historical and T'Sou-ke Nation knowledge, viable local production, and environmental stewardship. A key objective in the OCP is to preserve and use agricultural lands. With 531.3 hectares in the ALR, Sooke has roughly 3.1 % of the region's ALR lands. Specific policies included in this OCP, Sooke's 2012 Agricultural Plan and Sooke's 2008 Sustainable Development Strategy support protection of food production land, buffering of agricultural uses from non-agricultural properties, and linking food security with economic development.

OCP objectives backing the OCP goal of supporting and enjoying local food include: protecting food production and agricultural lands; working with Indigenous community members to support **food sovereignty**, and to protect and restore access to traditional foods and food harvesting; providing opportunities for people to experience the growing, preparing, sharing, and celebration of food; and supporting agri-food businesses to contribute significantly to the local economy.





Sooke is cradled in the stunning beauty and vitality of the ocean and forest and at its heart: its people.