



DISTRICT OF HIGHLANDS

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

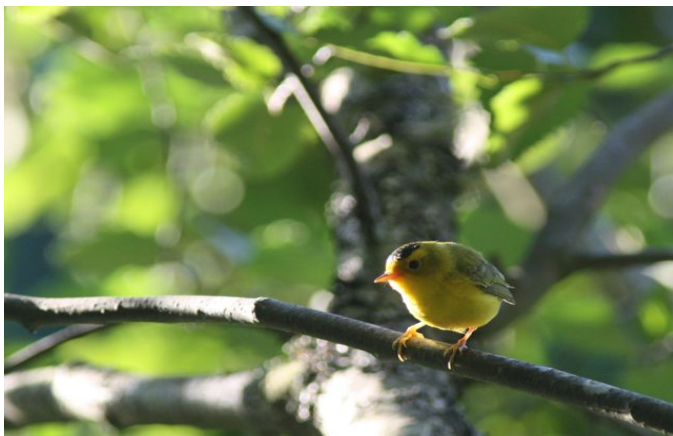
For the Year Ended December 31, 2020



We acknowledge that we are gathered in the traditional territories of the Lək'wəṇən, SENĆOTEN and Hul'q'umi'num speaking First Nations with whom we are committed to building stronger working relationships.



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Back Cover Photo Credit: David Brown

HIGHLANDS VISION AND MISSION

VISION

The following vision is stated in the District of Highlands' Official Community Plan:

The Highlands is a primarily residential community, rural in nature, and blessed with an exceptional abundance of scenic beauty, native plant and animal life, and public parkland. Those of us who live here place high value on the natural environment and our rural lifestyle. Highlanders are actively involved in the community, which fosters a spirit that is both self-reliant and cooperative.

The Highlands will strive to diversify its economy while preserving our natural systems, including the aquifers on which we depend so heavily. Land use decisions will be guided by a community plan, with the ongoing involvement of residents.

As stewards of our unique natural environment, we will protect its integrity. We will retain sufficient lands in their natural state to permit a diversity of plant and animal life to flourish and to ensure that the rural lifestyle we enjoy today can be experienced by future generations. We believe in the value of open and green space, trail systems, and outdoor recreational opportunities, both to enhance life in the Highlands and to contribute to the well-being of Southern Vancouver Island as a whole.

We will provide for an adequate tax base, including light industrial, related commercial and nature-related recreational uses in some areas of the Highlands, in order to support basic, affordable municipal services and facilities. We will encourage alternative transportation choices, housing choices, and a community hall.

New development in the Highlands will be in keeping with the rural character of the community and carefully designed to protect sensitive environmental conditions. The pace of change should be gradual and the type of development should leave a small footprint on the land.

MISSION

The District of Highlands provides good governance, services, stewardship of public assets, and fosters the economic, social and environmental well-being of the community for current and future generations. (Community Charter, Section 7)



COMMUNITY PROFILE

The District of Highlands is located just northwest of Victoria, British Columbia Canada. It is one of 13 member municipalities comprising the Capital Regional District. More than one-third of the Highlands is protected as municipal, regional, and provincial parkland. Highlands is a beautiful rural residential area and residents are actively involved in the community.

Incorporated December 7, 1993	Total Population 2,225*	Average Citizen Age 42.3 years*
Total Land Area 3,745 Ha	Total Park Space 1,478 Ha	Roads 46 km
Heritage Registry 5 Structures 3 Natural Areas 1 Road	Total 2020 Building Permit Revenue \$37,685	Total 2020 Construction Values \$1,752,650

* Statistics from 2016 Canada Census

CONNECT WITH US

In Person	1980 Millstream Rd, Highlands, BC, V9B 6H1 Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30 am - 4:00 pm (except statutory holidays) *By appointment only until further notice during the COVID-19 pandemic*	
Website	www.highlands.ca	
Telephone	General Inquiries: Fire Non-Emergency: Police Non-Emergency: Parks & Recreation:	250-474-1773 250-920-6970 250-474-2264 250-478-8384
Email	General: Staff Directory:	info@highlands.ca www.highlands.ca/201/contact
Newsletter	Highlands Council & Community Newsletter	www.highlands.ca/189/Newsletters
Meetings	Council: Committee of the Whole: Select Committees:	Meeting schedules, agendas & minutes are available online: www.highlands.ca/agendacenter

COVID-19 TIMELINE HIGHLIGHTS

January

- Jan. 28: First presumptive positive case of COVID-19 is announced in B.C.

March

- Mar. 15: District of Highlands activates its Emergency Operations Centre
- Mar. 16: Access to the District Office restricted to appointments only
- Mar. 18: B.C. declares a provincial state of emergency for the COVID-19 pandemic
- Council suspends regular meeting schedule

May

- May 19: B.C. announces moving to Phase 2 of its restart plan

June

- Jun. 1: Schools re-open for in-class instruction under new COVID-19 protocols
- Jun. 24: B.C. enters Phase 3 of its restart plan

September/October

- Sep. 7: Council resumes regular meeting schedule; COTW and Select Committees to meet as required
- Oct. 19: B.C. announces second wave of the pandemic as cases continue to rise

November

- Nov. 7: Social gatherings with people outside of the household prohibited
- Nov. 10: Highlands receives \$897,000 through the provincial Safe Restart Grant
- Nov. 19: Public health orders extended through the holiday season
- Nov. 27: Masks become mandatory

December

- Dec. 7: Provincial restrictions extended to Jan. 8
- Dec. 9: First COVID-19 vaccine approved for use in Canada from Pfizer-BioNTech

COMMUNITY EVENTS



Several filming productions occurred throughout the year at Caleb Pike Heritage Park and public and private locations around the District. COVID Safety Plans were required to proceed with these projects.



Highlands District Community Association modified the annual Highlands Fling activities to provide some community spirit and connection while complying with the public health orders in place.



The Community Gardens maintained operations with COVID safety protocols in place.



The annual Poppy Flag Raising Ceremony was held in compliance with public health orders.

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Mayor Ken Williams



Mayor Ken Williams is serving his second term as Mayor, and has previously served three terms as Councillor. He was first elected to Council in 2006.

Appointments:

Capital Regional District Board
Capital Regional District Finance Committee
Capital Regional District Planning and Protective Services Committee
Capital Regional District Municipal Finance Authority Representative
Capital Regional Hospital District Board
Highlands Emergency Planning Committee
South Island Prosperity Partnership Representative
Te'mexw Treat Advisory Committee

At the beginning of 2020, we ushered in a new year and a new decade. Within a few months, COVID-19 had arrived, upending our lives by creating uncertainty and challenges that we don't typically experience.

Your staff and Council acted quickly by adopting new protocols and guidelines, keeping municipal services and business safe and on track. From the outset of a turbulent year, it became clear that our citizens were dedicated to working together for the best outcome. Council and community groups helped show the way by moving meetings to virtual settings and continuing to address the business arising. Highlanders adapted quickly and exhibited a "can-do" spirit as we did our best under provincial restrictions and health orders.

In January, two items were added to our Strategic Plan at the Annual Review: a Climate Plan contract with Pinna Sustainability Inc. and a review of the Firearms and Bow Hunting Bylaw No.145.

In February, the South Highlands Local Area Plan Task Force began their work on defining boundaries, table of contents, and the public engagement process. A West Shore Parks and Recreation Governance Agreement was passed launching a new era in the operation and management of the JDF facilities.

In Spring, the budget and 2020-2024 Five Year Financial Plan process was completed with a 2 % increase to the average residential property, a 1% decrease over the previous year due to the financial challenges our community was experiencing caused by COVID-19. A movie production began shooting at the Caleb Pike House; a process that would continue with multiple film productions over the year.

Throughout the Summer and Fall, substantial work was done on municipal roads and culverts as part of the District's Asset Management Plan. Community aquifers delineation and mapping work commenced. The HDCA kept the spirit of the Highlands Fling alive by hosting roadside events respecting Dr. Bonnie Henry's guidelines. CREST installed a new tower so the fire, police, and ambulance services can more easily communicate.

During 2020, Provincial, Regional, and District parks in Highlands saw a significant increase in use by our regional neighbours eager to escape the restrictions imposed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff increased monitoring and bylaw enforcement in response to traffic, parking, and proper use concerns in and around these parks.

On behalf of Council, I am tremendously proud of our staff, firefighters, community groups, volunteers, and indeed all Highlanders for their efforts in these challenging times. We are grateful to you beyond measure and we always know we can count on the spirit of this special community to carry us through this present storm to sunnier days ahead.

Mayor Ken Williams

HIGHLANDS COUNCIL 2018 - 2022



Left to Right: Councillor Ann Baird, Councillor Leslie Anderson, Councillor Karel Roessingh, Councillor Marcie McLean, Mayor Ken Williams, Councillor Rose Stanton, Councillor Gord Baird (photo from 2019)

Highlands Council consists of a Mayor and six Councillors who are elected to four year terms. The current municipal Council was acclaimed October 20, 2018 and sworn in at the Inaugural Council Meeting held November 5, 2018. General local elections are held every four years. The next election is scheduled to be held October 15, 2022.

Council is responsible for establishing priorities and policies that serve the interests of both current and future Highlands residents. Mayor and Council work to make governance decisions that demonstrate local government leadership on matters within their jurisdiction as provided for by the Provincial Government through the *Community Charter* and the *Local Government Act*.

In addition to their Council duties, Council members may also participate in District and regional committees, boards, and advisory bodies to provide input and direction on local and regional matters.

Council generally meets on the first and third Monday of the month and sits as Committee of the Whole on the second Monday with some exceptions as reflected in the annual meeting schedule. Meetings normally start at 7 p.m. and are held at the School House, 1589 Millstream Road, unless otherwise noted.

CONNECT WITH HIGHLANDS COUNCIL

Council Member	Email	Telephone
Mayor Ken Williams	kwilliams@highlands.ca	250-882-5481
Councillor Leslie Anderson	leslie@corvidconsulting@gmail.com	778-350-8180
Councillor Ann Baird	ann@eco-sense.ca	250-812-5481
Councillor Gord Baird	gord.baird@gmail.com	250-818-7986
Councillor Marcie McLean	marciemclean@shaw.ca	250-474-4725
Councillor Karel Roessingh	karel@roessong.com	250-727-9808
Councillor Rose Stanton	rose26@telus.net	250-474-3403

HIGHLANDS COUNCIL PROFILE

Councillor Leslie Anderson



Councillor Anderson is serving her second term as Councillor. She was elected to Council in 2014.

Appointments:

Highlands Emergency Planning Committee
South Highlands Local Area Plan Task Force
West Shore Parks and Recreation Society Board
Western Communities Policing Advisory Committee
Capital Region Emergency Service Telecommunications (Alternate)
Co-existing with Carnivores Alliance (Alternate)
Greater Victoria Family Court Committee (Alternate)
Te'mexw Treaty Advisory Committee (Alternate)

Councillor Ann Baird



Councillor A. Baird is serving her second term as Councillor. She was elected to Council in 2014.

Appointments:

Capital Regional District Climate Action Committee
Capital Regional District Housing Regional Trust Fund Commission
Highlands Social Sustainability Select Committee (Alternate)
Capital Region Emergency Services Telecommunications (Alternate)
South Island Prosperity Partnership (Alternate)

Councillor Gord Baird



Councillor G. Baird is serving his second term as Councillor. He was elected to Council in 2014.

Appointments:

Capital Regional District Regional Water Supply Commission
Capital Regional District Juan de Fuca Water Distribution Commission
Capital Regional District Climate Action Committee (Alternate)
Highlands Emergency Planning Committee (Alternate)
Highlands Sustainable Land Use Select Committee (Alternate)



HIGHLANDS COUNCIL PROFILE

Councillor Marcie McLean



Councillor McLean is serving her fourth term as Councillor. She was elected to Council in 2008.

Appointments:

Co-existing with Carnivores Alliance
Greater Victoria Family Court and Youth Justice Committee
Intermunicipal Advisory Committee on Disability Issues
Highlands Sustainable Land Use Select Committee
Highlands Heritage Select Committee (Alternate)
South Highlands Local Area Plan Task Force (Alternate)
West Shore Parks and Recreation Society Board (Alternate)

Councillor Karel Roessingh



Councillor Roessingh is serving his seventh term. He was first elected to Council in 1993 and has previously served two terms as Mayor (1999-2002, 2002-2005) and six terms as Councillor (1993-1996, 2008-2011, 2011-2014, 2014-2018, 2018-2022).

Appointments:

Capital Regional District Arts Commission
Capital Region Emergency Services Telecommunications (Vice-Chair)
Greater Victoria Public Library Board
Capital Regional District Board & Hospital District Board (Alternate Director)
Capital Regional District Housing Regional Trust Fund Commission (Alternate)
Capital Regional District Regional Water Supply Commission (Alternate)
Capital Regional District Juan de Fuca Water Distribution Commission (Alternate)

Councillor Rose Stanton



Councillor Stanton is serving her first term as Councillor. She was elected to Council in 2018.

Appointments:

Highlands Emergency Planning Committee
Highlands Social Sustainability Select Committee
Intermunicipal Advisory Committee on Disability Issues (Alternate)
Western Communities Policing Advisory Committee (Alternate)



Notify Me®
Sign up to receive
notifications

You will not miss a meeting or Highlands event by using the “Notify Me” function on the District’s website. You simply sign up for items such as: agendas, minutes, news alerts, and events posted to the community calendar and an alert will be directed to either your cell phone or email informing you of the new item. Sign up by visiting www.highlands.ca.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Council's Strategic Plan 2019 – 2022 is guided by the Official Community Plan (OCP) and the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) that provide a long-term vision and pathway for Council's decision making.

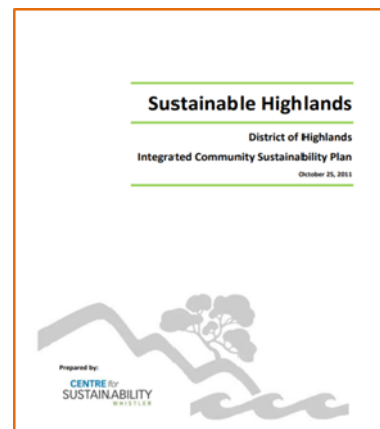
Strategic Plan 2019—2022



Official Community Plan (OCP)



Integrated Community Sustainability Plan



The Strategic Plan outlines the priorities for the Council term. These Council identified initiatives are undertaken by staff in addition to the delivery of core services and regulatory obligations. Timelines for completion of priorities are developed in consideration of departmental work plans and planned initiatives are funded through the annual budget process.

The Plan is reviewed annually to ensure progress is achieved, changing circumstances are responded to, and opportunities are considered. The financial implications of the strategic priorities are reviewed in conjunction with the District's annual and longer-term financial planning process.

Council identified five overarching goals or areas of strategic focus for the 2019-2022 term.

**Responding to
Climate
Emergency**

**Emergency
Planning**

**Protecting
Water
Resources
and the
Environment**

**Protecting
and
Enhancing
Rural Values**

**Protecting
Public Health
and Safety**

STRATEGIC PLAN TIMELINE

Each year Council undertakes a review of the priorities included in the Strategic Plan to discuss adding, removing, proceeding with, or modifying the initiatives included in the Plan in consideration of staff capacity to undertake the projects within the projected timelines, along with newly emerging priorities. These reviews are conducted in open meetings that the public is welcome to observe.

In 2020, the arrival of the global COVID-19 pandemic and the activation of the District's Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) had significant impacts on staff's capacity to achieve Council's identified priorities within the previously indicated timelines. While staff did complete or progress some of the initiatives, others were delayed and reconsidered in the 2021 annual review. The Climate Plan and amendments to the Firearms and Bow Hunting bylaw were added to the Plan and were accomplished within the projected timelines, and the ground water mapping was completed. Delayed projects included the implementation of the Step Code, commencement of the Secondary Suites Policy, and a review of the Tree Bylaw.

The table below represents the timeline for Council's identified priorities in 2020 following the annual review.

Initiative	2019				2020				2021				2022				2023			
Timeline/Quarter	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
South Highlands Local Area Plan (Include Amenity Policy with Heritage Amenities)											+	+	+							
Groundwater Protection Implementation and Work Plan																				
Building Bylaw Review and Step Code Implementation																				
Emergency Program Strategic Plan Implementation																				
Asset Management Plan Implementation (Becomes Operational in 2020)																				
Facilities Management Plan and Maintenance Program																				
Well Water Systems Maintenance Plan																				
Climate Leadership Plan																				
District of Highlands Firearms and Bow Hunting Bylaw No. 145																				
Climate Adaptation Risk Assessment																				
Community Hall Landscaping																				
Tree Bylaw Review																				
Secondary Suites/ Bylaw Enforcement																				
Official Community Plan Review																				
Operational Items Priorities Timeline																				
Records Management																				
Revised OCP Regional Context Statement																				
District Office Space Planning																				
Emergency Program Strategic Plan Implementation (Details as per Plan)																				
West Shore Parks and Recreation Society Board of Directors																				
Roads Maintenance Contract																				

	Council Priorities
	Becomes Operational / New Work
	Research
+	Potential Ongoing Implementation as Strategic Priorities

STRATEGIC PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS & ACTIVITIES

Council Priorities Initiated or Completed in 2020

Responding to the Climate Emergency	Emergency Planning	Protecting Water Resources and the Environment	Protecting and Enhancing Rural Values	Protecting Public Health and Safety
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Climate Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency Program Strategic Plan Implementation Evacuation Plan Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groundwater Protection Implementation and Work Plan: Groundwater Mapping Well Water Systems Maintenance Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Highlands Local Area Plan Community Hall Landscaping: Pergola 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Firearms and Bow Hunting Bylaw Amendment (Mapping)

Planned Council Priorities in 2021

Responding to the Climate Emergency	Emergency Planning	Protecting Water Resources and the Environment	Protecting and Enhancing Rural Values	Protecting Public Health and Safety
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Step Code Implementation Secondary Suite Review Climate-friendly Rebates and Incentives Web Information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency Program Strategic Plan Implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groundwater Protection Implementation and Work Plan: Monthly Water Budget Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Highlands Local Area Plan Community Hall Landscaping: Pergola Tree Bylaw Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore Opportunities to Restrict Bow Hunting of Specific Species in the District

Planned Council Priorities in 2022 and Beyond

Responding to the Climate Emergency	Emergency Planning	Protecting Water Resources and the Environment	Protecting and Enhancing Rural Values	Protecting Public Health and Safety
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize Step Code Implementation Continue Secondary Suite Policy Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency Program Strategic Plan Implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress Groundwater Protection Implementation and Work Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue Tree Bylaw Review Potential Official Community Plan Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer Consideration of Review of Noise Suppression Bylaw to 2022 Strategic Plan Review

SELECT COMMITTEES & ADVISORY BODIES

Select Committees and Advisory Bodies provide assistance to Council within their mandates as described in their respective Terms of Reference or establishing bylaw. Community members generously volunteer their time and diverse expertise to serve and are highly valued and appreciated for their significant contributions to the Highlands. Select Committee and Advisory Body members offer an important community voice that assists in Council's decision making on a variety of District matters.

Volunteer members assist Council with a broad range of matters including heritage, land use and natural areas, energy, building and sites, water and waste, healthy community, economy and work, education and leisure, transportation and mobility, food, and related financial sustainability.

The District is grateful to all of the volunteers for their commitment to strengthen the Highlands community for current and future residents.

Board of Variance

Deanna Henry

Ingo Lambrecht

Brian Williams

Heritage Select Committee

Daphne Allen

Sally Gose

Bob McMinn

Allen Dobb

Paul Henry

Social Sustainability Select Committee

Karen Burns

Warren Lee

Bob McMinn

Jennifer Dion

South Highlands Local Area Plan Task Force

Lexie Biegun

Bob McMinn

Mel Sangha

Regine Klein

Stephanie Rasmussen

Kim Vincent

Rick Lester

Scott Richardson

Terry Wood

Sustainable Land Use Select Committee

Ingo Lambrecht

Bob McMinn

Ellie Rayner

Dave Mackas

Cathy Reader

Allan Roger

External Volunteer Bodies

Highlands is also fortunate and grateful to receive additional community resources and services from the following volunteer bodies:

Highlands District Community Association

Highland Park and Recreation Society

Highland Heritage Park Society

Highland Stewardship Foundation

OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS



South Highlands Local Area Plan Stakeholder Workshop.



Volunteer Fire Department training moves online.



Munn Road paving capital project.



COVID-19 safety measures implemented.



New sand distributed at Eagles Lake.



Culvert replacement capital project.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Decisions are improved by engaging citizens and other stakeholder groups. The District of Highlands strives to promote transparency and encourage community dialogue to foster a better understanding of Council's role, policies, and statutory responsibilities through a variety of public participation and community engagement approaches.

The District undertakes public consultation in accordance with the International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2) guidelines. This reflects the Public Participation/Community Engagement Policy that is founded on the principles of inclusivity, transparency, accessibility, respect, and honesty.

Public Participation Opportunities

- Council Meetings – petitions and delegations
- Committee of the Whole Meetings
- Special engagement opportunities such as surveys/open houses/etc.
- Writing to Council at any time
- Volunteer for a Select Committee
- Public Hearings – Advertised
- Development Variance Permits – Notifications to property owners
- Highlands Website and Newsflashes
- Highlands Newsletter (quarterly)
- Community Notice Boards

	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
OBJECTIVES OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	• To provide balanced and objective information to support understanding by the public	• To obtain feedback on analysis, alternatives, issues and/or decisions	• To work with the public to ensure that concerns and aspirations are understood and considered	• To facilitate discussions and agreements between public parties to identify common ground for action and solutions	• To place final decision making in the hands of the public
DISTRICT OF HIGHLANDS COMMITMENT	• To inform the public by way of the District website, Highlands Newsletter or other social media opportunities	• To listen to and consider the public's concerns	• To work with the public to exchange information, ideas and concerns	• To seek advice and innovations from amongst various public parties	• To work with the public to implement agreed upon decisions
EXAMPLES OF ISSUES/TECHNIQUE THAT MIGHT FALL IN THESE CATEGORIES	• Repair or replace existing park asset • Open House • Notice of construction/repair	• Change of program format • Mapping Update • Capital project planning or designing	• New park asset such as new playground or new trail • Climate Change Adaptation Plan • Roadside Trail Network	• Strategic Plan • Integrated Community Sustainability Plan	• Referendum • Election/ by-election • Alternative approval process
PARTICIPANT'S RESPONSIBILITY	• To become informed	• To provide feedback	• To be open to other points of view and work with staff and other members of the public	• To put aside personal agendas and participate in discussions	• To work with staff to implement agreed upon decisions

In 2020, Council meetings transitioned to an electronic format to ensure that the public could observe proceedings and continue to provide input to Council during the pandemic. The regular meeting schedule was suspended in spring and resumed in fall. Committee of the Whole and Select Committee meetings were held as required. Regular business cycles normally held at Committee of the Whole were discussed at Council meetings with public input opportunities provided. Members of the public were encouraged to provide written comments on matters of interest.

2020 Engagement Activities Undertaken	
Community Boards	Newsletters, South Highlands Local Area Plan, Boundary Extension Request
COTW & Council	Financial Plan Review
COTW	Climate Plan
COTW	Mount Work Regional Park Planning (CRD)
Council	Annual Report
Council	Permissive Tax Exemption (Greater Victoria Greenbelt Society)
Publication	Dead and Dying Trees Brochure
SHLAP	Stakeholder Workshop
Website	COVID-19 and municipal updates

COTW = Committee of the Whole

2021 Planned Engagement Activities	
Community Boards	Newsletters and other information as required
COTW	Financial Plan
COTW	CRD Solid Waste Management Plan – Hartland Landfill
COTW	Permissive Tax Exemption
Council	Annual Report
Public Hearing	Regional Context Statement Official Community Plan amendment
SHLAP	Survey and Draft Plan
Website	Climate Rebates and Incentives
Website	COVID-19 and municipal updates

ASSET MANAGEMENT

Asset Management is an integrated process bringing together planning, finance, engineering, and operations to effectively manage existing and new infrastructure to maximize benefits, reduce risks, and provide satisfactory levels of service to community users in a socially, environmentally, and economically sustainable manner. Assets included in Highlands' Plan are manufactured assets such as buildings and roads and will also include the District's groundwater natural aquifer asset. Additional natural assets will be incorporated as the Asset Management Plan progresses.

The District's Asset Management Plan outlines a long-term approach for capital renewal investment. As a next step, an Asset Management Levy was introduced to the property tax notice in 2019 to provide clarity and transparency. This levy identifies the portion of the property taxes that are dedicated to infrastructure renewal. The accumulated asset management funds will need to increase over the next 10 to 15 year period to reach sustainable funding levels.

Highlights of 2020 Accomplishments

Replaced Fire Engine as per the Asset Management Plan
Advanced the Pavement Management Plan*
Integrated Asset Management Plan into operations

Highlights of 2021 Planned Initiatives

Integrate culvert replacement into Asset Management Plan
Initiate three-year culvert replacement contract
Continue pavement management and shouldering

* Available at www.highlands.ca/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Item/4854?fileID=5025

Asset Management Comparators* (District-owned assets)	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Replacement cost	\$210 M	\$204 M	\$193 M	-	-
Average replacement cost/year	\$742,000	\$713,000	\$692,000	-	-
% funded currently by District	54%	50%	50%	-	-
Tax levy for asset management	1%	1%	1%	-	-

* Information not available prior to the development of the Asset Management Plan



INFRASTRUCTURE REPLACEMENT REPORT CARD

The District maintains basic levels of asset condition information ranging from formal groundwater monitoring, bridge condition engineering assessments, and road surface reviews during maintenance activities, to an informal annual assessment of equipment, playground structures, and buildings by District staff. Fire vehicles and equipment are appropriately maintained by the Fire Department. Scientifically rating every asset for a high-level Infrastructure Condition Report is unrealistic, so a simplified system is used for each asset component grouping. Assets are evaluated on a simplified component-by-component basis.

Although every rating system is subjective, this process serves to improve accuracy because it incorporates the anecdotal asset knowledge of employees and contractors. The District's approach combines Condition and Performance, Capacity Versus Need, and Funding Versus Need.

DISTRICT OF HIGHLANDS INFRASTRUCTURE REPORT CARD

Asset Group	2020 Rating	2019 Rating	2018 Rating	2020 Comments
Land	B	B	B	Reasonable condition. No additional funding needed.
Groundwater Aquifer	B	B	B	Natural condition based on 2016 assessment. No additional funding needed.
Roads	C	C	C	Reasonable condition. Road profile assessment and PMP needed. Funding needed.
Bridges	B	B	B	Good condition based on assessment. Funding needed.
Facilities	B	B	B	Reasonable condition. Funding needed.
Park Improvements	B	B	B	Reasonable and natural condition. Modest increase in funding will maintain rating.
Vehicles and Equipment	B	B	B	Reasonable condition. Modest increase in funding will maintain rating.
Overall	B	B	B	Good rating. Funding needed.

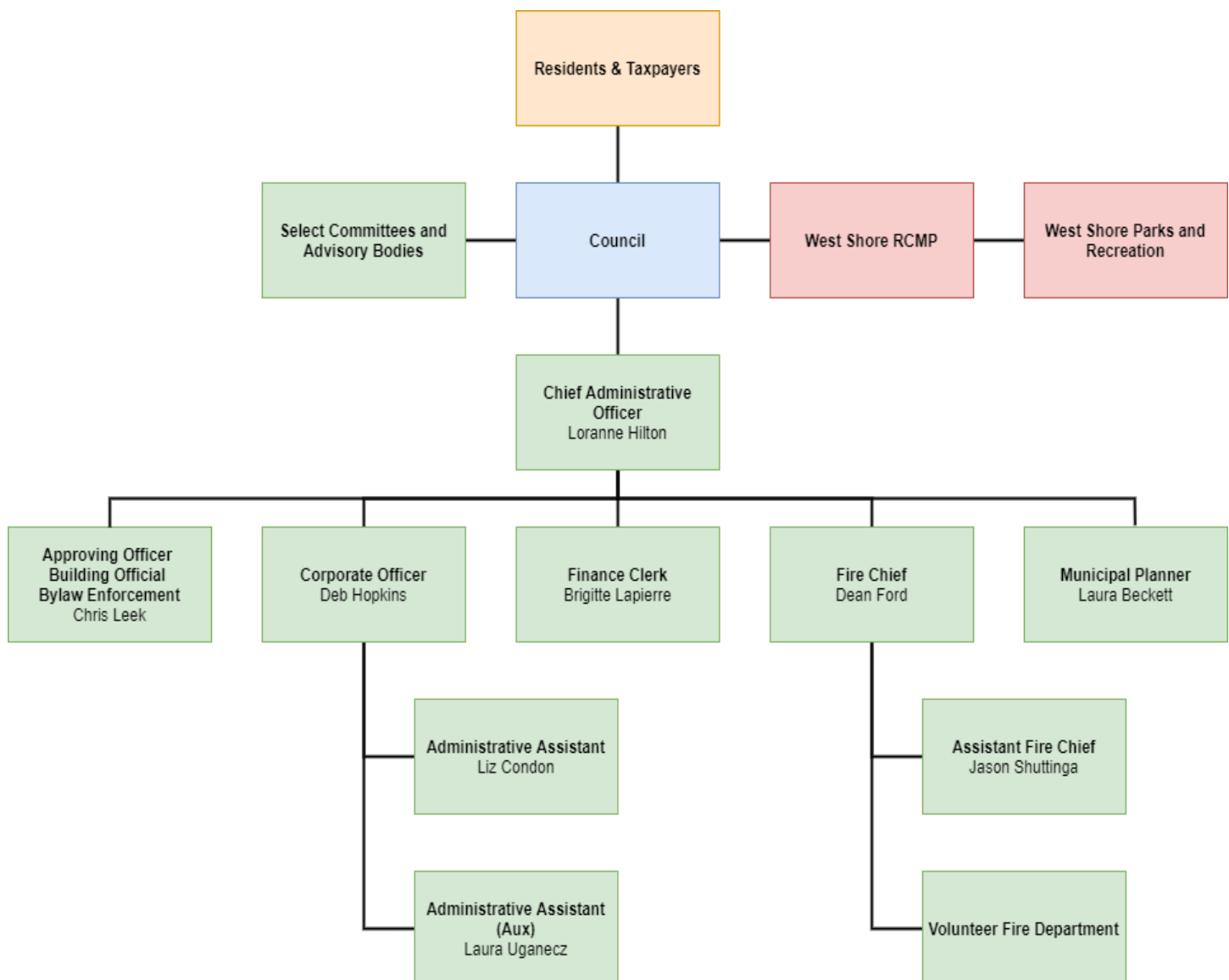


DISTRICT OF HIGHLANDS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Mayor and Council are responsible for setting the direction and establishing the strategic priorities for the District. The Chief Administrative Officer's responsibility is to ensure that direction is followed and to manage the affairs of the organization in accordance with the policies and programs approved by Council, the *Community Charter*, *Local Government Act*, and other relevant statutes and regulations.

The District of Highlands functions within the one-employee model. The Chief Administrative Officer leads a team of professional and committed employees responsible for providing municipal services, including overseeing contracted services, and accomplishing Council's strategic priorities identified in the Strategic Plan.



MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Loranne Hilton

Contact: lhilton@highlands.ca

250-474-1773

I am pleased to present the 2020 District of Highlands Annual Report. The Report provides an opportunity to highlight the achievements of the District over the past year, set out initiatives planned for the future, and provide a resource for understanding the District's finances and long term financial outlook.

The COVID-19 pandemic was at the forefront of operations for much of the year, providing challenges and opportunities in respect to how staff carry out their duties. I am very proud of the work of our staff throughout the year, despite the personal and professional obstacles that COVID-19 presented. Staff remained committed to serving residents and property owners of the District through their ongoing core

work and by implementing Council directives and strategic initiatives. Looking forward, District staff will use the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic to refine our processes and procedures, particularly in relation to information technology and emergency planning, to continue to improve how we provide services to the community and Council.

The asset management strategy continued to be a strong focus, and is evolving over time to provide the framework to ensure appropriate funding for infrastructure into the future. In particular, along with building financial reserves for future infrastructure replacement needs, we were successful in embarking upon a culvert replacement plan and continued pavement management via the replacement of four culverts and the paving of a portion of Munn Road.

While the challenges of COVID-19 impacted some of the progress on Council's strategic priorities, accomplishments were achieved such as completion of a Climate Plan, groundwater mapping as part of the groundwater protection implementation and work plan, revising the Firearms and Bow Hunting Bylaw, and ongoing work with the South Highlands Local Area Plan development process. In 2021 staff will focus on continuing progress on Council's identified priorities along with attending to our core work responsibilities.

I wish to express my appreciation for staff's dedication to their work over the challenging year of 2020, and to Council for its continued support.



Loranne Hilton
Chief Administrative Officer



ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

Deb Hopkins, Corporate Officer

Contact: dhopkins@highlands.ca

250-474-1773



Administration is led by the Chief Administrative Officer who provides guidance and direction to all departments and is Council's principal advisor. Administration also consists of the Corporate Officer, one full-time Administrative Assistant and one part-time auxiliary Administrative Assistant.

Administration provides legislative and administrative functions to support Council, its Select Committees, and the Corporation as a whole to ensure that statutory requirements are met and that Council policies, objectives, and directives are accomplished.

Some of the functions and activities that Administration leads include:

- Managing the municipal workforce efficiently.
- Organizing all meetings of Council, preparing agendas and minutes, and providing meeting management.
- Administering the Strategic Plan, Budget process and Financial Plan, and Annual Report Cycle.
- Coordinating internal and external corporate communications.
- Making recommendations on a broad range of policy and administrative matters.
- Drafting bylaws and policies and providing regulatory support to Council and staff.
- Executing legal documents on behalf of the District.
- Implementing and auditing the Records Management System.
- Processing requests for access to records and ensuring compliance with Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy policies and legislation.
- Managing a variety of agreements and contracts for the District.
- Administering the quadrennial general local elections.

Highlights of 2020 Accomplishments

Amended Firearms and Bow Hunting Bylaw, No. 145 to revise the mapping

Responded to emerging Provincial Health Orders related to the COVID-19 pandemic

Repealed and Replaced Officer and Delegation of Authority Bylaw

Facilitated renewed operation contracts for West Shore Parks and Recreation

Completed the District Office Space Planning Project

Highlights of Initiatives Planned in 2021

Initiate development of electronic document records management system

Review Council Procedure Bylaw

Research mechanism for potential bow hunting restrictions of certain species

Develop climate-friendly home improvement and low emission transportation option incentives and rebates information on the District's website

Administration Comparators	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Agendas and Minutes Prepared*	36	51	48	56	60
Bylaws Adopted	9	7	15	9	6
Community Hall Rentals	4**	20	23	17	13
Complaints Processed***	150	128	-	-	-
Council Resolutions	339	367	349	333	326
FOI Requests Received and Processed	4	0	2	1	2
Policies Amended or Developed	1	1	3	0	2
Public Occupancy Agreements Issued	6	5	5	4	2

* Excludes closed meeting agendas

**Rentals reduced due to pandemic

*** Totals not tracked prior to 2019

BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Chris Leek

Contact: cleek@highlands.ca

250-474-1773



The Building Department includes responsibility for the Approving Officer, Building Official, and Bylaw Enforcement Officer. All of these activities are undertaken by one municipal employee and augmented with contracted or temporary assistance as required.

The Building Department delivers a broad range of high quality services including:

- Performing pre-construction site assessments.
- Issuing building, plumbing, chimney, soil deposit and removal, tree cutting and blasting permits.
- Processing building applications and reviewing plans to ensure compliance with the B.C. Building Code, building regulations, and municipal bylaws and policies.
- Undertaking inspections at various stages of construction from foundation forms to final inspections and issuance of occupancy permits.
- Conducting site inspections to determine that permit conditions are satisfied.
- Coordinating subdivision activities including providing policy advice on proposals, reviewing completed applications, notifying applicants of deficiencies, and issuing approvals as the Approving Officer.
- Reviewing engineering servicing of subdivision and building permit applications.
- Conducting bylaw enforcement activities including investigation of violation complaints, enforcement action, consultation, coordination with other departments, and supervision of contracted services.
- Supervising the management of municipal trees, parks, trails, and facilities.
- Issuing permits for works proposed on municipal roads or property.
- Liaising with the roads contractor for road repairs, pavement management, shouldering work and culvert maintenance and replacements.
- Monitoring the winter duty phone for road safety calls.

Highlights of 2020 Accomplishments

Operationalized implementation of the Asset Management Plan

Initiated storm water management

Commenced culvert replacements and maintenance

Implemented Facilities Management Plan and Maintenance Program

Completed Community Hall landscaping

Executed roads maintenance contract

Operationalized Well Water Systems Maintenance Plan

Highlights of Initiatives Planned in 2021

Implement the Step Code and review the Building Bylaw

Install a pergola at the Community Hall

Explore secondary suites options

Develop three-year culvert replacement and maintenance contract

Implement Pavement Management Plan

Initiate Tree Bylaw Review

Building Comparators	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Annual Construction Value	\$1,752,650	\$1,008,995	\$1,604,095	\$2,552,625	\$5,980,599
Annual Permit Value	\$37,685	\$23,715	\$49,001	\$51,320	\$139,595
Blasting Permits	10	7	6	13	14
Building Permits	34	19	40	54	92
Bylaw Enforcement Complaints	178	128	186	181	197
Soil Deposit/Removal Permits	6	4	4	11	7
Tree Cutting Permits	15	23	11	20	25

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Loranne Hilton, Chief Administrative Officer, Chief Financial Officer

Contact: lhilton@highlands.ca

250-474-1773



The Finance Department is responsible for providing financial management of the municipality, collecting revenues from property taxes, administering payroll and benefits, coordinating procurement, and overseeing information technology. Finance staff include the Chief Administrative Officer/Treasurer and a Finance Clerk.

Finance provides a wide range of financial services including:

- Preparing the annual budget and five-year Financial Plan.
- Coordinating audit services annually.
- Processing payments for property taxes, permits, rental fees, and other fees and charges.
- Implementing BCA ownership updates for property tax records.
- Managing the provision of fiscal services including debt-servicing costs, transfers to reserves, and contingency.
- Developing the long-term financial plan, asset management, and applicable policy development.
- Administering accounts payable and receivable.
- Providing management and support of information technology.
- Undertaking procurement of goods and services.
- Administering payroll and benefits.
- Conducting reconciliations and preparing payments to external agencies including the Receiver General, WCB, and Employer Health Tax.

Highlights of 2020 Accomplishments

Updated Purchasing Policy

Implemented E-Transfer payment option

Prepared Alternate Tax Collection Scheme due to pandemic

Transitioned to Provincial Deferment Program centralization

Highlights of Initiatives Planned in 2021

Initiate IT infrastructure and services review

Transition to Provincial Home Owner Grant program centralization process

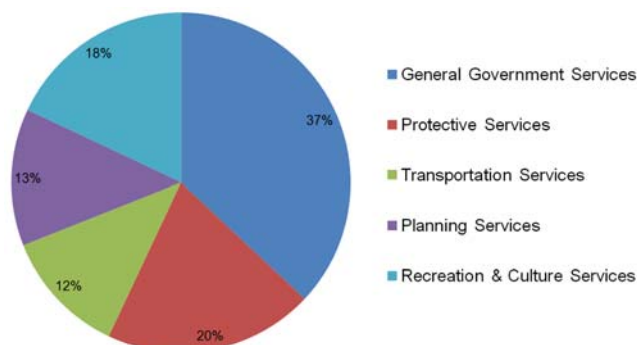
Implement BC Assessment electronic permits project for the District

Finance Comparators*	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Accounts Payable	This section intentionally left blank. Comparators to be tracked starting in 2021.				
Bank Reconciliations					
Municipal Pension Plan Reconciliations/ Payments					
Payroll Accruals/Benefits Reconciliation					
Payrolls Processed					
Property Tax Notices Levied					
Receiver General Reconciliation/Payments					
WCB and Employer Health Tax Reconciliation/Payments					

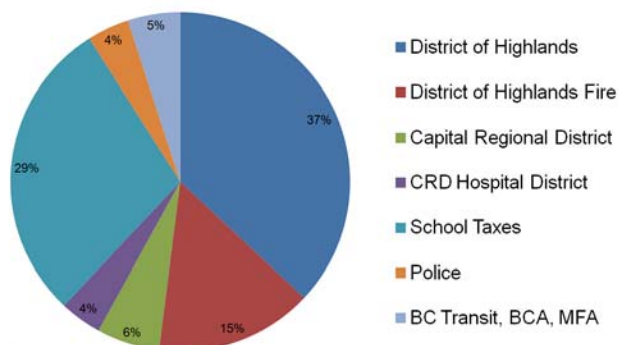
* Previously Finance and Administration were reported on together. To improve transparency these departments will be separated going forward.

PROPERTY TAX OVERVIEW

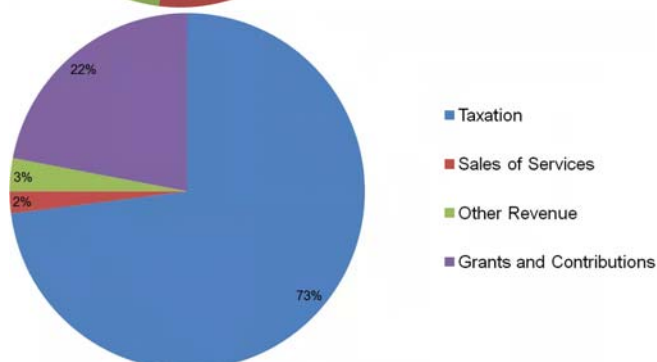
WHERE YOUR TAX DOLLARS GO



OPERATING EXPENSES



OPERATING REVENUES



The following example illustrates the property taxes collected in 2020 based on the average residential assessment. Taxes collected on behalf of other public agencies are also included.

Average Residential Assessment: \$843,133	
Municipal Taxes	
General	\$1,327
Asset Management	\$100
Specified Area Fire Protection	\$560
Total Highlands Taxes:	\$1,978
Other Taxing Agencies	
School	\$1,242
Capital Regional District	\$234
Regional Hospital	\$165
Regional Transit, BCA, MFA	\$191
Police Services	\$178
Total Taxes Collected for Other Agencies:	\$2,010

FINANCIAL PLAN OVERVIEW

District of Highlands Consolidated Five Year Financial Plan					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget
Operating Revenues					
Taxation	2,155,900	2,186,900	2,287,400	2,390,400	2,435,000
Sales of Services	67,000	66,100	66,100	66,100	66,100
Other Revenue	76,200	53,700	53,700	53,700	53,700
Grants and Contributions	639,800	625,800	626,800	627,800	629,500
Total Operating Revenues	2,938,900	2,932,500	3,034,000	3,138,000	3,184,300
Operating Expenses					
General Government Services	834,200	854,500	872,400	900,100	916,500
Protective Services	459,900	466,000	485,300	509,800	473,100
Transportation Services	278,500	311,100	321,500	331,900	343,000
Planning Services	307,500	280,900	233,800	237,400	240,600
Recreation and Cultural Services	399,800	411,600	421,600	432,700	444,100
Total Operating Expenses	2,279,900	2,324,100	2,334,600	2,411,900	2,417,300
Net from Operations	659,000	608,400	699,400	726,100	767,000
Add					
Reserves Used for Operating Project	70,000	60,000	-	-	-
Equity for Amortization	875,900	875,800	875,800	875,800	875,800
Reserves Used for Capital	1,248,300	280,000	255,000	255,000	255,000
Proceeds of Debt	-	-	-	-	-
Deduct					
Capital Expenses	1,248,300	280,000	255,000	255,000	255,000
Amortization Expense	875,900	875,800	875,800	875,800	875,800
Transfer to Reserves	668,100	607,500	638,500	665,200	706,100
Debt Servicing	60,900	60,900	60,900	60,900	60,900
Total Budget for the Year	-	-	-	-	-

The 2020 budget provided for continued core services that accounted for the majority of the District's human and financial resources. Key projects and Council's strategic priorities were funded, including groundwater protection projects, continued implementation of the Asset Management Plan, continued implementation of the Emergency Program Strategic Plan, the development of a South Highlands Local Area Plan, and development of a Climate Plan.

In 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Council reduced the annual tax increase by 1% to help address the financial impacts of COVID-19 on the community. The total tax increase was 2%.

The budget provided funds for capital projects including road paving and culvert replacements, installing a pergola at the Community Hall and fencing for the Community Garden, additional community sign boards, a new Fire Chief vehicle, improvements at the Caleb Park Heritage Park, and the purchase of miscellaneous Fire Department equipment.

Council considers requests for funding for the provision of programs and services to the community through the District's annual Grant in Aid process. Applications are awarded based on the set priority for grant funding and in accordance with the Grant in Aid Policy. Additionally, Council has the authority to exempt property taxes on properties that are held by charitable, philanthropic, or other not-for-profit corporations. In 2019, Council established a Tax Exemption Policy where Council may consider Permissive Tax Exemptions that support environmental preservation in the community. This triggers an exemption from municipal taxes as well as other taxing authorities.

Grants in Aid and Property Tax Exemption Comparators	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Grants in Aid	\$13,200	\$13,000	\$12,500	\$11,350	\$10,000
Permissive Tax Exemptions	\$30,038	\$16,224	\$0	\$0	\$0

FIRE SERVICES & EMERGENCY PROGRAM

Dean Ford, Fire Chief

Contact: firechief@highlands.ca

250-920-6970



Fire Services is led by the District's Fire Chief and includes the Highlands Volunteer Fire Department and the Emergency Program. There are 35 volunteers operating out of two fire halls. The main priority is to enhance fire protection and public safety services and prevent the loss of life and property.

Members of the Highlands Volunteer Fire Department are required to respond to a wide range of incident types including:

- Assist BC Ambulance Service
- Brush fires
- Burn complaints
- Chimney fires
- High angle rescue
- Hydro fire
- Hydro line emergencies
- Landfill fire
- Medical emergencies
- Motor vehicle incidents
- Mutual aid calls
- Rope/Animal rescue
- Structure fires
- Vehicle fires
- Other calls for assistance

The Emergency Program assists the District by preparing and planning to mitigate, prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from significant emergency events and natural disasters within the community.

The District's Emergency Response Plan can be accessed online from www.highlands.ca/DocumentCenter/View/6897/Highlands-Emergency-Response-Plan---2018 and the Highlands Emergency Response Program Strategic Plan is available at www.highlands.ca/DocumentCenter/View/7183/Highlands-Emergency-Strategic-Plan---Feb_2019.

Highlights of 2020 Accomplishments

Entered into automatic aid agreement with the District of Saanich to reduce response times and enhance fire protection capabilities for a portion of the areas in the East Highlands

Progressed Emergency Program Strategic Plan Implementation

Completed and incorporated Evacuation Route Plan into the Emergency Response Plan

Procured new fire engine and service vehicle

Purchased extrication equipment

Highlights of Initiatives Planned in 2021

Continue working on the Emergency Program Strategic Plan Implementation

Review of medical first responder services

WestShore Emergency Alert platform transition to Alertable

Development of training facility

Recruitment of volunteer members

Fire Services & Emergency Program Comparators	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Burn Permits Issued	629	247*	N/A	N/A	N/A
Fire Dispatches	134	118	111	128	100

* Burn Permits moved to an online process in October 2019 so this number only represents partial total for the year

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Laura Beckett

Contact: lbeckett@highlands.ca

250-474-1773



The Planning Department manages change and guides growth in the District by working collaboratively with residents, developers, stakeholders, Council, and other municipal staff. The Planning Department consists of one municipal planner and one contract planner as needed.

Planning is responsible for long-range land use planning that protects water resources and the environment, and enhances rural values. In addition, staff completes special projects and processes land use applications in accordance with District policies.

Planning undertakes the following functions:

- Processing and managing Official Community Plan (OCP) amendments, rezoning applications, development permits, development variance permits, the heritage registry, and ensuring bylaw and other regulatory compliance.
- Reviewing and developing policies consistent with the OCP, Zoning Bylaw, and Subdivision Bylaw.
- Responding to questions regarding environmentally sensitive development permit areas, future development potential, and zoning of land and land use matters.
- Providing technical and professional support to the Heritage Select Committee, Sustainable Land Use Select Committee, and the South Highlands Local Area Plan Task Force.
- Participating in external bodies representing regional matters of concern.
- Managing special projects such as the South Highlands Local Area Plan and the Groundwater Protection Work Plan.
- Providing support for subdivision services.

Highlights of 2020 Accomplishments

Initiated South Highlands Local Area Plan (SHLAP) and provision of support to the SHLAP Task Force

Developed Groundwater Protection Implementation and Work Plan

Participated in regional work towards Highlands Housing Needs Report

Managed community aquifer mapping project

Participated in Community Child Care Planning project

Highlights of 2021 Planned Initiatives

Continue work on the South Highlands Local Area Plan

Manage monthly water budget project as part of the Groundwater Protection Work Plan

Complete Official Community Plan Regional Context Statement Process

Undertake Secondary Suites Review

Obtain Heritage Site recognition for the Lime Kiln

Planning Comparators	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Covenant Amendments	4	0	0	1	0
Development Permits Issued	15	12	27	21	47
Development Variance Permits Issued	5	4	5	4	2
OCP Amendments/Rezoning Applications	1	0	1	1	1
Subdivision Applications	1	1	1	3	2
Temporary Commercial/Industrial Use Permits	0	1	0	0	0

POLICE SERVICES

West Shore RCMP

Non-Emergency Number: 250-474-2264 www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/detach/en/d/159

The West Shore RCMP provides policing services to five municipalities including the District of Highlands, City of Langford, Town of View Royal, City of Colwood, and District of Metchosin. The detachment located at 698 Atkins Avenue provides diverse policing services to the West Shore communities as well as the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations and portions of the Malahat.

The West Shore RCMP detachment includes 96 sworn officers, 54 civilian personnel, 12 commissioners, 2 officers dedicated to Police Dog Service, and 1 reserve constable. The detachment provided two officers to support the Vancouver Island Major Crime Unit (VIMCU), one officer to the Regional Domestic Violence Unit (RDVU), and one officer to the Forensic Identification Services (FIS).

Local policing priorities are established annually in consultation with elected officials and staff at the five municipalities and representatives from the First Nations Reserves.

Key priorities in 2020 included organized crime and drug trafficking, enhancing road safety, enhancing relationships with Indigenous Communities, reducing property crimes, and communicating effectively with partners. These identified priorities were supported through a five member Drugs and Organized Crime Unit, a four person Traffic Services Unit, a dedicated First Nations Policing officer, a five member Crime Reduction Unit, a four member Bike Patrol Unit, and a three member Community Policing and Crime Prevention Unit.

In 2020, West Shore RCMP implemented the Inadmissible Patrons Program (IPP) as a public safety partnership developed in consultation with local business and public partnerships to enhance the safety in and around West Shore restaurants and pubs.

For more information, please visit <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/detach/en/d/159>.

Police Services Metrics Comparators	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Incidents reported for District of Highlands	335	342	409	346	310

West Shore RCMP Top Five Service Calls Annual Comparison				
2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Traffic Incident	Traffic Incident	Traffic Incident	Traffic Incident	Traffic Incident
Breach	Breach	Assist Police/Fire/ Ambulance	Assist Police/Fire/ Ambulance	Assist Police/Fire/ Ambulance
Check Wellbeing	Assist Police/Fire/ Ambulance	Property	Property	Theft
Assist Police/Fire/ Ambulance	Check Wellbeing	Theft	Theft	Alarms
Property	Property	Alarms	Alarms	Impaired

RECREATIONAL SERVICES AND MUNICIPAL PARKS

MUNICIPAL PARKS

The District of Highlands places a high value on green space, trail systems, and outdoor recreational opportunities. Highlands is committed to preserving large areas of green space, protecting elements of the region's ecosystems, and providing outdoor recreational opportunities for Capital Regional District residents and visitors.

Twinflower Park has a playground, non-regulation size ball field, a bicycle jump park, and horse riding ring.

Eagles Lake Park features a small swimming beach and picnic area that is supplied with fresh sand each summer. There is a cob washroom with a composting toilet and living roof that was built by volunteers.

In addition, Gowlland Tod Provincial Park, Mount Work Regional Park, Thetis Lake Regional Park, and Lone Tree Hill Regional Park are located within the municipality. These parks are managed by BC Parks Services and the Capital Regional District.

RECREATION SERVICES

WEST SHORE PARKS AND RECREATION | 250-478-4384 | WWW.WESTSHORERECREATION.CA

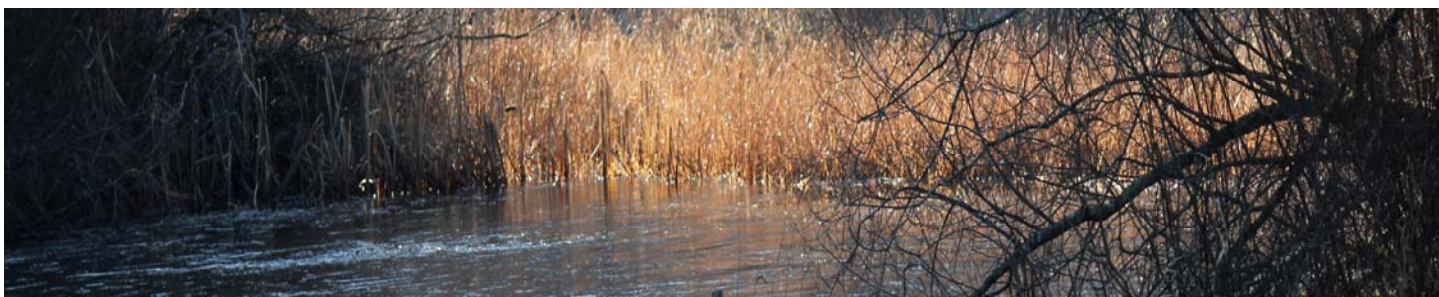
The District of Highlands is a joint owner of the West Shore Parks and Recreation Centre. West Shore Parks and Recreation's mission includes providing diverse and accessible recreational and sport opportunities that offer West Shore residents excellent experiences for healthy lifestyles. They offer a wide variety of services and programs for all ages and abilities. Amenities include exercise facilities, a swimming pool, indoor and outdoor playing fields, ice rinks, numerous sport courts, a golf course, and more. West Shore Parks and Recreation is governed by the West Shore Parks and Recreation Society's Board of Directors comprised of representatives from the joint owner municipalities. Each municipality provides financial support toward the operation of the parks and recreation facilities through an annual tax requisition.

LIBRARY SERVICES

**GREATER VICTORIA PUBLIC LIBRARY JUAN DE FUCA BRANCH
250-940-4875 | WWW.GVPL.CA/BRANCHES-HOURS/JUAN-DE-FUCA-BRANCH/**

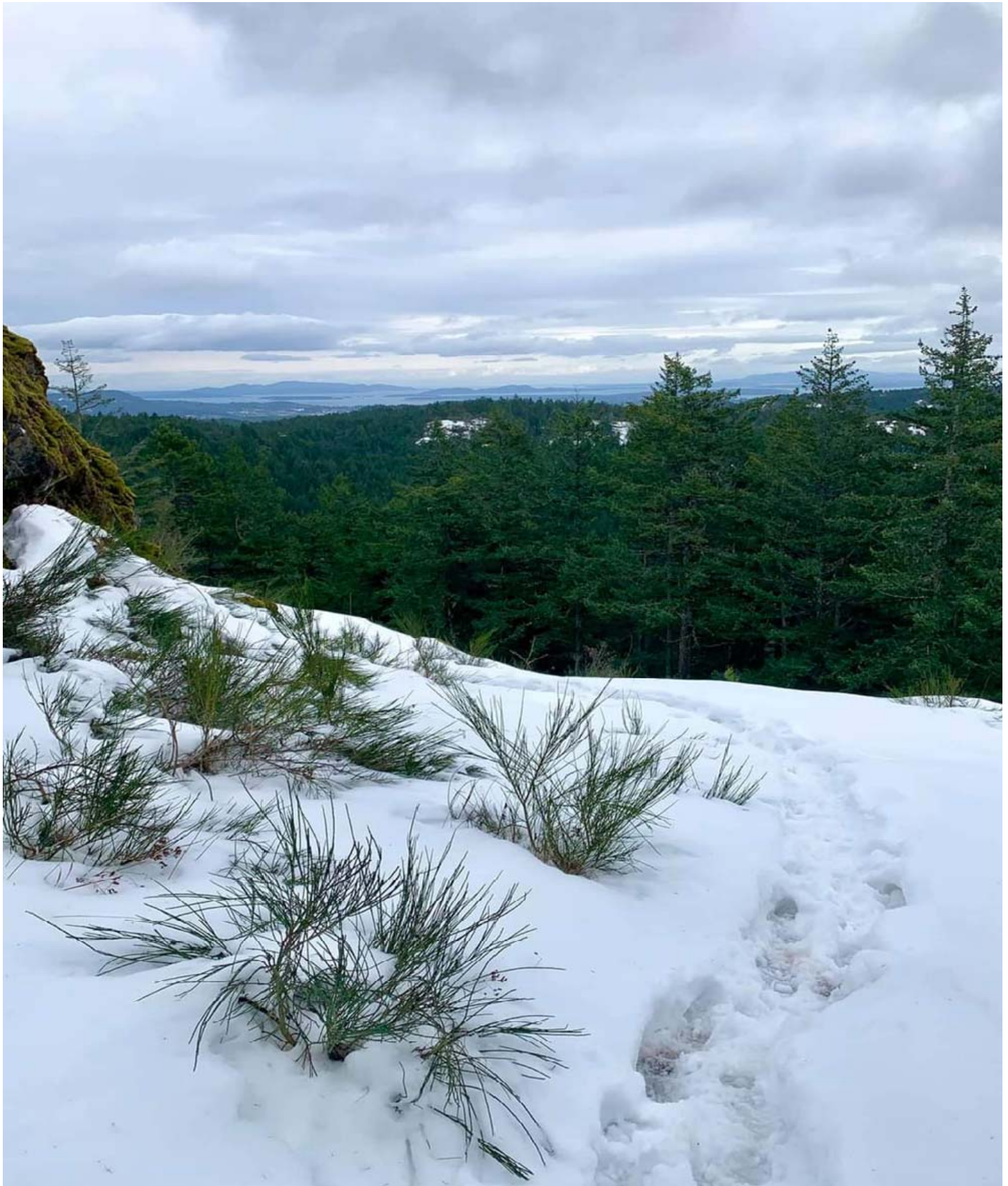
The District of Highlands is also a member of the Greater Victoria Public Library (GVPL) system. Library services are primarily provided to Highlands residents by the Juan De Fuca Branch located at 1759 Island Highway. The District is a co-owner of the Juan de Fuca Branch building in collaboration with the Cities of Colwood and Langford and the District of Metchosin.

The Juan de Fuca Branch is the largest of the three West Shore GVPL branches and offers a variety of general interest programs for all ages.



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended December 31, 2020





The 2020 Annual Report is available at www.highlands.ca.

Printed copies are available by request.

**Questions and comments may be submitted by telephone at 250-474-1773
or by email to info@highlands.ca.**

