

Zoning Bylaw Update

What We Heard Report

June 2026



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Executive Summary

The District of Central Saanich is updating its community planning documents, including the Zoning Bylaw, Development Permit Area Guidelines, and Official Community Plan, to support sustainable growth, align with provincial legislation, and reflect the evolving vision and priorities of the community.

In Fall 2025, the District undertook Phase 1 of public engagement for the Zoning Bylaw Update through the Let's Talk Central Saanich platform, drop-in open houses, targeted sessions with affected property owners, direct communication by email and phone, and online feedback forms. These engagement opportunities enabled residents to learn about the proposed changes, ask questions, and provide feedback on topics such as land use, housing, neighbourhood character, agriculture, and environmental protection. Feedback received during Phase 1 informed several refinements to the project, including retaining existing zoning designations in Saanichton Village and bringing back agricultural permissions within the proposed Rural Estate zones.

Building on this early engagement, Phase 2 focused on presenting the draft Zoning Bylaw and proposed zoning map for public review. Overall, a limited number of comments were received during this phase. Participants who reviewed the draft generally did not express significant concerns with the proposed changes, indicating broad support for, or comfort with, the direction of the draft bylaw. The feedback that was received primarily related to specific properties, site-specific zoning designations, or other planning initiatives currently underway within the District. This report summarizes the engagement activities undertaken during Phase 2 and the feedback received from the community.

Project Overview

The District of Central Saanich is undertaking a comprehensive update of its community planning tools, including the Zoning Bylaw, Development Permit Area (DPA) Design Guidelines, and associated amendments to the Official Community Plan (OCP). The project is intended to modernize the District's regulatory framework, implement the policy direction established in the 2023 Official Community Plan, incorporate recent planning initiatives and best practices, and ensure compliance with provincial legislation, including housing-related requirements introduced through Bill 44.

The project has included two phases of public engagement. Phase 1, conducted in Fall 2025, sought community input on proposed zoning and policy changes and informed refinements to the draft bylaw. Phase 2, undertaken in Spring 2026, provided residents and interest holders with an opportunity to review and comment on the draft Zoning Bylaw and proposed zoning map. Feedback received throughout the engagement process has helped shape the final draft documents that will be presented to Council for consideration.

Engagement Overview

The District of Central Saanich undertook a comprehensive and inclusive public engagement program to gather feedback and perspectives from residents and interest holders regarding proposed zoning changes as part of the Community Planning Tools Update.

The purpose of this engagement was to provide opportunities for the community to review proposed changes, ask questions, and provide input prior to finalizing the draft bylaw. Participants were able to share perspectives on key planning topics, including land use, neighbourhood character, housing, environmental protection, and development regulations.

The engagement program included a range of in-person, digital, and direct outreach methods:

- Open Houses – Drop-in sessions were held on Thursday, May 28, 2026 (Fire Station 1, 1512 Keating Cross Road) and Saturday, May 30, 2026 (Municipal Hall, 1903 Mt Newton Cross Road).
- Committee of the Whole – An opportunity to speak directly to Council will be provided on Monday, June 15, 2026, at Municipal Hall.
- Online Engagement – A project page and feedback tools were made available through the District's engagement platform, including a comment form open from April 21 to May 31.
- Phone and email – Residents were encouraged to reach out to staff via email or phone to ask questions or provide feedback throughout the engagement period.

Areas of focus

- Review of the draft Zoning Bylaw and proposed zoning map.
- Clarification of permitted uses, densities, and built form under updated residential, rural, and commercial zones.
- Feedback on rural land use policies, including agricultural permissions and rural character protection.
- Engagement with property owners with proposed zoning designation changes including Dignan road.

Engagement Opportunities

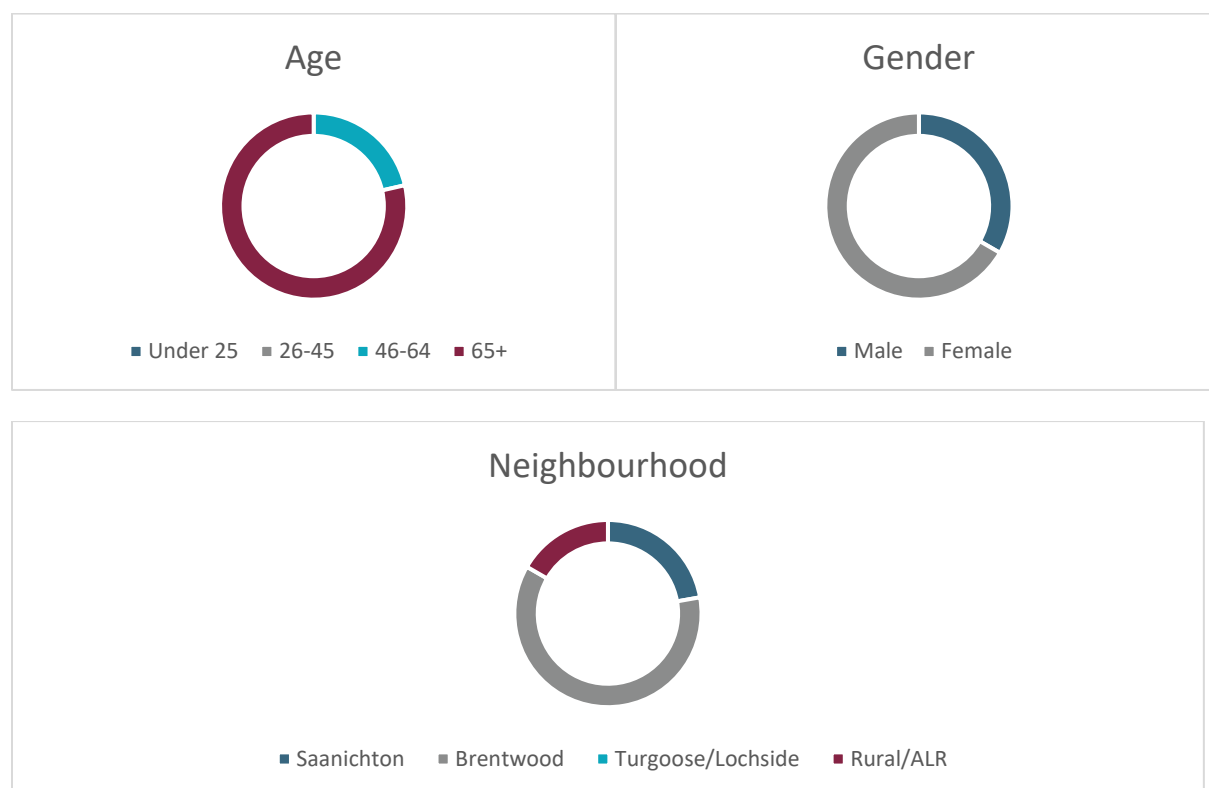
Public engagement on the proposed zoning directions took place between April 27th to June 15th, 2026, and included:

- Meetings with the Advisory Planning Commission (APC) and the Peninsula and Area Agricultural Advisory Commission (PAAC).

Date	Engagement Opportunity	Details	Engaged
Thursday, May 28, 2026 3:00-7:00 pm	Open House	Fire Station 1 Keating Cross Road	~25 across both
Saturday May 30, 2026 10:00 am-1:00 pm	Open House	Central Saanich Municipal Hall, Saanichton	
April 27– May 31, 2025	Feedback form		3 responses
Ongoing	Emails		2
April 2026	Direct Mailout to Dignan Rd	Letters to property owners	20

Who we heard from

At the two open houses the following demographics were captured from the approximately 25 individuals that attended.



What We Heard

Open Houses

Overall, feedback received during Phase 2 of engagement was limited, with most participants expressing general satisfaction with the draft Zoning Bylaw and related materials. Participants commonly noted appreciation that the District had considered and incorporated input received through Phase 1 engagement, and indicated that many of the proposed changes were understood as administrative updates or modernization improvements rather than substantive policy shifts.

A small number of specific comments were raised. One participant expressed concern regarding the proposed 25% agricultural lot coverage provision on rural lands, noting that it could create challenges in meeting the \$10,000 income threshold required for farm classification. Two participants provided mixed feedback regarding the proposed zoning changes on Dignan Road. One participant supported the proposed changes on the condition that they do not negatively affect property values, while another

suggested introducing Residential Apartment zoning along West Saanich Road and applying Residential Townhouse and Apartment zoning to properties fronting Stelly's Avenue to support a more graduated height transition.

In general, most attendees did not express significant concerns with the Zoning Bylaw itself and instead directed their comments toward other ongoing District initiatives and projects.

Peninsula and Area Agricultural Commission

The Peninsula and Area Agricultural Commission provided limited feedback on the proposed zoning amendments, with overall support for the agricultural-related updates. The Commission's primary recommendation was that the proposed limits on shipping containers on agricultural properties be removed. This recommendation was adopted, recognizing that shipping containers can play a practical role in supporting farm operations, particularly for new and emerging farmers who may rely on flexible, low-cost storage solutions to support agricultural activities.

Advisory Planning Commission

The Advisory Planning Commission provided limited comments on the proposed Zoning Bylaw amendments, with feedback primarily focused on requests for clarification regarding specific elements of the bylaw that had not previously been reviewed or discussed in detail. Overall, the Commission expressed support for the proposed zoning changes, recognizing them as a positive step toward modernizing and improving the District's zoning framework. The APC has requested that staff attend their June meeting to respond to a small number of outstanding questions, and any feedback arising from that discussion will be considered and incorporated into the draft bylaws as appropriate.

Next Steps

Subject to Council direction, staff will bring forward the final draft of the Zoning Bylaw for consideration of First and Second Readings. Following Council's consideration, a Public Hearing will be scheduled in accordance with legislative requirements, providing an additional opportunity for members of the public to provide formal comment on the proposed bylaw before Council consideration of Third Reading and adoption.

Thank you to all participants who took the time to share their experiences and insights. This input will help inform the final draft.

To stay informed, please visit letstalkcentralsaanich.ca for the latest project information.