

CIVIC REDEVELOPMENT

FAQs



Learn more about Central Saanich's civic facilities redevelopment and help imagine the possibilities!



LetsTalkCentralSaanich.ca/CivicRedevelopment

CIVIC REDEVELOPMENT

Key points to note

1



The project is ready to take shape and **we want your input**. This summer, share your ideas and feedback on the strategy, and this fall please get involved as concepts are developed.

2



Minimizing costs to taxpayers is a top priority of this project. Cost estimates will be shared as concepts are defined.

3



This project is still in the early stages and **no concepts are determined yet**. The Hovey site will contain some municipal facilities and hopefully recreation, and there are general principles for the Saanichton Village site to work through with the community.

4



The redevelopment is about more than municipal facilities. The community can **leverage this rebuild to add housing and amenities**, such as recreation, daycare space, commercial or medical offices. It's also about ensuring 1903 Mount Newton, the largest site in Saanichton Village, contributes to a vibrant community.



Share your ideas as we start the visioning process
Email MunicipalHall@CSaanich.ca or come to an online or in-person open house!



LetsTalkCentralSaanich.ca/CivicRedevelopment



Central Saanich

CIVIC REDEVELOPMENT

Questions & Answers



What is Central Saanich's civic redevelopment project?

The civic redevelopment project is a comprehensive plan to update aging District facilities to ensure they meet the current and future needs of Central Saanich's growing community. The project includes plans for the District's municipal services, including police and fire, to move to a new site on Hovey Road and reimagine the current site at 1903 Mt Newton Cross Rd in the heart of Saanichton Village. The approach will create opportunities to enhance the village, while improving services and facilities and meet current accessibility and safety standards. It will also ensure that District properties are used to their full potential to serve the community, including the potential for new recreation facilities.

Why does the hall, police and fire station require replacement?

The multi-service building at 1903 Mount Newton houses critical District services: Central Saanich Municipal Hall, Police Station and Fire Station #2, and is at the end of its useful life. The building has:

- accessibility deficiencies (there are no ramps or elevators between the two floors in addition to many other accessibility challenges),
- seismic deficiencies and does not meet post-disaster standards,
- long ago outgrew operations (space for the public at Council meetings is limited, there are no additional workspaces, and meeting space is extremely limited), and
- consistently requires an array of increasingly larger necessary repairs.

It was built in 1965 to serve a population of 5,000; today, we serve a population of 18,000 and growing, and our services have expanded. For fire response, while we now have Fire Station 1 on Keating, Central Saanich requires some fire vehicles closer to Saanichton to meet emergency response times.

A new building would be designed to be accessible, customer-service oriented, energy efficient, and safe; this would ensure District staff, vehicles and facilities will be available to best support the community during emergencies. Additionally, the District wants to create spaces in the facility for community use, such as recreation or space for community programming.

Why is this project needed now?

Many of the District's critical facilities, as well as other infrastructure, was built in the 1960s and replacement is needed. Almost 20 years ago, the District began closely looking at several municipal facilities approaching the end of their useful lives. This project has spanned many Councils and has been incorporated into long-term asset management and financial plans. The project began by prioritizing building Fire Station #1 on Keating Cross Road (completed in 2013). There remains a critical need for replacement of Municipal Hall, the Police Station, Fire Station #2 and the Municipal Yard facility, as noted through facility assessments as part of the District's Facilities Master Plan. All of the buildings require replacement in the near future to address accessibility and safety deficiencies, meet legislated standards, and meet the growing operational needs of the District.

The District's recent Strategic Plans have included looking closely at redevelopment and has taken an approach based on the principles of:

1. ensuring the project has the lowest financial impact as possible on the District, and
2. utilizing the properties to their full potential for the community, consistent with recent Official Community Plan updates.

The District has used community input from the Official Community Plan and other guiding documents to shape the initial direction, and is now reaching out to the community to help guide the next steps.

This project is in the very early stages and the District is committed to moving it forward in a timely manner. The project needs to be done now, not later, due to rising construction costs, the condition of the buildings and to meet the growing needs of Central Saanich.

CIVIC REDEVELOPMENT

Questions & Answers



What will redevelopment cost residents?

Current and previous Central Saanich Councils and staff have been taking proactive steps to plan for these replacements financially. Minimizing costs has been a key project principle from the outset to ensure that when the time was right we would be in a strong financial position. In 2014, the District began expediting repayment of the debt taken out from building Fire Station 1 (expected to be paid off by 2026) so that annual funding could be utilized for new debt for rebuilding other municipal facilities. In 2017 the District implemented an Asset Management Plan (updated in 2022) and adopted financial strategies to increase funding to targeted levels for future replacement of our aging infrastructure, which includes the facilities in discussion. An "Infrastructure and Debt Levy" was added to taxes and will contribute towards the funding required.

Staff and Council will continue to focus on sound and creative fiscal strategies to ensure the development has minimal financial impact possible on taxpayers. The District will be actively exploring opportunities around partnerships, grants, District owned land, and more to ensure the impact is as low as possible on taxpayers. As we move forward, all options will be analyzed for their long-term financial benefits to the community. The full financial details of the project will be shared with the public as soon as they are determined.

What community amenities/partnerships are being explored?

Residents have clearly and consistently shared their requests for more green space, more connections between key areas in the District and routes for active transportation, childcare spaces, additional access to recreation, and support for healthcare and housing for our growing region.

The District will be working to determine how recreation facilities could potentially be included at the Hovey Road site given this site's proximity to Centennial Park and the need for more public recreation space on the Peninsula.

The Peninsula Recreation Commission supports exploring recreation facilities in the District of Central Saanich as part of a broader sub-regional facility planning process starting this year.

The District wants to hear from the community about desired amenities during public engagement this summer and fall.

How does the redevelopment align with the Official Community Plan?

The Official Community Plan envisions a community with rural and small-town character, a strong sense of community pride, and neighbourly residents that welcome diversity. It plans for a built environment that supports a healthy, vibrant community and diverse housing stock located within walking distance to services and public transit.

The redevelopment is about more than rebuilding municipal facilities, it's about leveraging this opportunity to create more space for needed civic amenities, such as recreation, daycare, medical offices, housing and commercial space. It's also about ensuring 1903 Mt Newton Cross Road, the largest site in Saanichton Village, contributes to a vibrant village as we work to envision the future of Saanichton for decades to come.

Redevelopment is key to improving accessibility of facilities, having more services in our community, and enabling residents to have smaller environmental footprints by building within the Urban Containment Boundary, which enables active forms of transportation and access to local services.

CIVIC REDEVELOPMENT

Questions & Answers



Will there be community input on this project?

There will be numerous opportunities for input, including a series of open house events online and in person in 2024 and 2025. The District is excited to be able to invite community input.

The three-phased engagement process will include:

1. ideas and input from the community (summer/fall 2024),
2. review and feedback of concepts and financial models (winter 2025),
3. final project plan and elector approval process (mid 2025).

In addition, community input that's already been received to date has already been considered and incorporated in the project. As background, within the last five years, the District has adopted a number of important plans based on significant public engagement. This included the Official Community Plan, Saanichton Village Design Plan, Economic Recovery Plan, Central Saanich Recreation Needs Assessment (CRD), and more (all available at CSaanich.ca/plans); we also recently held the 2023 Community Satisfaction Survey. Based on these plans, financial estimates, conversations with local service providers and what we hear from the community over the coming months, the District will have concepts developed in 2025.

The financial reality of what can be accomplished in today's construction market will determine what can be shaped by the community—such as what community amenities are priorities. Time is of the essence to organize the various aspects of this project before costs rise further. In the summer/fall of 2024 the District is inviting the community to learn more about the project and share in initial directions; in early 2025 we hope to have initial concepts and financial estimates for the community's input.

Please subscribe for updates at LetsTalkCentralSaanich.ca/Redevelopment to be made aware of opportunities to learn more about the project and provide feedback.

Why have land decisions been made in closed Council meetings, and why is some information still confidential?

Under section 90 of the Community Charter, Council may decide to go 'closed' or 'in-camera' to consider certain items; these meetings may only be held in very specific circumstances. The acquisition, disposition or expropriation of land is one of those circumstances, as the details of the discussion (e.g. appraisals, maximum debt service ratio etc.) have a very high likelihood to affect the interests of the municipality as it can reveal bargaining positions. Like when you are purchasing a house, when there are multiple negotiations at play as a landowner and purchaser; Council may keep some of the details confidential for a time to obtain the best value for taxpayers.

CIVIC REDEVELOPMENT

Questions & Answers



Why does the municipality require the Hovey Road site?

In looking at scenarios for redevelopment, finding a piece of bare land in the Urban Containment Boundary (and outside the Agricultural Land Reserve) was key financially. This site has the added bonus of being a great location to include a recreation facility, if possible. Having an ability to add civic space, including potential recreation and other community amenities to the location has many benefits, and a civic building is well suited for being on the perimeter of the village.

If the civic building was rebuilt on the current site, a large municipal operations building would take up prime land in the core of the village centre that could instead be used for housing, services, shops, green space, and other aspects of a walkable and vibrant village. The Mount Newton Cross Road site also has a much higher land value than the Hovey Road site, meaning the overall project cost would be more at that location and adequate space for recreation would not be as feasible.

The Hovey Road property also offers the District, and taxpayers, the cost benefits of being able to build on bare land while operations continue without temporary space rentals or service interruptions at the current location.

About the site: Hovey Road Lot A is the only sizeable piece of bare land within the Urban Containment Boundary (the 18% of the District where development is focused) and this piece has been vacant for approximately 18 years. It is approximately 2.2-acres situated across from Centennial Park, the District's most popular park, and is currently zoned A-1 but is not in the Agricultural Land Reserve. The location is central to the community and on a main road and transit route; it is a good location for municipal services including emergency service access.

Why did the District expropriate the Hovey Road site?

The District began by negotiating with the property owner, a corporation based on the mainland specializing in long-term care, to purchase the land, and had offered more than the District's appraised value. The step to begin expropriation was not taken lightly, but was felt to be critical for the community and a financially responsible site well-suited for a multi-purpose civic facility. The District believes the company could still advance their adjacent Lot B site on Hovey for a seniors' care facility through a rezoning process.

What is happening with the expropriation process?

The District obtained two land appraisals, based on current land zoning, the Official Community Plan, and data such as current similar land sales, as required by the BC *Expropriation Act*. Based on those appraisals the District issues an advance payment. If disputed, the amount could be challenged in court, however the property will officially be transferred to the District this summer regardless.

Why isn't a part of 1903 Mt Newton Cross Road being used for the future civic building site?

The District does not have plans for 1903 Mt Newton Cross Road yet and looks forward to inviting the community to have input this summer as we set initial direction and begin to develop potential concepts this fall.

1903 Mt Newton Cross Road is a rare parcel of land that's the largest site in the heart of Saanichton Village. The Official Community Plan and Saanichton Village Design Plan envision a village with more green public spaces for residents to enjoy as they relax or socialize, commercial frontages that beautify and liven the village core, pedestrian and cyclist facilities that encourage active transportation, and multi-level housing to meet the most pressing housing needs in our community. This site plays a critical role in realizing that potential for the future of the Village and entire community. The site is also of high land value and its use will provide an economic benefit to the community, while improving the financial model for the overall project. The District will be involving the community in the near future to learn more about what the public sees as the potential for the site.

CIVIC REDEVELOPMENT

Questions & Answers



Is increasing housing included in redevelopment plans at 1903 Mt Newton?

The District does not have plans for 1903 Mt Newton Cross Road yet and looks forward to inviting the community to have input as we set initial direction, which will subject to the input and approval of Council.

Housing will be considered as part of the many options for how the site could best contribute to the village. Expanding the supply of affordable, attainable and rental housing is a priority of Council.

Please learn more and share your ideas in the coming months about this site and the entire redevelopment—Council and staff look forward to hearing your ideas to ensure this important site has long-term community and economic benefits for generations to come.

Can you share the Feasibility Study?

In 2020, Central Saanich Council included a site feasibility study in the Strategic Plan to look at high-level options for replacing the aging facilities, and it was completed in 2023. The study looked at the rough costs of redeveloping a civic facility with space for Municipal Hall, Fire Station #2 and the Police Service and also an option to add space for recreation or community amenities. The study includes confidential municipal property land assessments and values and preliminary footprint scenarios that were only used for financial estimating. It looked at the most cost-effective way to redevelop not just the services currently located at 1903 Mt Newton Cross Road, but also the Municipal Yard. This was done while keeping in mind the need to reimagine Saanichton Village for the future and the critical role 1903 Mt Newton Cross Road, the largest lot in the Saanichton core, plays in the village's future.

The District is limited in what information can be shared with the public because the Feasibility Study contains preliminary information and potential land purchase prices that could impact land values. However, the District can share that the analysis of all possible locations was based on financial feasibility and supporting the following Official Community Plan's Fundamental Principles:

- Use limited land supply wisely
- Facilitate a sense of community
- Maintain rural character
- Manage growth carefully
- Provide a range of housing opportunities
- Create walkable neighbourhoods
- Address the causes and impacts of climate change
- Support economic development
- Protect and enhance the environment, biodiversity and natural ecosystems
- Protect water quantity and quality
- Support agriculture (prioritize development within the Urban Containment Boundary)

In addition, the land analysis looked for bare land that made financial sense as well as being within the Urban Containment Boundary and not in the Agricultural Land Reserve; this was the process that identified Hovey Road Lot A as the only piece of suitable bare land that met the criteria.

A summary of the Feasibility Study can be found on the project website, LetsTalkCentralSaanich.ca/CivicRedevelopment.

CIVIC REDEVELOPMENT

Questions & Answers



What is the timeline and status of the project?

The project began in 2006 and has started and stopped over the years. We are now running out of time to be able to redevelop before it's no longer affordable due to rising construction costs.

The timeline for the next year is to work with the community to determine plans for the sites, ensure solid financial estimates and plans minimizing the impact on tax-payers and hold a process for voters to approve debt, if required.

At this time the anticipated timeline would ensure the project prioritizes time for community engagement and concept development while being efficient to ensure construction cost estimates and financial models are affordable and current.

July-October 2024

- Community outreach on project
- Set initial directions for draft concepts following community outreach
- Hire architect and construction manager for Hovey site for concepts

Early 2025

- Develop and share concepts, options and financial strategies with community for feedback
- Refine concepts

Mid 2025

- Voter process (Alternative Approval Process or referendum)

Will there be a chance to vote on the project?

Elector approval is anticipated to be required to approve borrowing for redevelopment. The District anticipates a referendum (where residents can vote) or Alternative Approval Process (where residents only note if they are opposed) in 2025. Much more information on that approval process will be shared as the project progresses.

How can I stay informed and share ideas and feedback?

The District will be using many channels to keep residents informed – both print and online! We encourage you to visit the project site LetsTalkCentralSaanich.ca/CivicRedevelopment where you can find lots of information and subscribe for email updates.

Information can also be accessed from our website, CentralSaanich.ca or our Facebook or Instagram pages. In addition, please watch for updates in the lobby at the Cultural Centre/Library, in the Community Focus newsletter mailed to all homes, advertisements in the paper, posters and signage around town, regular project newsletters (made available online, at the Cultural Centre and at Municipal Hall) and project 'open houses' through the summer and fall.

Public input is vital, and Council and staff are looking forward to now being at the stage of the project where early directions can be explored. Please get involved!

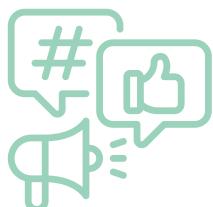
CIVIC REDEVELOPMENT



Help us design civic spaces

Public input is vital! Council and staff are looking forward to now being at the stage of the project where directions can be explored.

The District will be using many channels to keep residents informed – both print and online! We encourage you to visit the project website where you can find lots of information and subscribe for email updates.



Information can be accessed at

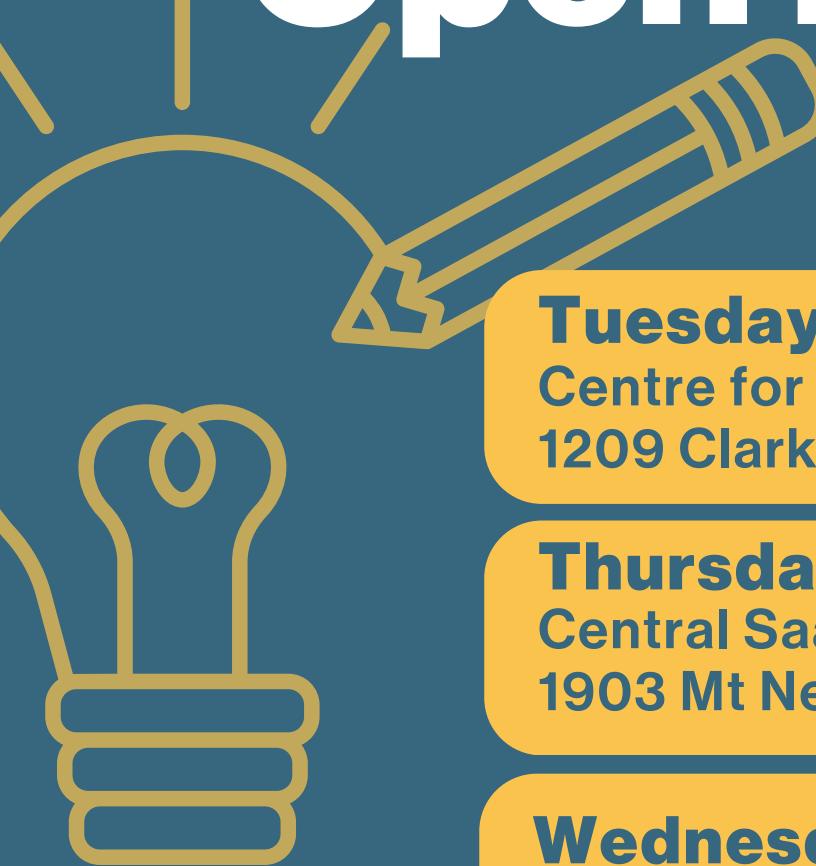
- website: LetsTalkCentralSaanich.ca/CivicRedevelopment
- the District of Central Saanich's Facebook or Instagram pages
- updates in the lobby at the Cultural Centre/Library
- in the *Community Focus* newsletter mailed to all homes
- advertisements in the paper
- posters and signage around town
- regular project newsletters (made available online, at the Cultural Centre and at Municipal Hall)
- and open houses through late 2024 and early 2025.



LetsTalkCentralSaanich.ca/CivicRedevelopment

CIVIC REDEVELOPMENT

Open Houses



Tuesday, July 30, 4:30-7:30 pm
Centre for Active Living 50+
1209 Clarke Rd

Thursday, August 22, 4-7 pm
Central Saanich Municipal Hall
1903 Mt Newton Cross Rd

Wednesday, Sept 11, 6-7 pm
Virtual Open House

Sunday, Sept 15, 10am-12pm
Central Saanich Municipal Hall
1903 Mt Newton Cross Rd

**Join us to
learn more**



LetsTalkCentralSaanich.ca/CivicRedevelopment



Central Saanich