



|| Tseycum Chief Tanya Jimmy, Tsartlip Chief Curtis Olsen, and Mayor Cliff McNeil-Smith signed a Memorandum of Understanding on July 10th to work together toward shared priorities.

Historic agreement strengthens relationships with WSÁNEĆ Nations

In July, the Town of Sidney took an important step forward in reconciliation by signing a historic Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Tsartlip First Nation and Tseycum First Nation.

Facilitated by the WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council, the agreement establishes a framework for ongoing collaboration on shared priorities, such as environmental stewardship, economic development, public art, and the protection of ancestral sites. The MOU recognizes that Sidney is located within WSÁNEĆ territory,

where WSÁNEĆ people have cared for and stewarded the lands and waters since time immemorial.

The agreement implements a key commitment in Sidney's Official Community Plan (2022) to establish MOUs with WSÁNEĆ Nations and strengthen government-to-government relationships.

Through regular meetings and annual work plans, the partners will work together to advance shared initiatives. The Town will provide updates on collaborative projects as this work progresses.

2026 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION



Local Government Election Day is October 17. Learn about nominations, voting options, and voter registration.

More on page 3.

Shelter for extreme winter weather approved for St. Andrew Anglican Church

This July, following extensive community input, Council approved a Temporary Use Permit for an Extreme Weather Response Shelter at St. Andrew Anglican Church at 9691 Fourth Street.

The shelter will be operated by Beacon Community Services and will open only on nights when extreme winter weather poses a risk to people experiencing homelessness.

Under the permit conditions, the space may not be used as a shelter at any other time. The Temporary Use Permit is valid for up to three winter seasons.

The proposal builds on a successful pilot warming centre held earlier this year in the Nell Horth Room alongside the Sidney/North Saanich Library, which operated without incident over seven nights and served 15 individuals, including seniors.

Operational and staffing costs are anticipated to be covered by BC Housing.

Message from Mayor and Council

As summer draws to a close and the days begin to feel a little busier, we appreciate community members taking the time to catch up on municipal news and activities.

If you have been enjoying Sidney's public outdoor spaces this summer, you may be pleased to hear that improvements continue. In June, the Sidney Museum installed 13 new interpretive signs along the Waterfront Walkway showcasing local history and culture. The Town has also begun construction of a sport court in Philip Brethour Park, a great addition to the playground installed in 2024.

Those who appreciated last year's transition to four-way stops at downtown intersections on Sidney Avenue may welcome a similar change made to Bevan Avenue this summer at Second, Third, and Fourth Streets to help create safer, more predictable crossings for everyone.

This spring, we were happy to hear from hundreds of community members as we

asked what was most important to you in planning for the future replacement of Town Hall. Some of what we heard is highlighted here, with more details available online, and more engagement opportunities to come.

When the Town worked with the community to update Sidney's Official Community Plan in 2021-2022, residents underscored the importance of reconciliation with local First Nations. It has been rewarding to take a significant step toward that goal by signing a historic Memorandum of Understanding with Tsartlip and Tseycum First Nations this summer. You can find more information on the newsletter cover and online.

This fall marks the 2026 Local Government Election. In this edition, you will find key dates and information for voters and potential candidates. As we near the end of this Council term, we want to express what a privilege it has been to serve the people of this remarkable seaside community. Thank you for your trust and ongoing engagement.



Back row from left to right: Councillor Scott Garnett, Councillor Richard Novek, Councillor Steve Duck, Councillor Chad Rintoul. Front row from left to right: Councillor Sara Duncan, Mayor Cliff McNeil-Smith, Councillor Terri O'Keeffe.

Sidney's 2026 Local Government elections

Local Government Election Day across BC is on Saturday, October 17, 2026.

Elections are an important opportunity for residents to help shape the future of their community by choosing who will represent them and make decisions on local issues.

In Sidney, voters will elect:

- One Mayor
- Six Councillors
- One School District 63 Trustee

Those interested in running as a candidate can pick up nomination packages at Town Hall. Completed nomination documents must be submitted to the Chief Election Officer at Town Hall during the official

nomination period which begins September 1 and closes on September 11.

The official list of candidates for residents to consider will be declared following the close of the nomination period.

For residents, there are several options to cast a ballot, including:

- Advance voting
- Vote by mail
- Voting on Election Day

Find more information below as well as key dates in the timeline.

For complete election information visit [Sidney.ca](https://sidney.ca) or contact the Administration Department at 250-656-1139 or admin@sidney.ca.



KEY DATES FOR 2026 ELECTION

NOMINATION PERIOD OPENS

Tuesday
September 1
9am

NOMINATION PERIOD CLOSSES

Friday
September 11
4pm

MAIL BALLOTS DISTRIBUTED

Approximately
Monday
September 28

ADVANCE VOTING DAY #1

Wednesday
October 7, 8am - 8pm
Town Hall
2440 Sidney Ave

ADVANCE VOTING DAY #2

Wednesday
October 14, 8am - 8pm
Town Hall
2440 Sidney Ave

GENERAL VOTING DAY

Saturday
October 17, 8am - 8pm
Mary Winspear Centre
2243 Beacon Ave

REGISTER TO VOTE

New voter registrations will be accepted on voting day.

Please bring two pieces of identification that prove your identity and residency, with at least one containing your signature, such as:

- BC Driver's Licence
 - BC Identification Card
 - BC Services Card
 - ICBC Vehicle Registration
 - Citizenship Card
 - Property Tax Notice
 - Utility Bill
- (water, electricity, or gas)

VOTE BY MAIL

Vote-by-mail ballots are available to all qualified electors and are helpful to those who may be away or unable to attend a voting location in person.

Completed mail ballots must reach Town Hall by October 16 (or be submitted on voting day at the Mary Winspear Centre).

Submit a mail ballot application to Town Hall. Forms are available at Town Hall and [Sidney.ca](https://sidney.ca).

Community shares priorities for future Town Hall

This spring, the Town completed an initial phase of public engagement on the future replacement of Town Hall. The feedback will help inform next steps in planning. Engagement opportunities included two public open houses and an online survey, which received 522 responses.

Community feedback emphasized the importance of keeping project costs as low as possible. Many participants were receptive to exploring cost-saving options such as relocation within the downtown core and mixed-use development. Views were more divided on the potential use of increased building height to lower costs. There was a clear preference for owning rather than leasing a future Town Hall.

No decisions have been made at this time. The initial input will help Council identify which options warrant further exploration before draft concepts are developed and shared with the community for consideration. Planning and community consultation is expected to continue through 2027 and 2028.



||| The Fire Department's Incident Response Dashboard helps bring hundreds of incident response records together in one place, revealing trends and insights that support informed decision-making.

Sidney Fire's data-driven dashboard recognized internationally

The Town of Sidney received international recognition this summer when the Fire Department's new Incident Response Dashboard was given a shout-out during the opening session of the Esri User Conference, a major global mapping and technology conference in San Diego attended by more than 16,000 people.

Over the past year, the Town's Information Technology team and Fire Department joined forces to transform more than 1,400 emergency response records from 2024 into an interactive dashboard. The made-in-Sidney tool will be updated each year, mapping emergency incidents, identifying trends, and tracking response performance.

The dashboard will help the Fire Department make data-driven decisions about service delivery and future planning, addressing a common challenge faced by organizations: how to turn large amounts of collected data into meaningful insights that can be acted upon.

While the dashboard contains incident details that cannot be made publicly available, one broader fact may be of interest to community members: in 2024, Sidney Fire Department's average emergency response time was 5.2 minutes; local firefighters are often among the first responders on scene when help is needed.

Get to know Sidney's newest Deputy Fire Chief

Staff Profile: Deputy Fire Chief Joe Geary is no stranger to the Sidney community. Raised in Victoria, he later settled on the Peninsula, becoming a familiar face to many residents through his work as owner of Sidney Plumbing and as a volunteer firefighter with the Sidney Fire Department, which he joined in 2008.

After serving as Fire Chief in Christina Lake in the Kootenay region for six years, he was happy to trade in his snowshoes for ocean views in 2025, returning home to serve as one of Sidney's two Deputy Fire Chiefs.

What are some of your areas of responsibility?

One of the roles I hold here is Training Officer, helping ensure our firefighters are ready for whatever challenges come their way.

Alongside responding to calls and supporting the department's operations, I oversee the training of our new recruits and coordinate ongoing skills development for our volunteer and career firefighters. Through weekly drill nights, we train on everything from high-rise tactics to vehicle extrication and marine firefighting.



||| In 2025, Deputy Fire Chief Joe Geary returned to his roots, coming back to the Sidney Fire Department after six years spent as Fire Chief at Christina Lake.

Repetition helps build the muscle memory and teamwork needed in an emergency, so when a call comes in, like the marine fire we responded to this past February, our firefighters are ready.

What role does Sidney play in supporting BC's wildfire response?

Each year a number of Sidney firefighters take part in wildfire response in other parts of BC. These fires are devastating and managing them requires a province-wide response.

I recently returned from a deployment in Boston Bar, north of Hell's Gate on the Fraser River, where I was a Task Force Leader for a team of 15 firefighters. The intensity of that situation certainly sharpened my fast-paced decision-making skills as I

responded to more structural fires in eight days than I might during eight years of normal duty.

When I got back to Sidney, three more of our firefighters were heading out on wildfire deployments of their own.

No one wants to be far from home, but we know it is better than having a disaster hit close to home. If Sidney ever faces a major emergency, firefighters from across BC will be there to support us too.

What has been the best part of returning to Sidney?

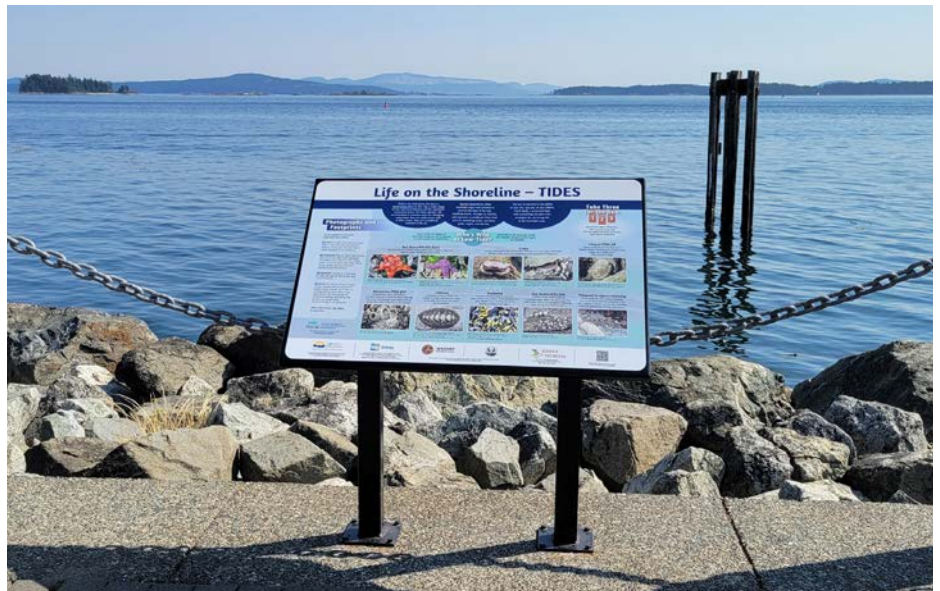
The smell of the ocean, living closer to family, and the chance to help a team of dedicated new recruits prepare to serve as active-duty firefighters in Sidney. I can't wait to see them out on the trucks in 2027.

Philip Brethour Park improvements continue

A new multi-sport court at Philip Brethour Park is nearing completion. The full-size court will support a variety of activities, including basketball, ball hockey, and tennis. In the months ahead, the Town will also pave the parking area.

These improvements are part of the Town's ongoing efforts to help this green space become a more lively neighbourhood park in West Sidney. In 2024, a playground was added, with some features designed to include children with accessibility challenges.

Over the past two years, the park has also hosted Sidney's Tree Appreciation Day, resulting in a new treed pathway and additional tree plantings that will help increase shade and canopy coverage over time.



||| Sidney Museum recently installed 13 new interpretive signs along the waterfront.

New interpretive signs installed along Sidney's waterfront

This June, the Sidney Museum and Archives unveiled 13 new interpretive signs along the Waterfront Walkway and into downtown, highlighting Sidney's history, culture, and ecology.

Developed with support from the Town of Sidney and other community partners, the new signs replace panels that were originally installed in 2009. As the original signs weathered over time, the Museum opted to reimagine what the signs could be.

Working with First Nations and local organizations over several years, the Museum created a more engaging and inclusive interpretation of the stories, people, and places that have shaped the Saanich Peninsula.

As part of the project, the

Museum worked closely with the WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council and WSÁNEĆ School Board to incorporate traditional stories, knowledge, and SENĆOTEN language that reflect the enduring connection of WSÁNEĆ people to local lands and waters.

The signs also explore local marine ecosystems, waterfront industries, transportation and rail history, women's history, Chinatown in Sidney, and significant events from the community's past.

Residents and visitors can discover the signs at their own pace while exploring the waterfront. For those who would like to visit all 13 locations, a self-guided walking tour map is available at SidneyMuseum.ca.

PICKLEBALL COURT TRIAL COMING TO IROQUOIS PARK

Following neighbourhood and stakeholder consultation, a trial period is moving ahead this fall for dedicated pickleball courts at Iroquois Park, based on a conversion of existing court space. The west tennis court will be converted to two pickleball courts, while the east court will remain a dedicated tennis court. A mobile divider and separate gated entrances will be added.

The trial will run through November 2027, with noise and user experience monitored throughout this period before the Town considers any long-term changes.

SCOOTERS, SIMPLIFIED

The term 'scooter' can create some confusion, as it applies to two very different types of devices that must follow different rules.

As a general rule, mobility scooters are required to move like pedestrians, while electric kick scooters must move more like bicycles, with some additional restrictions.

Mobility scooters should use sidewalks where available. When there is no sidewalk, users should use the left shoulder facing traffic.

Electric kick scooters, which are permitted in Sidney as part of a Provincial pilot project, are not permitted on sidewalks and may travel where bicycles are allowed.

E-scooter riders must:

- Be 16 years of age or older
- Wear a helmet
- Obey traffic signs & signals
- Use lights at night
- Travel at 25 km/h or less.



NEW FOUR-WAY STOPS ON BEACON AVENUE

This summer, four-way stops were introduced at the intersections of Bevan Avenue and Second, Third, and Fourth Streets.

The change responds to community safety concerns and reported near misses involving pedestrians. These well-used downtown intersections accommodate a mix of users, and the new traffic pattern will create more predictable crossing opportunities for everyone.

The update builds on a similar change at downtown intersections on Sidney Avenue, which was well received in 2025.

The Sidney Street Market, with more than 150 vendors, has been bringing between 3,500 to 4,500 people of all ages to Beacon Avenue on Thursday evenings this summer.

NIL/TU'O MURAL CAREFULLY RESTORED BY ICEBEAR

Sidney's most visible mural has been brought back to its original vibrancy through careful hand restoration by artist IceBear, who created the work in 1997. The restoration was funded by TELUS, which commissioned the original mural for its telecommunications building at Resthaven Drive and Beacon Avenue.



NIL/TU'O (In the Beginning) features Coast Salish warriors paddling a canoe toward shore. When creating the mural, IceBear, a member of the Chippewas of Nawash, worked closely with Tseycum Nation Chief and Elders to help with cultural accuracy.

PLANNING A HOME IMPROVEMENT PROJECT?

Permits may be required for renovations, accessory structures, heat pumps, and other projects. A quick call to Development Services can help avoid delays and ensure your project meets Town requirements: 250-656-1725.



Ever wonder where to look for a detailed list of upcoming community events? Visit www.sidneybia.ca/events to view or add events.

SALISH SEA PAINT NIGHT

Saturday, September 26, 6pm to 8pm
Shaw Centre for the Salish Sea (9811 Seaport Place)

Learn about the gentle basking shark while harnessing your inner artist with the help of step-by-step instruction. Learn more at salishseacentre.org.

2026 ARTSEA STUDIO TOUR

Saturday, October 3 & Sunday October 4, 10am to 4pm
Locations across the Saanich Peninsula

Discover 44 local artists and the creative spaces behind their work during the 32nd annual ArtSea Studio Tour. Plan your self-guided route using the interactive map and enjoy a weekend of art, conversation and community. Learn more at ArtSea.ca.

TREAT STREET

Saturday, October 31, 4:30pm to 6pm
Downtown Sidney

Downtown Sidney transforms into a pedestrian-only zone for a safe, family-friendly Halloween celebration. Children can visit Treat Stations at local businesses and enjoy a festive community-wide trick-or-treating experience.

REMEMBRANCE DAY PARADE & CEREMONY

Wednesday, November 11, 10:30am
Downtown Sidney

The traditional Remembrance Day Parade will proceed at 10:30am from the Mary Winspear Centre, along Beacon Avenue and Second Street, to the Cenotaph on Town Hall. The Service of Remembrance for the Fallen commences at 10:50am. The event is organized by the Royal Canadian Legion which marks its Centenary Anniversary this year.