



In 2025, local artists submitted artwork to beautify five more utility boxes in Sidney. Above is Ronya Lake's Humpback Whale, which will be featured on a utility box wrap near Bevan Fishing Pier this summer. *More selected art on page 4.*

Public input needed to shape future Town Hall

In 2025, the municipality hired Number TEN Architectural Group to undertake a building condition assessment of Town Hall to see what would be needed for the building to continue functioning for another 40 years. The assessment found that extending the building's life for this period would require extensive renovations, including:

- Stripping the building back to its structural shell to replace heating and electrical systems;
- Installing new building footings and upgrading the building's exterior;

- Adding an elevator to meet public-building accessibility requirements; and,
- Addressing Building Code requirements for seismic structural reinforcements.

Given that so little of the original building would remain, the consultant concluded that the cost of renovations would be comparable to new construction, without the benefits of a modern layout or improved site use.

Staff are now focused on options to replace Town Hall rather than undertaking major renovations. Public input is needed to help guide next steps. *More on page 3.*

TEMPORARY WARMING CENTRE APPROVED FOR EXTREME WINTER WEATHER



The Town of Sidney will be working with Beacon Community Services to activate a warming centre during extreme cold weather events this winter (2025/2026) at the Nell Horth Room next to the library.

More on page 6.

Message from Mayor and Council

As we move into 2026, the final year of this Council's term, it is a fitting time to consider initiatives nearing completion and major projects beginning to take shape for the future.

One initiative that began as a community request has been our effort to provide a safe overnight space for people experiencing homelessness during extreme winter weather. For the rest of this winter, we will be partnering with Beacon Community Services to operate a night-time warming centre, when needed, in the Nell Horth Room, adjacent to the library.

Looking ahead, we are exploring a longer-term option in collaboration with St. Andrew's Church and Beacon Community Services, with the goal of establishing an Extreme Weather Response Shelter at

the church site. If this approach proves to be feasible, there will be opportunities for public input.

In keeping with our Strategic Plan, we have been updating Development Cost Charges to help fund growth-related infrastructure, and we recently completed new sea level rise and coastal flood maps to support climate adaptation.

One of the most significant projects on the horizon is planning for the future of the Town Hall building. Following a building condition assessment, Council is now exploring building replacement options rather than top-to-bottom renovations. We look forward to hearing from the public through open houses and an online survey this spring to help shape future planning. Thank you for your interest in municipal matters.



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.



Condition of the Public Works Yard to be assessed

Updating or replacing the Town's aging civic sites has long been a priority in Sidney's Strategic Plan. This work extends beyond Town Hall to include the Public Works Yard.

The Public Works Yard currently consists of a mix of structures, including buildings from the 1970s, a relocated and re-purposed home, a modular unit, and some additions from more recent decades. These facilities are deteriorating and do not function well together.

Staff are looking into options to modernize the Public Works Yard and are pursuing grant funding to support this assessment work.

Project updates are expected in 2027.

Community invited to take part in open houses and online survey for planning future Town Hall

Continued from page 1

While a new standalone Town Hall on the current site (2440 Sidney Avenue) may be the first option that comes to mind for a future Town Hall, it is also among the most costly. Redeveloping this site would require relocating Town Hall operations to a temporary facility for two to three years, resulting in significant additional costs and operational disruption. For this reason, Council and staff are prepared to explore a full range of options, including alternative downtown locations for Town Hall. There are no plans to relocate the Cenotaph.

Planning for a future Town Hall will be informed by public input to ensure future concept plans presented for public consideration reflect the community's needs, values, and fiscal priorities.

An online survey to gather feedback on key considerations is now available at Sidney.ca and the Town is hosting open houses this spring to share information and respond to community questions.

Key considerations for a future Town Hall

At this stage of the project, Council and staff will be seeking public input on the following key considerations:

- Whether to build a new Town Hall on the current site or relocate Town Hall to another location in downtown Sidney.
- Whether to pursue a public-private partnership (P3) to lower project costs and potentially add housing to the Town Hall site.
- Whether the new Town Hall should be municipally owned and financed through long-term borrowing. Another approach would be to lease space from a private partner to reduce maintenance responsibilities and borrowing costs.
- Whether to permit a building height above four storeys to help reduce project costs.
- Whether to include affordable housing in a new Town Hall project, recognizing that this could increase project costs.
- Whether to add community space in a new Town Hall project, recognizing that this could increase project costs.

Thank you for taking the time to provide input on this important project.



OPEN HOUSES

- Monday, March 30, 2026 1pm to 3pm
(Presentation at 1:15pm)
Mary Winspear Centre
2243 Beacon Ave
- Thursday, April 9, 2026 7pm to 9pm
(Presentation at 7:15pm)
Mary Winspear Centre
2243 Beacon Ave

ONLINE SURVEY

Survey open now until April 30 at Sidney.ca.

PROJECT WEBPAGE

Learn more about the project, stay tuned to updates, and view the Town Hall building condition assessment at Sidney.ca.

2026 Local Government elections

The 2026 election for the office of Mayor (1), Councillors (6) and School Trustee (1) will be held on Saturday, October 17, 2026 at the Mary Winspear Centre.

Are you eligible to vote at the October elections for the Town of Sidney? Is your name on the current list of electors?

The Town uses the Provincial Voters List for the election. You are eligible to vote if you are a resident of Sidney, or if you own property in Sidney even if you don't reside in Sidney.

Please contact Elections BC at 1-800-661-8683 or by email at electionsbc@elections.bc.ca to confirm that you are registered.

If you are thinking about running as a candidate for Council, please reach out to the Administration Department at Town Hall at 250-656-1139 or admin@sidney.ca for some helpful information.

More information on elector and candidate qualifications is available at Sidney.ca.

Local art coming to five utility boxes

Since 2006, the Town of Sidney has been brightening streets and public spaces by wrapping utility boxes and pump stations with original artwork. Last year, local artists were invited to submit designs for five utility boxes.

Thank you to all the artists who shared their work. In addition to the cover photo, below are four selected works coming in 2026.

Le Jardin Extraordinaire
Françoise Dunstan

Future Location: Near Waterfront washrooms



Life Is Good
Anna Trelford

Future Location: Fourth Street near Beacon Avenue (across from Army, Navy and Air Force Unit 302)

Sea Grass
Mary FitzZaland

Future Location: Near Waterfront washrooms



Constellation Orcas
Jenna Falk

Future Location: Bevan Avenue (near Shoppers Drug Mart)

New Director of Engineering

Staff Profile: Brian Murphy, P.Eng., is the Town of Sidney's new Director of Engineering, responsible for overseeing municipal infrastructure such as roads, sidewalks, underground utilities, and parks. He brings extensive experience from several local governments, having served as Assistant Director of Public Works with the City of Victoria, and most recently as Director of Public Works and Engineering with the City of Duncan.



||| Brian Murphy joined the Town of Sidney as the Director of Engineering in October 2025.

Raised in Royal Oak, where his family still lives, Brian's move to the Town of Sidney allows him to be closer to his aging parents, while contributing to a community he has enjoyed watching blossom through the years.

How has your perspective on Sidney changed since growing up in the area?

I grew up with friends in Sidney and have fond memories of trick-or-treating along its quaint streets. Since that time, it's been great to see Sidney's downtown thrive at a time when many downtowns across Canada have faced real challenges. There is growing pride in calling Sidney home, and I can see why. Where else can you find such an extensive waterfront walkway with parks along it?

What are some of the projects you will be working on?

We've got a number of important improvements planned around town. To name a few:

- At Rathdown Park, we're upgrading the drainage north of the playground to help prevent flooding, and also adding the services needed for a future public washroom.
- In West Sidney, we'll be extending the sidewalk along the east side of McDonald Park Road to make it safer for pedestrians and people walking from their cars to nearby destinations. Parking will still be available next to the sidewalk.
- On Harbour Road, we'll be replacing the pump station to keep sewage

moving reliably up the line to eventually reach the Saanich Peninsula Wastewater Treatment Plant.

What has helped you settle into your new role in Sidney?

There are definitely parallels here with my work in Duncan, as well as past experiences in Victoria and Medicine Hat. Many municipalities are facing similar challenges, and there's a lot we can learn from what's working or not working elsewhere. I've also been fortunate to land in a municipality that runs on a rolling infrastructure renewal program. That kind of foresight, commitment to the future, and accomplished progress is reassuring. It means the Engineering Department can work proactively rather than reacting to failing systems.



Updating Development Cost Charges

The Town is in the process of updating Sidney's 1998 Development Cost Charge Bylaw so that new growth contributes more appropriately to the cost of infrastructure such as water, sewer, drainage, parks, and roads.

The current bylaw no longer reflects today's construction costs or community needs. The proposed new rates, developed with input from the development community, would remain lower than most in the region, helping keep Sidney an attractive place to build.

Once Council gives the new bylaw three readings, it will be submitted to the Provincial Inspector of Municipalities for review and approval.

Over the next 20 years, the revised Development Cost Charge program is projected to generate more than \$22 million to help fund growth-related infrastructure and support a sustainable approach to community development.

Warming centre to operate during nights with extreme cold weather at Nell Horth Room

The Town of Sidney continues to take steps to support vulnerable community members during the coldest months of the year.

On January 12, Council approved the establishment of a temporary overnight warming centre, operated by Beacon Community Services, in the Nell Horth Room (10091 Resthaven Drive), adjacent to the Sidney and North Saanich Library.

The warming centre will operate during any extreme cold events that occur during the remainder of the 2025/2026 winter season, providing a safe, welcoming space with seating, access to washrooms, and light refreshments. Hours of operation will be overnight and will not overlap with library services.

Eligible operating costs will be reimbursed by the Province. A temporary storage container may

also be installed on site to allow individuals to securely store personal belongings while using the facility.

While there may only be a few cold snaps left to come this winter, the effort will provide an important service, as well as a learning opportunity for the Town.

Establishing a warming centre in the Nell Horth Room addresses immediate winter needs while longer-term planning continues for an Extreme Weather Response Shelter, which would include overnight sleeping mats during extreme weather events.

Staff are currently exploring St. Andrew's Church (9691 Fourth Street) as a potential location for the 2026/2027 winter season and will report back to Council, including proposed public engagement, if the site is found to be suitable.



||| This winter, a temporary warming centre can be activated during extreme weather in the Nell Horth Room next to the library at night.

NEW GUIDE HELPS PROPERTY OWNERS EXPLORE SMALL-SCALE MULTI-UNIT HOUSING

The Province's 2023 housing legislation (Bill 44) requires local governments to allow Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing on most properties previously zoned for single-family or duplex use.

To help residents understand these changes and explore whether this type of development may be a good fit for their lot, the Town has prepared Sidney's Guide to Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing, available at [Sidney.ca](https://sidney.ca).

This type of housing, often called "missing middle" housing, allows one to four dwelling units in forms that are similar in scale to existing neighbourhoods. Examples include suites, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhouses, and garden suites, as well as different combinations of these housing types.

The new guide explains recent updates to Sidney's Zoning Bylaw to align with Bill 44, and how property owners can get started by confirming whether their lot is eligible. It also highlights standardized housing design catalogues and examples that may be adaptable to Sidney properties.



NEW SEA LEVEL RISE MAPS AVAILABLE FOR SIDNEY FOLLOWING LOCAL STUDY

Sidney has completed an Enhanced Flood Inundation Modelling and Mapping project to assess shoreline flood risks from storms, waves, tsunamis, and sea level rise.

Funded through a Union of BC Municipalities grant and building on earlier regional work, the project used detailed wind and wave data and advanced modelling along Sidney's 8.5-kilometre shoreline.

The final report includes updated flood maps and recommended Flood Construction Levels based

on a one-metre sea level rise anticipated within the next 125 years.

These findings will help inform building regulations, zoning, emergency planning, and long-term climate adaptation.

In 2026, Council will consider next steps, which could include a Flood Construction Level Bylaw and Coastal Flood Hazard Mitigation and Adaptation Plan. The report and maps are available at [Sidney.ca](https://sidney.ca).

SNOW REMOVAL REMINDER

If we experience snowfall this winter, please do your part to keep the Town safe and accessible by clearing snow and ice from the sidewalk along your property, business, or home. This is a requirement under the Traffic Regulation Bylaw (sec. 51).

If you can, please consider extending a hand to neighbours who need assistance with snow clearing.

The Town will work to keep major and collector streets open and will clear snow and ice from as many local streets as possible, particularly those in the downtown area. We will also clear ice and snow from intersections and bus stops, beginning with high-use areas.

Thank you for your help on snowy days.

BUDGET PROCESS UNDERWAY

The Town of Sidney's annual budget process is now underway. The 2026-2030 financial plan, introduced to Council on February 17, will receive first consideration on March 3. Final consideration and approval is expected on March 16.

Public input on the budget is welcomed. Please refer to budget materials at Sidney.ca and share your thoughts at admin@sidney.ca or by speaking at the March 3 or March 16 meeting.



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

ASK AN OCEANOGRAPHER

Tuesday, March 10, 2pm to 3pm

[Sidney/North Saanich Library \(10091 Resthaven Drive\)](#)

Do you know why the ocean is blue? Did you know that there is weather underwater? Join scientist-in-residence and oceanographer, Sophia Johannessen, for an informal chat.

BLACK PIONEERS ON THE SAANICH PENINSULA

Underway until Saturday, February 28, 10am to 4pm everyday
[Sidney Museum \(2423 Beacon Avenue\)](#)

Celebrate Black History Month and learn about Black Pioneers on the Saanich Peninsula at a special display featuring the Clanton family, residents of Sidney in the early 20th century.

CELEBRATING SEAGRASS

Sunday, March 1, 10am to 4pm

[Shaw Centre for the Salish Sea \(9811 Seaport Place\)](#)

Seagrasses are essential ecosystems worldwide. Join educators and special guests for hands-on activities and learning about local eelgrass habitats, diversity and conservation.

ARTSEA GALLERY: 2026 SEASON BEGINS

Begins Friday, March 6

[Tulista Park](#)

The ArtSea Gallery in Tulista Park reopens for the 2026 season with a rotating schedule of weekly, artist-directed exhibitions showcasing local artistic talent. Visitors are invited to meet artists and artisans, experience demonstrations, and explore new works throughout the season.