



District of Sooke 2014 YEAR END REPORT

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The Corporate Services department is directed by the Chief Administrative Officer and has a broad range of responsibilities ranging from managing elections for the District of Sooke to the legislated responsibilities for corporate administration.

Council Meetings and Proceedings

The Corporate Services Department is primarily responsible for the coordination and proceedings of Council, particularly with respect to meetings regulated under the *Community Charter*, the *Local Government Act* and the District of Sooke Bylaw 422, *Council Procedure Bylaw, 2009*. Council can only conduct its business at a duly authorized meeting where there is a quorum of Council present.

Council Committees and Commissions

The District of Sooke Council has established a number of committees and commissions. The term “committee” is commonly used to refer to all of these bodies. There are three primary types of committees (standing, select and commission) that may be established by the Mayor or the Mayor and Council. There are also statutory boards and authorities established by senior levels of government; for example, the Board of Variance is a statutory committee that works at arm’s length from Council.

Corporate Services provides administrative support to Council Committees. There were seven Committees that continued to meet in 2014; Board of Variance, Climate Change Action, Community Grant Review, Emergency Planning, Finance and Administration and Land Use and Environment. Corporate Services also provided administrative support to the Community Centre Information Committee, Primary Health Care Services Working Group and Accommodation Tax Steering Committee.

Standing Committees

The Finance and Administration Committee provides advice to Council on the District's financial and administrative affairs. In 2014, the Finance Committee reviewed and finalized the 2014-2018 Five Year Financial Plan, which was adopted by Council in April along with the *Property Tax Rate Bylaw*. The Committee completed the review of the *Fire Protection Services Bylaw* and *Sooke Fire Rescue Service Policies and Standard Operating Guidelines* which were also adopted by Council in April 2014.

The Land Use and Environment Committee makes recommendations to Council on matters related to planning, zoning and affordable housing. In 2014, the Committee made recommendations to Council on several rezoning applications, development permits and development variance permits. The Committee continued the review of the *Subdivision and Development Standards Bylaw*, referring the Bylaw to Committee of the Whole for final review and approval. Bylaw No. 404, *Subdivision and Development Standards Bylaw, 2014* was adopted by Council in October 2014.

Select Committees

- ***Community Grant Review Committee***

The Community Grant Review Committee met in May and October 2014 to review and make recommendations to Council on Community Grant applications received from local non-profit organizations. The Committee identifies projects or special activities that build volunteer capacity and enhance the community through sports and recreation, arts and culture, heritage, public safety and community welfare, community beautification and environmental projects. In 2014, the Committee provided recommendations to Council for approval of \$60,274.00 in funding to Category A grants and \$45,422.39 in funding to Category B grants.

- ***Emergency Planning Committee***

The Emergency Planning Committee provides recommendations to Council regarding matters related to the planning, development, maintenance, and training of all aspects of emergency management within the District of Sooke. The Committee participated in a number of local and regional events in 2014 including; the Westshore Emergency Preparedness Fair, the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation Conference, Tsunami Awareness and Planning workshop and the Great BC Shakeout. The Committee will also be working with Sooke Fire Rescue Service and the District of Sooke in coordinating the Vancouver Island Emergency Preparedness Conference being held at the Prestige Hotel in April 2015.

Mayor's Public Advisory Panels

The three Mayor's Public Advisory Panels in the areas of Arts and Beautification, Economic Development and Community Health and Social Issues, continued to meet and provide updates and recommendations to Council.

- A. The Mayor's Panel on Arts and Beautification** played a key role in promoting the arts as well as making enhancements to beautification in the community. In 2014, the Arts and Beautification panel participated in and completed some of the following projects within the community:



- The addition of 8 flower barrels in the Town Centre adopted by local businesses/individuals
- Concept and implementation of the Thursday Night Market at the Museum
- Participation in the Scott's Miracle Gro Best Garden – 2014 Best Garden Selection Program
- Participation in the 2014 Communities in Bloom
- Participation in the Sooke Fall Fair
- Participation in the SEAPARC Festival of Trees
- Christmas tree light-up and Christmas swags in the Town Centre

The Arts and Beautification Panel coordinated the District of Sooke's participation in the 2014 Communities in Bloom in which the District received its third 5 Bloom status with a special mention for the District of Sooke Communities in Bloom Profile Book.

- B. The Mayor's Advisory Panel on Community Health and Social Issues**, in conjunction with the Sooke Region Community Health Initiative (CHI), worked to identify issues within the community in the areas of health and social wellbeing. The group reported to Council on community needs such as an expansion of Ayre Manor, a senior's drop in center, mental health services, the need for more family physicians, improvements to transportation infrastructure, youth services and planning for an aging population.

Faced with a long list of subjects to tackle, the Mayor's Panel on Community Health and Social Issues formed the **Primary Health Care Services Working Group (PHCSWG)**, tasked to create an action plan to identify and address health care services gaps and priorities in the Sooke region. Additionally, the Mayor's Panel identified an opportunity to combine their efforts with CHI under a Memorandum of Agreement with the District of Sooke in 2014 to provide support for activities that will improve the health and wellbeing of Sooke residents. CHI coordinated the successful application for the 2015 Age-Friendly Community Planning and Project Grant.

- C. The Mayor's Panel on Economic Development** works to identify ways to stimulate economic activity within the community.

2014 Report of the Mayors Advisory Panel on Economic Development

The panel met every third Thursday throughout 2014. The early focus was supporting the Chamber as it considered a path to financial sustainability and growth and the creation of an economic development portfolio.

The Chamber was connected to the Continuing Studies department at Royal Roads University and that project is now actively moving ahead with the hope that more educational opportunities will be made available to Sooke residents through. For example, Business Education programs championed by the Chamber will be made available through the Library in Sooke.

A considerable effort was made to bring a composting facility to Sooke, including hosting a site visit by a potential proponent. In the end, there was insufficient interest to pursue the proposal. The Panel remains convinced that a viable business case exists given the right political circumstances. Mateo Ocejo, the President of Net Zero Waste presented to the panel on his successful operations in other communities particularly when done in partnership with First Nations Communities.

The business and resident survey on economic development that was done by the panel clearly expressed the sentiments of what the community felt were priorities for Sooke.

Other ideas that were investigated by the panel included:

- expansions of the sewage treatment plant to a full transfer station;
- bringing together telecommuters in Sooke and increasing bandwidth to Sooke;
- the future of the DeMamiel Golf Course and nearby baseball diamond and meeting with the Community Association;
- bringing back the triathlon to Sooke,
- the development of a business incubator (Sookerator);
- the expansion of the sewer system to promote development;
- location of Sea Salt production in Sooke;
- the attractiveness of Sooke to the High Tech sector (Guest: Dan Gunn);
- promotion of alternative energy businesses;
- improving political support for the Mariner's Village Project;
- the rationale and advantages of amalgamating SRTA and the Chamber to handle tourism marketing for the region;
- over 55's as a target market; and,
- the creation of a Sooke Economic Development Agency.

Our congratulations to Adrenaline and AOS Accumulated Ocean Energy for their 2014 Greater Victoria Business Awards showing that Sooke can punch above its weight.

Public Communication

Council strives to provide timely and current information to the public. The Corporate Services department manages updates to the District website regularly with current issues, notices and general information (www.sooke.ca). Through the IT Department, a significant update to the District of Sooke website was started in 2013 in order to bring the www.sooke.ca address to current coding standards. The new website went live in May 2014.

The District of Sooke publishes weekly Council Column ads in both the Sooke News Mirror and the Sooke Voice News as to current updates and notices, including the public meeting schedule for upcoming public meetings.

The Annual Report is prepared by the Corporate Services Department and as required under the *Community Charter*, an Annual Municipal Meeting is held annually in June. The Annual Report must include:

- *A statement of objectives and measures that will be used as the basis for determining the municipality's performance during 2014 and 2015.*
Based on the District of Sooke Corporate Strategic Plan and Five-year Financial Plan, the 2014 Annual Municipal Report included the 2014- 2015 Municipal Objectives and Measures to be used as the basis for determining the municipality's performance during the current and following years.
- *The performance of the municipality with respect to established objectives and measures for 2013.*
The 2014 Annual Municipal Report presented the progress reporting on the performance of the municipality with respect to the municipal objectives and measures established in the 2013 Annual Municipal Report.
- *A list of permissive tax exempted properties for 2013;*
The Annual Report included a list of the permissive tax exemptions adopted by Council for 2013 and for each exemption, the amount of property tax that would have been imposed during 2013 if the exemption had not been granted.
- *The audited financial statements for 2013;*
The municipal auditors presented to Council the 2013 Audited Financial Statements at the May 12th, 2014 Council meeting. The statements were included in the Annual Report.
- *A report on the municipality's services and operations for 2013;*
The Annual Report presented a section from each of the District of Sooke departments as to the municipal services and operations for 2013, including highlights and major achievements. These sections provided an opportunity to inform the public on all major changes and developments. The statements were previously provided to Council as 2013 year end reports.
- *Declarations of disqualification (if any).*

For 2013, there were no declarations of disqualification.

Bylaws and Policies

The Corporate Services Department is also responsible for municipal bylaws and policies and accordingly, coordinates the public process for the adoption of the bylaw and policies. In 2014, Council adopted 20 bylaws and considered and introduced several more. There were several financial bylaws adopted in 2014 including:

- The *2014-2018 Five Year Financial Plan Bylaw* with the *2014 Property Tax Rate Bylaw*
- A *Revenue Anticipation Borrowing Bylaw* adopted annually to provide for the borrowing of money in anticipation of revenue
- A *Fees Amendment Bylaw* to amend fees at the District of Sooke Public Boat Launch
- A *Carbon Tax Rebate Reserve Fund Bylaw* and a *Playing Fields Reserve Fund Bylaw*

Most notably, a review of the *Fire Protection Services Bylaw* and review of the *Subdivision and Development Standards Bylaw* was undertaken in 2014. Bylaw No 404, *Subdivision and Development Standards Bylaw, 2014* was adopted in October. Council also adopted a new *Election Procedures Bylaw* and adopted several amendments to the District of Sooke *Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2010* and *Sooke Zoning Bylaw, 2013*.

Several policies were amended in 2014 including; *Community Grant Program Policy*, *Purchasing and Disposal of Assets Policy*, *Code of Ethics Policy*, *Respectful Workplace Policy* and *Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy*. In addition, several new policies were introduced and adopted by Council; *Sooke Fire Rescue Department Standard Operating Guidelines*, *Employee Services Awards Policy*, *Town Centre Illustrative Design Handbook Policy*, *Memorial Dedication Policy* and *Electronic Agenda Policy*.

Bylaws	Completed 2014
<i>Subdivision and Development Standards</i>	Adopted
<i>Official Community Plan -- Town Centre Design Guidelines</i>	Amended
<i>Fees</i>	Amended
<i>Fire Regulation</i>	Amended
<i>Financial Plan and Tax Rate and Revenue Anticipation Borrowing</i>	Adopted
<i>Carbon Tax Rebate Reserve Fund</i>	Adopted
<i>Election Procedures</i>	Adopted
<i>Sooke Zoning (600) Amendments</i>	Amended
<i>Sooke Core Sewer Specified Area</i>	Amended
<i>Permissive Tax</i>	Amended
<i>Delegation</i>	Amended
Policies	Completed 2014
<i>Memorial Dedication</i>	Adopted
<i>Town Centre Design Guidelines</i>	Adopted
<i>Community Grant Program</i>	Amended
<i>Electronic Agenda Systems and Devices</i>	Adopted
<i>Purchasing and Disposal of Assets</i>	Amended
<i>Codes of Ethics, Respectful Workplace, Bullying & Anti-Harassment</i>	Amended
<i>Sooke Fire Rescue Department Standard Operating Guidelines</i>	Adopted
<i>Sooke Fire Rescue Department Standard Operating Guidelines</i>	Adopted
<i>Sooke Fire Rescue Department Volunteer Member Grievance Policy</i>	Adopted

Conferences

The District of Sooke partnering agreement with the Prestige Oceanfront Resort allows for 12 days free usage per calendar month of meeting, event or convention spaces within the Resort's facilities. Eligible, non-profit organizations are able to use the facilities for no charge, with local groups having booking priority. In 2014, 98 bookings were made through the Agreement. This included the Mayor's Public Advisory Panel meetings and many local community groups. Several regional non-profits also accessed the space when available.

In addition, Sooke Fire Rescue Service hosted the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation Conference at the Prestige Hotel in October 2014 under the District of Sooke partnering agreement.

Council Conventions

Council attended three major Conventions in 2014; the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) Convention held in Qualicum Beach, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) held in Niagara Falls and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) held in Whistler. By attending annual Conventions, Council members receive important information through a variety of presentations and workshops by key political speakers and develop networking opportunities at the local, provincial and federal government levels.

Records Management

Records Management is the ongoing process of maintaining the records of the District of Sooke and the District's Records Management System. The Corporate Services Department is responsible for Records Management and for processing Freedom of Information Access Requests.

During the summer of 2014, a Camosun College Co-op Student was hired for a four month term. The student worked in the area of records management and provided general administrative support during tax season. Under the direction of Corporate Services staff, the summer student completed a number of projects including scanning and archiving completed Development Services applications. To date, the majority of the District's Land based applications have been scanned and attached to TEMPEST – the District's Land Management Database making records easily accessible to staff.

The District's Local Government Management Association (LGMA) file system was updated in preparation for the new Council term. A total of 81 boxes of records, including applications were archived and sent to off-site storage in 2014.

Projects for 2015 include the conversion of microfiche records into digital format and the implementation of SharePoint to manage the District's electronic records.

Elections

The District of Sooke General Local Election was held on November 15th, 2014. The Corporate Services Department is responsible for the preparation and coordination of municipal elections, which begins more than a year in advance of Election Day. The District of Sooke contracts for a Chief Election Officer and the Corporate Officer is appointed as the Deputy Chief Election Officer.

Newly Elected Officials

The Inaugural Meeting of Council was held in the Council Chambers on December 1st, 2014. The newly elected Council was led in precession into the Council Chambers by Sooke Pipes and Drums piper Lynn Moffatt. Mayor Maja Tait and Council members were given their Oath of Office and Oath of Allegiance by Notary Public Shawna Farmer. Following Mayor Tait's Inaugural Address, members of the public joined Council and Staff for refreshments at a small reception in the Firefighter's Lounge.



Council attended several orientation sessions, including a session with lower Vancouver Island municipalities held in Victoria.

Special Events

Throughout the year, members of Council and staff participate in several special events within the community and the municipal offices. The Corporate Services Department is responsible for coordinating special events.

Public Information

In May 2014, The District of Sooke participated in the Sooke Rotary Auction and Spring Fair at SEAPARC Leisure Complex. Members of Council and staff presented information to the public on the 2014-2018 Five Year Financial Plan, 2014 Corporate Strategic Priorities, the Connector Road and future road network projects.

A public information meeting was held in March 2014 to provide an opportunity for the public to talk to Council and staff on current municipal projects and initiatives, including:

- Proposed Sunriver playing fields
- DRAFT Community Energy and Emissions Plan (CEEP) Connector Road Project update
- Proposed 2014 – 2018 Five Year Financial Plan
- New Sooke Emergency Plan
- Tsunami Signage
- Boat Launch Management Survey
- RCMP – Citizens on Patrol and Speedwatch
- Sooke Community Health Initiative
- Mayor's Public Advisory Panel on Arts & Beautification (including Communities in Bloom)
- Town Centre Design Guidelines

Wadams Way Opening

On September 27th, 2014, the District of Sooke celebrated the official opening of “Wadams Way”, the newly constructed east-west connector road and multi-use trail through the Town Centre. Following speeches by Mayor Wendal Milne, Regional Director Mike Hicks, Consultants, Nathan Dunlop and Peter Ferguson and Wadams family member Peter Cook, Council opened the new Connector Road with an official ribbon cutting and rode down the newly completed Wadams Way in a fire truck.



Following the opening of Wadams Way, the District of Sooke participated in the Sooke Family Resource Society Wadams Way Public Market to celebrate 30 years of service for the Sooke Family Resource Society and the 10th Anniversary of Children’s Health Foundation’s Sooke Child, Youth and Family Centre.

Santa Claus Parade

The District of Sooke co-hosted the Sooke Region Chamber of Commerce Santa Claus Parade where the newly elected Council participated in the festivities.

Staff Events

District staff participates in several fundraising activities throughout the year. In August, staff took on a challenge from SEAPARC in the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge fundraiser in which the District challenged the Sooke Region Chamber of Commerce. The overall staff/United Way Campaign for 2014 was a huge success. Payroll contributions increased 14% this year, with a total of \$5,057 raised in support of local United Way programs.



At Christmas time, staff took part in numerous fundraising efforts including collection for the Sooke Christmas Bureau Help Fill a Fire Truck Campaign and contributed to the CUPE 374 Annual Socks for Kids Drive.

BYLAW COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

The Bylaw Compliance and Enforcement department has worked diligently to establish relationships in the community such that the public are more inclined to call the bylaw enforcement department in a timely manner, which generally, affects the outcome of actions taken resulting in less time dealing with a particular issue. This has been a rather challenging year for the Bylaw department due to a few property use issues that have consumed a great amount of staff time and legal resources.

There were 307 “Calls for Service” in 2014. Breaking the total ‘Calls for Service’ down, 244 calls were for Bylaw contraventions and 63 were for Parking which represents:

- 9.52% increase in Traffic complaints as compared to 2013
- 29.66% increase in Bylaw complaints as compared to 2013

COMPLAINT	NUMBER
Animals	18
Burning	20
Business Licence Queries	4
Civil	17
Farm Animal	2
Illegal Grow Op	1
Illegal Suites	4
Noise Construction	4
Noise General	24
Private Property General	24
Private Property Unsightly	35
Public Property Boulevards	2
Public Property Garbage	4
Public Property General	19
Signs	16
Work Without Permit	14
Zoning Non-Compliance	36
Total	244

BUSINESS LICENCING

Business Licences Issued

As of December 31, 2014, 613 Business Licences were issued as follows:

LICENCE	NUMBER
Commercial Large	20
Commercial Small	181
Home-Based	164
Intermunicipal	219
Non-Resident	24
Daily	2
Peddler	2
Direct Seller	1
Total	613

This represents an 8% increase in total business licences as compared to December 31, 2013. There were 100 new Business Licence applications received in 2014, which represents a 7% increase in new applications over 2013.

Business Licence Complaints

There were only four complaints related to Businesses operating within the District of Sooke. There were two complaints each of “Operating without a Licence” for Home-Based and Intermunicipal Businesses.

Bylaw Enforcement and Business Licence Official

Professional development for the Bylaw Enforcement and Business Licence official in 2014 included:

- *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design* course, which includes planning communities that are people friendly, walkable, visually pleasing and through design makes communities safer. There is a second level to this course that goes into much more detail in actual planning of areas.
- A second course attended was instructed by the law firm of **Dominion GovLaw** entitled *Prosecute This 2*, which was held in Richmond in November 2014. This course deals with a higher level of prosecuting Bylaw offences and various methods of achieving compliance.
- The District of Sooke Licence Inspector, along with those from the other 12 Municipalities on Southern Vancouver Island, continues to meet to discuss Intermunicipal Business Licencing to ensure we are consistent in our approaches and Bylaws. This is proving to be very effective as an education tool as well as networking. The group frequently invites speakers of various organizations to attend and address the group. An example of previous speakers includes representatives from the Better Business Bureau, Vancouver Island Health Authority Licence Department and those speaking on Medical Marijuana legislative changes.



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

It is my pleasure to highlight the key accomplishments in 2014 for the Finance Department. 2014 was a year of continued progress in the finance department with a number of priorities that were achieved in 2014.

Budget:

Through a number of meetings with the Finance and Administration Committee and Council, a preliminary approval of the 2014 – 2018 Five Year Financial Plan was achieved in early February. This is in line with the previous year and earlier than in years prior to that and a testament to the hard work of every department head and the CAO in the preparation of the budget.

The 2014 – 2018 Five Year Financial Plan was brought forward into bylaw format and approved by Council on May 12th, before the provincially legislated deadline of May 15th.

The 2014 budget achieved Council's objective of less than a 2% overall tax increase while also setting additional funds aside for future capital replacement projects.

With the civic election in November 2014, the 2015 budget process will begin in early 2015 after the newly elected Council has completed their strategic planning sessions.

2013 Year-end:

Staff worked with the external auditors to finalize the 2013 Financial Statements to meet the statutory deadline of May 15th. The financial statements were received and approved by Council on May 12th.

A number of recommendations from the audit of the 2011 Financial Statements were implemented by the department in 2012. This resulted in a significant reduction in the number of recommendations coming from the audit of the 2012 Financial Statements. The Finance Department, in conjunction with all other District departments, successfully continued to work hard to improve the internal processes and controls. This was demonstrated by another reduction in the number of recommendations coming from the audit of the 2013 Financial Statements.

Property Taxes:

The tax rates must be set before May 15th each year and for 2014 they were set on May 12th. Once the tax rates have been set tax notices need to be generated and mailed out. Again in 2014, the department managed to issue the tax notices in a timely manner by mailing them out by the first week of June. There were 5,972 tax notices mailed out for 2014.

The month of June and the first week of July is a very busy time for the Finance Department and the front counter staff as we process and collect the property taxes for the year. Property taxes made up approximately 35% of all revenue for the municipality in 2014. The property tax due date this year was July 2, 2014 and accounts with outstanding balances after this date had a 10% penalty applied.

The District of Sooke has two primary sources of taxation revenue, property taxes and sewer parcel tax. Property taxation is the largest source of revenue for the District of Sooke, 34.61% of total revenue. Sewer parcel tax (including the sewer generation charge) amounts to 8.35% of total revenues.

Of the 5,815 properties that had taxes applied in 2014, 4,987 paid their taxes before the due date. This represents 86% of the tax folios.

As mentioned above, properties that have not paid their taxes before the tax due date receive a 10% penalty on outstanding current year taxes. For 2014 the penalty that has been applied was \$153,925. The penalty amount and the percentage paid before the due date statistics are consistent with previous years.

Property Tax Sale:

Each year, on the last Monday of September, municipalities across the Province of BC hold their annual tax sale if necessary. Under provincial legislation, the collector must hold a tax sale for any properties that have delinquent taxes outstanding. For 2014 delinquent taxes are outstanding taxes from the 2012 property tax year. The Tax Sale date for 2014 was September 29th.

Finance department staff begin contacting property owners with delinquent taxes at the beginning of August to attempt to do everything possible to avoid having properties go to tax sale. This year there were over 100 properties that had delinquent taxes when staff began contacting property owners, and staff was able to collect on every property prior to the tax sale. There was no tax sale this year.

Human Resources:

Staff continues to work on a number of human resources related projects and tasks.

Community Grant Funding:

The Community Grant Program is designed to assist non-profit organizations with projects or activities that promote community well-being.

A new Community Grant Program Policy was developed and was adopted by Council in February 2014. The new policy strengthens fiscal responsibility and accountability by limiting the grant categories, introducing a maximum award level, improving application templates, and streamlining application intake dates. The changes help ensure that the community is getting the best value for tax payer funding.



Fiscal 2014 was another successful year with the District issuing 13 grants totalling \$60,274 to Category A applicants, and an additional 13 grants totalling \$45,422 to Category B applicants.

Pre-authorized Withdrawal Plan (PAWS)

The success of this five year old project continued into fiscal 2014. This program has gone from 262 last year to 291 participants in 2014. The program automatically debits the account holder's bank account on the first business day of each month from August to May with the balance automatically debited on the property tax due date.

Electronic Home Owner Grant (e-HOG)

Like the PAWS, 2014 was the sixth year for the Electronic Home Owner Grant. Not all municipalities participate in this program but those that do are finding considerable customer satisfaction and increased usage. Our statistics show that usage increased from 1,385 in 2013 to 1,422 in 2014. In addition to added convenience for the property tax payer, the e-HOG program has resulted in processing time savings.

Deferred Property Tax:

In 2013 there were 134 property owners who used this provincial government program and in 2014 there were 137 participants. The total dollar value of deferred taxes amounted to \$355,923 in 2014 (\$336,726 in 2013).

Information Technology:

The winter of 2014 saw consolidation of servers, replacement of aging server hardware and enhancements in internal wireless capabilities.

In the Spring of 2014 network hardware was installed that replaced an outdated appliance. The new firewall examines traffic based on access rules, geographic location, content, application types and blocks known viruses or malware. Protecting the internal network becomes more challenging with each passing year as attacks become more sophisticated and prevalent across all sectors of IT.

Also in the Spring of 2014 a new sooke.ca website was launched in partnership with AMDS, a local Sooke web development studio. The new website was built on a WordPress platform with custom templates developed by AMDS. The result was a mobile friendly website that's easy to navigate by end users and easy to update by district staff.

In the Summer of 2014 RFP's were issued for IT Augmentation services and Asset Management solutions. Two vendors were ultimately chosen and these solutions were implemented in the fall of 2014. The IT augmentation minimizes the risk a single person IT department presents. The asset management software helps the District accurately forecast the resources required for asset replacement, maintenance and repair and future growth.

In the Fall of 2014 the Districts business license software was updated as the current solution was no longer supported starting in 2015. The new solution is tightly integrated into our existing land management software.

The year was rounded out with the election of a new council and the move to paperless agendas. iPads were purchased for council and with our existing Granicus software for video streaming we were able to provide an app that enables digital agendas. Inside the app council and staff can take notes, bookmark reports or attachments and annotate sections of the agenda much like they would on paper. Thousands of pages of paper will be saved moving forward.

Conclusion:

2014 was a busy year for the Finance Department with many new initiatives in addition to the many statutory requirements. The department began work on and completed many IT and Human Resources related projects while still maintaining our regular day to day operations.

It is believed that in 2015 the Department can continue to build on its accomplishments and continue providing sound management of the District's assets and continue its delivery of exceptional customer service through timely, accurate information to stakeholders both internally and externally.

It is critical that sound fiscal responsibility be considered in all decisions. Fiscal Responsibility must include sustainable decisions. Sustainable decisions are those that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Michael Dillabaugh, CA

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES YEAR END REPORT 2014

Planning Department
Geographic Information Services
Subdivision and Development
Engineering Department
Building Department



Planning Department Activities Year End Report 2014

Development Activity

The following is a brief summary of planning applications in 2014:.

ACTIVE APPLICATIONS	2014
Rezoning & Public Hearing	5
Development Permit	8
Development Variance Permit	8
Board of Variance	2
Sign Permit	20
Temp. Commercial/Industrial	1
OCP Amendment	1
Total	45

Project and Policies

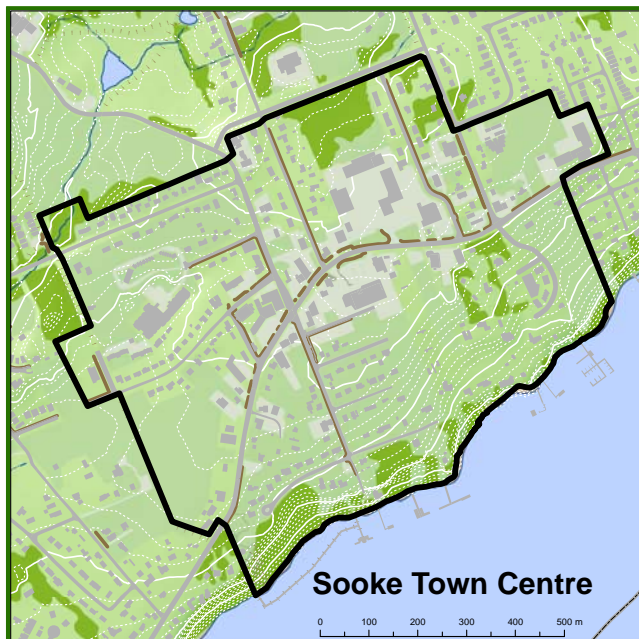
Summarized below are initiatives taken on by the Planning Department during the year 2014.

- **Town Centre Design Guidelines**

Staff prepared amendments to the Official Community Plan to strengthen the policy statements regarding a “West Coast” theme for the Town Centre. Staff rewrote the Development Permit Area (DPA) #1 for the Town Centre to include more guidelines around architectural details, storefront design and building materials. Staff, with input from the Sooke Region Chamber of Commerce and the Advisory Panel to the Mayor on Arts and Beautification prepared a Town Centre Design Handbook (Policy 8.9) outlining the characteristics for a “West Coast” theme.



Sooke Laundromat & Car Wash



- **Amendments to Bylaw No. 408, Sooke Town Centre Revitalization**

Amendments were made to allow Built Green buildings in addition to LEED to be eligible for property value tax exemptions, reduced building permit fees and reduced development cost charges in the Sooke Town Centre.

- **Administrative Amendments to Bylaw No. 600, Sooke Zoning Bylaw, 2013**

Amendments were made to rectify administrative matters.

- **Horseshoe Pitch**

Staff worked with the Sooke Horseshoe Association to determine an appropriate location for a horseshoe pitch within the District. Several options were presented to Council and a final approval was granted to use the municipal lands located at 2250 Sooke River Road. The Sooke Horseshoe Association must enter into an agreement with the District of Sooke for the approved location of the Horseshoe Pitch at 2250 Sooke River Road, and a design must be provided by the group.

Sun River School Site

Staff was involved in the community engagement processes with Sooke sports organizations/clubs, residents of Sun River and the community to present, review and receive comments regarding the

proposed playing fields and related costs. The Planning department was also in charge of completing the Sun River School site rezoning and OCP amendment. These bylaws went through the public process and were approved by Council.

Development & Planning Advisory Committee Meetings (DPAC)

Staff attended meetings for up-dating the Capital Regional District (CRD) Regional Growth Strategy (RGS). The RGS will be replaced by a Regional Sustainability Strategy (RSS).

Waste Transfer Station – Idlemore Road

Staff prepared reports and bylaws for Council to discuss the addition of a definition for “Waste Transfer Station” and to discuss allowance “Waste Transfer Station” as Permitted Uses - Principal Uses in the General Industrial (M2) zone. A public hearing was held. Council did not approve the bylaws.

Building Permits – “Plan Checks”

Staff complete “plan checks” on many building permit applications to confirm that zoning regulations are met and to determine if there are any development permits and/or planning related covenants in place that would affect a building/building location.

File Closure and Archiving

There are over 1000 records (application files) in the planning department’s database with some records, many of which are active development permits, being inherited files from Sooke’s incorporation. To date, only a small percentage of these 1000 records have been digitally archived. Development Services Clerks scan at least three historical files per week and it is standard practise to scan new application files when completed.

Tempest Software

Reviewing and updating internal administrative processes in Tempest, specifically within the configuration of the “Prospero” module, is an ongoing task within the Planning Department, specifically by the Development Services Clerks. Ensuring that the internal administrative processes are working efficiently is important because not only does this better service the needs of the Development Services Department and provide support to other departments but it helps the planning department to deliver better customer service.

Landscape Inspections

Before a Landscape Bond can be partially or fully released, the Planner visits the site in the company of the project landscape architect or the person responsible for installing the landscaping to determine if the landscaping meets the approved landscape plan in the Development Permit. Four landscape inspections were completed this year:

6800 Grant Road (Clearbrook Estates)
2260 Maple Ave N (Trickle Creek Estates)
6750 West Coast Road (The Hope Centre)
6681 & 6691 Logan Lane
(Car Wash & Laundromat)



Sooke Hope Center

MAJOR APPLICATIONS

The following complicated (Major) applications were reviewed by staff in 2014. The complexity of these applications required considerable staff and client time to process and report on to LUEC and Council.

Royal Bank Development Permit at 6639 Sooke Road

A one story, 325m² (3500ft²) commercial building will be utilized by Royal Bank of Canada for business office space and support services.



Harbourside Co-housing Development Permit at 6669 Horne Road

32 multi-family dwelling units will be developed for a seniors co-housing community.

6545 & 6547 Sooke Road

Staff is reviewing an application to rezone two properties adjacent to Brownsey Boulevard from Manufactured Home Park (MHP) and General Commercial (C2) to a Comprehensive Development (CD) zone.

Silver Spray Development Permit Amendment

A Development Permit was approved by Council for one to five buildings in the place of eight of the original ninety five cottage buildings. These buildings will be twenty meters high and with density bonusing, seven stories high.



Silver Spray

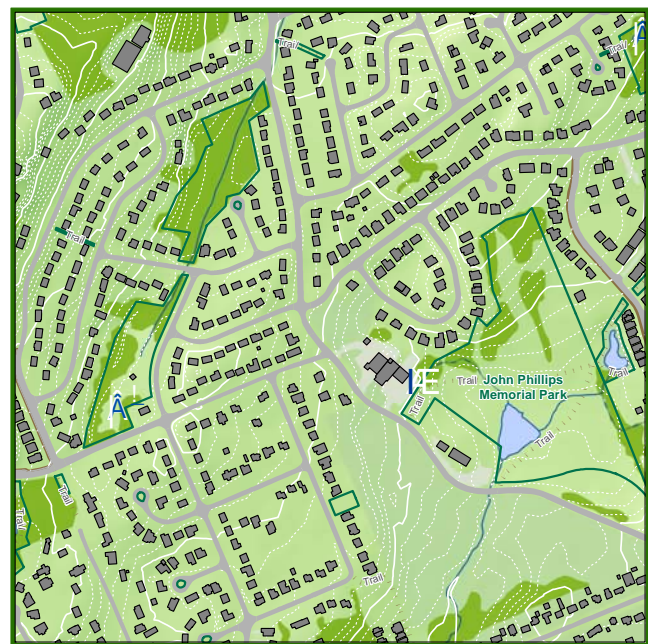


Geographic Information Services Year End Report 2014

The District of Sooke municipal Geographic Information System (GIS) is the framework for providing mapping and property information to District of Sooke staff and to the public. In combination with the Tempest Land Records database, the GIS software provides a geographic context for projects in the Engineering, Planning, Building, Bylaw, Finance, and Administration departments.

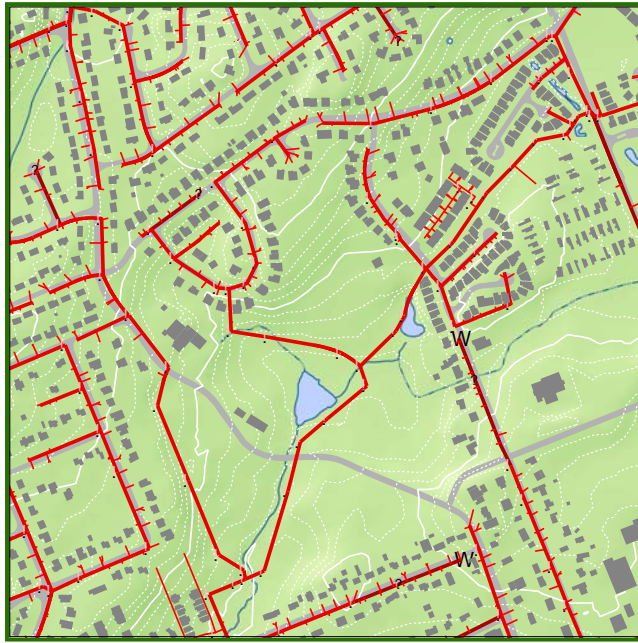
Managing the spatial data requires a combination of desktop and server software. The ArcGIS Desktop software is used to edit, maintain, analyse, and publish the spatial data on maps that can be printed or displayed on web maps. The ArcGIS Server software stores the spatial features in GIS databases describing the location of properties, structures, infrastructure, environmental features, zoning and administrative boundaries, parks, watercourses, and aerial photography.

The ArcGIS Desktop software enables staff to digitize features from survey plans, aerial photography, or to import from external data formats. Map documents are created by combining the features in symbolized layers that can be printed, published to a digital PDF map, or displayed on an interactive web map.



Parks, Trails and Amenities.

The desktop software also allows the GIS database to be related to other databases (e.g., Tempest Land Records) to provide further analysis. Tempest contains records for lands within the District of Sooke. Regular updates from BC Assessment (e.g., new subdivisions, ownership, and property descriptions) are loaded into the Tempest system and related to property data within the GIS. Each land record in Tempest has an identifier that relates to a property in the GIS, allowing staff to select properties, determine attributes, provide analysis, and support public inquiries and development applications such as Subdivision, Rezoning, and Building Permits.



Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure

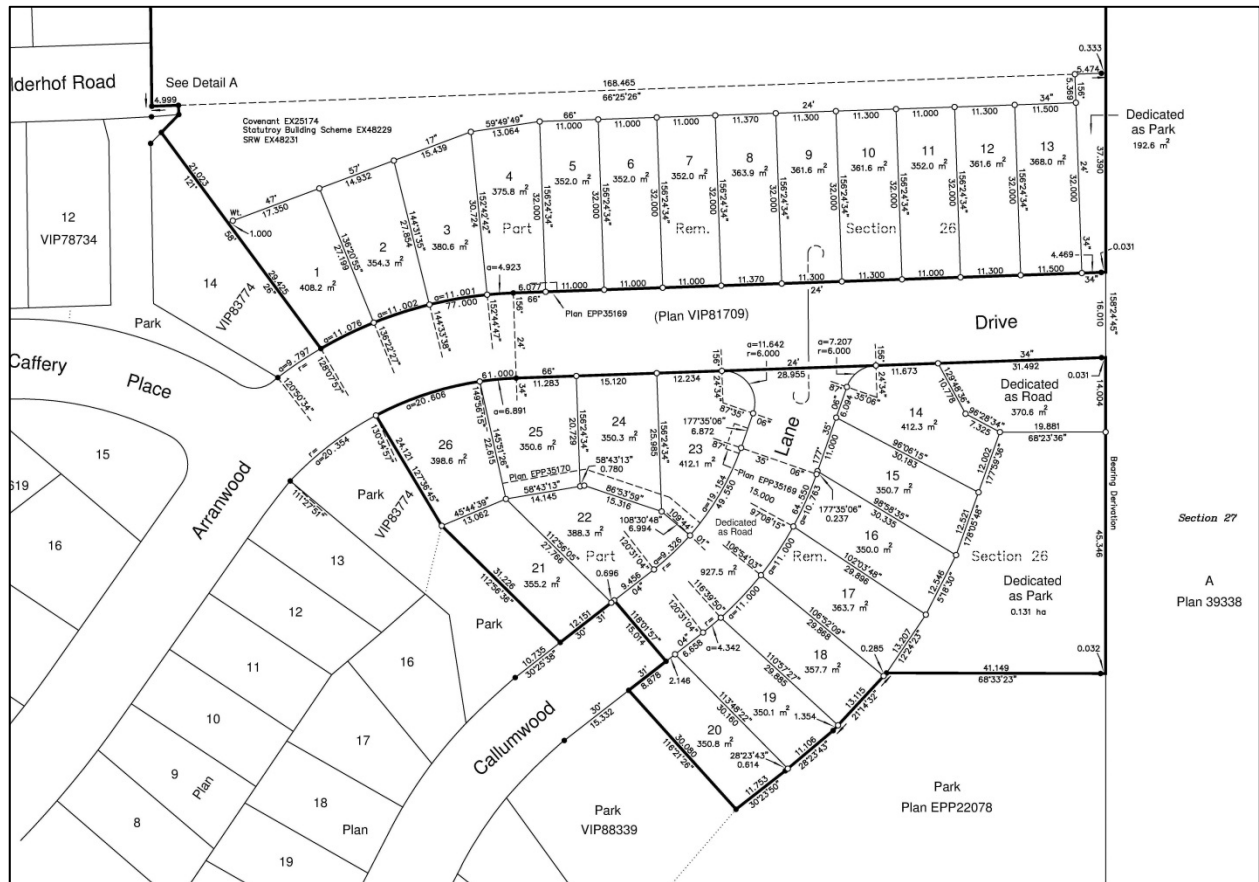
on a public interactive web map. The public map, available at the web address <http://gis.sooke.ca>, includes properties, addresses, zoning, roads, green spaces, watercourses, and aerial photography.

Infrastructure is digitized from survey plans and engineering drawings and stored in the GIS. Infrastructure is grouped into different categories (e.g., Roads, Sidewalks, Streetlights, Sanitary Sewer, Storm Drainage, Park Trails, etc.). Summary reports are created for each category to generate a listing of features by type, location, condition, and status for use in the annual infrastructure inventory summaries.

By the end of 2014, the District of Sooke GIS database contained a variety of spatial features describing property ownership, addressing, land features, environmental features, and infrastructure. This data includes the locations of approximately 6600 parcels, 6500 addresses, 1800 survey plans, and 183,000 infrastructure features.

The GIS data are also available for viewing

A variety of thematic maps including zoning maps, a zoning map booklet, and a “Sooke Street Map” are available as downloadable PDFs from the District of Sooke website.



Subdivision & Development Year End Report 2014

Background

Subdivision and Development staff work on a variety of tasks in relation to land development applications including subdivision application processing, land development application coordination (building permit projects, design review and acceptance, construction monitoring, and interdepartmental application review. Staff also assist the public with their application proposals as well as questions about active developments. These tasks are in addition to day-to-day operations, public enquiries, policy and procedure planning and bylaw reviews.

The following is a list of the application types administered by the land development section of the Engineering Department:

- Subdivisions (land)
Staff are responsible for the administration of the subdivision application, design acceptance, construction monitoring and final approval process for a variety of projects including traditional fee simple, bare land strata, boundary adjustment, road dedication, leases over three years, and phased strata plans. Subdivisions are approved by the Approving Officer.
- Building Permit/Development
Subdivision and Development staff coordinate the involvement of the Planning and Engineering Departments and their respective requirements for the construction of all multi-family, commercial, residential, industrial or institutional building permit-related projects. Staff also act as a liaison for external professionals and service providers involved with the project.
- Phased Strata (buildings)
When a developer proposes registering a building strata in phases, the approval of the Approving Officer is required. Subdivision and development staff manage this process.
- Strata Title Conversion
Staff are responsible for working with developers (often individual homeowners) on the process to convert previously occupied dwellings to strata title ownership.
- Long Term Lease
Staff process and approve applications for the lease of land exceeding a term of three years as this is considered a subdivision of land.
- Road Closure/Exchange
Staff work closely with the Corporate Services Department on the road closure/exchange process which may see unused road dedication closed and possibly sold or exchanged.
- Road Dedication (District-Initiated)
In order to ensure some future capital projects may proceed, the obtaining of road dedications is often required. The review of road dedication proposals and processing of applications is administered by subdivision and development staff.
- Park Closures
Staff work closely with other departments in the processing of any park closure files. This process includes liaising with land surveyors and legal representatives on behalf of the municipality.

Highlights of 2014

- Staff assisted in the completion of the new Subdivision and Development Standards Bylaw (No. 404) adopted by Council on October 14, 2014. Staff also prepared new development guides and updated the "Land Development" section of the District's website with additional information to assist applicants through the development process.

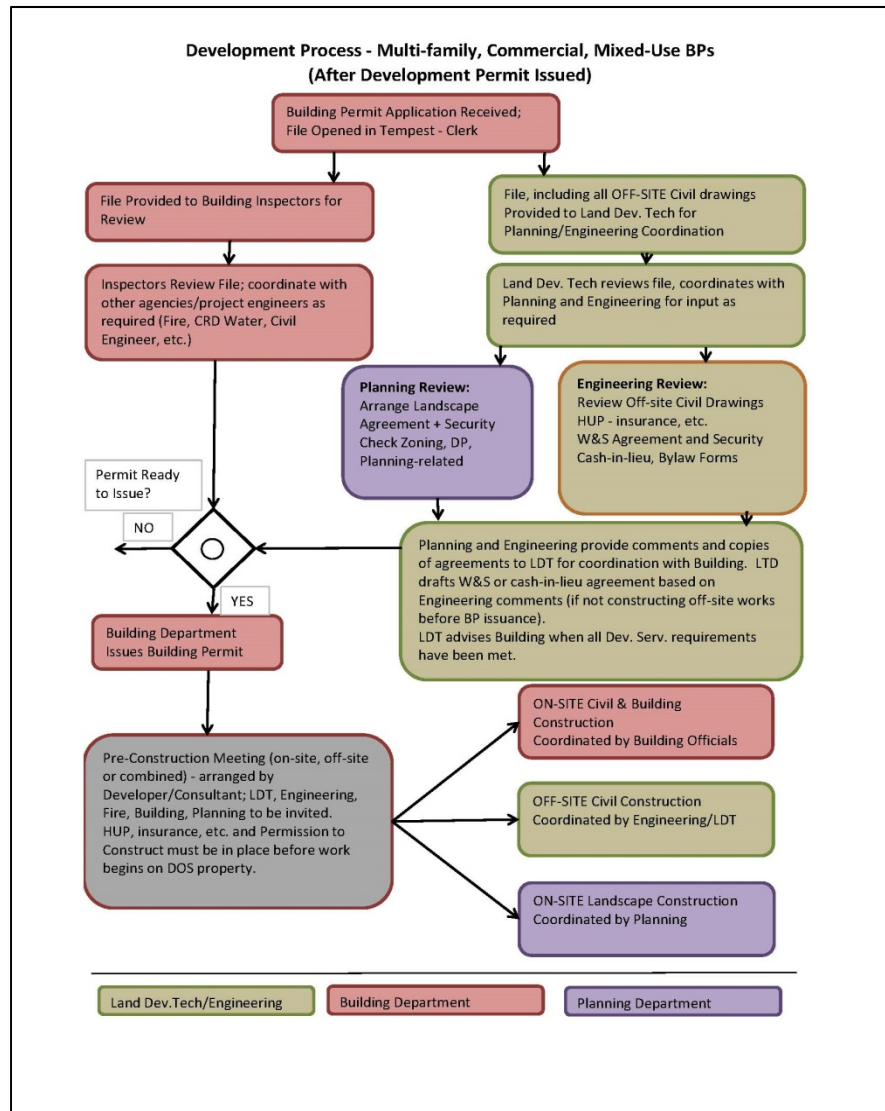
- Completion and registration of the subdivision plan for the final single family residential phase of Woodland Creek Estates has provided an improved transportation link to and from Ecole Poirier Elementary School. This final link provides for the safe movement of pedestrians with sidewalks now linking from Church Road and along Arranwood Drive through to the school.
- As part of ongoing subdivision approvals, completion of construction of the last segment of Phillips Road through Sunriver Estates has provided road improvements for motorists as well as additional sidewalks which complete a safe pedestrian link from the Sooke Arena through to the end of the development. Pedestrians can then connect to the previously constructed separated trail to the north of Sunriver Estates.



Completion of Arranwood Drive through to Poirier Elementary.

- The District of Sooke saw an increase in the number of applications granted approval in 2014. The Approving Officer approved 16 subdivisions, up from 13 in 2013 and 9 in 2012. The 16 plans approved contain a total of 60 lots, a further increase from 44 in 2013. Two large developments saw phases registered in 2014. Sunriver Estates added 10 new lots, and Woodland Creek Estates added 27 new lots. Sunriver Estates also continues to move forward with construction of new infrastructure that is expected to lead to further lot registration in early 2015. In addition, many individual home owners embarked on infill subdivisions in the community, taking their larger-sized lot and splitting it into two new lots.
- Registered 1,502 m² in new park land dedication in Woodland Creek Estates. The final piece of park dedication in the single family residential portion of the development provides for connection to existing park and trail linkages as well as a linkage to a future development to the north.
- Assisted in coordinating the Engineering, Planning, Building, Fire and external agency requirements for Harbourside Cohousing, a 32-unit multi-family development on Horne Road prior to building permit issuance.

- Assisted in the coordination of final Engineering, Planning and external agency requirements for completion of the Hope Centre on West Coast Road.
- Assisted in the coordination of Engineering and Planning requirements in advance of issuance of a Building Permit for the new Royal Bank building on Sooke Road.
- In order to improve efficiency and internal communication, staff created a new process for acting as liaison between all District departments in order to ensure all department requirements are addressed prior to building permit issuance on complex developments. Subdivision and Development staff coordinate the requirements of Planning, Engineering, Fire, Building and external agencies to ensure those requirements are addressed prior to a building permit being issued. The new process allows for improved interdepartmental communication as well as assists the developer and their professionals in moving through the process.



- Noted an increase in the number of requests for pre-application meetings and development information from potential developers and local property owners interested in subdividing/developing.
- Hosted a meeting with Sooke real estate agents to review the District's website and online mapping features to assist the Realtors in finding land and development related information to assist their business.

- Continued review of outstanding deposits held in conjunction with Works and Services Agreements and addressing the outstanding items associated with these deposits.
- Updated Tempest subdivision/development tracking software to reflect new internal process improvements.
- Finalized archiving/digitizing of completed/expired subdivision files for off-site storage and Tempest integration.

Corporate Strategic Plan Goals

In accordance with the guidance of the District of Sooke 2014-2015 Corporate Strategic Plan, Strategic Priority #2 – Town Centre, which requires the District to “...strive towards making the town centre a vibrant, clean and well-maintained node, and will focus initially on transportation flow, pedestrian safety improvements and meeting appropriate maintenance standards”, the completion of construction of Logan Lane has provided an improved transportation link in the Town Centre as well as a safe pedestrian connection with the addition of a sidewalk. Completion of construction of a Laundromat/café, car wash and auto detailing facility along the newly improved road have added new services to the Town Centre as well.



Logan Lane provides new public link in Town Centre.

In accordance with Corporate Strategic Plan Strategic Priority #4 – Community Planning, which requires that the District “...strive towards clarifying, simplifying and streamlining planning processes and instruments which will respond to, enable and support investment and job growth in the community”, significant progress was made on Council’s defined objective. After many months of review with other members of the Engineering and Corporate Services Departments, Council was presented with the final version of the *Subdivision and Development Standards Bylaw* (Bylaw No. 404) which was adopted October 14, 2014. The new bylaw provides a clearer and more streamlined approach to development requirements within the District.

To complement the new Subdivision and Development Standards Bylaw, staff also made improvements to the District’s website with more thorough information as well as printable guides to assist developers and the public in general.

As interest in the construction of larger multi-family, commercial and institutional projects increases in the District, improvements to the Building Permit/Development process have been implemented to assist in ensuring projects move forward in a consistently clear manner. As these projects involve work from most District departments, staff have implemented a new system to ensure consistent communication between all parties involved in the project (internal and external). This new process will ensure that various departmental requirements are met as the project progresses.

Application Statistics				
Applications Approved January 1 - December 31, 2014				
#	PLAN #	ADDRESS	PLAN TYPE	LOTS
1	EPP32102	2174/2176 French Road S.	Fee Simple	2
2	EPP42982	6669 Horne Road	Fee Simple/Road Dedication	1
3	EPP45791	5330 Basinview Road	Line Adjustment	0
4	EPP43495	6516 Steeple Chase	Line Adjustment	0
5	EPP35168	Woodland Creek	Fee Simple	27
6	EPP40879	2350 Sooke River Road	Fee Simple	3
7	EPP37569	2050 Townsend	Fee Simple	2
8	EPP29432	7707 West Coast Rd.	Road Closure	0
9	EPP38346	7130 West Coast Rd.	Fee Simple	2
10	EPP36292	Sun River Estates	Fee Simple	10
11	EPP34634	2727 Phillips Road	Fee Simple	2
12	EPP36651	Sooke Hanger Drive	Fee Simple	2
13	EPS1710	1810 Connie Road	Strata Conversion	2
14	EPS2127	2554 Sooke River Rd.	Bare Land Strata	3
15	Pending	6695 Rhodonite Dr.	Fee Simple	2
16	EPP41274	2078 Kennedy	Fee Simple	2
Total Lots Approved January-December 31, 2014				60
		Total Lots Approved January-December 31, 2013		44
		Total Lots Approved January-December 31, 2012		55
		Total Lots Approved January-December 31, 2011		172
		Total Lots Approved January-December 31, 2010		113
Number of Plans Approved - Yearly Summary				
2014			16	
2013			13	
2012			9	
2011			19	
2010			19	
2009			23	
2008			14	
Phased Strata Plans Approved January 1 - December 31, 2014				
#	ADDRESS		PLAN TYPE	UNITS
1	6800 Grant Road - Phase 2		Phased Strata	3
Total Units Approved January-December 31, 2014				3
Total Units Approved January-December 31, 2013				13
Total Units Approved January-December 31, 2012				12
Total Units Approved January-December 31, 2011				12
Total Units Approved January-December 31, 2010				34

New Applications Received January 1 - December 31, 2014			
#	ADDRESS	PLAN TYPE	LOTS
1	2350 Sooke River Road	Fee Simple	3
2	6695 Rhodonite Drive	Fee Simple	2
3	5330 Basinview Heights	Lot Line Adjustment	0
4	6516 Steeple Chase	Lot Line Adjustment	0
5	6930 Blanchard Road	Fee Simple	70
6	2166 Harbourview Road	Fee Simple	2
7	3130 Sooke River Road	Fee Simple	2
Total Lots Proposed			79
New Applications Received - Yearly Summary			
2014		7	
2013		11	
2012		20	
2011		13	
2010		20	



Engineering Department Year End Report 2014

The Engineering Department is responsible for the implementation of the municipality's infrastructure master plans as well as the planning, design, construction and maintenance of municipal infrastructure. This infrastructure includes roads (including street lighting and sidewalks), sanitary sewer, rainwater management (drainage), transit stops, parks, natural areas, boulevards and trails. The sanitary sewer collection and treatment system is owned by the District of Sooke and is operated and maintained by EPCOR Water Services Inc.

The Engineering Department spearheads the advancement of environmental initiatives, climate change initiatives, liquid waste management, spill response, watershed protection and water quality protection. The department is also responsible for reviewing and providing input on all Subdivision, Development Permit, Development Variance Permit, Road Closure and Rezoning applications. Engineering staff are also involved in the review of some Building Permit applications which affect municipal infrastructure and have potential environmental impacts.

Regular updates on ongoing projects in the municipality are posted on the District's website at <http://sooke.ca/municipal-hall/whats-new/projects/>. This site details initiatives undertaken by the District of Sooke, other government agencies, various development projects or volunteer projects which may affect our residents.

Corporate Strategic Plan Goals

Town Centre

In the District of Sooke *2014-2015 Corporate Strategic Plan*, under Strategic Priority #2 – Town Centre, Council identified objectives in the form of road and sidewalk projects. The following projects were either completed in 2014 or are currently underway:

	Location	Description	Timeline
1.	Church Road	Multi-use trail on west side of the road from Throup Road to future connector	Completed
2.	Connector Road	Church Road to Otter Point Road	Completed
3.	Sidewalks / Town Centre Improvements	Sidewalks along the north and south side of Sooke Road from Church Road to Otter Point Road	Planning and design started in 2014
4.	Brownsey Boulevard/Highway 14 Round-about	Property acquisitions and design and construction	Underway Summer 2015
5.	Connector Road	Phillips Road to Charters Road	Winter 2015

In accordance with the *Corporate Strategic Plan*, District staff worked on all of the above noted projects and successfully completed the Church Road multi-use trail and the connector road, now called Wadams Way from Church Road to Otter Point Road. Appropriate funding is in place under the 2014-2018 Five Year Financial Plan to complete the roundabout on Highway 14 and the connector between Phillips Road and Charters Road.

Community Planning

In the District of Sooke *2014-2015 Corporate Strategic Plan*, under Strategic Priority #4 – Community Planning, Council identified objectives in the form of master plan updates. The following projects are anticipated for 2015:

	Location	Description	Timeline
1.	Parks and Trails Master Plan Update	Priority – Plans for John Phillips Memorial Park, Off-Leash Dog Park and Sooke River Road Park	2015
		Master Park Plan Updates	2015

During 2014, significant progress was made on a number of capital projects.



Overlay showing the location of the multi-use trail along Church Road and the new Wadams Way

Church Road – Multi-use Trail

Construction of the multi-use trail along the west side of Church Road began in late 2013 with final paving of the 3.0 m wide trail completed in early 2014. ICBC provided a grant for the installation of the pedestrian crossing line painting and signage.



Multi-Use trail looking south on Church Road from the Throup Road pedestrian crossing

Wadams Way – Connector Road from Church Road to Otter Point Road

The design and construction of the portion of the connector road from Church Road to Otter Point road commenced in mid 2013 and included a multi-use trail along the south side as well as two new sections of concrete sidewalk completing the pedestrian network along Townsend Road. The construction of this portion of the connector was completed by the end of the summer of 2014 and the grand opening took place on September 27, 2014.



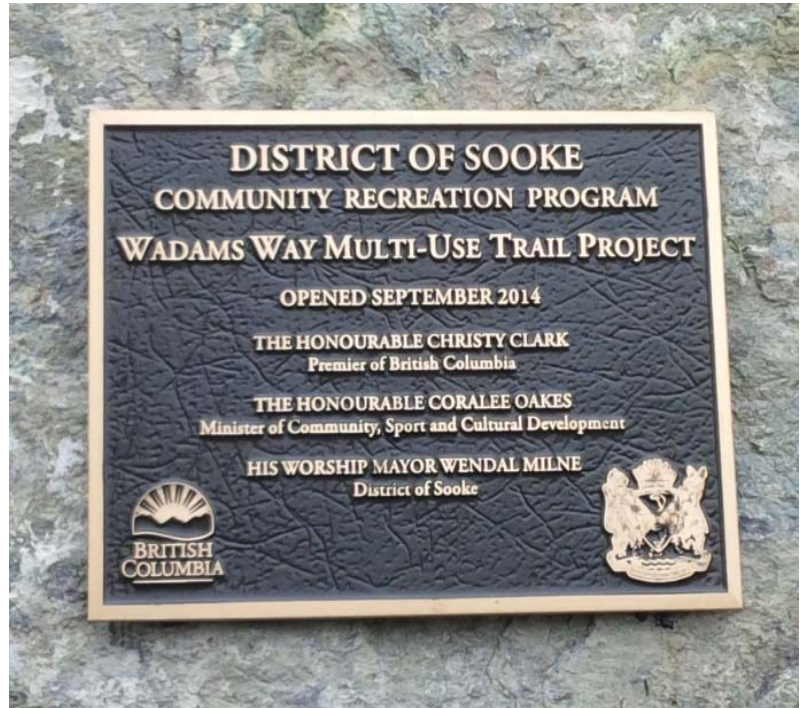
View east towards Church Road

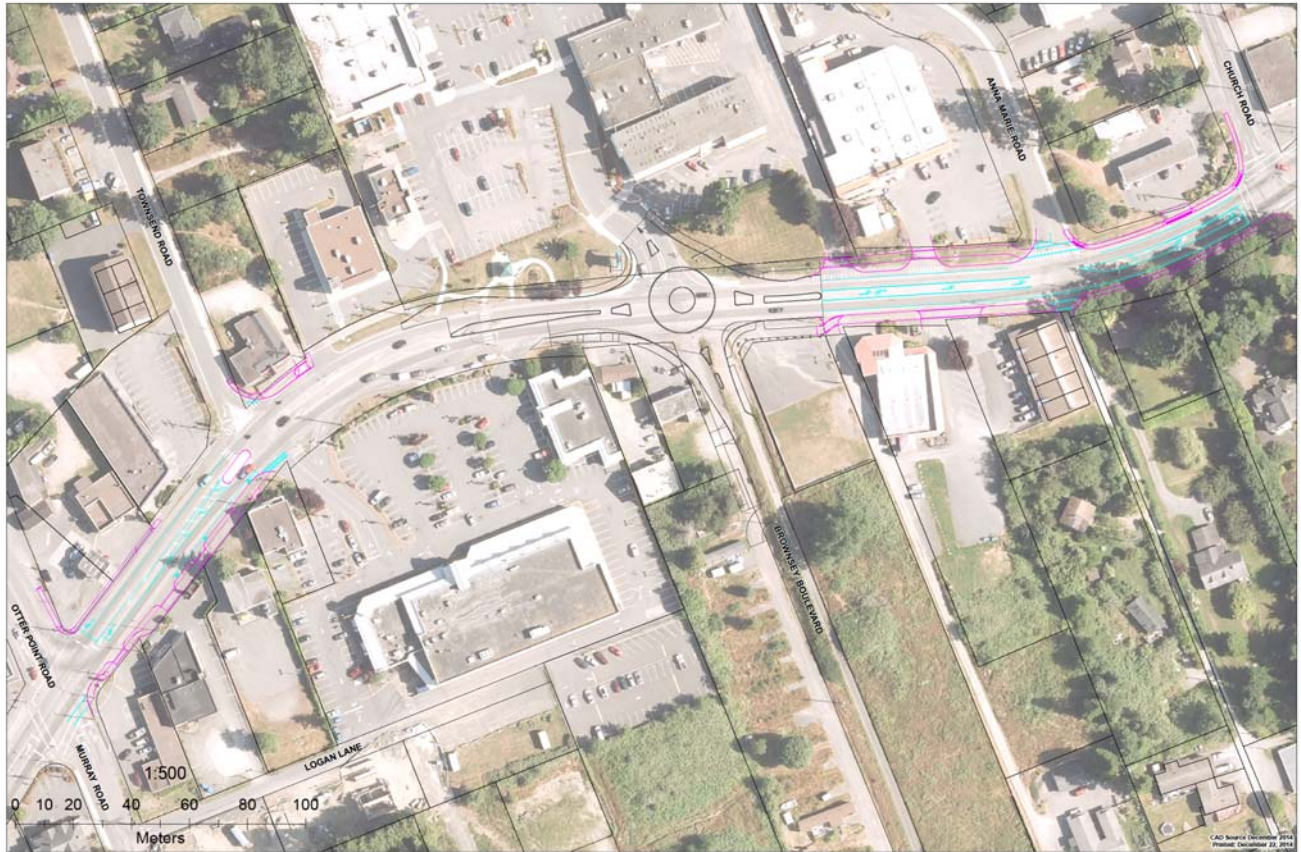


View west towards Otter Point Road

The District received a grant from the Province of British Columbia for the construction of the multi use trail and a plaque was unveiled at the grand opening to commemorate this partnership.

The District also received assistance from ICBC for the installation of the 3-way flashing beacon at the T intersection of Otter Point Road and the connector; the use of highly reflective signage for the project; installing the 1.7m concrete sidewalk along Townsend Road and installing the crosswalk flasher at the intersection with Townsend Road.





Highway 14 / Brownsey Boulevard Round-about and Town Centre Sidewalks

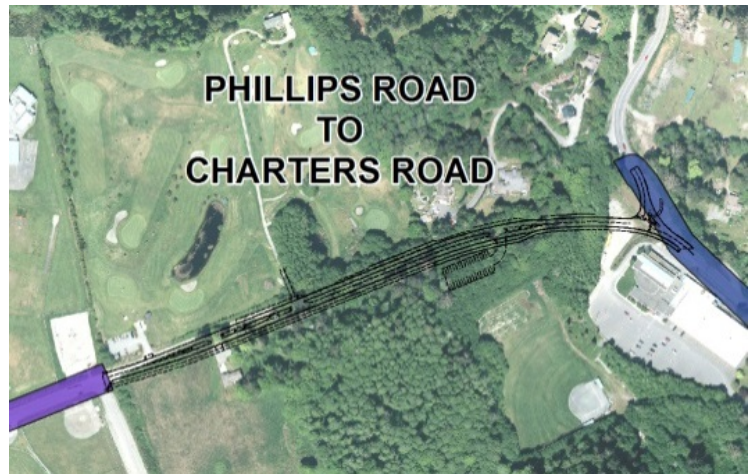
This project involves coordination with the design consultant, transportation consultant and MOTI. The detailed design for the round-about is currently at 50% and under review by MOTI and District staff. Discussions commenced in 2013 regarding the required property acquisitions which will need to be finalized prior to design completion. Construction is anticipated to commence in the spring of 2015.

The District and MOTI signed a MOU to work together to deliver the roundabout in conjunction with upgrades along Highway 14 initiated by MOTI from Church Road to Otter Point Road. Council had already given direction to complete the design work for the sidewalks along Highway 14 from Church Road to Otter Point Road which commenced in late 2014. Construction of the sidewalk would commence pending budgets, with the section of sidewalk along the south side of the highway from Otter Point Road to Townsend Road approved for construction in 2014. However, as design approval was not achieved in time for construction this year this construction was delayed until 2015.

The partnership with MOTI is anticipated to provide greater budget efficiencies and therefore allow the extents of the sidewalk construction to be increased.

Connector – Phillips Road to Charters Road

The detailed design work for this phase of the Connector, from Phillips Road to Charters Road was on hold during 2014. The 50% design drawings were submitted to the District for review in 2012 and will require further consultation with neighboring property owners prior to completion in 2015. Construction of this portion of the connector was slated for completion in late 2015 in the Corporate Strategic Plan; however, the timing for this will be budget dependent.



Staff is anticipating to be submitting a grant application in 2015 for this section of the connector.

Transit Stop Improvements

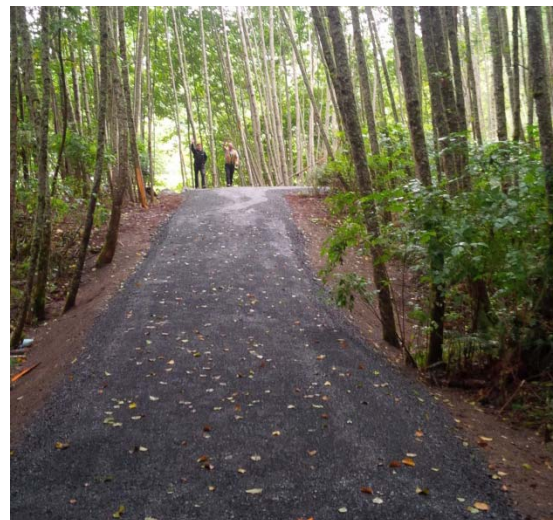
The Engineering Department continues to work with BC Transit to provide the District with some well needed bus transit stop enhancements to improve rider safety and usage. New shelters were constructed at stops on West Coast Road at Whiffin Spit Road and Sooke Road at Phillips Road. Lighting will be installed in 2015 at these stops for improved public safety. The shelter at Sooke Road at Village Food Market has been refurbished in conjunction with the high school art program seeing renew plexiglass/art installed. Side panels to be installed in 2015 as a result of public feed back.

Pineridge Park

In 2011, the design drawings were developed by a consultant for rainwater management and park improvements based on input received at public hearings. These improvements were constructed in 2014 and include the construction of approximately 160 meters of new path systems, a new nature themed activity area within the park, adult fitness equipment, rain gardens, and headwalls and rock lined swales.

SEAPARC Multi-use Trail

SEAPARC, the District of Sooke and the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area partnered to obtain funds from the CRD-Active Transportation Innovative Infrastructure Funding Program to upgrade cycling facilities. The bike park at SEAPARC has been upgraded and access via Throup Road and SEAPARC have been improved thanks to a \$75,000 grant from the Capital Regional District and funds from SEAPARC and the District of Sooke. New construction of a pump track, improvements to the existing Throup Road trail to make it more pedestrian friendly and creating new trail connections to the park are just a few of the items that have been completed to date.



New trail connection to
SEAPARC Bike Park

Policy & Regulatory Initiatives

In the District of Sooke 2013-2014 Corporate Strategic Plan, under Strategic Priority #4 – Community Planning, Council identified objectives to streamline, simplify, clarify service responsiveness and business friendliness. To address this objective a review commenced on several policies and bylaws.

To ensure staff remains approachable, staff continues to set aside time each Thursday, at minimum, to meet with members of the public and/or developers/consultants to discuss potential applications before an application is made or with existing applicants to review outstanding items and/or address questions.

Subdivision and Development Standards Bylaw

The review of Bylaw 65 and all related policies to improve the language and clarity between subdivision and development requirements was completed in 2014 with Council adoption of the updated and re-organized *Subdivision and Development Standards Bylaw 404*, on October 14, 2014.

Corporate and Community Energy Emissions Plan (CEEP)

At Council direction the District completed a Corporate and Community Energy Emissions Plan (CEEP). CEEP is a systematic way to analyze, rank and plan for future climate-related efforts tailored to the unique responsibilities and influences of a local government and community.

DCC Bylaw

Work was slated to commence on the Sanitary Sewer component of the DCC Bylaw based on the completed sanitary sewer model. A preliminary draft was completed by the consultant in 2013. Anticipated projects are to be aligned with the budget process and need to be updated to reflect actual DCC receipts. Unfortunately due to the other Bylaw updates undertaken in 2014 the completion of the DCC Bylaw review is now anticipated in 2015.

Soil Removal and Deposit Bylaws

Work commenced to review and update the outdated CRD Soil Removal and Deposit bylaws currently still in existence. It is proposed that both of these bylaws be combined into one comprehensive bylaw which is currently under internal review prior to being brought to Council for review. The completion of this review was delayed to 2015 due to the work involved with the Subdivision and Development Standards Bylaw review.

Blasting Bylaw

To address a concern that the current Blasting Bylaw put too much responsibility on the District regarding blasting regulations, a review of the bylaw was undertaken. Discussions commenced if it should be a policy or bylaw and the bylaw was updated which is currently under internal review prior to being brought to Council for review. The completion of this review was delayed to 2015 due to the work involved with the Subdivision and Development Standards Bylaw review.

Town Centre Servicing and Connectivity Review

With the potential development as well as the road right of way acquisitions by the District in the Town Centre, staff commenced with the review of the connectivity and servicing in this area, particularly, the sanitary sewer servicing and drainage. Discussions were also held with the CRD Water Services regarding potable water supply and fire suppression for the Town Centre. This review is anticipated to be completed in 2015.

Transportation Requests Review Matrix

Staff commenced discussions with a transportation consultant in 2014 to discuss the potential of establishing a decision making methodology for various requests that are received and entered into the Calls for Service. It is imperative that each request is reviewed through a consistent methodology taking into account the appropriate guidelines and standards. Establishing a consistent methodology will ensure that these requests are not left to completely subjective judgement and thus manage the risks appropriately. This work will be completed in 2015.

Development Services

This task involves the review of developer's consulting engineer's civil design drawings for conformance with District bylaws and policies and to confirm that they address the concerns of the Preliminary Layout Assessment letter. Typically, there are at least three stages of drawing reviews, preliminary, final and construction drawing review culminating in the issuance of permission to construct once the drawings are accepted for construction. This process also includes the review of the street light design drawings and the review of design drawings prepared by BC Hydro, Telus, FortisBC, CRD Water and Shaw Cable designs for acceptability by the District prior to installation of their systems. Consultation with the Approving Officer ensures all requirements are being addressed and for identification of required easements, statutory rights of way and/or covenants. Staff also coordinates with Canada Post with regard to mail box locations and configuration, as well as with BC Hydro to arrange for activation of the streetlights.

Site conditions are reviewed prior to and during drawing review (as required). Environmental impacts, such as watershed protection and water quality protection, are considered. In 2014, three Riparian Areas Regulation Assessments were vetted during the redevelopment of properties and new developments at time of subdivision or rezoning.

Once the design receives the Accepted for Construction, staff attends the on-site pre-construction meeting with developer, consultant, contractor and utility representatives. The District continues to have an on-site presence during construction as necessary with onsite reviews of works completed when processing reductions to Letters of Credit.

Once the off-site works are completed, the developer's consulting engineer submits as-constructed drawings which are reviewed with the completed works onsite. At this time, all District bylaw required forms and documentation is submitted and reviewed for completeness. The engineering staff coordinates the completion of a final acceptance certificate (FAC), which serves to summarize the completed works, shown in the as-constructed drawing(s) and off-site cost estimate for works to be taken over by the District and entered into the Asset Management system.

Staff also worked with CRD Integrated Water Services as they completed upgrades to their water mains on:

- Sooke Road Watermain crossing of Ayum Creek-Goodridge Road to Ludlow Road (64 m)
- Blythwood Road from Parkland Road (564 m)



Blythwood Road CRD Watermain Upgrade works

Operations and Maintenance

Highway Maintenance

Staff manages the Highway Maintenance Contract and works with the maintenance contractor to implement the contract.

- The highway maintenance contractor, Mainroad South Island Contracting Ltd., submits weekly schedules to provide notice as to the anticipated work for the upcoming week as well as weekly reports summarizing the work undertaken the week before. Both documents are reviewed and posted weekly on the District Website. Spot checks are performed to confirm the completed work.
- All issues or requests for highway related maintenance received from Sooke residents are entered into the District Calls for Service (CFS) system and directly issued to Mainroad for action. This has been working very well with issues dealt with quickly and also tracked for asset management purposes and to find long term solutions for re-occurring issues.
- As a result of various signage requests from residents and requests for traffic calming, staff continues to work on reviewing highway signage to ensure all signage is appropriately documented and installed. When additional signage was required, staff prepared the traffic orders to allow the sign installation and coordinated with the RCMP and District Bylaw Officer.

Drainage and Culvert Replacement Program

Various drainage improvement projects are being assessed for feasibility and costs to determine the appropriate plan of action and order of priority. Once the final requirements have been determined, the District will be asking contractors to quote the works.

Drainage Projects Completed or In Progress

- Grant Road West drainage pedestrian access improvement project; the design and tender documents for 180 meters of drainage improvement work along the north side of Grant Road between Maple Avenue and Guardian Road is completed and ready to proceed to construction. Timing for this project will be included in the 2015 Budget discussions.
- During 2014, staff undertook extensive reviews of drainage issues on Sooke Road in the Stickle Back area.



Grant Road

- Onsite reviews of the ground water exfiltration on the road pavement fronting 2454 Mountain Heights Drive. A final evaluation by a hydro geologist was received in order to determine how best to contain and safely discharge the surface run-off issue. Groundwater remedial construction work is anticipated to commence in early 2015.



Mountain Heights Drive

- The drainage route from Atherly Close to the outlet is under review. Staff conducted onsite meetings with residents and is reviewing existing documentation to determine the existing route and implications to the property owners. The intent is to review the existing route, and potentially replace portions of it, to avoid existing structures and obtain legal documentation with the property owners to ensure that the route is properly maintained to avoid future issues.



Brule Road

- Major drainage rainwater system at the 2500 block of Brule Road needs realigning away from private property prior to discharging into Baker Creek. Anticipating construction in 2015, pending budget approval.

- Drainage issue at the 3100 block of Sooke River Road required evaluation of the rainwater ponding on top of the roadway. Anticipating construction in 2015, pending budget approval.



- Review of the boardwalk drainage and pavement on the south end of Murray Road: this area needs realigning and rehabilitating for the deteriorating pavement and to redirect the rainwater surface run-off away from private property and pedestrian access from the parking area to the Marine Boardwalk. Due to the increase to the scope of work this work will continue into 2015 with a detailed survey and design review. Construction will be pending budget approval once the design is completed.



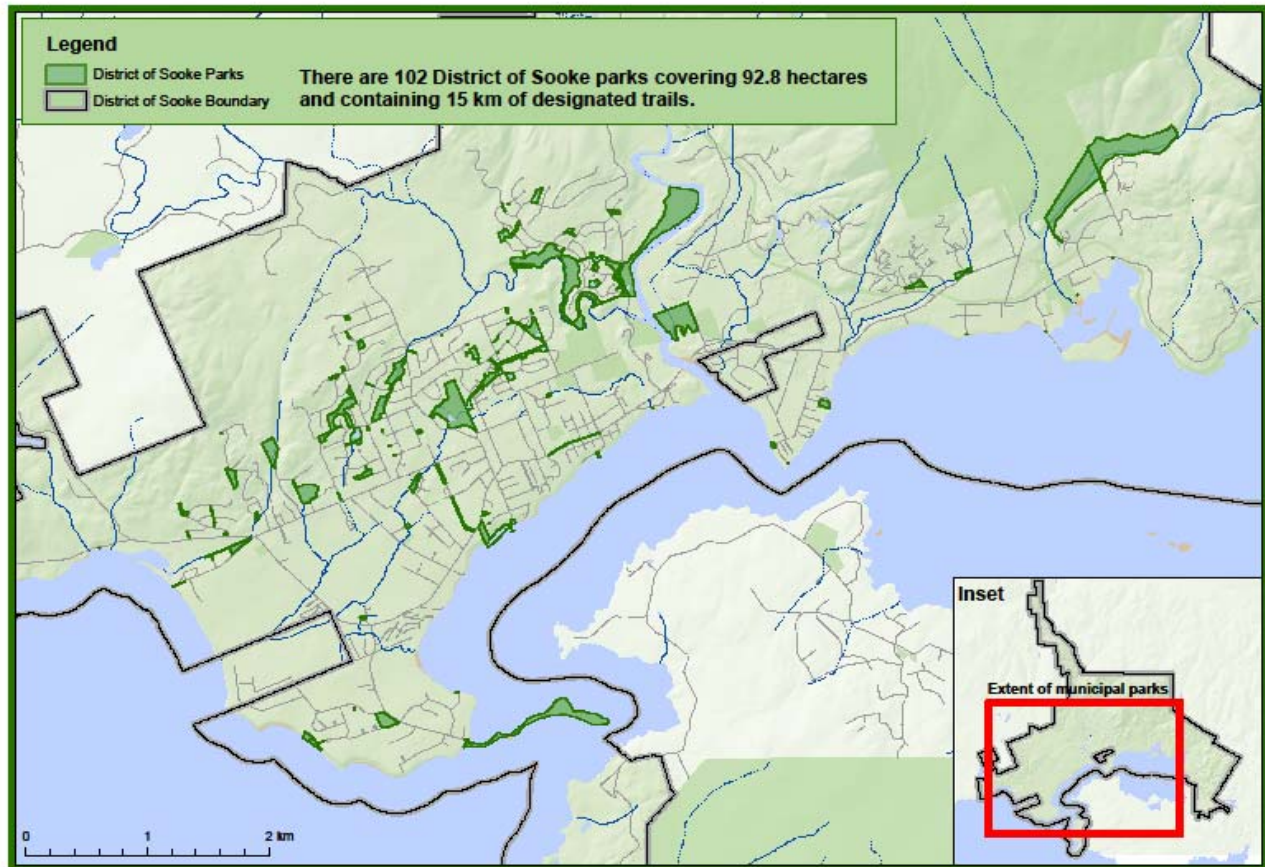


- Slope assessment report was conducted at 1600 Connie Road by a geotechnical engineering firm to help remediate the embankment. Anticipating construction in 2015, pending budget approval.

- Culvert issue at Dover Street, from the Lanark Road to the foreshore requires further review and possible replacement of the steep, above ground, 750-mm diameter corrugated steel pipe, as the invert of the pipe has corroded and is discharging rainwater into the neighboring property. Anticipated construction in 2015, pending budget approval.



Parks and Trails



Staff manages five Greenspace Maintenance Contracts and works with the maintenance contractors to implement the contracts.

- The ornamental areas, greenspaces, trails and washroom cleaning maintenance contractors, provide maintenance to all public greenspaces and facilities. Spot checks are performed to confirm the completed work.
- All issues or requests for greenspace related maintenance received from Sooke residents are entered into the District Calls for Service (CFS) system and directly issued to the appropriate contractor for action. This has been working very well with issues dealt with quickly and also tracked for asset management purposes and to find long term solutions for re-occurring issues. The contractors are garnering many accolades from the public for their performance and their high level of care to the parks and trails.
- Continued the public input and preliminary design process for the proposed off-leash dog park in the Ponds Park Corridor at 2276 Church Road. The process is expected to be completed in 2015.



Park benches installed in John Phillips Memorial Park

Staff worked with contractors to improve Ella Park to enable students from John Muir Elementary to access the park and watercourse for use as an outdoor classroom.

Vandalism to public washrooms, locks, transit stops and trees continues to cause concern. Approximately \$2,500 was spent this year to repair damage and cover graffiti.



Vandalism in parks and public spaces cost taxpayers 1,000's of dollars annually.



Dumping of garbage and yard waste in parks, transit stops and along trails continues.

Dumping of yard waste and garbage continues to cause concern and have a financial and aesthetic impact on the community.

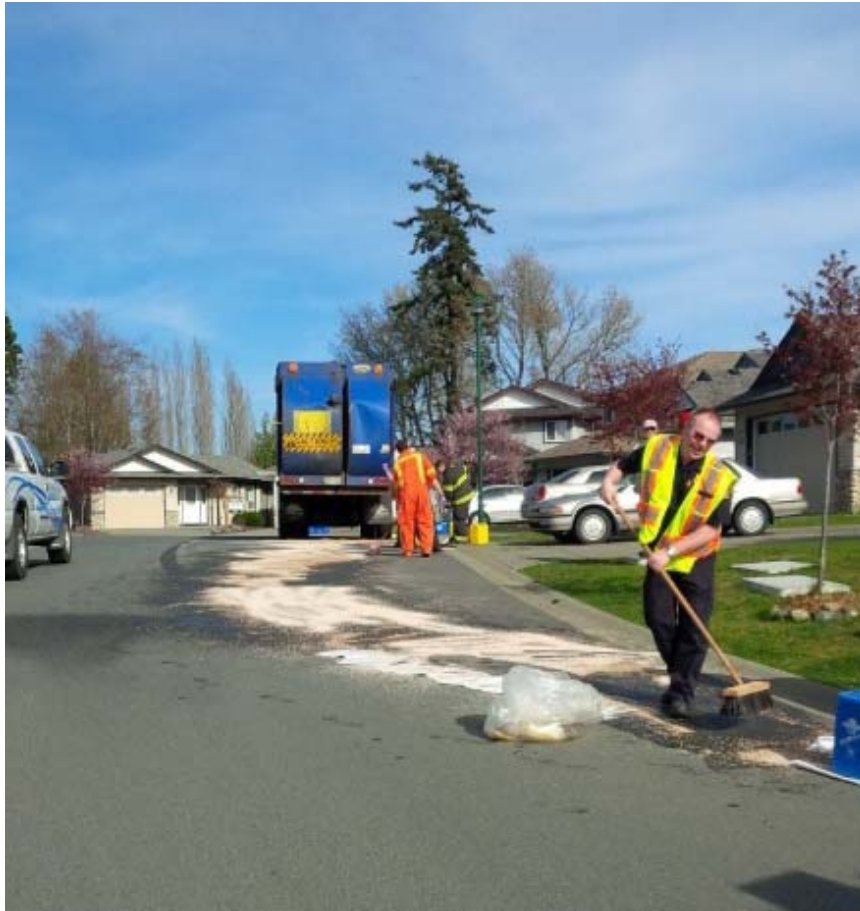
Water conservation program for irrigation leak prevention to troubleshoot water leaks continues at three parks that were high water consumers (\$4,900 in leaks in 2012). Timers and equipment have been retrofitted for water savings. This year the District saved 30% in water costs.

Staff worked with the Communities in Bloom Committee and volunteers to prepare for Communities in Bloom and attained "Five Blooms".

Garbage cans, park benches, and dog bag dispensers were installed throughout the parks and trails network.

Environment

Staff continues to work with Sooke Fire Rescue Service and Mainroad to mitigate the impact of hazardous materials to the environment. Various chemical spills from trucks and marine vessels occurred in 2014.



Hydraulic fluid spill on Acreman Place

Staff facilitated four shoreline clean-up events at local beaches through local volunteers with Great Canadian Shoreline Clean-up.

Removals of invasive weeds that threaten ecosystem diversity in public parks (Scotch broom) and agriculture (tansy ragwort) continues. The District works with other government agencies to remove noxious vegetation (knotweed and hogweed) that pose a threat to watershed function and drainage infrastructure.

Sanitary Sewer



EPCOR Wastewater Treatment Plant

The Sooke wastewater collection and treatment system is owned by the District of Sooke and operated by EPCOR Water Services Inc. The Sooke collection system and wastewater treatment plant was commissioned in November 2005. The system services a core area of approximately 5,500 residents.

Engineering staff continues to be the contract manager and regularly meet with EPCOR to review the agreement, ongoing operations and maintenance, as well as additional required work. This also includes the review of the monthly operations reports and other required yearly reporting.

The monthly operations reports are submitted to the District and posted on the District of Sooke website. These reports detail the system components, the operations issues dealt with throughout the month, as well as the regulatory requirements.

During 2014 all of the air diffuser membranes were replaced in SBR #1 as part of an asset renewal project. Air headers and diffusers disperse air into the basins for the treatment process and have a manufacturer's life expectancy of five years. This work was done on schedule and on budget and included a confined space rescue exercise which was performed as part of an EPCOR safety initiative. Digester #2 will have all diffuser membranes replaced in the next year to ensure equipment is properly maintained and treatment quality continues to be excellent.

The Wastewater Treatment Plant Outfall Inspection was completed in 2013 and the report confirmed all were in good condition. However, it was reported that a large rock was found resting on the pipe and some fishing gear was found fouled on the pipe. In 2014 commercial divers were hired to conduct the debris removal and issued a report detailing that the outfall was free of any debris that could potentially damage the pipe.

EPCOR continued to meet or exceed the target values of the Performance Measures for 2014. There were no releases, no lost time accidents, effluent quality was well within regulations, and there were numerous safety activities and quality assurance/quality control activities.

In order to finalize the required Operational Certificate (OC) for the waste water treatment plant, staff is working on final submissions to the Ministry for approval of the OC. The Municipal Wastewater Regulation requires operational certificates for wastewater treatment plants as they set municipal effluent quality standards and requirements.

Sewer Connections / SSA Expansions

Receive requests for expansion of the Sewer Specified Area and coordinate with developers, consulting engineers, public, EPCOR and Stantec. Prepare report to Council and assist with the preparation of bylaws as required. If Council approves, follow up with petitioner to connect property and notify appropriate internal departments for records update.

- No sewer specified area inclusion petitions were received in 2014.

Coordination of sanitary serviceability review completion and associated invoicing. Review the results of the review and track any upgrades required to the sewer system. Advise developer of applicable work required for development to proceed.

- No sanitary serviceability reviews were received in 2014.

Calls for Service and Follow up

The Engineering Department received a total of 316 new calls for service relating to public complaints, suggestions and requests. These included potholes, blasting, dust, vandalism, garbage, vegetation within highway rights of way, maintenance of boulevards, drainage, street lighting (either not working or asking for more), signage (either damaged, vandalized or asking for additional signage), pavement marking (eradication) and sanitary sewer issues during 2014 and is continuing to work on 59 active calls for service received in previous years.

Parks and Environmental Services received 216 new calls for service relating to the environment, parks, trails, boulevard maintenance, vandalism, hazardous trees, hazardous materials spills, garbage and washrooms. An additional 34 calls for service are in progress.

Each call is entered into the Tempest system, assigned and tracked. All calls are investigated and action is taken as necessary. This includes coordination with the RCMP (when required) and coordination with the contractors (budget pending) for quotes and onsite reviews during the installation. If the caller requests a call back that will also be noted and followed up on. Once an issue/concern has been reviewed and addressed, the call is completed and closed.

As staff is not able to regularly drive around and review all of the infrastructure, staff depends mostly on residents to contact the department with their observations and any call is very much appreciated.

For example, residents are in a much better position to notice if a street light is not functioning or a new light is perhaps required as they use the roads during the evening hours. When a resident contacts the department with a streetlight repair request it is entered into CFS, which is then forwarded to the contractor for the repair. The ornamental street lights are owned by the District and therefore maintained by the District. The davit lights on power poles remain the responsibility of BC Hydro so any CFS regarding a davit light is coordinated directly with BC Hydro.

Permits

The Engineering Department issues Highway Use Permits (for works within the road right of way and special events), Park Use Permits (for special events), Soil Removal permit, Soil Deposit permit and Blasting permits. Each permit submission requires onsite review, often before the permit is issued, and also during the works/event and once the work/event is completed to ensure that the works were completed as detailed and without damage to public property.

Permit Type	No. of Permits Issued 2013	No. of Permits Issued 2014
Park Use Permit	10	9
Blasting	1	1
Soil Removal	2	6
Soil Deposit	3	4
TOTAL	16	20
Highway Use Permits	No. of Permits Issued 2013	No. of Permits Issued 2014
Telus	6	3
Fortis	20	11
Shaw Cable	1	2
CRD Water	7	2
BC Hydro	10	1
Driveway Access for Building Permits	51	58
Events	9	8
Frontage	17	15
Other	3	4
TOTAL	124	104
TOTAL PERMITS ISSUED	130	124

The Engineering Department processed an **additional 37 requests** (an increase from 28 in 2013) for information for utility locates during the year 2014 which included providing appropriate infrastructure drawings and maps:

CRD Water	9
Fortis BC	18
BC Hydro	10



Building Department Year End Report 2014

The Building Department is responsible for issuing building and plumbing permits, performing site inspections, reviewing onsite infrastructure and approving residential, commercial, and industrial construction within the Municipality.

Building Inspectors process applications and review building plans to ensure compliance with the 2012 BC Building Code, municipal bylaws, regulations and policies. Site inspections are performed at various stages of construction to determine that the conditions set out in the building permit have been satisfied. Building Inspectors provide interpretation of the BC Building Code and bylaw requirements, and discuss appropriate construction methods. A final inspection is required before an occupancy permit can be issued.

On December 19, 2014, there was a change to the 2012 BC Building Code. New energy efficiency and ventilation requirements came into effect for residential dwelling units, such as houses, apartments and secondary suites. All building applications received by December 18, 2014 will be processed under the current 2012 BC Building Code. All building permits applied for on or after December 19th will be reviewed for compliance to the new energy efficiency and ventilation requirements. Our building inspection staff have been working in conjunction with other municipalities on a collaborative way to approach this change.

In 2014, the Building Department issued a total of 205 permits. This is a 20% increase from 2013 and had a 15% increase in revenue. Residential building permits saw a significant increase of 32%. The 48 Hour Building Permit application process received 38 applications in 2014, 25 of which were in the Phillips Road and Riverstone Drive areas. This service provided applicants, who have all supporting documentation to begin construction, two working days after the building permit application has been received.

The Sooke Hope Centre was completed October 2, 2014. Located at 6750 West Coast Road, this brand new four storey building provides a total of 25 affordable rental units and houses businesses such as St. Vincent De Paul Thrift Store, Ahimsa Yoga and Wellness, Sooke Therapeutic Yoga Society and Standing Cedars Acupuncture Clinic.

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul of Vancouver Island and the M'akola Group of Societies have partnered to provide affordable housing for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal homeless singles in Sooke. This project was the first of its kind in the Province.



Hope Centre



A permit was issued on December 4, 2014 for the 32 unit Harbourside Senior Co-Housing project at 6669 Horne Road. The purpose of co-housing is to build a neighbourhood for seniors that is affordable, environmentally friendly, and socially/culturally supportive. In this model, the future residents participate in the planning, design and development of the community so that it directly responds to their needs. The plan is to construct apartment and duplex style homes with common amenities to support interaction among neighbours and aging in place.



Harbourside Senior Co-Housing



On October 15, 2014, a permit was issued for construction of the new Royal Bank building at 6639 Sooke Road. They are currently operating out of a temporary location on Goodmere Road at the corner of Sooke Road and Church Road.

The following summary outlines permit activity in the Building Department for 2014:

	2013	2014
# of Residential permits issued (<i>Single & Multi Family</i>)	96	127
# of Other permits combined (<i>i.e.: Commercial, Industrial, Demolition Oil Tank, Plumbing, Sewer, Additional Suite, Renovation, Woodstove, Additions, Decks</i>)	74	78
Total Number of Permits Issued	170	205
Total New Units created	130	165
Total Revenue Received	\$276,532.93	\$318,342.96



From the Office of the Fire Chief

For members of the Sooke Fire Rescue Department, 2014 will go down as a year in which extraordinary challenges were met with courage, dedication and an unmatched commitment to protect life and property. A multitude of major emergency calls again demonstrated that the firefighters in our community are among the best. As Fire Chief and Incident Commander at many of these events, I was often awestruck at the caliber and quality of work that these extraordinary people demonstrate on a regular basis. Only through the thousands of hours of training and preparedness were these personnel able to keep these emergencies from becoming full fledged disaster situations. The majority of these people volunteer to perform this service, including our career firefighters who often stay on long past their shifts showing their love of the job and their community.

Moving into 2015 and years beyond, there will be new challenges and obstacles to overcome. Diminishing number of volunteers, increase in emergency calls, working within budgets and addressing the requirements of new Provincial regulations are just a few items that will all play into the future needs of the Fire service.

Council introduced the volunteer firefighter recruitment and retention program that recognizes the volunteer work through an annual stipend based on attendance. To improve response times, we are working with our mutual aid partners to establish automatic aid agreements in which multiple departments will be called out simultaneously for all structure fires. Other department efficiencies such as shared or joint purchases to support cost saving measures are also being investigated, all the while ensuring that firefighters are adequately trained and equipped to perform their jobs.

Special mention must also be given to a group of dedicated volunteers who are working diligently at fundraising to enable them to travel to Panama for the second time where they will provide training and assistance to local firefighters. As part of the effort, and with assistance from the local photography club, a very professional fire department calendar was put together and received great reviews from everyone.

I look forward to working with the members of the fire department, emergency program and our mutual aid partners as we share ideas and work cooperatively together to find solutions to issues that challenge us.

Steven Sorensen
Fire Chief



Fire Department Operations

The Sooke Fire Rescue Service faced an extraordinary variety of major incidents this past year. It was extremely busy for members, with the department attending over 600 emergency responses and another 77 non emergency calls such as beach fires, smoke sightings, assist police and minor first aid incidents. Another 102 responses were to burning complaints. Several of the emergency calls exceeded the capabilities of the fire department and additional assistance was required from other local fire departments. As is common practice under mutual aid agreements, Sooke firefighters were able to return the favour when they responded to major incidents in other jurisdictions when those communities were overwhelmed by the size or type of call. Due to the complexity of some of these incidents and the potential risk to the community, the activation of the Sooke Emergency Program and the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) did occur. In two circumstances, several homes were evacuated due to the threat of rapidly spreading wildfires, and in one incident, the Emergency Reception Centre was opened to take care of evacuees.

Some of the more dramatic events of 2014 included:

- February 6 –assist Otter Point Fire Department at a fully involved structure fire on West Coast Road.
- February 6 -- assist East Sooke for structure fire.
- February 14 – Sooke along with mutual aid from Otter Point, East Sooke, Shirley and Metchosin FDs fought a major fire on West Coast Road involving several boats and a large warehouse structure.
- April 22 – Sooke along with members of the Otter Point FD contained a large barn fire
- May 21 – A very difficult and complex rope rescue operation took place at the Sooke Potholes. Sooke firefighters were assisted by Metchosin and Langford firefighters as well as the JdF Search and Rescue members.

- June 15 – a difficult to reach brush fire was contained in the hills above Cedar Park Place.
- July 12 – another difficult rescue at the Sooke Potholes.
- July 28 – an observant passerby noticed smoke near the YMCA Camp. Sooke and Metchosin firefighters were able to get the small brush fire under control very quickly.
- July 31 – crews responded to a fully involved house fire. The fire spread very quickly, causing several spot fires in surrounding forests. Several homes were evacuated as crews from Sooke, East Sooke, Otter Point, Metchosin, Shirley and Langford FDs along with the BC Forest Service fought to keep the fire under control.
- September 11 – a major structure fire on the Sooke/Otter Point border occurred just before lunch time. The wind driven fire spread quickly to neighbouring properties resulting in the rapid evacuation of homes in the area. This event required the largest fire department response in the history of this region with a total of eight municipal or regional fire departments responding along with the BC Forest Service. The fire required the activation of the Sooke and CRD Emergency Operations Centre's as well as the Sooke Emergency Reception Centre to take in evacuees.
- September 12 – many of the same fire departments involved in the previous day's fire were called in to assist the Metchosin Fire Department at a major forest fire on Blinkhorn Mtn. Sooke crews remained on scene assisting for an additional three days.
- September 26– Sooke, with the assistance of Otter Point and Metchosin fire departments, responded to a fast moving fire and saved the duplex.
- November 1 – Sooke and Metchosin firefighters were called in to assist East Sooke FD at a tragic house fire.



Fire Department Personnel

The volunteer membership in the Sooke Fire Rescue Department is constantly changing and evolving. In 2014, membership ranged from a low of only 33 personnel in suppression (this includes the five career staff) to a high of 41 members. This constant fluctuation requires a never ending and ongoing process of attracting, recruiting, training and retaining new volunteers at all times. This past year, the recruiting budget was increased to allow the fire department to build a marketing plan complete with a corporate logo and "Community Hero" tag line in an effort to using branding as a tool in promoting interest in the fire department. A variety of community events featured the logo and several give away items are now kept in stock that can be used at these various shows to continue the promotional activities. This included new banners, fridge magnets, re-useable grocery bags, coffee cups and travel mugs. Additional products may be acquired once a full evaluation of the program is completed.

As of December 31, 2014, the Sooke Fire Rescue Service had the following membership:

Career Staff

5.6 persons: Fire Chief, Deputy Chief (Prevention), Assistant Chief (Training), 2 firefighters and a 0.6 clerical support person.

Volunteer Firefighters:

34 Members: 2 Captains, 4 Lieutenants, 20 Firefighters, 2 Driver/Operators and 6 Probationary Firefighters

Volunteer Support Services: 10 Members: 1

Assistant Chief, 6 fire and life safety educators, 1 fire inspector, and 1 radio operator. (400 volunteer hours)

Emergency Social Services: 24 Volunteers and 2 volunteer Ham Radio Operators. (786.5 hrs volunteer hours)

TOTAL Membership:

39 Fire Suppression + 1 part time clerk + 10 Support Service + 29 ESS Members For a total of 79. This makes Sooke Fire Rescue Service one of the largest employers' within the District of Sooke.



The new Sooke Firefighter Recruitment Logo



Emergency personnel perform a complex high angle rescue to recover an injured climber at Sooke Potholes

Fire Prevention & Public Education

The Fire Prevention Division

Over 400 hours was devoted to community fire and life safety prevention programs in 2014, with the majority of this effort through volunteer time. The department's volunteer fire inspector provided an additional 184 hours assisting the Deputy Chief with business inspection duties.

Members of the fire department again volunteered at many community events and spearheaded a major fundraising event for the Sooke Food Bank. The fire department formed an integral part in organizing the annual Christmas Food Drive. Firefighters and friends collected in excess of \$100,000.00 in cash, food and toys for the Sooke Christmas Bureau. This again goes to show the incredible generosity of the residents of Sooke and the dedication of the fire department to the community.

INSPECTION / INVESTIGATION TEN YEAR COMPARISON

Activity	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Fire Investigations	18	16	15	16	26	34	30	27	30	51	26
Daycare/ School	13	9	20	8	19	13	19	13	13	13	12
Multi-Family	10	12	16	8	8	6	6	25	21	22	29
Business	36	83	106	87	50	103	126	144	160	161	156
Public Assembly	11	17	35	34	35	19	39	38	48	49	41
Small Home Based Business						34	49	38	56	54	40
Miscellaneous	2	1	6	0	0	8	7	8	22	12	9
Re-Inspection	5	6	10	2	7	10	31	53	79	75	62
Oil Furnace or Oil Tank	40	45	32	39	31	10	26	12	8	13	22
Class A Burning Permit Inspection	12	7	12	12	N/A	1	18	23	16	12	13
Construction Site Inspection	16	9	9	43	27	15	27	44	12	28	20
Total Inspections	161	189	246	233	177	219	348	398	435	439	404
Plan Reviews	3	3	22	27	13	8	15	8	7	7	8
Subdivision / Rezoning Referrals	30	39	29	62	31	33	51	36	58	47	39
Fire Safety Plan Reviews							3	6	4	5	3
TOTAL ALL	194	231	297	322	221	260	417	448	504	498	454

Fire Investigation:

Several complex fire investigations were undertaken this year to determine cause and origin of the fire as per the requirements of the Office of the Fire Commissioner. The most time consuming investigation involved the July 31st fire on Sooke Road.



This fire at Sooke Elementary School was deemed accidental resulting from an electrical short circuit in this light fixture. Fortunately the fire was noticed while it was still small and contained. Quick work by firefighters prevented its spread to the remainder of the school.

Fire Department Training

Forty volunteer members of the Sooke Fire Rescue Department, both suppression crews and support service members participated in excess of 7000 hours of training and course instruction in 2014. Half of this training occurred during regular Thursday night sessions with the other half being conducted on weekends or other evenings. Three of the volunteer firefighters contributed over 200 hours each and another eight members exceeded 150 hours each. Of the total hours, 25% was done by the five career staff members, primarily as instructors for various programs throughout the year. Providing in house courses is more economical than sending members to the Justice Institute of BC programs in Victoria or the lower Mainland.

With the Council approved volunteer firefighter stipend program, a total of 21 members (52.5%) qualified for the \$500.00 training incentive award while 19 (47.5%) did not meet the eligibility criteria. Only two volunteers did not receive any compensation for emergency call attendance. Based on this, the range of payout for 2014 will be a low of \$0.00 to a high of \$989.16.

Sooke Firefighters are trained to the NFPA 1001 requirements for Firefighter Level 1 and Level 2.

Hazardous Materials: There are currently two career members and two volunteer members on the CRD Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Team, all trained to the Technician Level. While the Fire Chief, Deputy Chief and Assistant Chief are also Technicians, they are currently not part of the CRD program due to the time commitments involved in maintaining their status.

Technical Rescue covers tasks such as rope rescue and confined space rescue. Rope rescue can involve high angle and low slope type situations and confined space involves

anything, (usually underground) in which there is limited access situations. This could be a sewer lift station, an underground hydro vault or below deck on a boat.

The joint hosting of the second annual Juan de Fuca Regional Fire Training Weekend took place in September. In cooperation with the Justice Institute of BC, the fire departments of Sooke, East Sooke, Otter Point and Metchosin banded together to provide a variety of educational opportunities to those firefighters in attendance. Programs varied from one to four days in length. With well over 100 firefighters participating from departments all over Vancouver Island, the Justice Institute was very pleased with the results noting that this was still the most successful training weekend they are part of.



The Otter Point Fire Department Live Fire Training Centre was heavily utilized again this year. This facility provides the department the continued opportunity to conduct training in basic and advanced fire fighting skills and drills, conduct firefighter self rescue techniques and also rapid intervention team procedures. The live fire training scenarios continue to be the most popular form of training for the members.



Firefighters train on the car fire simulator at the Otter Point Fire Training Facility

Apparatus and Equipment

As Sooke's apparatus fleet continues to age, the expenses for repair and maintenance costs have begun to rise. These units continue to experience demanding service in their roles as emergency response units.

There were some significant changes within the fleet this year including.

- The disposal of the heavy rescue truck – Unit 207. With the departure of this truck, all of the rescue gear has been placed on various apparatus or stored in the station if room could not be found on a truck.
- The used 1999 ambulance that was located at the Sunriver Muster Station was taken out of service and sold. It has been replaced with a van purchased from the Langford Fire Department.



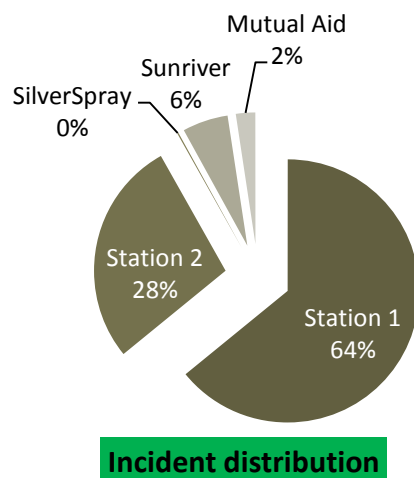
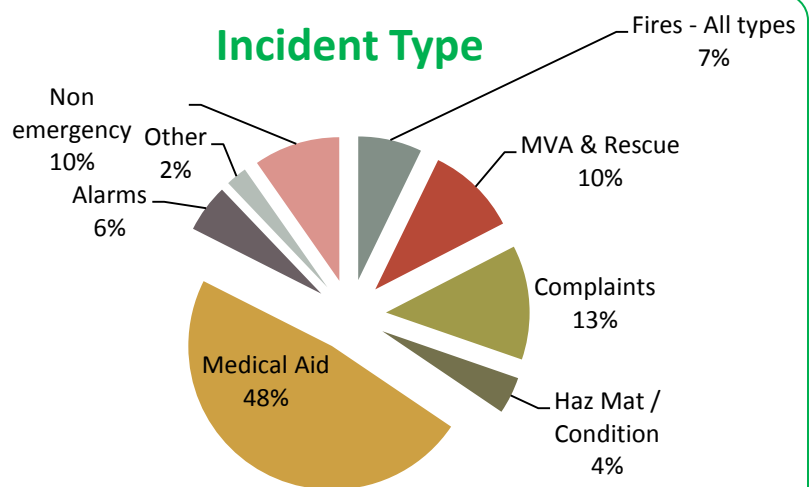
A new commercial turnout gear washing and extraction machine was installed into Station 1 late in 2014. This important piece of equipment is able to clean four complete sets of firefighter turnout gear at any one time and provides a much quicker and more comprehensive wash and rinse process than the residential washing machine previously used. The new installation complies with the requirements set forth by Worksafe BC to deal with any asbestos contamination on firefighter's personal protective gear.

Firefighters undergo a quick field decontamination procedure following extinguishment of a structure fire in which the building contained asbestos. The gear is then bagged for a more thorough cleaning back at the station.

Emergency Incidents and Response

Medical calls still account for the majority of emergency responses in Sooke as it does with most fire departments.

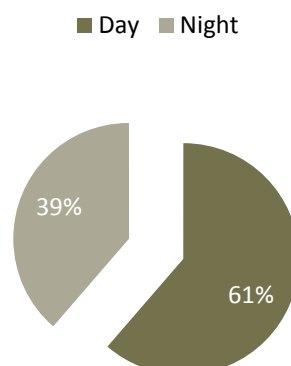
MVA's & Rescue took 10% of all calls while fires account for 7% of the total. It has been noted there has been a small, but upward trend in the number fires over the past ten years.



As expected, the majority of emergency incidents occur within the Station 1 area as most of the population is here. Station 2's area received 28% of the calls in 2014. This area is responsible for a majority of the motor vehicle collisions. 6% of calls came from the Sunriver area, 2% of calls were for mutual aid and only 1 call occurred in the Silver Spray neighbourhood.

61% of all calls attended by the Sooke Fire Rescue Department occurred between the hours of 6:00 am and 6:00 pm in 2014. Unfortunately, this is when the least number of volunteers are available.

Incidents - Day vs Night - 2014



Sooke Emergency Program – Emergency Social Services (ESS) Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)

This year was once again a very busy year for the volunteers of the Sooke Emergency Program. There are currently 24 active members (5 new members and 5 other members left for various reasons) who this year were able to amass a total of 786.5 volunteer hours. These hours reflect the total from monthly meetings, ESS courses, special presentations, workshops and supporting local Community events throughout the year.

Sooke also participated in the Great BC Shake out (4th year in a row), with all 6 of our schools taking part. Provincially, over 743,000 participants from across British Columbia took part in this this years event which resulted in a new record being set.

The Sooke Emergency Program continued with the acquisition of emergency supplies. This will continue through 2015 with a goal to acquire additional items and to investigate the possibility of a securing a second storage site on the east side of the Sooke River.

The Sooke ESS team had their first activation, in which all the training and preparation were put to the test. This occurred when a major interface fire forced the evacuation of many homes. A Reception Centre was set up at the Sooke Community Hall for the evacuees. Volunteers assisted in the set up of the Sooke EOC and ensured that any support needed at the emergency scene was quickly assessed and dispatched as the calls for assistance came in.

Goals for 2015 will focus on recruitment, retention, training, continued cooperation with JDF ESS, increasing supplies and researching alternative locations for the required emergency facilities and supplies in Sooke.

The Sooke Emergency Program will be hosting the Vancouver Island Emergency Preparedness Conference in the spring of 2015. A committee was organized and has been very busy, organizing the web site, advertising, obtaining speakers, sponsors, door and draw prizes, accommodations and rates to name a few of the tasks. The busy time for the Conference Committee is early in 2015 as they gear up to welcome 300 delegates in April 2015.

