

# Perspectives

A REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO PUBLICATION | DECEMBER 2016



## Top Bridge named an #AmazingPlace

The Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region recently ran a competition asking the public to identify the top 10 amazing places in the area and Top Bridge was named one of the finalists! This is exciting news for the RDN's beautiful 5km Top Bridge Trail which connects the Top Bridge Crossing to three parks, a conservation area and the ocean. The RDN opened the trail in 1999 and has been working with many conservation partners since then to protect the river's fish and wildlife habitat, including the important salmon spawning channel.

With the help of significant community fundraising and support from the Province of BC, the suspension bridge was added in 2007, making this regional trail a nice bike ride from the urban sea-side to the cool woodlands.

For more information on the Top Bridge Trail, visit [www.rdn.bc.ca/parks](http://www.rdn.bc.ca/parks). For more information on the other #AmazingPlace finalists, visit [mabr.ca/amazingplaces](http://mabr.ca/amazingplaces).

## Looking for a New Outdoor Adventure over the Holidays? The Coombs to Parkville Rail Trail is almost ready!

The 7 km Rail Trail between Station Road in Coombs and Springwood Community Park in Parkville is almost complete and would make for an excellent bike ride or family outing when the kids are off school in December. The trail is accessible, away from vehicles and level grade and will be open for use by December 23rd. An official opening will be held in the spring, but in the meantime, residents are encouraged to get out and enjoy the new trail that takes you right out to Coombs to see the Goats on the Roof.

For more information on the trail, visit [www.rdn.bc.ca/parks](http://www.rdn.bc.ca/parks)

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Residents are reminded that Off-Road Vehicles (ATVs, quads, dirt bikes etc.) are not permitted on public roads, in RDN Parks or on RDN Trails, including the new Coombs to Parkville Rail Trail. Off-Road Vehicles alter the outdoor experience of other park and trail users and cause damage to park environment and infrastructure. For more on Off-Road Vehicle regulations, visit [www.for.gov.bc.ca/mof/orv](http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/mof/orv)

## Wildfire Fuels Management Activities in the RDN

The RDN was proud to support wildfire fuels management work in our regional parks again this year. The British Columbia Wildfire Service conducted training and FireSmart operations in Oakdowne Community Park in Area 'H.' Work included removing lower tree limbs to prevent wildfire from travelling quickly up trees and controlled burns to reduce combustible materials in the park. These activities not only provide training opportunities to the BC Wildfire Service and local fire departments, they also provide fire hazard reduction in our parks at no cost to the RDN.

For more information, visit [www.bcwildfire.ca](http://www.bcwildfire.ca)

## HAVE YOUR SAY!

### 2017 – 2021 Financial Plan

This year's budget process is well underway and there are several opportunities for the public to get involved. Two public meetings were held in November and two more will be held in February in our Board Chambers at 6300 Hammond Bay Road. Please come out and have your say on the 2017 – 2021 Financial Plan.

**February 7 & 14, 2017:** Public meetings with the Board

**February 14, 2017:** Report on 2017 to 2021 Financial Plan to Committee of the Whole

**February 17, 2017:** Publication of budget edition of Regional Perspectives

**March 14, 2017:** Introduction of bylaw to adopt the 2017 to 2021 Financial Plan

**March 28, 2017:** Adoption of Financial Plan Bylaw

Visit [www.rdn.bc.ca/finance](http://www.rdn.bc.ca/finance) for more information.

## What's Inside:

- 2 RDN'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY
- 3 WASTEWATER SERVICES UPDATE
- 4 TRANSIT EXPANSION
- 4 ARE YOU PREPARED FOR AN EMERGENCY?

[www.rdn.bc.ca](http://www.rdn.bc.ca)



## Strategic Plan Update

The RDN's Strategic Plan was finalized this year and we have moved forward on several identified priorities including transit and recreational amenity improvements, establishing an Electoral Area Services Committee and recognizing the importance of water in supporting our environmental health.

We look forward to continued representation of the interests of the region through Strategic Plan implementation, particularly through the budget deliberations that are currently underway.

To see the full plan, visit [www.rdn.bc.ca/strategicplan](http://www.rdn.bc.ca/strategicplan)

## RDN Strategic Priorities

### FOCUS:

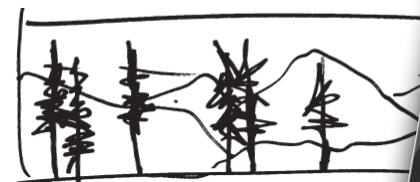
Governance  
Service and Organizational Excellence  
Relationships  
Economic Health  
the Environment



## Region Wide Parks and Trails mapping now available!

New parks and trails mapping is now available! Our interactive RDN Parks and Trails Finder map provides searchable information for Regional and Community Parks and recreation trails throughout the RDN, and is compatible with most mobile devices.

**Hiking without cell service?** Geo-referenced PDF maps are also available for download – these can be printed or used with various mobile mapping applications.



Access our mapping at [www.rdnmap.ca](http://www.rdnmap.ca) or [www.rdn.bc.ca/gis](http://www.rdn.bc.ca/gis)



Maps are currently available for Mount Benson, Englishman River and Moorecroft Regional Parks, 707 Community Park, as well as Big Qualicum River Regional Trail with surrounding Hatchery Trails.

Keep checking back as more PDF maps will be added on an ongoing basis.

## RDN's 50th Anniversary

The RDN is celebrating its 50th anniversary in August 2017 and we want to hear from you! How would you like to see this occasion celebrated?

**Do you have memories you would like to share?**

Stories of political figures and events over the years? Photos? Please get in touch as we would love to take this opportunity to travel down memory lane with the people who live here.



# Fifty Years!



For more information, visit [www.rdn.bc.ca/50years](http://www.rdn.bc.ca/50years)

## We are now mapping trails on Crown Land!

Interested in trails outside of the RDN's Regional and Community Parks? We have started to map recreation trails on Crown Land. This ongoing project has started in Areas 'H' and 'B,' and will expand into the remaining Electoral Areas as we make progress. Watch for the Nile Creek and McColl Road Crown Land trail networks to be available soon!

Check for updates at [www.rdnmap.ca](http://www.rdnmap.ca) or [www.rdn.bc.ca/gis](http://www.rdn.bc.ca/gis)

## What Goes Where?

The 'RDN Curbside' app has a new feature designed to help residents figure out what goes in the blue bin, green bin or garbage and what needs to be taken to a recycling depot.

All you have to do is download the app, type in the item you'd like to dispose of and the app will tell you where it goes.

If you already have the RDN Curbside App, it will automatically update with this feature.

The What Goes Where app is also available on our website at [www.rdn.bc.ca/curbside](http://www.rdn.bc.ca/curbside)



### Wetland Research in the RDN

The RDN's Drinking Water and Watershed Protection program has partnered with Vancouver Island University to update the wetland inventory for the region. Student researchers are on the ground collecting data for the inventory to improve our understanding of wetland dynamics and identify significant groundwater recharge and discharge areas. Across the RDN, the inventory will be used to inform regional land use planning, ensuring protection of groundwater resources and wetland ecosystems.



Englishman River Estuary Lands

### Englishman River Water Service

The Englishman River Water Service water treatment project is on track to be completed in the latter half of 2018. The contractor prequalification process for this significant project has now been completed and the construction contract tender is anticipated to close in early 2017.

### Wastewater Services Update

The Greater Nanaimo Pollution Control Centre is being upgraded from primary to secondary treatment as required by provincial and federal regulations. Secondary Treatment produces a higher quality effluent than that produced by primary treatment and will improve the quality of effluent discharged to the Strait of Georgia. The project requires upgrades to, and expansion of, the existing plant, and will provide capacity to the service area to 2039. Engineering design was completed earlier this year. Construction activities should begin in 2017 and continue to the end of 2019. To receive up-to-date progress notifications, please subscribe to our email alert service. Go to [www.rdn.bc.ca/emailalerts](http://www.rdn.bc.ca/emailalerts) and choose the option for Wastewater Services – Secondary Treatment Upgrade.



For more information on any Wastewater Services project, please visit the RDN website or contact the department at 250-390-6560 or 250-954-3792 (in District 69).

### Call for Volunteer Firefighters

The RDN includes six volunteer departments directly funded by Regional District taxes including Bow Horn Bay, Coombs-Hilliers, Dashwood, Errington, Extension and Nanoose Bay as well as five independent Improvement District Fire Departments including Deep Bay, Gabriola, North Cedar, Cranberry and East Wellington. All departments regularly seek volunteers to serve as firefighters and some also utilize volunteers in operational roles for office administration and truck/equipment servicing. At this time the Bow Horn Bay, Cranberry and Extension Fire Departments are actively seeking volunteers. Anyone interested in volunteering is encouraged to contact their local Fire Department.



For more information, including contact information for all Fire Departments, visit [www.rdn.bc.ca/fireprotection](http://www.rdn.bc.ca/fireprotection)

**DON'T FORGET**

Make sure your address is visible on the road to emergency services.

### Septic Rebates Continue to be Popular

The RDN's Septic Maintenance Rebates were offered again in 2016, providing up to \$1,000 to help residents maintain their septic systems. Since 2014, more than 200 households have participated in this program and the RDN has given out more than \$80,000 in Septic Maintenance Rebates.

Offered through the SepticSmart program, **the rebates promote long-term maintenance habits** to maximize the longevity of existing onsite systems. Rebates are offered in combination with a series of SepticSmart workshops on how to properly care for your residential septic system. Funds have been fully allocated for 2016, but please check back in March to learn about rebates offered in 2017.

For more information on these and other rebates offered by the RDN, including the Oil to Heat Pump Rebate, Rainwater Harvesting Incentive, Clothes Washer Incentives and more, visit [www.RDNrebates.ca](http://www.RDNrebates.ca)



### Incentives for Inefficient Wood Stoves

An efficient wood burning stove will have little to no smoke coming out the chimney and will improve air quality in your neighbourhood. The RDN is offering residents **\$250 plus additional rebates of \$150 offered by some retailers** towards changing out their inefficient wood stoves.

Note: when lighting your stove, open the damper wide open and get a **good hot fire going before you dampen it down**. Look outside – if there is smoke billowing out of your stove, it's not burning properly. Smoke can expel dangerous gases that can cause serious health issues to you and your neighbours.

## Transit Expansion

Parksville, Qualicum Beach, and Electoral Areas 'G' and 'H' will see expanded transit service in 2017 with the addition of a community bus in Qualicum Beach, more frequent service for #99 Deep Bay and improvements to the #91 Intercity.

Transit riders can visit the 'Recent News' section at: [www.bctransit.com/nanaimo](http://www.bctransit.com/nanaimo) for more information.

## Goodbye Diesel Buses!

As 2016 comes to a close so does the era of diesel buses at RDN Transit. All RDN buses will now run on Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) making ours **the first fleet in Canada** to do so. The first CNG buses joined the fleet in 2013 and the final 24 will arrive in the coming weeks. The diesel buses were nearing the end of their life cycle and will be retired from service or moved to another community.



The benefits of switching to CNG include significant cost savings, **improved air quality** through reduced greenhouse gas emissions, reduced particulate emissions, lower fuel costs and quieter engines. The switch has been cost-shared with BC Transit and Fortis BC.

## Landfill Construction Projects

2016 was a milestone year for the Cedar Regional Landfill with the completion of several major infrastructure projects. After more than a decade of planning, the expansion of the North Berm is now complete, providing enhanced stability in case of a significant seismic event in the area. Capacity has also been expanded so the landfill can continue to serve the region for an additional 15 years, taking us to approximately 2041. A new maintenance shop has also been constructed which will remain and service the site post-closure.

## New CAO announcement

The Board is pleased to introduce Phyllis Carlyle as the new Chief Administrative Officer. Ms. Carlyle was selected by the Board after a cross-Canada search and brings over 26 years of municipal experience to her new role including 12 years as General Manager of Law and Community Safety with the City of Richmond. Ms. Carlyle joined the RDN on October 11, 2016.



## Are you prepared in case of an Emergency?

PreparedBC is British Columbia's one-stop shop for disaster readiness information, including:

# ELEVEN STEPS TO A PREPARED HOUSEHOLD

1. Identify the risks for your region
2. Complete the PreparedBC: Household Emergency Plan, and identify at least two out-of-area contacts
3. Pick a meeting spot in case you're separated from family members
4. Assign someone to collect your children from school or daycare if you can't
5. Identify what official sources you'll get information from
6. Learn how to turn off utilities
7. Store enough emergency water for your family for a minimum of three days
8. Store enough emergency food to support your family for a minimum of one week
9. Identify any special needs, such as medications, baby formula or pet food, and make sure a proper supply is on hand
10. Secure your space if you live in an area where earthquakes are a risk
11. Create grab-and-go bags for every member of your household

Visit [www.gov.bc.ca/PreparedBC](http://www.gov.bc.ca/PreparedBC) for more tips on how to prepare your family for an emergency.

## Green Building Series 2016

This year's Green Building Series was held in October and included a one-day workshop on Passive House Design and Construction. The workshop introduced elements of Passive House design which leads to cost effective, low energy buildings with increased occupant comfort and reduced mechanical systems.



As in other years, the Series also offered open house tours in the region. This year, two homes were on display: an energy retrofit project in Meadowood and a newly constructed Passive House in Qualicum Bay. We would like to thank the homeowners for opening their doors and thank all participants for supporting this initiative. To find more about Passive House Design, visit [www.passivehousecanada.com](http://www.passivehousecanada.com).

Details of the 2017 Green Building Series will be posted next fall at [www.rdn.bc.ca/greenbuildingseries](http://www.rdn.bc.ca/greenbuildingseries).

In October 2013, a group of stakeholders came together to discuss health and well-being in the Oceanside region (Parksville, Qualicum Beach, Electoral Areas 'E,' 'F,' 'G' and 'H'). They decided to form a group that would invite the community to identify and address health-related issues together. This group, with funding from the RDN, evolved to become the Oceanside Health and Wellness Network (OHWN). Since it was established, OHWN has worked to gather and assess local health data, support the work of the Oceanside Task Force on Homelessness, and clearly define the key priorities for collective action in our region.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

After a recent strategic planning session, OHWN has identified **three priority areas for 2016-2018: Child Wellness, Mental Health and OHWN Network Development**. Some activities will include: improving food security in the school setting; raising awareness and taking action to address mental health issues and substance use in Oceanside; and enhancing community outreach and stakeholder engagement.

If you are interested in learning more, presenting at a meeting or getting involved, email Brenda Kent at [info.ohwn@gmail.com](mailto:info.ohwn@gmail.com).