

Mayor's Message

In these times of adversity, I remain immensely proud of our community's unwavering resolve, characterized by confidence and resolute action. I draw inspiration from the way our community members continue to foster hope, creatively volunteer, and provide assistance to those most in need.

With Thanksgiving on the horizon, both the council and our dedicated staff extend heartfelt wishes to all, urging everyone to take a moment for introspection, pondering the genuine treasures in our lives.



Wildfire Season Is Not Over

This past month, our province's battle against the worst wildfire season on record raged on. Now, with nearly 2 million hectares of land lost to the fires burning across the province and a provincial state of emergency issued, the need for preparedness is critical.



Although the Highlands is not currently facing any threats of wildfire, we are entering a very dangerous time for our area as the risk of a wildfire can remain well into October. Currently, the wildfire danger level in the Highlands remains on HIGH even with rain we have had in September, and with the colder nights residents are now turning to their wood stoves to heat their homes.

As the Wildfire danger historically has remained high through September in our area, it is imperative that residents report columns of smoke, adhere to our local outdoor fire bans (even if it's raining) and ensure that their woodstoves are CSA rated and utilize an approved spark arrestor to prevent ignitions in the surrounding forest.

Last year we extinguished 2 wildfires in Gowlland Tod Park, one started on Aug 30 and the other on Oct 4.

The Fire Department, through its partnership with FireSmart is continually providing seminars and information for our residents about wildfire resiliency and preparedness around their property, and most recently FireSmart has updated their Last-Minute Checklist with new information. Now known as the Emergency Wildfire Preparedness Checklist, we encourage residents to download this resource and familiarize themselves with the steps they can take to be prepared for an emergency:

<https://firesmartbc.ca/resource/firesmart-last-minute-wildfire-checklist/>

As Wildfires won't wait for you to make a plan, residents are strongly encouraged to visit the FireSmart BC website for information on how to prepare their home, their property and their families for a wildfire: <https://firesmartbc.ca/>

However, if a wildfire is threatening your area, the priority is getting out safely!

In the Highlands, our primary method for disseminating emergency notifications to our residents is through the utilization of a public alerting notification system known as Alertable. These notifications serve to furnish essential details regarding the emergency, encompassing information about its nature, the areas affected, whether the notification is classified as an Alert or an Order, and crucial instructions for residents to adhere to, including the recommended evacuation routes if deemed necessary. To sign up for emergency Alerts please go to www.westshorealert.ca and click on the Highlands logo or you can also download the Alertable app and subscribe to the Highlands area notifications.

An evacuation alert means you need to be ready to leave at a moment's notice. If you are on an alert and preparing to evacuate, assess your home, and complete the items on the Emergency Wildfire Preparedness Checklist.

An evacuation order means the time to prepare is over. **YOU NEED TO LEAVE IMMEDIATELY.** ~Fire Chief Ford

South Highlands Local Area Plan

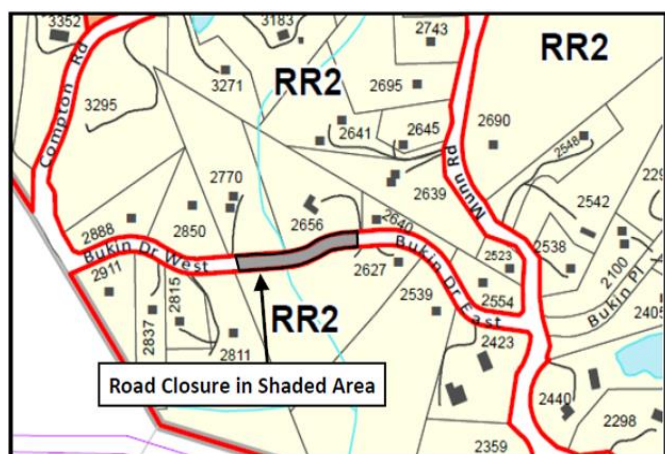
The SHLAP is now complete and can be viewed at this link:

https://www.highlands.ca/DocumentCenter/View/8395/2023-06-12_SHLAP_LAP_Report_FINAL.

To incorporate it into District policy, at its June 19th meeting, Council directed staff to bring forward an Official Community Plan amendment bylaw. This is expected to return to Council sometime in the fall or early winter.

Bukin Drive

A portion of Bukin Drive East and Bukin Drive West was closed to all traffic (vehicle, pedestrian, equestrian) at the July 17 Council Meeting. The shaded portion in the map below is now closed.



DISTRICT OF HIGHLANDS

Crime Statistics

West Shore Detachment	District of Highlands			
	Jan 1 - Jun 30, 2022	Jan 1 - Jun 30, 2023	% Change	Jan 1 - Jun 30 2019 - 2023
Crimes Against Persons	7	9	29%	
Offences Against Property	17	20	18%	
Other Criminal Code Violations	2	4	100%	
Controlled Drug & Substances Violations	0	0	0%	
Other Federal Statute Violations	1	2	100%	
Provincial Statistics Codes	9	12	33%	
RCMP Statistics Codes	120	138	15%	
Traffic Violations (Provincial)	2	4	100%	
Total	146	168	15%	



Accessibility Plan

In 2021, British Columbia passed the Accessible BC Act, mandating municipalities to create an Accessibility Plan to enhance access to municipal services, programs, and infrastructure. The goal is to ensure that everyone can fully participate in the community. The plan addresses issues in information, communications, technologies, policies, practices, and infrastructure, with a long-term vision of a barrier-free community.

The Accessibility Plan focuses initially on Employment and Service Delivery standards, with a commitment to ongoing improvements. It must be reviewed and updated every three years, incorporating input from public engagement initiatives. An Accessibility Committee, initially comprised of staff from partner municipalities, is tasked with improving accessibility practices. Public participation and feedback are encouraged to identify and eliminate barriers, enhancing access and inclusion for all.

We invite your feedback.

- **Email:** accessibility@highlands.ca
- **Phone:** 250-474-1773
- **Deliver Comments:** 1980 Millstream Road, Victoria BC, V9B 6H1

For more detailed information on the web:

<https://www.highlands.bc.ca/537/Accessibility>

Secondary Suites/Accessory Dwelling Units Project

At its August 14th meeting, Council directed staff to provide more information about opportunities for the District to have input regarding well-water to supply secondary suites and accessory dwelling units. The web site for the project can be found at:

<https://www.highlands.ca/500/Secondary-Suites-and-Accessory-Dwelling->



The HIGHLAND FLING is coming!

This outdoor festival has been held for many years in the Highlands and is a wonderful way to celebrate all we share as a community.

Come and enjoy great music from live performers. Play some fun games and enter the 50/50 draw (proceeds to support Muscular Dystrophy Canada). We have wonderful events going on all day:

- Local craft and produce market.
- Amazing display booths.
- Face painting and balloon animals.
- Kids' crafts table.
- Lots of food and ice-cream.
- And then, at the end of it all, the giant tug of war!

There's awesome entertainment all day, so lie in the sun and enjoy!

Sunday, September 10 Noon – 4pm
Caleb Pike Heritage Park
1589 Millstream Road

Highlands Music Coffee House

The Highlands Music Coffee House started in 1998 to provide a community event each month where Highlanders and anyone that enjoys music and arts, young and old, could gather once a month to listen to live music and have a place where kinship could grow.

September 16 - "One Wheel"

October 14 - "Homespun"

November 4 - "Karel Roessingh and Colleen Eccleston"



"One Wheel" Sept 16, Admission by Donation
Doors open 6:30pm 1589 Millstream Rd.

Highlands Community Garden Update

"The pause between summer and autumn is nostalgia with a sharp edge. Let the memories come. Give them to the ecstatic earth, now beginning to deepen and turn". ~ Victoria Erickson

As summer churned along, our garden plots and orchard took off, and gardeners enjoyed multiple harvests of all manner of fruit and veg. Tips and recipes were shared, stories swapped over work parties, and new friendships were forged. This year, we completed the irrigation system for the orchards, and filled and planted the new community beds. As summer comes to a close, the apples and pears are coming ready for harvest, and winter crops are being tucked in for the coming season. Our fall cleanup and end of season festivities will be upon us soon.

We are so grateful for this space in which to grow. If you have any questions, please contact us at highlandscommunitygarden@outlook.com





September 30th marks National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The annual South Island Powwow is an opportunity to recognize Survivors and their families in the spirit of reconciliation. Through song and dance, we will celebrate traditional Indigenous cultures and resiliency. First Nations far and wide have been welcomed to join us on this day to celebrate in our time-honoured powwow. In 2022, the powwow brought 10,000 together to witness Indigenous resiliency to stand together on Orange Shirt Day.

When: September 30th, 2023
Gates Open at 10 am, Grand Entries at 12 pm & 6 pm. Colours retire at midnight.
Where: Royal Athletic Park 1014 Caledonia Ave, Victoria, BC Free admission

Meeting Dates

September

- Sept 4 – Office Closed
- Sept 5 – Social Sustainability Select Committee 7:00pm
- Sept 10 – Highland Fling
- Sept 11 – Council — 7:00pm
- Sept 13 – Heritage Select Committee Cancelled
- Sept 13 – Sustainable Land Use Select Committee– 7:15pm

October

- Oct 2 – Office Closed
- Oct 3 & 16 Council – 7:00pm
- Oct 9 – Office Closed
- Oct 10 – Committee of the Whole – 7:00pm
- Oct 11 – Heritage Select Committee – 7:30pm
- Oct 17 – Social Sustainability Select Committee –7:00pm
- Oct 18 – Sustainable Land Use Select Committee –7:15pm

November

- Nov 6 & 20– Council –7:00pm
- Nov 7 – Social Sustainability Select Committee –7:15pm
- Nov 8 – Heritage Select Committee –7:30pm
- Nov 13 – Office Closed
- Nov 14 – Committee of the Whole –7:00pm
- Nov 15 – Sustainable Land Use Select Committee –7:15pm

Highlands Winter Craft Fair

Highlands Winter Craft Fair will be held on Saturday, November 18th this year from 10:00am to 4:00pm at the Caleb Pike Heritage Park as well as the Highlands Community Hall.

Be Bear Aware!



Tip Remember to replace the batteries in any battery-operated smoke alarms on Sunday, November 5th when we turn the clocks back one hour.

Contact Info

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- CRD Bylaw Enforcement
 250-474-3351
- CRD Parks
 250-478-3344
- Wildlife Information
 1-800-663-9453

Stay connected! Check out our website at www.highlands.ca and subscribe to *Notify Me* which allows you to sign up to an unlimited number of email lists. Receive email or text message updates regarding the information you have requested that is important to you!

www.highlands.ca | 1980 Millstream Road | Highlands, BC | V9B 6H1 | 250-474-1773

