

Township of
ESQUIMALT

COUNCIL PRIORITIES PLAN
2023-2026

UPDATED SEPTEMBER 2025



View from Highrock Park



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View from Saxepoint

THE LAND OF SHOALING WATER

- > The area now known as Esquimalt has been inhabited by Coast Salish First Nations for over 4,000 years.
- > Esquimalt (pronounced Ess-KWY-malt) is an anglicized version of the *ləkʷəŋən* word “es-whoy-malth,” which means the place of gradually shoaling waters.
- > Year of incorporation: September 1, 1912.
- > Esquimalt is home to close to 18,000 residents.
- > Esquimalt boasts a diverse business landscape, from a bustling graving dock and light industrial enterprises to offices to breweries and a variety of local businesses.
- > Esquimalt has over 40 hectares of parkland, many of these parks overlooking waterways along the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the Gorge Waterway.

The Township enjoys over 30 parks, beaches and green spaces.





West Bay Marina

INTRODUCTION

Goal of the report

Mayor and Council develop and identify key projects and initiatives to be undertaken during the term of Council 2023 – 2026. The report is intended to outline the priorities and their progress.

What are council priorities

Council priorities outline areas of focus for the coming term. These priorities can be amended over time as some are completed and other needs arise. Any proposed new projects are evaluated on priority and costs—both financial and in staff time.

These priorities are in addition to existing operational tasks and approved capital projects.

The projects or initiatives in this plan fall outside of staff's day-to-day operational or service level commitments.

Generally, 90 per cent of staff effort is devoted to delivering on service level commitments, which leaves approximately 10 per cent of staff's workplan capacity for projects that are part of the Council Priorities Plan.

Services

The Township is responsible for delivering essential local services such as parks and recreation; sewer services; transportation infrastructure and fire protection. Land use planning, economic development and other policy areas impact how the township grows.

These services are part of staff's core service work and are included in the financial plan. Details about this work is summarized in the annual reports.



Part of the art walk at Esquimalt Town Square

COUNCIL PRIORITY PROCESS

Council was sworn in on November 7, 2022 after the October municipal election. In December of that year, they began strategic planning sessions that included identifying areas of focus; drafting mission, vision and values; and assessing organizational strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities.

After a follow-up session, this draft was taken to the Committee of the Whole for public input in March 2023. After ratification in April and a housing workshop in May, Council finalized the list of priorities and projects.

The Council Priorities Plan represents Council's direction to staff; staff use this guidance to build their workplans and deliver the results that Council is seeking. While Council retains the flexibility to modify or update the Priorities Plan at any time, the aim of a structured framework is to establish a predictable rhythm

for governance review of Council's priorities throughout the year.

These projects may be adjusted to align with financial and departmental planning. Adjustments to the projects will be reflected in periodic updates of this document.

NOTE: Cllr. Darlene Rotchford resigned her position in October 2024 due to her new position as MLA for the Esquimalt-Colwood riding. Cllr Meagan Brame was successful in the April 2025 by-election.



(Top) Councillor Boardman, Councillor Morrison, Councillor Helliwell, & Councillor Cavens

(Bottom) Councillor Brame, Mayor Desjardins & Councillor Armour

COUNCIL PRIORITY PROCESS

Financial planning

Staff present a draft budget to Council and the public for feedback and adjustments in the spring. This budget outlines both operational needs and capital projects.

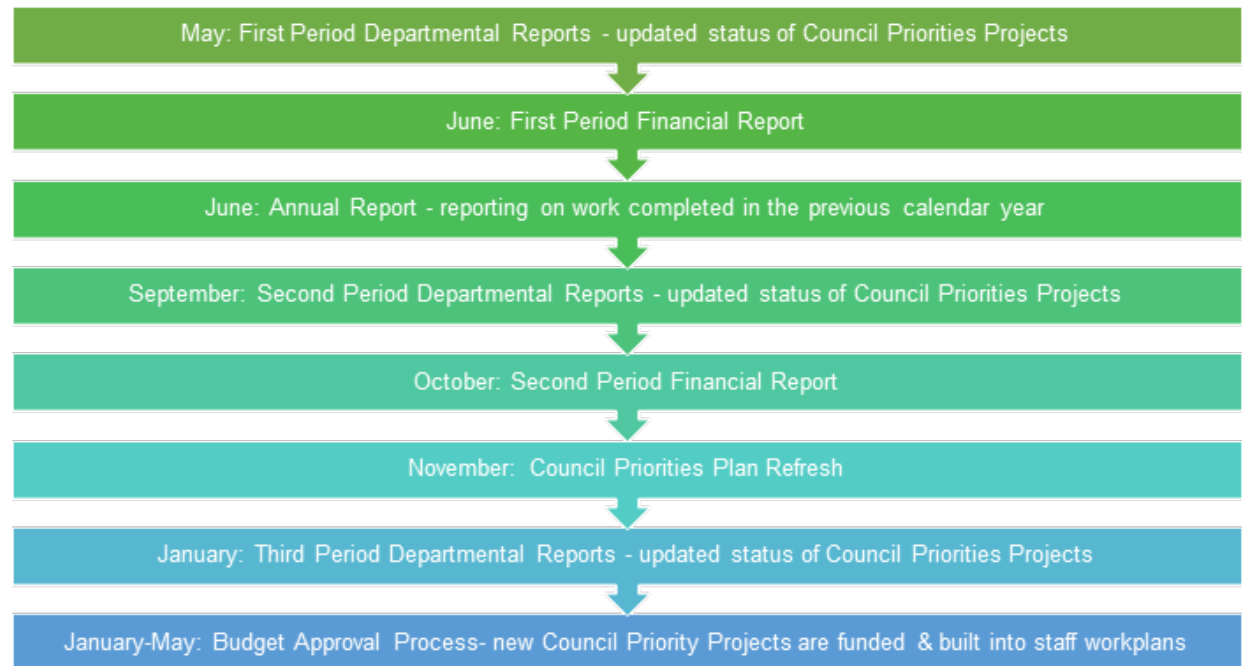
Council takes council priorities into account when approving the budget to ensure initiatives are responsibly funded. The resulting Five-Year Financial Plan provides funding for core services as well as the Council Priorities Plan. To keep Council, staff and community expectations aligned, it is important to recognize that Council does not normally add new projects or initiatives to the Council's Priorities Plan without understanding the required funding, staff resources, and impact to current commitments.

The Township has adopted a best practice where new or unfunded projects are referred to the Council Priorities Plan Refresh scheduled to occur each November. Staff would prepare decision notes for Council consideration that would include information about the potential projects (scope, budget, impact assessment, etc.) to enable prioritization of the new projects within existing plans and resources.

How do these priorities impact planning and work throughout the year?

The Chief Administrative Officer and senior leadership group then use these council priorities to develop operational strategies and work plans to support the direction set by Council.

The Period Financial Reports share budget variance updates, including insight on Council Priorities Projects. Progress is reported to Council and the public through Department Reports three times a year and is summarized in the Township's annual report published each June.





Esquimalt skyline

VISION, MISSION & VALUES

VISION

The Township of Esquimalt is a leader that is recognized as a vibrant, distinct, resilient and diverse community for people to discover, feel welcome and belong.

MISSION

The Township of Esquimalt works to support economic, cultural, social and environmental health for our current and future generations.

VALUES

Accountability - We are transparent and take responsibility for our policies, our decisions and our actions.

Integrity - We demonstrate high standards of ethical behaviour and open communication that inspires trust.

Respect - We value people and treat everyone with dignity and fairness.

Service Excellence - We meet community needs and achieve high-quality results through responsiveness, creativity, teamwork and partnerships.

Passion - We approach our work with conviction and enthusiasm.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusiveness - We share in the responsibility to create a positive culture, honour differences, and safeguard equity, inclusion and dignity for all.

COUNCIL PRIORITIES



CLIMATE RESILIENCE & ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP



DIVERSIFIED & THRIVING ECONOMY



ENGAGED & HEALTHY COMMUNITY



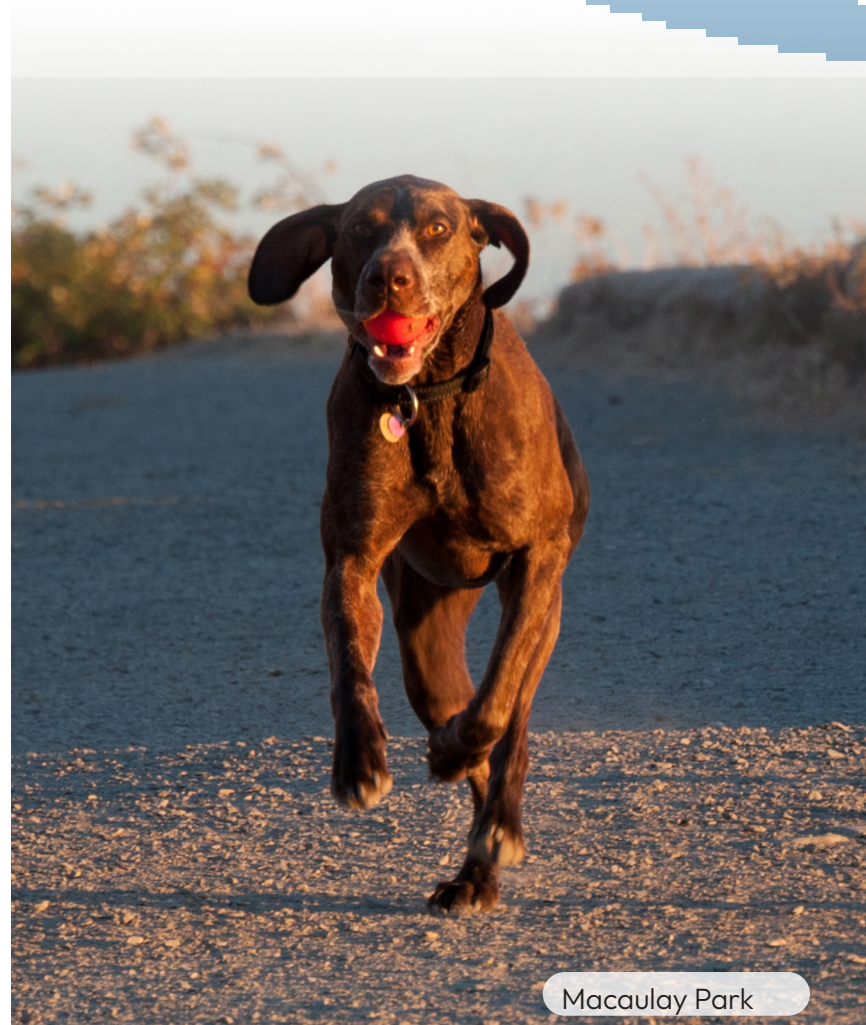
GOOD GOVERNANCE & ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE



HOUSING



STRONG RELATIONSHIPS & PARTNERSHIPS



Macaulay Park



PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

CLIMATE RESILIENCE & ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Project	Department	Status	Status Details	Completion
Tree Protection Bylaw Update	Parks and Recreation		Complete	Q1 2023
Priority Development Workshop—Climate Resilience and Environmental Stewardship	Development Services		Complete	Q2 2023
Climate Action Workshop Initiative: Update Council report templates to include climate action (mitigation and adaptation) considerations	Corporate Services		Complete	Q3 2023
Climate Action Workshop Initiative: Develop an annual progress report that ties to specific strategies within the climate plan	Development Services		Complete	Q2 2024 Q4 2024
Low Carbon Energy Systems Bylaw	Development Services		Complete	Q3 2023
Integrated Resource Management	Engineering and Public Works		Update to Council expected at end of Q3 / early Q4.	Q2 Q4 2024 Q2 2025- Q3 2025
Green Teams Partnership	Parks and Recreation		Complete	Q3 2023
Develop concrete action plan to reduce corporate greenhouse gas emissions by 45% from 2010 levels by 2030 including: 1. Electric vehicle fleet plan 2. GHG emission municipal building audit 3. GHG corporate roadmap	Development Services		> The Electric vehicle fleet plan is ongoing. > The municipal building audit has started and will be completed by Q3 2025. > The GHG Corporate Roadmap will be completed once the municipal building audit has been completed.	Q1 2025 Q1 2026



Proposed/Not yet funded



On track



Issues or concerns



Project at risk



Complete



PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

DIVERSIFIED & THRIVING ECONOMY

Project	Dept	Status	Status Details	Completion
Develop Economic Development Action Plan	HR and Community Relations		Complete	Q3 2023
Options Analysis - Park Place & Esquimalt Road	HR and Community Relations		A comprehensive report will be presented to Council in Q3 2025.	Q4-Q3 2024 Q2 2025 Q3 2025
Business Façade Improvement Program	Financial Services and IT		Complete	Q1 2024
Short-term rental policy analysis	Development Services		Consultant has been selected. Work to begin in September.	Q2 2026



Proposed/Not yet funded



On track



Issues or concerns



Project at risk



Complete



PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

ENGAGED & HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Project	Department	Status	Status Details	Completion
Options Analysis – Arm Street Park Dock	Parks and Recreation		Complete	Q4 2023
Volunteer Recognition Policy	HR and Community Relations		Complete	Q1 2024
Macaulay Elementary Crossing Guard MOU	Financial Services and IT		Complete	Q1 2024
Impact Assessment—Report on Undergrounding of Mainline of Overhead Utilities (Esquimalt Rd (Constance to Dominion))	Engineering and Public Works		Complete	Q1 2024
Family Doctor Shortage & Incentives	Development Services		Complete	Q1 2024
Implement Public Art Plan	Parks and Recreation		Complete	Q2 2024
Public Safety Building—Design Phase	Community Safety Services		Complete	Q2 2024
Police Service Model Transition—Phase I	Community Safety Services		Complete	Q2 2024



Proposed/Not yet funded



On track



Issues or concerns



Project at risk



Complete



PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

ENGAGED & HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Project	Department	Status	Status Details	Completion
Revise "Maintenance of Property and Nuisance Bylaw" with respect to Construction Noise	Corporate Services		Complete	Q2 2024
Level of Service Review - Enhance evening and weekend bylaw enforcement	Community Safety Services		Council was briefed; after-hours will be trialed and a report to Council in 2026	Q2-Q4 2024 Q1 2025 Q2 2026
Refresh & Replace Esquimalt Road Banners	HR and Community Relations		Complete and operationalized.	Q1 Q4 2024
Partner and develop turf field for Esquimalt High School	Parks and Recreation		UMBC Strategic Priorities Grant submission complete - waiting on results of grant application.	Q2 Q3 2024 Q1 Q4 2025 Q1 2026
Health Needs Assessment	Development Services		Completion date adjusted to Q4 2025.	Q4 2024 Q1 2025 Q3 Q4 2025
Police service model transition—Phase 2	Community Safety Services		Project update delivered to Council on January 13, 2025. Update to Council expected in fall of 2025.	
Public safety building construction	Community Safety Services		As of September 2025, project is on track and on budget.	Q3 Q4 2026
Esquimalt Together Against Graffiti	Engineering and Public Works		Initiation complete; kickoff event in coordination with VicPD occurred in Q3. Registered volunteers were provided with paint kits. Public Works to continue supporting ETAG.	Q4 2025



Proposed/Not yet funded



On track



Issues or concerns



Project at risk



Complete



PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

ENGAGED & HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Project	Department	Status	Status Details	Completion
Dock Analysis	Parks and Recreation		Assigned to Parks & Recreation for capital project development.	Q3 Q4 2024 Q1 2025
Implement Active Transportation Network Plan	Engineering and Public Works		> Munro Sidewalk update: construction on second phase from Kinver Street to Lampson Street finished summer 2025 > Sidewalk priorities update: discussion with Council on next priority projects for new sidewalks expected in Q4. > Esquimalt Road Active Transportation Improvements: Phase 1: \$500,000 BC Active Transportation Grant awarded; construction started summer 2025 > Phase 2: following the routing engagement What We Heard Report, Council provided direction on a phased approach; design engagement on segments between Joffre and Fraser, and Admirals to Canteen expected Q4 > Craigflower Crosswalk Improvements: construction underway in summer 2025, with completion expected in fall 2025.	Ongoing
Front Yard Deer Fencing Policy Development	Development Services		Initial research started.	Q2 2026



Proposed/Not yet funded



On track



Issues or concerns



Project at risk



Complete



PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

HOUSING

Project	Department	Status	Status Details	Completion
Construction Protocol Review	Development Services		Complete	Q1 2023
Priority Development Workshop—Housing	Development Services		Complete	Q2 2023
Rent Bank Program Information Brief	Development Services		Complete	Q2 2023
Parking Strategy and Updated Parking Bylaw	Development Services		Complete	Q1-Q4 2024 Q1 2025 Q3 2025
GIS Census Analysis	Development Services		Complete	Q3 2023
Tenant Relocation Policy	Development Services		Complete	Q4 2023
Subdivision & Development Bylaw Update (including sidewalk requirements)	Engineering and Public Works		Complete; Updated Bylaw approved by Council January 15 2024	Q1 2024

Proposed/Not yet funded On track Issues or concerns Project at risk Complete



PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

HOUSING

Project	Department	Status	Status Details	Completion
Prepare Zoning Bylaw Amendments to bring the Zoning Bylaw into conformance with recent amendments to the <i>Local Government Act</i>	Development Services		Complete - Bylaw adopted June 2024	Q2 2024
Affordable Housing Strategy (previously "Non-Market Housing Incentives & Targets Program")	Development Services		Staff to provide a brief to Council to define project expectations regarding scope and schedule.	Q3 2024 Q1 2026
Development Capacity Assessment	Development Services		Consultant contract awarded; project underway.	Q4 2024 Q3 2025 Q1 Q2 2026
Development Process Improvements	Development Services		Complete	Q2 2024
Doctor Density Bonusing	Development Services		New tools from the Province under review by staff.	Q4 2024 Q4 2025
Prepare new Housing Needs Assessment	Development Services		Complete	Q4 2024
Official Community Plan 2025 Updates	Development Services		OCP Recalibration amendments, assessing potential 12-storey height limits for Commercial/Commercial Mixed-Use, and incorporation of updated Housing Needs Assessment	Q4 2025
Official Community Plan Major Review	Development Services		Project scope document being developed for Council decision in Q1 2026.	



Proposed/Not yet funded



On track



Issues or concerns



Project at risk



Complete



PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

GOOD GOVERNANCE & ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Project	Department	Status	Status Details	Completion
Council Code of Conduct	Corporate Services	■	Complete	Q2 2023
Sign Bylaw Amendments	Development Services	■	Complete	Q3 2023
Staff report—B.C. Growing Communities Fund Options Analysis	Development Services	■	Complete	Q2 2023
Accessibility Plans— <i>Accessibility British Columbia Act</i> Compliance	Corporate Services	■	Complete December 2, 2024	Q3 Q4 2024
Long Term Financial Planning Update – Infrastructure Asset Management Strategy	Financial Services and IT	■	Complete	Q4 2023
Asset Management Program—Recreation Inventory and Plan Development	Parks and Recreation	■	Complete; Results to be incorporated into the Facilities Master Plan	Q3 2024
Asset Management Program—Sanitary Sewer Master Plan	Engineering and Public Works	■	Complete; received by Council in February 2025	Q2 Q4 2024 Q1 2025
Asset Management Program—Storm Sewer Master Plan	Engineering and Public Works	●	RFP to hire consultant closed late summer, with consultant expected to start in September.	Q2 2025 Q1 2026
Asset Management Program—Facilities Master Plan	Engineering and Public Works	●	Facility condition assessments occurred in Q3. Information to be used in RFP to hire a consultant to develop a municipal facilities plan.	Q1 Q2 2025 Q1 2026
Improved budget documentation	Financial Services and IT	■	Complete	Q2 2025



Proposed/Not yet funded



On track



Issues or concerns



Project at risk



Complete



PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

GOOD GOVERNANCE & ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Project	Department	Status	Status Details	Completion
Recreation Strategic Plan	Parks and Recreation		RFP engagement underway. Development capacity report will provide details around growth and future impact to recreation capacity.	Q1 2026
Pavement Condition Assessment and Management Plan	Engineering and Public Works		Asphalt condition assessments on all roads occurred in Q3, with corresponding paving plan expected early fall 2025	Q3 2026



Proposed/Not yet funded



On track



Issues or concerns



Project at risk



Complete



PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

STRONG RELATIONSHIPS & PARTNERSHIPS

Project	Department	Status	Status Details	Completion
Gorge Bridge Midden Site Signage	HR and Community Relations		Mayor and Council are in communication with both Nations with regards to the status of the current signage. Project delayed due to staff turnover.	Q3-2024 Q3-2025 Q1 2026
Community to Community Engagement (Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations)	HR and Community Relations		Complete. Community to Community dinner & flag raising completed November 2024 - ongoing engagement incorporated into operational planning and outcomes.	Ongoing
Develop opportunities for service agreements with Songhees and Esquimalt Nations	HR and Community Relations		Departments working in applicable areas (e.g., archaeological requirements)	Ongoing



Proposed/Not yet funded



On track



Issues or concerns



Project at risk



Complete

POTENTIAL FUTURE PROJECTS

These projects were considered by Council in 2024 and were deferred for future consideration.

They will be implemented as projects near completion and as staff capacity allows.

Project	Department	Council Priority
Ground-Oriented Small Developments	Development Services	Housing
Parkland Placement, Aquisition and Management	Parks and Recreation	Engaged & Healthy Community

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- > Official Community Plan
- > 2025 Financial Plan Bylaw
- > 2024 Annual Report
- > Period reports
- > Active Transportation Network Plan
- > Climate Action Plan
- > Art in Public Spaces Plan

Find these and other corporate documents on [Esquimalt.ca](https://esquimalt.ca) or visit Esquimalt Municipal Hall at 1229 Esquimalt Rd.



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