

ESQUIMALT CURRENT

The Township of Esquimalt's Community Newsletter

Successful Activation of Emergency Operations Centre in 2006

On December 15, 2006, the Township of Esquimalt activated its Emergency Operations Centre (EOC), after a windstorm knocked down trees and power lines, blocked roads, and caused substantial property damage.



The EOC was opened to help coordinate the multiple responses required for this Level One emergency and to ensure that a task number was received from the Provincial Emergency Program (PEP), so that emergency response costs could be funded by the Province.

The activation of the EOC allowed staff to put training in emergency planning into action, including record-keeping and liaising with PEP. This was the first time since 2004, when Corporate Services Director, Brenda Warner was appointed as Esquimalt's Emergency Coordinator, that the municipality has activated its EOC.

The municipality has received annual Emergency Planning Grants

from the Union of BC Municipalities to help fund emergency training. Municipal staff have been assigned roles in the EOC and participated in regular emergency training exercises.

The event, according to Warner was successful and "highlighted the need for good communication and clear decision-making" during emergencies.

Esquimalt's Emergency Program offers free emergency training to residents during the spring and fall. For more information, visit www.esquimalt.ca/emerg.

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The Esquimalt Current is a tri-annual newsletter published by the Township of Esquimalt and distributed to residents' homes and local businesses.

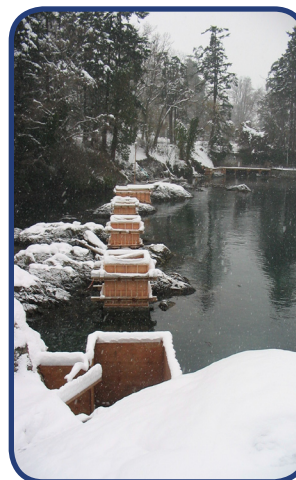
Mayor Chris Clement
Councillor Basil Boulton
Councillor Barbara Desjardins
Councillor Hy Freedman
Councillor Lynda Hundleby
Councillor Donald Linge
Councillor Jane Sterk



New West Bay Walkway Pedestrian Bridge

This winter the Township of Esquimalt is partnering with the City of Victoria to replace the West Bay Walkway Pedestrian Bridge located below Barnard Park on the Victoria/ Esquimalt border.

This new and improved pedestrian bridge design incorporates a wider walkway surface that is fully accessible and utilizes sustainable materials such as IPE wood top railings.



Footings of Westbay Walkway Bridge (Winter 2006)

Incorporated into the design is a viewing area with seating, enhanced lighting, and stairs to allow park users to enjoy access to the beach.

The project is scheduled to be completed by the end of March 2007. A pedestrian detour will remain in place through Barnard Park until the bridge is re-opened.

For more information, contact David Speed, Director of Parks and Recreation at 412-8509.

2 Council Completes 2007-2008 Strategic Plan

Council is in the process of completing its 2007-2008 Strategic Plan. Council developed its first strategic plan last year, following the municipal election, as a way of prioritizing municipal objectives.

Mayor Chris Clement states, "Council has so many things they want to see done in the community... I believe the plan allows us to focus our efforts and make sure that our energy and resources are directed in a cohesive and coordinated...way."

The 2007-2008 Strategic Plan is a departure from previous municipal planning efforts, in that its focus "is for a longer term than the three years Council term of office," according to Councillor Hy Freedman.

The 2007- 2008 Strategic Plan identifies the following seven key community goals and actions required to achieve them:

1. To ensure the Corporation of the Township of Esquimalt remains economically viable.
2. To ensure Esquimalt accommodates growth in a manner that is sustainable, while maintaining its small town ambience.
3. To protect and improve the health of our natural environment.
4. To provide, encourage, and leverage development of facilities, amenities, and programming to enhance the health and quality of life for all residents.
5. Ensure Esquimalt is recognized as an integral component of the Capital Region and the community actively participates in the region's destiny.
6. To ensure Esquimalt is a safe community in which to live, work and play.

"I believe the plan allows us to focus our efforts and make sure that our energy and resources are directed in a cohesive and coordinated...way."

Mayor Chris Clement

7. To ensure Esquimalt's local government is open and communicative.

Councillor Lynda Hundley comments: "Strategic planning is an excellent business tool to aid Mayor and Council in staying focused to achieve its vision and to allow the residents to know and understand the rationale for the decisions and the goals."

She adds, "This is a good move for Esquimalt that brings logical reasoned governance into the municipal landscape."

The 2007-2008 Strategic Plan is available at the Municipal Hall or on the website at www.esquimalt.ca.

Assessment Updates From Finance

More than 4,800 property owners in Esquimalt should have received their 2007 assessment notices in January. Assessments are the estimate of a property's market value as of July 1, 2006.

The real estate market creates property value, which is reported annually by BC Assessment. After determining their own budget needs this spring, the Township and other taxing authorities will determine their property tax rates based on BC Assessment data. The increase in assessed property values does not translate into a corresponding increase in municipal taxes.

Overall, Esquimalt's assessment roll increased from \$2.435 billion last year to \$2.835 billion this year.



This growth reflects changing market values for many properties, but also includes added value from subdivisions, rezoning, and new construction. Over the past few years, residential property values have increased significantly, while commercial and industrial property values have remained relatively stable. On average, residential properties in Esquimalt experienced a 13.84% increase in assessment this year due to market value.

"Assessments and Sales by Address," a publication, which can assist residential property owners to understand their property's market value, is available on BC Assessment's web site (www.bcasessment.ca) or at the Municipal Hall until March 15, 2007.

Municipal Hall
1229 Esquimalt Road
Esquimalt, BC V9A 3P1

Archives
1149-A Esquimalt Road
1229 Esquimalt Road
Esquimalt, BC V9S 3P1

Recreation Centre
527 Fraser Street
Esquimalt, BC V9A 6A6

Archie Browning Sports Centre
1151 Esquimalt Road
Esquimalt, BC V9A 3N6

Esquimalt Branch Library
1231 Esquimalt Road
(behind Municipal Hall)

We welcome your feedback.

Melissa Darou
Communications Manager
mdarou@esquimalt.ca
(250) 414-7122

Japanese Garden Planned for Gorge Park

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This winter the Municipality is working on the design of a new Japanese Garden to be located in Esquimalt Gorge Park. This Japanese Garden, with roots firmly connected to the original Japanese Tea Gardens that flourished on this same site from 1907 to the 1930s, will include modern Japanese garden design ideas and features.

Esquimalt's new Japanese Garden will be situated on a ½ acre hillside site with spectacular views of the Gorge Waterway. A short walk

from the parking lot, it will be easily accessible to all park visitors.

Landscape designer Michael Greenfield (New Takata Japanese Gardens, Glendale Gardens) envisions a garden that is peaceful, serene, beautiful, and respectful of the site's famous past.

2007 will see planning completed for the garden with ground breaking scheduled for the winter of 2007-08.

For more information, contact Christine Morissette, Esquimalt Parks Manager at 412-8508.



Takata Japanese Gardens, Glendale Gardens, Saanich

Global Outreach Supports Nepalese Orphanage

As part of our corporate value of stewardship, several employees at the Township have initiated a Global Outreach program to help less fortunate individuals in other countries. Sonja Zupanec, one of the project's coordinators, says the project is "a small grassroots approach to supporting positive change."

In 2006, employees and members of Council raised over \$4759 through payroll deductions to contribute to the Save Child Blessing Home Orphanage in Nepal. "Because the money is sent directly to the orphanage," says Zupanec, "there is confidence that one hundred per cent of the funds are being used for the well-being of the children."

Funds were used to pay for rent and to purchase basic school supplies, soap, shoes, and food for children in the orphanage.

Nepal, a small country located in the Himalayan Mountains between India and China (Tibet) is one of the poorest and least



Children at Save Child Blessing Home Orphanage, Nepal

developed nations in the world. Most people exist there on subsistence farming and do not have access to electricity, running water, medical care, or education.

Zupanec adds, "I think it's important for employee groups to think about and act on issues of common interest... whether the projects we support are half a world away or right in our own municipality, we can promote positive change."

To find out how to participate in this project, contact Sonja Zupanec by phone 414-7179 or email szupanec@esquimalt.ca. Updates about the orphanage can be found on the website at www.esquimalt.ca.

Snow and Wind and Rain, Oh My!

by Christine Morissette, Esquimalt Parks Manager

Wasn't that a wild way to end 2006? We barely recovered from the rain and wind and snow of late November when it started all over again in December. Here's hoping February teases us with milder, spring-like weather.

In the meantime, your Parks staff continue to "pick up the pieces" of Esquimalt's urban forest.

What exactly is an urban forest? Trees in parks, on boulevards, on private property, in your backyard – all are part of the urban forest. These trees play an important role in our world: they clean the air, cool the earth, divert storm water, provide habitat for birds and other wildlife, and soften our urban landscape. Recent winter storms have taken their toll on this forest of ours.

The next time you visit parks like Esquimalt Gorge or Saxe Point, you'll see evidence of fallen or wounded giants.

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Snow, Wind, Rain cont'd

Once majestic Douglas Firs lie ramrod straight on the earth, or if standing, are missing their crowns and massive limbs. Along boulevards, our magnificent Japanese flowering plum and cherry trees are bent and broken from the storms. Parks staff address hazard situations first: falling and bucking the most affected trees, pruning dangerous branches, and clearing trails through the storm's debris.

What can you do for the urban forest in your back yard? Prune broken branches, or hire a certified tree service to do it for you. Wear eye protection, gloves and other safety equipment when you work around your trees. And remember that Esquimalt offers a free composting service for municipal residents.

Take your garden debris and branches up to 3 inches in diameter to 605 Canteen Road, 9 to 5, Monday through Saturday, knowing it will be returned to the earth where it began its lifecycle. Then sit back and enjoy your piece of the urban forest.

Leading specialty coffee roasters, Canterbury Coffee, are assisting us in the relentless pursuit of the perfect cup of coffee.

Bring this ad in for ONE FREE cup of coffee or tea.*

Stay for lunch and enjoy a grilled Panini and some homemade soup.

Esquimalt Parks and Recreation
Bullen Perk
527 Fraser St.
Phone: 412-8500

* One per customer, only



Community Calendar

March

10 Esquimalt's gigantic garage sale Clean out your garage, find great deals, make a few dollars.
Esquimalt Recreation, 9 am to 12 pm, \$15/table. Call 412-8500 to register.

14 "Community Connection and Creativity": Part of the Land Marks lecture series on Public Art.
Cedar Hill Golf Course Clubhouse, 1400 Derby Road, 7 pm, free.
From more information, call 414-7148 or visit www.esquimalt.ca.

April

6-9th Easter weekend.

Municipal Hall closed.
Recreation Centre open 8 am to 8 pm.

8 Easter egg hunt at Esquimalt Gorge Park, 1 pm to 3 pm, free.
Presented by the Lions Club and Esquimalt Parks and Recreation.
For more information, call 412-8500.

26 Mayor and Friends of Esquimalt Golf Tournament 2007: A fundraiser for aquatic and accessibility equipment for the Esquimalt Recreation Centre.
Entry: \$135 per person. Enter individually or as a team. To register call 412-8500 or 412-8510 or download registration from: www.esquimalt.ca
Entry deadline: April 17th, 2007.

May

10 World Move for Health Day
Water Fit-a-Thon
Esquimalt Recreation, 6-8:30 pm
\$5, Registration required: 412-8500

Contacts

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Emergency	9-1-1
Municipal Hall (Reception)	(250) 414-7100
Administration	(250) 414-7101
Finance	(250) 414-7100
Development & Engineering	(250) 414-7108
Public Works	(250) 414-7152
Building Inspections	(250) 414-7108
Bylaw Enforcement	(250) 414-7108
Police Department	(250) 995-7504
Fire Department	(250) 414-7126
Parks & Recreation	(250) 412-8500
Library	(250) 414-7198
Archives	(250) 412-8540

Council Meetings

Regular Council Meeting

- March 5, 2007
- March 19, 2007
- April 2, 2007
- April 16, 2007
- May 7, 2007
- May 22, 2007 (Tuesday)

Committee of the Whole

- March 12, 2007
- April 10, 2007 (Tuesday)
- May 14, 2007

Unless otherwise noted, Council Meetings take place at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Council Chambers at 1229 Esquimalt Road.

Please check the website or contact the Municipal Clerk at 414-7135 to confirm meeting times.

The Township of Esquimalt is committed to environmental sustainability. This newsletter is printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper.

