

Township of ESQUIMALT Current

community newsletter: fall/winter 2024

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Township raises Songhees Nation & Kosapsum Nation flags

The Esquimalt (Kosapsum) Nation's flag and Songhees Nation's flag will be flying permanently at both Esquimalt Municipal Hall and the Gorge Park Pavilion.

The flags will be raised at a ceremonial event on November 1 with participation from representatives from the Kosapsum Nation, Songhees Nation and Township of Esquimalt's Councils.

The flying of the two Nations' flags, alongside the Township flag is a reminder that the Township of Esquimalt is situated on the traditional lands of the Songhees and Kosapsum Peoples and demonstrates the Township's commitment to take further steps to visibly honour and respect the Nations.

"Today marks a significant step toward Truth and Reconciliation and recognition of our shared history. The flying of our Ləkʷəŋən flags honours the deep, enduring connection our people have to this land. It is a symbol of our resilience, unity, and the ongoing partnership needed to foster respect and understanding for future generations." — Chief Ron Sam, Songhees Nation.

"Flying our flags isn't just about recognition; it's a clear statement that we're committed to real change. It's time to honour our history, celebrate our culture, and work together for a future where everyone's voice matters." — Chief Jerome Thomas, Esquimalt Nation.

"Having the three flags flying alongside one another demonstrates the township's commitment to ongoing reconciliation and collaboration with the two Nations," said Mayor Barbara Desjardins.

While the Canadian flag is flown at the Archie Browning Sports Centre and other township facilities, flying the Kosapsum Nation and Songhees Nation flags at the Gorge Pavilion is an acknowledgement of their meaningful connection to the Gorge Waterway. The arrangement of the flags was done in consultation with both Songhees and Kosapsum Nation members.

TOWNSHIP CONTACTS

Emergency 9-1-1

Esquimalt Municipal Hall

1229 Esquimalt Road
Esquimalt, BC V9A 3P1

Municipal Hall reception	250-414-7100
Building Inspections	250-414-7103
Bylaw Enforcement	250-414-7161
Corporate Services	250-414-7177
Development Services	250-414-7103
Engineering/Public Works	250-414-7108
Finance	250-414-7100
Parks and Recreation	250-412-8500

Esquimalt Municipal Archives

103-1249 Esquimalt Rd
Esquimalt, BC V9A 3P2 250-412-8540
Tues (1-4:30 p.m.);
Wed/ Thurs (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

Esquimalt Recreation Centre

527 Fraser Street
Esquimalt, BC V9A 6H6 250-412-8500

Archie Browning Sports Centre

1151 Esquimalt Road
Esquimalt, BC V9A 3N6 250-412-8510

Public library—Esquimalt branch

501 Park Place 250-940-4875

Fire Rescue Services

#101-1151 Esquimalt Road 250-414-7126

Police Department

1229 Esquimalt Road 250-995-7500

The Esquimalt Current is published three times a year by the Township of Esquimalt and distributed to 8,000 homes and local businesses.

If you have a community event you would like included in The Current, call 250-414-7122 or email communications@esquimalt.ca.

Sign up for email notification at esquimalt.ca to receive this newsletter by email and for updates on Township news, events and more.

We are committed to environmental sustainability. This newsletter is printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper.

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Council meeting schedule

Council meetings

Jan 13; Jan 27; Feb 3; Feb 24; March 3

Committee of the Whole meetings

Jan 20; Jan 27 (5:45PM Special COTW); Feb 10; March 10

* Unless otherwise noted, council meetings take place at 7 p.m. and Committee of the Whole at 6 p.m. in the Municipal Council Chambers at 1229 Esquimalt Road. Please check the website or call 250-414-7157 to confirm meeting times.

Esquimalt Municipal Hall and Esquimalt Archives closed:

Dec 25-Jan 1; February 17

Financial planning & budget meetings

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.

Budget 2025 PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

Jan 20 Committee of the Whole (COTW) Preliminary Budget Presentation

Feb 10 COTW- VicPD Budget Presentation

March 3 Council- Updated Budget Presentation

March 10 COTW (tentative) - Library Budget Presentation

April 7 Council - Tax Rates Discussion

Check Esquimalt.ca for up-to-date documents and meeting information.

We are in Phase II of the Esquimalt Road Active Transportation Improvements & Underground Utility Renewals Project.

The Active Transportation Network Plan endorsed by council in 2022 outlined several key priorities for the township.

One of the key recommendations was creating an east-west route through the township. Esquimalt Road and Lyall Street were identified.

Please review the information boards online or in hard copy that outline different route options both on Esquimalt Road and along neighbouring streets. The boards will also share key considerations about the route options to better illustrate the anticipated effects of the changes.

Take the survey by January 27 at EngagingEsquimalt.ca/EsquimaltRoad and visit our January 16 open house (3-7PM at Esquimalt Rec Centre.)



DYK? THE SAUNA AT ESQUIMALT REC CENTRE HAS BEEN COMPLETELY REFURBISHED WITH NEW CEDAR AND NEW TILE FLOORING.

esquimalt.ca

A message from

ESQUIMALT FIRE RESCUE SERVICES

As we begin to see a change in the weather, we will endure inclement weather events. EFRS wants to make sure everyone is being safety conscious when these events happen.

Now is a great time to ensure flashlights, headlamps or solar re-chargeable lights have new batteries or are charged and easily accessible in the event of a power outage.

While candles provide a lovely ambience they can be hazardous when used as a light source and are not considered a viable heat source when without power.

Keep candles away from curtains or other textiles if using. Battery operated candles are an excellent alternative if you'd still like to keep your cozy fall vibes alive.

Stay safe this chilly season!



Growing communities

Did you know that Esquimalt has a community garden?

Founded in 2010, Esquimalt Community Garden in Anderson Park is a tangible expression of the Township's goals of sustainability and food security. The garden is operated and maintained by Esquimalt Community Garden Society in partnership with the Township. We have 43 raised garden beds, community beds, fruit trees and berry borders.

If you are an Esquimalt resident interested in growing food for your family using organic methods, and if you are interested in participating in the maintenance and upkeep of a community garden and growing your social circle, contact us at esquimaltcommunitygardens@gmail.com and ask to be added to our wait list. **For more information go to Esquimalt.ca/CommunityGarden**



Planting at Esquimalt Gorge Park. Photo by Ariadne Boutsakis

A shoreline transformed

The Esquimalt Gorge Park Green Shores Demonstration Project is part of an ongoing collaborative effort to restore and protect the Gorge Waterway, a crucial ecosystem in the heart of Victoria. Construction was completed in fall 2024.

Work involved removing riprap and recontouring the shoreline to restore natural coastal processes that contribute to the health of the Gorge Creek Estuary while increasing overall resiliency to sea-level rise.

In early November, volunteers and project partners gathered to plant hundreds of native plants, including trees, shrubs and salt marsh vegetation in the enhanced riparian zone and salt marsh fringe. Stay tuned for more planting and outreach events.

Renew dog & business licences the easy way by going to Esquimalt.ca/MyEsquimalt

Upcoming events in Esquimalt

SOCIAL SATURDAYS

Jan 25- Paint & Wine Night

Feb 8- Pub Quiz
with Benji Duke

March 15- TBA!

Register at [esquimalt/registration](https://esquimalt.ca/registration)

Tree Chipping

Jan 4 & 5; Archie Browning Sports Centre (back lot)
10AM-4PM

The festivities of the holidays have come to a close and it is time to take down the decorations. Let us help you dispose of your tree at this tree chipping event. This service is provided by donation and helps subsidize a local charity organization.

Open house: Esquimalt Road Active Transportation & Underground Improvements

Jan 16; Esquimalt Rec Centre
3-7PM

Join us to discuss the posted plans (or your ideas) for Phase II of the Esquimalt Road Active Transportation Improvement Plan.

**Take the survey
before January 27 at**

**[EngagingEsquimalt.ca/
EsquimaltRoad](https://EngagingEsquimalt.ca/EsquimaltRoad)**

Family Day Celebration

Feb 17; Esquimalt Rec Centre
10AM-1PM

Join us for kindergym, skating, swimming and a variety of other FREE family activities.

Find full event details and sign-up information at esquimalt.ca/events

Looking to volunteer in our community?

We have upcoming volunteer opportunities with Esquimalt Recreation

- Run clinics—must be able to run or walk 10km and be available Saturdays 9:30- 11:30AM from January-April 2025
- Esquimalt 5K run/walk—looking for road marshals 16 and older for the morning of April 5, 2025

Interested in volunteering? For details contact us at 250-412-8502 or email fitness@esquimalt.ca



LEARN ABOUT COUNCIL PRIORITY PLANNING

Staff update the list of priority plans three times a year in addition to the annual report in spring.

These updates show progress on a variety of projects from housing to business development.

Find the plan online and don't miss the January 27 update to council.

View our up-to-date online calendar



Health needs assessment

Mayor and Council have engaged the Pepler Group to conduct a Health Needs Assessment update for the community.

Look for Pepler Group team members in your neighbourhood and at key locations around town in fall/winter 2024. Residents may be invited to participate in a workshop or a one-on-one interview. The project will run from late November to March 2025 with a final report to Council in April 2025.

Community involvement is essential to making the project a success. These contributions will help identify the health, social, and mental health care needs of our community. As we move forward, it is vital that we understand your health needs and plan for securing the resources for our community.

By-election update

General voting day for the by-election will be Saturday, April 5, 2025.

Advanced voting (March 26 & April 2) and mail ballots are additional voting opportunities.

Former Councillor Rotchford was elected to the provincial legislature in October 2024. The by-election will elect one candidate to fill the remainder of the current Council term until the next General Local Election is held in October 2026.

Township of
ESQUIMALT