

# 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](mailto:communications@esquimalt.ca).

Sign up for email notification at [esquimalt.ca](http://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 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.](#)

### Council meeting schedule

#### Council meetings

Dec 16; Jan 13; Jan 27; Feb 3; Feb 24; March 3

#### Committee of the Whole meetings

Dec 9; 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](http://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](http://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](http://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](mailto:esquimaltcommunitygardens@gmail.com) and ask to be added to our wait list. **For more information go to [Esquimalt.ca/CommunityGarden](https://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](https://Esquimalt.ca/MyEsquimalt)**

# Upcoming events in Esquimalt

## By-election update

General voting day for the by-election will be Saturday, April 5, 2025. 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. Advanced voting (March 26 & April 2) and mail ballots are additional voting opportunities.

## Christmas Tree Village

**Dec 3-Jan 3; Esquimalt Rec Centre**

Experience the magic of the holidays at our ninth annual Christmas Tree Village. Join us as we transform the Recreation Centre Atrium and Archie Browning Sports Centre into a holiday wonderland, teeming with twinkling lights and delightful decorations.

## ESQUIMALT INDOOR FARMERS MARKET

THURSDAYS UNTIL DEC 19!

## Community coffee with VicPD and Esquimalt Fire

**Dec 5, 12-1:30PM**

**Esquimalt Seniors Community Center (1379 Esquimalt Rd)**

Join members of VicPD's Esquimalt Division as they give a brief property crime prevention presentation. Learn about fire prevention from Esquimalt Fire Rescue Services for your home. Ask questions, meet your neighbours and enjoy some snacks and coffee.

## Esquimalt Skate with Santa

**Dec 7; Archie Browning Centre 2:30-4PM**

Santa is coming to the Archie Browning Sports Centre! Join us on the ice

for music and fun. Admission is FREE! Skate rental, on a first come first serve basis, for \$3.50 per rental.

## Photos with Santa

**Dec 12; Esquimalt Rec Centre 12-4PM**

Santa is popping into the Recreation Centre for some photo opportunities this year. Please bring your camera or smart phone to take your photo, or have our friendly staff take the photo for you. Registration is not required but donations for the Rainbow Kitchen are strongly encouraged.

## Jolly Jingle Story Mingle

**Dec 14; Esquimalt Rec Centre 7-8PM**

Throw on your PJs, cozy up by the fire, and enjoy a story time! Families can stop by after their swim to relax and enjoy some holiday merriment! Or just come for the stories and singing!

## Music Jam Christmas Sing-along

**Dec 23; Esquimalt Rec Centre 6-8PM**

Join us for a FREE, all ages, Christmas Sing-along in the Esquimalt Recreation Centre! Music Jam members will lead the sing-along & everyone is welcome to join in. You can bring an instrument and play along too if you would like to!

## New Year's Levee

**Jan 1; Esquimalt Gorge Park 1-3:30PM**

Join Esquimalt's Mayor and Council for a historical walk in Esquimalt Gorge Park, celebrating the New Year. Led by author Dennis Minaker, this leisurely stroll will showcase the glory days of Esquimalt's Gorge Park and its waterway from a century ago.

## SOCIAL SATURDAYS

**Jan 25- Paint & Wine Night**

**Feb 8- Pub Quiz with Benji Duke**

**March 15- TBA!**

## 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](https://esquimalt.ca/events)**

View our up-to-date online calendar



Township of  
**ESQUIMALT**