

13.0 Community Well-Being and Culture

13.1 CONTEXT

Community well-being in View Royal is shaped by the social, cultural, and economic conditions that support residents' health, safety, belonging, and ability to participate in society. As View Royal grows and diversifies, the Town's role in supporting social needs continues to evolve, with an emphasis on equity, inclusion, accessibility, and collaboration with the Songhees and Xwsepsem Nations and other partners across the region.

COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Community health is important to residents and the character of a community is directly related to the quality of life and social, mental and physical well-being experienced by its residents. As the host for one of the region's two major hospitals (Victoria General Hospital), View Royal also plays a key role in providing healthcare services for local and regional residents alike, with a desire to expand the services provided at this facility in the future.

Community well-being extends far beyond mental and physical health services. It encompasses various community facilities and spaces, including parks, trails, and recreational facilities, as shown in Map 15. Schools and daycares in View Royal are essential, offering education for youth, opportunities for social, educational, and recreational enrichment, and support for local families. Parks, trails, and recreation areas (see section 12.0) play a significant role in supporting the mental, physical, and social health of the community through access to nature and opportunities for connection and exercise.

Contemplating and addressing the needs and abilities of residents across demographic groups is essential for ensuring the well-being of all community members. Prioritizing accessibility is key to creating a more equitable community, allowing everyone to safely, comfortably, and fully participate in life in View Royal. Accessibility for an ageing population is of increasing importance for the Town given the median age of 44.8 years in the last Census period (2021), which slightly exceeds the provincial median of 42.8 years. As the community grows older, meaningful steps must be taken to support the ability of residents to age in place.



COMMUNITY CULTURE

View Royal's heritage resources, cultural spaces, creative sector, and community organizations also help foster a safe, welcoming, and inclusive community with a strong sense of place. View Royal is home to some of the oldest buildings in the Capital Regional District and some of Canada's National Historic Sites. The Craigflower Manor site, completed in 1856, is one of the four original farms the Hudson's Bay Company set up in the Greater Victoria Area. The Town is a full participant in the Capital Regional District Arts Service, which provides operating and project grants to local festivals, performing arts, general arts, and visual arts of non-profit organizations such as the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, Ballet Victoria, the Victoria Jazz Society, and the Victoria Symphony. This partnership aims to acknowledge the key role that arts and culture play in fostering a sense of place and community and contributing to overall well-being. It is a priority of the Town to partner with the Songhees and Xwsepsem Nations to integrate aspects of Indigenous culture into the community fabric wherever possible, such as public art, interpretive signage, and the hosting of public events and festivals, amongst others.

This section aims to advance objectives and policies that strengthen community health and well-being, cultural identity, enhance accessibility and inclusion, protect heritage, and expand opportunities for youth, families, and seniors, while fostering a safe, connected, and culturally rich community where all residents can thrive.

The following OCP Goals may be achieved through the policy direction provided in this section:

- Community Well-Being
- Community Safety and Security
- Community Input and Governance
- Regional Partnerships



13.2 OBJECTIVES

13.2.1 HISTORIC AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

Celebrate the diverse heritage of View Royal by identifying, recognizing, protecting, and celebrating natural, cultural, and built heritage resources, including those of significance to the Songhees and Xwsepsem Nations.

13.2.2 ARTS AND COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION

Support the enrichment of arts, culture, and heritage by attracting artists through the provision of spaces and events, programs, and policies. Collaboration with Songhees and Xwsepsem Nations and neighbouring municipalities is encouraged.

13.2.3 CREATING A DIVERSE, EQUITABLE, AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

Enhance the quality of life for all residents by fostering an environment where diversity, equity, and inclusion are promoted and embedded in Town policies, programs, and spaces. Successful implementation of a diverse, equitable, and inclusive approach recognizes and addresses the evolving needs of View Royal's residents and understands and respects the diverse needs of persons of all ages, abilities, identities, and backgrounds.

13.2.4 COMMUNITY AND IDENTITY

Strengthen the sense of belonging, shared identity, and emotional connections within View Royal to establish a strong sense of place and community.

13.2.5 COMMUNITY SAFETY AND SUPPORT

Ensure that View Royal is a safe community by working with emergency services, community and volunteer groups, and residents with diverse lived experiences that wish to advance community safety, health, and well-being.

13.2.6 THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUTH, FAMILIES, AND FUTURE LEADERS

Attract and retain youth and families in the community and foster an environment that encourages growth, support, and enrichment for future community leaders. The success of youth and families relies heavily on the investments and resources provided to them in their neighbourhoods and broader community.

13.2.7 COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT THROUGH KNOWLEDGE AND INVOLVEMENT

Identify and develop innovative approaches to civic engagement to ensure that all community members have an opportunity to participate in the Town's decision-making processes. Opportunities to empower community members through education and volunteerism are encouraged.

13.3 POLICIES

13.3.1 BUILT, NATURAL, AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

- A. Continue to identify and add heritage properties to the Town's Heritage Register.
- B. Clarify and evolve heritage protection in View Royal through creation of a Heritage Protection program.
- C. Encourage adaptive reuse of heritage buildings, where appropriate. Work with property owners to find innovative solutions that will permit change while minimizing the impact on heritage values.
- D. Recognize the role of the View Royal Community Archives as an important resource for local history through advancing and encouraging volunteerism, grants, material donations, and collaborating with the Songhees and Xwsepsem Nations.
- E. Continue to advocate and support the Province with the preservation of Craigflower Manor as a provincial heritage asset by ensuring its ongoing maintenance, restoration, and integration into the community's cultural landscape.
- F. Collaborate with Songhees and Xwsepsem Nations and community organizations to support increased public education and awareness of the history of View Royal. This may include educational campaigns and exhibits, collaborations with local schools, installations of historical plaques or markers, permanent displays, and public events or meetings.
- G. Encourage the creation of new, and enhancement of existing public gathering spaces. Such as plazas, parks, community halls, schools, outdoor performance areas, waterfront areas, and streets.
- H. Encourage the hosting of local cultural events and activities, such as annual celebrations, fairs and festivals, outdoor markets, and arts and sports events. Partner with the organizations that host these events, where possible.
- I. Encourage opportunities for First Nations art to be included in the design and construction of new development.



13.3.2 LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- A. Continue to implement the Community Engagement Strategy that applies the International Association of Public Participation principles and an equity-focused approach for seeking participation from all demographic and socioeconomic groups in the community, with specific attention placed on participation from equity-deserving peoples.

The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) is a global organization that instills best practices of public participation amongst entities in service of the public interest. The Town has endorsed IAP2's pillars of engagement.

- B. Support and build neighbourhood capacity in strengthening social connections, climate action, and community resilience through neighbourhood-driven initiatives.
- C. Commit to transparent, ongoing public dialogue about growth management strategies, emphasizing how proactive planning can protect established neighbourhoods and guide change in a manner that benefits the entire community.
- D. Encourage applicants proposing development to consult with stakeholders and the broader public prior to the statutory consultation phase of a development application.

- E. Consider opportunities to improve knowledge of and access to volunteering opportunities within the Town.
- F. Explore opportunities and actions that seek to strengthen civic engagement, especially among underrepresented community members, by building their capacity and knowledge of municipal processes to generate diverse involvement in Town initiatives.

13.3.3 SUPPORTING YOUTH AND SENIOR POPULATIONS

- A. Investigate opportunities to enhance access to childcare spaces as a public amenity in new development.
- B. Ensure that youth interests are appropriately integrated into Town initiatives, events, and activities. This may involve conducting outreach in View Royal Schools, disseminating information regarding youth initiatives through Town update channels such as RSS feeds and social media, and adapting Town programs and activities to accommodate the needs of youth when applicable.
- C. Continue to support opportunities for youth to be involved in leadership roles in recreational and leisure activities, as a municipal member of West Shore Parks and Recreation.
- D. Undertake efforts to understand how the Town can partner with community organizations, public agencies, and the Province to better accommodate an aging population.

- E. Ensure that the interests of seniors are fully considered in Town initiatives, events, and activities. This can include support services, housing that facilitates aging in place, and engaging with and supporting caregivers who assist seniors.

13.3.4 COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SAFETY

- A. Collaborate with Island Health to enhance health care services, ancillary services, and access to clinics, as well as the redevelopment of existing facilities where appropriate.
- B. Explore opportunities to increase the number of medical clinics and other health care services in the Town to support community needs.
- C. Continue to advocate for and support community-based and public agency initiatives to prevent crime and reduce potential harm to individuals, such as neighbourhood watch, school, and RCMP community-outreach programs.
- D. Ensure the Town is equipped to respond to any local and regional states of emergency.
- E. Enhance the delivery of fire protection services.
- F. Continue to coordinate policing matters with the West Shore RCMP.
- G. Enhance community knowledge of fire prevention and life safety measures.

13.3.5 CREATING AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

- A. Improve navigation to key destinations to ensure residents and visitors of all ages, abilities and incomes can easily access Town locations.
- B. Ensure all public buildings and spaces integrate principles of universal access design to allow anyone in the community to enjoy time in a space, regardless of their abilities or age.
- C. Continue to seek out and provide equitable access to a broad range of inclusivity measures in the public realm that support the mental and physical health of residents of all ages and abilities. This includes people with visible or invisible disabilities.
- D. Explore the feasibility of obtaining community meeting space through new mixed use, multi-unit residential development.
- E. Advocate and collaborate with property owners and management groups to provide access to community meeting spaces, where possible, that are both safe and accessible.
- F. Attract and retain businesses and jobs that offer livable, household-sustaining wages, support community wealth, and enable View Royal residents to live and work locally.
- G. Advocate and collaborate with the Capital Regional District and the Province to address local social needs and issues, such as the needs of equity-deserving

peoples, homelessness, poverty, food security, substance use and addiction, and mental health.

13.3.6 SCHOOLS

- A. Recognize public schools as important community gathering places, education centres, recreational, and cultural activity spaces in View Royal.
- B. Strengthen relationships between the Town and individual schools, the School District, and groups operating within the schools to support the further development of these facilities as community resources. This may include facility upgrades, school development projects, and the long-term use of surplus facilities or land, amongst others.



13.3.7 FOOD SECURITY

- A. Ensure all members of the community have access to affordable, healthy, and local food.
- B. Encourage the development of small-scale, healthy and affordable food retail options such as year-round and seasonal farmers markets, small to mid-size locally-owned grocery stores, mobile food vendors, bakeries, and restaurants.
- C. Support opportunities to for urban agriculture on privately and publicly owned lands.
- D. Support priority access to community gardens for View Royal residents who do not have access to a private garden.
- E. Collaborate with Songhees and X^wsepsəm Nations to identify, protect, and restore lands and waters in support of gathering and harvesting traditional foods.
- F. Engage and collaborate with Songhees and X^wsepsəm Nations, where there is interest, to develop Indigenous gardens and harvesting areas that focus on cultivating culturally important plant species for food, ceremony, and medicinal purposes.
- G. Engage and collaborate with the Songhees Nation and X^wsepsəm Nations to celebrate and bring awareness to traditional foods through collaboration in festivals, markets, and other appropriate events.