



## DISTRICT OF METCHOSIN

### AGENDA

#### HEALTHY COMMUNITY ADVISORY SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING

**June 24, 2025 at 4:30 p.m.**  
Council Chambers  
Metchosin Municipal Hall

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- 1. Agenda Approval**
- 2. Public Participation**
- 3. Adoption of Minutes**
  - a) Healthy Community Advisory Select Committee, May 27, 2025..... 1
  - b) Special Healthy Community Advisory Select Committee, June 4, 2025 ..... 4
- 4. Business Arising from the Minutes**
  - a) Village Square
  - b) 'Movie Night' at Metchosin School
- 5. Reports**
  - a) Council Liaison
  - b) Fire Chief
  - c) Seniors Information Resource Centre (SIRC) Liaison
  - d) Poverty Reduction Subcommittee
  - e) Health and Safety Subcommittee
- 6. Other Business**
  - a) Input on Draft Biodiversity and Natural Assets Plan ..... 5
  - b) Sports Equipment for the Community Centre
- 7. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date**



District of Metchosin

Minutes

**Healthy Community Advisory Select Committee Meeting  
May 27, 2025, at 4:30 p.m.**

**Present:** Shari Rourke, Sarah Anthony, Councillor Sharie Epp, Deirdre Chettleburgh, Shannon Carman, Stacey Weir, Kathleen Sutherland, Chief Dunlop

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 p.m.

**1. Agenda, Additions and Approval**

Addition to Agenda:

- Item 9. a., Village Square, by Shannon C.
- Item 9. b., Community Markets, by Sarah A

**Moved and Seconded by Shannon C. and Stacey W:**  
THAT the Committee approve the agenda as amended.

**Carried**

**2. Presentations**

- a) Chad Pacholik, The Logic League, presented on a proposed Disaster Risk Reduction Community Risk Assessment and summarised information including:
- The project is funded through a UBCM Climate Action grant Future planning for climate related impacts and events, along with present risks.
  - Assessing hazards, vulnerabilities, exposures/physical proximity, and capacities/coping mechanisms.
  - Categories that help or hinder preparedness include: social and cultural factors, health, built environment, natural environment, economy and governance.

Committee Discussion:

- Committee members discussed Metchosin's strengths and weaknesses, ie. food security, tsunami, natural resources.
- The Logic League will be compiling a report before the end of summer.

**3. Public Participation**

None.

**4. Adoption of Minutes**

**Moved and Seconded by Stacey W. and Councillor Epp:**  
THAT the Committee approve the minutes of the Healthy Community Advisory Select Committee meeting held on April 22, 2025.

**Carried**

**5. Receipt of Minutes**

None.

**6. Business Arising from the Minutes**

a) Community Open House

Committee Discussion:

- Members proposed holding a Community Open House event on Sept 27/28 with the inclusion of sports / games in the gym or outside, with equipment
- Committee member Shari R. suggested an online fundraiser to purchase equipment; Shari R will follow up with a formal proposal to include the possibility of going through an outside organization.
- Members discussed organizing a movie night at the Community Centre, and members Sharie and Shari volunteered to explore the logistics of holding this event with the idea that Donations could be collected to go towards sports equipment.

**Moved and Seconded by Stacey W. And Shari R:**

THAT the Committee recommend Council support the Healthy Community Advisory Select Committee (HCAC) hosting a community “movie night” at the gym this summer.

**Carried**

**7. Reports**

- a) The Council Liaison reported that the Active Transportation Network Plan has been approved by Council.
- b) The Fire Chief had nothing new to report
- c) The Seniors Information Resource Centre (SIRC) Liaison reported that the Parisian Cafe is being held June 7, 10-12 in front of MACCA. The SIRC has had numerous presentations and screenings on seniors’ topics and were attended. The shuttle bus is now operating every other Thursday to Royal Bay from the SIRC, for seniors to take.
- d) The Poverty Reduction Subcommittee reported that they have finished.
- e) The Health and Safety Subcommittee had nothing new to report, except that more Naloxone and First Aid training workshops are to come.

**8. Correspondence**

None.

**9. Other Business**

- a) Village Square:
  - This proposal has been approved by Council and will be moving forward with consultation with stakeholders at the School, with community engagement to follow regarding materials, donations, etc.

- b) Community Markets:
  - Discussion around how to better support markets, with less silos, though it was noted that the subject is outside the purview of the Committee.

**10. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date**

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m. The next meeting will be held Tuesday, June 24 at 4:30 p.m.

District of Metchosin

Minutes

**Healthy Community Advisory Select Committee Meeting  
June 4, 2025 at 4:30 p.m.**

**Present:** Shari Rourke, Sarah Anthony, Councillor Sharie Epp, Shannon Carman (electronically), Stacey Weir, Kathleen Sutherland

**Regrets:** None.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

**1. Agenda, Additions and Approval**

**Moved and Seconded** by Sharie E. and Stacey W.  
THAT the Committee approve the agenda.

**Carried**

**2. Other Business**

**Letter of Support for Firehall Feasibility Study –**

- Councillor Sharie Epp recused herself from the discussion.

Committee members discussed the firehall feasibility study process and how the health and safety of the community, including the fire department, is something that HCASC has a role in contributing feedback to council on.

**Moved and Seconded** by Kathleen S and Shannon C  
THAT the Committee write a letter of support in support of Council following recommendation from consultant option 1A.

**Carried**

**Absent: Councillor Sharie Epp**

**3. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

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**From:** Steve Gray <sgray@metchosin.ca>  
**Date:** May 12, 2025 at 9:35:13 AM PDT  
**To:** srouke76@icloud.com  
**Cc:** Sharie Epp <sepp@metchosin.ca>  
**Subject:** Draft outline Biodiversity and Natural Assets Plan

Shari:

MEASC has started to work on a Biodiversity and Natural Assets Plan for Metchosin.

The Committee is now looking for community input on a draft outline (attached). We also are engaging with SC'IANEW Nation.

MEASC invites comments from you and HCASC. Please address these to my District email address for conveyance to MEASC: sgray@metchosin.ca

Thanks again for your work and that of HCASC.

Thanks,  
Steve  
250 478 5066

## Outline for a Metchosin Biodiversity and Natural Assets Plan

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this plan is to guide the stewardship of Metchosin’s natural environments and ecosystems, aligning with the objectives outlined in Metchosin’s Official Community Plan (OCP) and the District of Metchosin Declaration on the Climate Emergency and Biodiversity Crisis.

The plan has two priorities:

- securing ecosystem features that would otherwise require costly engineered infrastructure (e.g. flood control, aquifer recharge, shoreline protection from storm surges, soil health).
- protecting, conserving, and enhancing biodiversity and natural assets in the region through the implementation of specific strategies and actions that address key ecological priorities promoting long-term ecological health while supporting community and land use goals.

Prioritizing protection of natural assets and their associated nature-based services can secure important budget savings for the municipality while protecting species and ecosystems.

### **1. Vision and Goals**

#### **Vision:**

Metchosin is a thriving resilient community where biodiversity is protected, enhanced and integrated into daily life and where important natural assets are valued and protected. Through sustainable development practices, ecological restoration and community engagement, Metchosin is a place where both natural ecosystems and people can flourish. Moreover, by recognizing and accounting for natural assets in the District’s financial planning and asset management programs, Metchosin will be equipped to make sound planning and financial decisions into the future that support the health of our region and the health and safety of our residents in the face of climate disruptions.

## Goals:

- **Conserve Natural Ecosystems and Species:** Safeguard, critical habitats, ecosystems, and species to ensure their long-term survival and ongoing provision of ecosystem services
- **Integrate Biodiversity and Asset Management into Land Use and Financial Planning:** Ensure that biodiversity and the preservation of ecosystem features are considered in all land use development and planning decisions, guided by a District natural assets management plan
- **Engage, Educate and Listen to the Community:** Foster an informed and active community engaged in biodiversity conservation and natural asset management
- **Improve Ecological Connectivity:** Enhance conservation corridors and links between natural areas to support wildlife movement
- **Restore and Revitalize Degraded Ecosystems:** Implement active restoration programs for areas impacted by development or other human activity

## 2. Context and Alignment with the OCP and Metchosin's Region Role

The **Metchosin Official Community Plan** (OCP) emphasizes, environmental stewardship, habitat conservation, and sustainable land use practices. The OCP outlines strategies for maintaining the district's rural character, preserving natural features and fostering a sustainable and resilient community.

Key sections in the OCP relevant to this Biodiversity Plan include:

- **Environmental Policies and Development Permit Areas:** These are critical to maintaining Metchosin's biodiversity with a focus on the conservation of shoreline, riparian zones, forests, meadows, wetlands, and conservation corridors.
- **Sustainable Development:** Metchosin maintains and preserves a low density rural-agricultural community within the region. Metchosin's OCP stresses the need for low impact development that respects and integrates with the natural environment, ensuring that new housing or zoning does not erode critical habitats, proper functioning of wetlands and aquifers.
- **Agriculture and Land Stewardship:** There is a strong emphasis on promoting agricultural practices that protect and enhance biodiversity in the Metchosin Agricultural Plan.
- **Community Engagement and Education:** The OCP recognizes the importance of fostering community that is engaged with and

knowledgeable about environmental conservation. Much of this work is done through volunteer initiatives.

This Biodiversity and Natural Assets Plan will ensure these OCP directives are fully realized by providing actionable steps and strategies that align with Metchosisin's vision of ecological sustainability and fiscal prudence, the emerging CRD biodiversity strategy and CRD Regional Growth Strategy.

### **3. Priority Biodiversity Actions**

#### **3.1 Habitat Protection**

- **Identify, describe and map high-value biodiversity areas:** In partnership with ecological experts, identify priority ecosystems, including wetlands, riparian zones, old growth forest, meadows and shorelines that provide ecosystem services and require protection from development. Develop a comprehensive map of biodiversity observations and establish ongoing monitoring programs to track the health of ecosystems and species to inform a municipal natural asset management program. Work with the BC Conservation Data Centre and register eligible protected lands and parks in the BC Conservation Areas Database.
- **Incentives:** Establish forest canopy protection and conservation covenant requirements for property tax exemptions. Establish a local conservation fund dedicated to local high-priority conservation and restoration projects.
- **Create protected areas:** Finalize a new zone (e.g. Conservation Zone P4) for designated conservation areas (e.g. buffer lands and other protected areas). Enact Environmental Development Protected Areas (EDPA). Encourage the use of conservation covenants on private property to prevent habitat degradation and ensure long-term ecological protection. Support the 30% by 2030 national conservation targets.
- **Updated tree cutting bylaw:** Adopt new permit requirements to minimize tree cutting.

#### **3.2 Natural Asset Management**

- **Annual reports during the budget process on the status of municipal natural assets:** Prepare an asset management inventory. Monitor and report on asset condition.

### 3.3 Habitat Restoration

- **Riparian and Wetland Restoration:** Restore disturbed wetland ecosystems to improve water quality, enhance wildlife habitat, and maintain critical functions like flood, regulation and carbon storage e.g. initiatives of the Bilston Watershed Habitat Protection Association.
- **Invasive Species Management:** The District manages invasives alongside volunteer groups and through the CRD and the Capital Region Invasive Species Partnership (CRISP). The Parks and Trails Advisory Select Committee (PTASC), the Metchosin Invasive Species Cooperative (MISC) and the Devonian Restoration Volunteers work in local and CRD regional parks. Work parties have started on the Buffer Lands.
- **Forest and native plant restoration and reforestation:** Land owners are encouraged to restore native forest ecosystems by planting native tree species, removing invasive species and improving forest health. The Moralea's Meadow volunteers do restoration work there and public education on native planting. Westmont School staff and students are restoring a Garry Oak meadow with assistance from the Habitat Acquisition Trust (HAT).

### 3.4 Conservation Corridors and Ecological Connectivity

- **Establish conservation corridors:** The Metchosin Foundation Conservation Corridor Project works with local volunteers and landowners plus conservation organizations and neighbouring communities to create and maintain ecological courses that connect fragmented natural areas. Promote green infrastructure solutions e.g. fencing, road crossing.
- **Ecological planning and development:** Ensure that any new development plans include ecological, connectivity considerations, maintaining natural corridors, and minimizing habitat fragmentation.
- **Buffer zones around critical habitats:** Create buffer zones around significant natural assets ensuring that development is set back from sensitive, ecosystems and conservation corridors e.g. establish local government riparian area regulations.

### 3.5 Sustainable Land Use under Metchosin's Agricultural Plan

- **Promote sustainable agricultural practices:** Support agricultural practices that enhance biodiversity such as agroforestry, regenerative agriculture, permaculture and organic farming. Local farmers and homeowners work to reduce pesticide use, protect riparian buffers and enhance hedgerows.

- **Agri-environmental stewardship programs:** Develop and implement programs that encourage landowners to maintain natural habitats, plant native species and restore degraded landscapes on agricultural properties including removal of invasives.
- **Agricultural land protection:** Work within the ALC framework and the OCP to ensure that agricultural land remains protected from development pressures, preserving its ecological function and connection to wildlife habitats. Locally regulate ALC compliant site restrictions and setbacks. Enforce strong dumping regulations.

### **3.6 Community Engagement and Education**

- **Public education campaigns:** The Metchosin Biodiversity Project's Walk and Talk programs educate residents about local biodiversity. The Metchosin Foundation educational materials and website help to emphasize the importance of protecting natural ecosystems. Together these initiatives inform conservation priorities.
- **Volunteer programs:** Established volunteer groups organize community members in habitat restoration, invasive species removal and monitoring. Volunteer recruitment is ongoing.
- **Encourage citizen science initiatives:** The Metchosin Biodiversity Project promotes biodiversity monitoring through community use of iNaturalist and periodic Bioblitz events collecting valuable data for conservation efforts. The Metchosin Hall Society conducts annual bat counts at the Hall in concert with the Habitat Acquisition Trust.

### **4. Action Plan and Implementation Timeline (Schedule goes here)**

### **5. Conclusion**

The Biodiversity and Natural Assets Plan for Metchosin will protect the natural heritage of the community by fostering collaboration, responsible land-use practices and active community engagement aligned with the principles and goals of the Official Community Plan. This Plan will also secure ecosystem features that would otherwise require costly, engineered infrastructure (e.g. flood control, aquifer recharge, shoreline protection from storm surges, soil health).