



DISTRICT OF METCHOSIN

AGENDA

PARKS & TRAILS ADVISORY SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, April 29, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.
Council Chambers
Metchosin Municipal Hall

1. **Agenda, Additions, Approval**
2. **Presentations**
3. **Public Participation**
4. **Adoption of Minutes**
 - a) Parks & Trails Advisory Select Committee, March 17, 2026 1
5. **Receipt of Minutes**
 - a) Metchosin Environmental Advisory Select Committee, March 24, 2026 5
6. **Business Arising from the Minutes**
 - a) Parks & Trails Master Plan Update
 - i. Draft Plan 9
 - ii. District Trails Table 55
 - b) RRU Student Nick DeCarlo, Thesis Topic for Input, Metchosin Buffer Lands Potential Research Questions
7. **Reports**
 - a) Parks & Trails Coordinator Verbal Report
 - b) Council Liaison Verbal Report
 - c) Chair Verbal Report
 - d) Buffer Land
 - i. Letter from Friends of the Buffer Land 67
8. **Correspondence**
9. **Other Business**
 - a) Role of PTASC/ Terms of Reference Discussion
 - b) Trail Steward Program on Website
10. **Adjournment and Next Meeting Date**

DISTRICT OF METCHOSIN

Minutes

Parks and Trails Advisory Select Committee Meeting
Tuesday, March 17, 2026, at 4:30 p.m.
Council Chambers
Metchosin Municipal Hall

Present: David Shanks (Chair), Jay Shukin (Council Liaison, Recorder), Emma Horgan, Ron Aubrey, Chris Thibodeau, Caroline Donohue, Ian Baxter

Regrets: Kathy Atherton,

The Meeting was called to order at 4:30pm.

1. Agenda, Additions, Approval

- Introduction of new members.
- Agenda approved by consensus.
- Brief discussion about documents that the new members should have.

2. Presentations

- No presentations.

3. Public Participation

- No public participation.

4. Adoption of Minutes

- Parks & Trails Advisory Select Committee, February 17, 2026. Approved, with the correct spelling of “Cliff”.

5. Receipt of Minutes

- No other minutes to receive.

6. Business Arising from the Minutes

a) Parks & Trails Master Plan Update

- Most recent draft of the Plan circulated to new members and comments requested by April 2, 2026.
- Goal is to provide Council with a new draft by mid-April.

7. Reports

a) Parks & Trails Coordinator Verbal Report

- Trail signage update:
 - Affordable quote (~\$30/sign); and
 - Can overlay old signs, where the paint is faded.

Committee Discussion:

- Material availability, aluminum and a composite material;
 - Priority replacement and graphic standard;
 - Committee and staff roles and responsibilities regarding sign replacement to be discussed with CAO.
- No reports of park/trail damage after mid-March windstorm.

Committee Discussion:

- New drainage work done by Colwood on Latoria Creek:
 - Concerns about future flow impact on downstream neighbours and Latoria Creek Community Bridge as development continues;
 - CAO has been informed of the work and has connected with Colwood; and
 - PTASC to continue monitoring.

b) Council Liaison Verbal Report

- Update on the newly hired Fire Chief (Dan Verdun) and District budget process.

Committee Discussion:

- Buffer Land:
 - Ian Baxter provided an update from the March 21 Broom Removal event organized by Friends of the Buffer Land; and
 - Buffer Land to be added as ongoing agenda.

c) Chair Verbal Report

- Review of past Committee actions;
- Possibility of Committee OneDrive to be discussed with staff; and
- Meeting time change to 6:00 p.m.

8. Correspondence

- No Correspondence received.

9. Other Business

a) Royal Roads University (RRU) Student Nick DeCarlo, Thesis Topic for Input, Metchosin Buffer Lands Potential Research Questions

- Ian Baxter provided background on the research proposal including the following two options:
 1. “Patterns of Invasive Species and Native Plant Composition Near Trails”
 2. “Buffer Land Asset & Ecosystem Service Hotspot Identification & Risk Assessment”

Committee Discussion:

- Value of Option 2:
 - Ian will request more information about the research plan for the next meeting for further discussion.

10. Adjournment and Next Meeting

Next meeting will be held on April 29, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

District of Metchosin

Minutes

Environmental Advisory Select Committee Meeting

Tuesday, March 24, 2026, at 7:00 P.M.

Council Chamber

Metchosin Municipal Hall

Present: Councillor Steve Gray, Bill Cave, Garry Fletcher (Chair), Merrilee Hoen (recorder), Andy MacKinnon, Ric Perron, Erin Van de Water

Regrets: Anna Hall

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

1. Agenda, Additions and Approval:

- Addition to 6b. Zoom meeting with Action for Adaptation representatives for a demonstration of their mapping tool.

Moved and Seconded by Ric Perron and Erin Van de Water

THAT the Committee approve the agenda as amended to include the addition to item 6.b), a Zoom meeting with Action for Adaptation representatives for a demonstration of their mapping tool.

Carried

2. Presentations

- None

3. Public Participation

- None

4. Adoption of Minutes

Moved and Seconded by Merrilee Hoen and Andy MacKinnon

THAT the Committee approve the minutes of the Environmental Advisory Select Committee meeting held on January 27, 2026.

Carried

5. Receipt of Minutes

Moved and Seconded by Steve Gray and Ric Perron

THAT the Committee receive the Parks & Trails Advisory Select Committee Minutes from meetings held on January 28, 2026, and February 17, 2026, for information.

Carried

6. Business Arising from the Minutes

a) Biodiversity and Natural Assets Planning

- Council has approved the recommendation made by the Committee of the Whole to forward the Biodiversity and Natural Assets Draft Plan to staff for review and for MEASC to hold an Open House for public education and input.

- Committee members will plan for open house event.

b) Mapping Sensitive Ecosystems

- Committee Members outlined their concerns regarding the Official Community Plan (OCP) Map 4 which does not include sufficient detail to identify all the sensitive ecosystems in Metchosin.
- Zoom meeting with Kelly Chapman and Dionne Bunsha, Action for Adaptation:
 - Next month they plan to launch a beta version of the Biodiversity Atlas online for the public to view and download.
 - They have mapped many layers for an area of the south coast including Metchosin.
 - These layers represent data from a number of sources gathered over the years.
 - MEASC is particularly interested in the layers which represent sensitive ecosystems in our area.

Committee Discussion:

- The data currently captured in the map layers is predominately terrestrial.
- Addition of marine data sources to be shared with Action for Adaption representatives.
- Data derived from aerial photographs:
 - While it is preferred that it be verified by ground truthing, the magnitude of the area means that some of the layers represent a reasonable approximation of the situation but may lack fine detail.
- Action for Adaptation is interested in working with Metchosin to help refine local data.
- Discussion to continue at next meeting.

7. Reports

a) Chair's Verbal Report

- None

b) Council Liaison Verbal Report

- Recent Council meeting highlights including:
 - Status of the tax exemption for non-profit organizations;
 - Upcoming Budget Open House;
 - Fire Hall project; and
 - PTASC Parks and Trails Master Plan update.

8. Correspondence:

The Committee received Nicole Shukin's correspondence concerning Ecosystem Services and Uplands.

Committee Discussion:

- Further education is needed regarding the meaning and significance of ecosystem services.
- This may be included in the information presented in the Biodiversity and Natural Assets Draft Plan Open House.

9. Other Business

a) Roadside Ditching vs. Naturalized Roadside Infiltration

- Little ditching has occurred in Metchosin over the last 3 years.
- Public Works is recommending the resumption of ditching because some roads and culverts may suffer water damage due to ditch overflow.
- Some members of the public are opposed to any ditching.
- MEASC plans to make recommendations about how to apply different treatments to ditches depending upon their location, the adjacent road conditions and the type of vegetation present.
- The ideal would be to keep the ditches narrow and retain as much vegetation as possible to minimize erosion and maximize the infiltration of water into the ground.
- Research factors to be considered in a ditching plan.

10. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date

Moved and Seconded by Ric Perron and Erin Van de Water

THAT the Committee adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Carried

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 28, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.

District of Metchosin
Parks and Trails Master Plan
DRAFT: <<DATE>>

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Section 1 – Overview

1.1 Metchosin’s Parks and Trails Masterplan

Metchosin’s natural environment and spectacular landscapes are foundations of our community’s rural character. Metchosin has a dynamic coastline, active farm fields, complex ecosystems, and steep terrain that capture the wind, rain, and sun of each successive season. The District’s parks and trails network provides opportunities for community members and visitors to appreciate, experience and be active in this multi-faceted coastal environment.

The following is **[a draft version of]** Metchosin’s first integrated Parks and Trails Master Plan. The District’s Parks and Trails Advisory Committee (PTASC) developed this document with a goal of honouring the past efforts that established our park and trail network, while anticipating future needs and challenges.

Our goal with the Master Plan is to affirm and highlight the value of our parks and trails assets, while clarifying the plans and work required to maintain that network, and where appropriate develop new opportunities.

Thank you to the community members who provided their insights into the Plan.

1.2 Territorial Acknowledgement

The District of Metchosin and its parks, trails and shoreline areas are located on the traditional territories of the Coast Salish people, including Sc’ianew First Nation and the T’Sou-ke First Nation. The District of Metchosin is committed to respecting the history and aspirations of these nations.

1.3 Plan Purpose

There are currently five parks and 51 trails within the District of Metchosin. Two beaches are also covered, as the District has responsibility for the nearshore area, including parking and land use planning.

The Master Plan’s purpose is to:

- Outline an overall strategy and plan for community-owned parks and trails assets, including individual maintenance/management plans.
- Articulate the aspirations and vision that residents expressed around parks and trails.
- Outline standards for future parks and trails development.
- Prepare for new park assets that will come to Metchosin’s ownership as a result of the 2017 Land Swap and the Reconciliation Agreement between the Sc’ianew Nation, the City of Langford and Metchosin. These parcels include Sections 95, 28 and 25.
- Clarify the land acquisition and subdivision process in relation to park/trail amenities.

- Identify opportunities to grow our park and trail network, particularly around new subdivisions.
- Identify current and future issues, risks, and opportunities for our parks and trails assets.
- Clarify operational and planning matters, such as the role of volunteers, the District’s long-standing Parks and Trails Advisory Select Committee, subdivision processes, acquisition and disposal matters, making recommendations on these matters as is appropriate

The Master Plan should be reviewed at five year intervals following Council approval.

1.4 Existing Parks and Trails Assets

This section lists the parks and trails assets covered by the Master Plan. *Not all of the park and trail assets within the network are owned by the District. For example:*

- Sea Bluff Trail is located on private land, with access granted through a Right-of-Way provided by the family in the late 1980s. See section 4.7.
- Metchosin Wilderness Park (100 Acre Wood, Section 25) and Libra Park (Section 28) is owned by the provincial government, with access granted through a Licence of Occupation (LOO) agreement. Both Section 25 and Section 28 were part of the 2017 Reconciliation Agreement with the Sc’ianew Nation and the City of Langford, which is further covered in section 5.3.3.
- Several trails cross through private lands, with access granted through a statutory right of way. See section 3.7

1.4.1 Parks

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blinkhorn Nature Park • Buckbrush Swamp Park • Carlton Cosh Nature Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eleanor Mann Park • Metchosin Wilderness Park / 100 Acre Wood / Section 25
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1.4.2 Natural Trails

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beckingham • Blaney Trail Ocean Lookout • Bob Mountain • Bradene Steps (Witty Beach) • Branson-Duke • Chapel Heights • Clapham • Cliff Trail • Cook Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joe Lodge • Libra • Lisandra • Lusse Way • Madill • Matheson Lake Trailhead • Montreul Hill Heights • Mount Ash Lookout • Municipal Grounds Trail
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deer Park Upper and Lower Connector Trails • Deer Park • Eales Road Trail • Ed's Lane • Farhill Connector (Latoria Creek Bridge) • Ferncliffe • Gemini • Graceland to Gilbert • Helgesen-Lombard • Hillman • Horse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olympic View to Annie Jackson • Pearson College/Galloping Goose Connector • Ron Weir • Sea Bluff • Sweet Chestnut / Labonne • Top of LaBonne • Upper LaBonne to Lower LaBonne • Upper Park Drive • Wayne's Rock • Weir Beach Stairs
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1.4.3 Roadside Trails

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annie Jackson Place Roadside • Duke Roadside Trail • Kangaroo Roadside Trail • Liberty Drive Roadside Trail • • Metchosin Roadside Trail (Chapel Heights to Duke Road) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metchosin Roadside Trail (Happy Valley to Wootton) • Pears Roadside Trail • Rocky Point Roadside Trail • Village Roadside Trail • William Head (Parry Road to Happy Valley Road)
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1.4.4 Un-Managed Parkland

These are municipally owned lands that are undeveloped green spaces, which are not maintained to support recreation, such as walking. With two exceptions, these parcels were dedicated as “park” through prior subdivision processes (see section 107 of the *Land Title Act*). The two exceptions are the parcels on Metchosin Road and Spellman Drive, which have park designation indicated in the OCP.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branson Trail Pocket Park • Graceland • Hi-Mount • Kasani • Metchosin Road • Linear Park Saddleback Rd to Sundance Dr. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saddleback • Seaspray • Spellman • Stirrup • Windover
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1.4.5 Notable Road Allowances

There are several road allowances (Rights of Way (RoWs)) in Metchosin that may have the potential to serve as trails or access points. These include RoWs off of the following roadways:

- Beckingham
- Neild Road
- Wild Cherry

The RoW off of Winfall Road is discussed in section 4.7.8. A trail is not recommended off of this RoW.

1.4.6 Beaches

- Taylor Beach
- Weir Beach

1.4.7 Future Parkland Assets

At the time of the development of this Master Plan, the Buffer Land was not designated as parkland and Section 95 was not owned by the District. These are further covered in section 5.3.2. <<TBD on the Buffer/parkland ref>>

1.5 Regional Parks and Trails

Within or near Metchosin’s boundaries are seven Regional Parks and the Galloping Goose Regional Trail (GGRT), which are managed by the Capital Regional District (CRD). While not covered under this plan, these regional assets are used extensively by Metchosin residents, and District owned/managed trails are often used to connect to the regional parks/trails.

Key CRD parks in relation to the District’s network include:

1. Albert Head Lagoon Regional Park	5. Sooke Hills Regional Park
2. Devonian Regional Park	6. Tower Point Regional Park
3. Matheson Lake Regional Park	7. Witty’s Lagoon Regional Park
4. Roche Cove Regional Park	8. Galloping Goose Regional Trail

Parks and Trails Master Plan Recommendation Highlights and Implementation Schedule

Timeline Range	Investment Range
• On-going	\$ - under \$5,000
• Near term – 1 to 2 years	\$\$ - \$5,000 to \$10,000
• Medium term – 3 to 5 years	\$\$\$ - \$15,000 to \$50,000
	\$\$\$\$ - Over \$50,000

Recommendation	Additional information / Section #	Timeline	Investment	Resourcing
Review the potential of widening road shoulders as part of regular road repaving projects.	Roads to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Happy Valley Road • Kangaroo Road • Glen Forest/Pears Roads • Lindholm Road • Metchosin Road • William Head Road • Duke Road • Rocky Point Road Section: 3.1	Continuing	\$\$\$\$	Council District staff PTASC
Trails proposed as part of residential subdivision projects be constructed and made useable / accessible during the subdivision development process.	Sections: 3.2, 4.9.4, 5.4	Continuing	n/a	Council District staff PTASC
High priority park and trail opportunities be assessed regularly.	Trail opportunities are noted in section 4.9.2 and 4.9.3. Park opportunities in	Continuing	n/a	Council District staff PTASC

Recommendation	Additional information / Section #	Timeline	Investment	Resourcing
New trail opportunities to be assessed through the criteria provided in the Master Plan.	5.4. Trail development criteria noted in 4.9.1.			
Seek partnership opportunities with the CRD on active transportation projects.	See 4.9.5 for specific project recommendations	Continuing	TBD	Council District staff
PTASC develop an annual parks and trails work and maintenance plan	Section 4.5	Continuing	TBD	PTASC
Support and encourage land donations.	Section 3.8	Continuing	TBD	Council District staff PTASC
A round-table session be held twice annually with organizations and individuals involved in invasive management.	Where possible, seek to involve the Capital Region Invasive Species Partnership (CRISP) and local groups. Section 3.6	Continuing	n/a	Council District staff
To support the protection of sensitive ecosystems, that the District continue to forge partnerships with key community groups conservation groups.	Groups to involve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metchosin Invasive Species Cooperative, • Bilston Watershed Habitat Protection Association, • Metchosin Foundation • Habitat Acquisition Trust • Friends of the Buffer Land • Friends of Metchosin Mountain 	Continuing	n/a	Council District staff PTASC

Recommendation	Additional information / Section #	Timeline	Investment	Resourcing
	Section 3.6, 5.0			
Equestrian use of District trails be continued.	Section 4.4	Continuing	N/A	District Staff
The District assess the future of under-utilized parkland, with the goal of either 1) Enhancing biodiversity and/or recreational values, or 2) assessing the sale of such parcels with funds being placed in the Parkland Acquisition Fund.	Section 5.5	Continuing	TBD	Council District staff
Parks/trails containing sensitive ecosystems be identified, management plans developed and other protective measures assessed.	Section 4.9.1	Continuing	TBD	District staff PTASC
The District maintain its current stance on not having garbage receptacles or bathroom facilities at its managed park or beach sites.	Section 6.0	Continuing	n/a	Council District staff
The prohibition on beach fires continue.	Section 6.0	Continuing	n/a	Council District staff
The District take steps to prevent the storage of large beach items (e.g. paddle boards, tents, kayaks, bbqs, umbrellas) and motorized watercraft on Weir Beach.	Section 6.0	Continuing	n/a	Council District staff
The District install benches on key trails to support walkers with limited mobility or those who require rest-stops.	<p>Priority trails:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hillman Trail • Happy Valley Road in the Village area. <p>Other trails:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blaney 	1 – 2 years	\$\$\$	Council District staff PTASC

Recommendation	Additional information / Section #	Timeline	Investment	Resourcing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metchosin Road, • Rocky Point Road • Annie Jackson Place. Section 3.1, 4.0			
Assess the potential of an all-season walking track around the School Field	Included as an accessibility action. Section 3.1	1 – 2 years	\$\$\$	Council District staff PTASC
District to clarify its approach to community volunteers working on trails, including issues such as work-levels and insurance needs.	Relates to Trail Stewards Program, Buffer Land, invasive management Sections: 3.2, 3.3, 3.5	1 – 2 years	\$	Council District staff PTASC
Develop a Trail Stewards Program <i>Program underway as of February 2026.</i>	Sections 3.2, 3.6	1 – 2 years	\$	Council District staff PTASC
Confirm approach regarding biking on District managed parks trails. Key recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bike use continue to be allowed on all roadside trails. • No biking or the use of mechanized/electric devices on trails where erosion and damage is likely. “No Biking” signs to be placed on trails at high risk of damage. • Motorcycles and ATVs be banned from all district parks and trails. 	Section 3.4	1 – 2 years	\$	Council District staff
Pedestrian safety initiatives be undertaken in the Village area.	Section 4.3, 4.9.3	1 – 2 years	\$\$\$	Council District staff PTASC

Recommendation	Additional information / Section #	Timeline	Investment	Resourcing
<p><i>In late 2025, Council voted for funds to implement traffic barriers in two locations: 1) Happy Valley Road after Rocky Point (toward the Village); and, 2) William Head Road south of the Community Hall.</i></p>				
<p>Park signage be developed and placed in highly visited parks; messaging to focused on responsible use and sustainability.</p>	<p>Litter & pet waste, dog under control, staying on trails, limits on biking, etc.. Section 4,0, 5.0</p>	<p>1 – 2 years</p>	<p>\$\$</p>	<p>Council District staff PTASC</p>
<p>Action be taken to support the Buffer Land as a conservation area, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An inventory / assessment of sensitive environmental areas be undertaken. • An access management plan be developed. • That a restoration plan be developed for areas previously logged and cleared. May include plans for invasive removal, reforestation, riparian enhancement, including the possibility of an engineered wetland. • Encourage and foster interest among community members in contributing to restoration and monitoring activities. • That a new name for the Buffer Land be considered. 	<p>Section 5.3.3</p>	<p>1 – 2 years</p>	<p>\$\$\$\$</p>	<p>Council District staff PTASC</p>

Recommendation	Additional information / Section #	Timeline	Investment	Resourcing
Encourage biking to the beaches, particularly Taylor Beach.	Section 6.0	1 – 2 years	TBD	District Staff
Implement a 20 km/hr speed limit on Taylor Road and Sandgate Road.	Section 6.0	1 – 2 years	\$	District Staff
Steps be taken to prevent parking in areas of high risk pedestrian safety areas, such as near the William Head Rd access point to the Weir Beach stairs.	Section 6.0	1 – 2 years	\$	District Staff
Improve key trails to allow for better access by wheelchairs or mobility assisted devices.	<p>Priority trails:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Happy Valley Road in the Village area. <p>Additional Trails</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blaney Metchosin Road, Rocky Point Road Annie Jackson Place <p>Section 3.1</p>	3 to 5 years	\$\$	District Staff PTASC
District to encourage and support volunteers where appropriate, potentially through retaining a part-time volunteer coordinator.	Section 3.5, 3.6	3 to 5 years	\$\$\$	Council District staff PTASC
New technology (camping location aps, e-bikes, e-scooters, etc.) be considered in parks and trails planning.	Section 3.4	3 to 5 years	TBD	PTASC
Explore using QR codes on signs to promote awareness of key issues.	Potentially a pilot project on on invasive species	3 to 5 years	TBD	District staff PTASC

Recommendation	Additional information / Section #	Timeline	Investment	Resourcing
	Section 3.6			
Review Master Plan at the five year mark, post-approval, assessing against any OCP updates.	Section 1.3	3 to 5 years	TBD	Council District staff PTASC
At least one accessibility parking space be considered at Taylor and Weir Beach.	Section 3.1, 6.0	3 to 5 years		Council District staff PTASC
Assess adding accessibility matts (MobiMatts) to allow for improved access to Tayor and/or Weir beaches. These should be considered as part of any updates to the District's Accessibility Plan.	Section 3.1, 6.0	3 to 5 years	\$\$\$	District staff
District to seek opportunities to better understand who visits Weir and Taylor Beaches, possibly through a visitor survey.	Section 6.0	3 to 5 years	\$\$	Council District staff PTASC
Enhance the Parkland Reserve Fund.	Section 5.6		TBD	Council District staff
District to monitor the key lands for potential future parkland opportunities.	Section 5.6			District staff
Explore initiatives to help protect the local marine environment in the Weir and Taylor Beach areas.	Section 6.0		TBD	Council District staff PTASC / MEASC
Any future increases to parking at Taylor and Weir beaches be considered only with a environmentally and economically compelling opportunity.	Section 6.0		N/A	Council District staff

Section 2 - Community Profile and Process

2.0 Community Demographics and Profile

Metchosin's rural nature is a vital element of Metchosin's community character. This is reflected in the community's patterns of growth, the abundance of agricultural land, and the presence of large tracts of greenspace, whether privately or publicly owned.

The District covers a land area of 6,957 hectares (69.57 km²; 17,396 acres), making it the second largest jurisdiction in the Capital Regional District by land area. Additionally, Metchosin has over 50 km of coastline and has over 1,000 hectares (2,470 acres) of land in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). In terms of District managed assets, there are over 101 hectares (249 acres) of parks and ~20 km of trails.

The 2021 census put Metchosin's population at 5,067, and an increase of 359 people from the 2016 census. The median age among Metchosin residents is 50.8 years, which is both higher than the regional (45.2 years) and provincial (42 years) median ages. Approximately 26% of Metchosin residents are 65 years of age or over. Metchosin's population growth rate is expected to be low over the next 20 years.¹

Metchosin has limited commercial / industrial development, and a small "village" core area where a number of businesses operate. Metchosin has also followed a low-density approach to residential development for decades. The District is outside of the CRD's Urban Containment Policy Area, which was established for purposes of regional planning in the CRD's 2018 Regional Growth Strategy. A key CRD planning objective is to "locate a minimum of 95% of the region's new dwelling units to 2038 within the Urban Containment Policy Area." Metchosin's low-density objectives reflective the community's infrastructure limitations. For example, Metchosin relies entirely on individual septic systems for liquid waste and many properties rely on wells for their water.

In terms of residential development, the community has ~1,880 private dwellings. The average assessed value for residential lots in 2025 was \$1.25M, which represents the fourth highest assessed value (2025 figures) in the CRD, behind Oak Bay, North Saanich and the Highlands.

The District is also Metchosin is bounded by two of the fastest growing communities in British Columbia, the City of Langford (pop 46,804; 2021) and by the City of Colwood (18,961; 2021). Langford is anticipating its population will be 100,000 within 15 to 20 years²; Colwood is

¹ [2025 Metchosin Housing Capacity Analysis](#)

² [Langford Official Community Plan, 2025](#)

planning for 30,168 residents by 2041.³ Population growth throughout the greater Victoria area is also expected to continue.

Some of this growth will be beside or near Metchosin. For example, the Centre Mountain residential development could add as many as 312 homes to an area immediately adjacent to Metchosin's border. The Royal Bay and Beachlands developments in Colwood will continue to bring thousands of new people to the broader area through additional residential, commercial, institutional and recreational growth..

Regional growth was a key consideration in the development of this plan.

In respect of our parks and trails assets, several inferences can be drawn from the demographic and regional context information:

- With continued urban growth in the CRD, and with many developments being higher-density dwellings, Metchosin's undeveloped spaces will likely take on increasing importance on a region-wide basis.
- With a population older than the average further consideration should be given to new accessibility supports on our trails, or even amenities (such as benches) to assist older walkers and those with mobility issues (see section 3.1).
- Given its overall size, the distances to employment/schools/shopping, and the low-level of public transit service, it's likely that Metchosin will continue to be a "car-community." However, with the development of new transit options, like e-bikes, there will be new opportunities to promote active transportation options as an alternative to cars.
- While Metchosin has a tradition of low-density, several large properties remain available for subdivision. As these properties are developed, care should be taken to ensure that parks/trails opportunities and obligations are addressed effectively.

2.1 Plan Process and Public Engagement

In January 2025, District Council tasked the Parks and Trails Advisory Select Committee (PTASC) with developing the Master Plan. Information on the process that followed is found in Appendix 1.

2.2 Administrative and Planning Context

Metchosin's Official Community Plan (OCP) covers parks and trails matters through several objectives and policy statements. The OCP also contains two planning documents specific to parks and trails:

- The 2009 Metchosin Community Trail Network Master Plan.
- The District of Metchosin Parks and Recreation Master Plan (1986).

³ <https://www.colwood.ca/local-government/insights-statistics>; https://communitycouncil.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/CSPC_Colwood-Prosperty-Project-2023.pdf

The key OCP provisions considered as part of the Master Plan are found in Appendix 2.

There are several District bylaws and policies which were also reviewed for relevance to the Master Plan and future parks and trails, including:

- PTASC Terms of Reference
- Advisory Select Committee Bylaw
- Trail Coordinator Terms of Reference
- Subdivision Referral Policy
- Metchosin's Green and Blue Spaces Strategy

In April 2025, the District finalized the Metchosin Active Transportation Network Plan. That plan has also been reviewed and the findings considered in the development of the Master Plan.

2.3 Guiding Principles

This Master Plan was developed with four principles in mind.

The Master Plan must reflect Metchosin's rural character and traditions, including volunteer stewardship of the natural environment.

- Parks and trails are a vital element of Metchosin's community character and our connection to the environment.
- Preserve, enhance and protect our community's natural features.
- Encourage and enable volunteers in maintaining parks and trails.

Maintain and improve the connectivity of our parks and trails.

- Connecting our trails in a meaningful way for community members. For example, as access points to the Galloping Goose or between neighbourhoods.
- Connectivity considerations will be important in assessing future parks and trails opportunities.
- Look for opportunities to improve accessibility for those with mobility limitations, consistent with the District's Accessibility Plan.

Acknowledge First Nation present, traditional and ancestral connections to these lands.

- As reflected in the Territorial Acknowledgement (Section 1.2) and supported by the intent to respect the environment and work to support biodiversity values.

Respect the environment and work to enhance biodiversity values

- Park and trail planning to take into account key environmental goals, including biodiversity enhancement and protection of natural spaces, minimizing impacts to riparian areas, enhancing wildlife corridors, monitoring and managing invasive species.

- Manage risks, including: invasives, climate change risk (fire, flooding), activities that may cause damage.
- Manage and minimize human impacts to natural assets from various current and future uses: mountain biking, e-bikes, commercial dog walking, dogs in parks, random camping.
- Seek new ways of enhancing conservation and environmental preservation, including new park zoning focused on conservation purposes.

Section 3 – Key Trends and Planning Considerations

3.0 Trends and Planning Considerations

The following trends were considered as part of the Master Plan, and a number of vital matters are outlined in terms of future planning of Metchosin’s parks and trails network.

3.1 Accessibility

The District of Metchosin has committed itself to removing or reducing barriers for people with accessibility limitations. The District (at the time the Master Plan was prepared) is part of the Capital West Accessibility Advisory Committee (Accessibility Committee), which includes Colwood, Esquimalt, Highlands, Langford, Sooke and View Royal. The Accessibility Committee developed a shared [Accessibility Plan](#), which Metchosin District Council approved in 2024. An additional phase of the Accessibility Plan is expected within the next three to five years.

The definition of “Accessibility” used in this plan is “the concept of making a product, service, or experience that can be used or interacted by everyone – including individuals with disabilities or impairments.”

The Master Plan looks at opportunities to address limitations, “disabilities” and “impairments,” including those who:

- Are unable to walk long distances, particularly the elderly.
- Require aides for walking, such as canes or ‘walkers’
- Use wheelchairs or other mobility devices
- Parents or caregivers who want to take children on paths in strollers

Recommendations to support greater accessibility are found in the Implementation Table.

3.2 District Resources

The District’s ability to fund operations or new projects will always face the realities of limited resources and District-wide “wants” and “needs.” Metchosin does not have a dedicated parks department or staff members; this is unlikely to change in the near future.

PTASC has traditionally been provided with budget amounts in the range of \$5,000 to \$10,000 for maintenance of the network. The long-standing arrangement in terms of division of labour is that:

- Public Works staff will undertake maintenance work on roadside trails.
- PTASC members will undertake maintenance work within District Parks, assisted by public works as required

Some flexibility in this arrangement is possible based on discussion with the District’s Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and Public Works staff.

An amount of \$20,000 for “Parks and Trails Minor Capital” improvements is typically allocated in District budgets. Drawing on this amount for specific projects often requires planning and coordination from PTASC and District staff.

3.3 Impacts from New Technology

Metchosin’s parks and trails are seeing a range of new technology:

- Electric bikes are making cycling more accessible, particularly over larger distances and steeper slopes. Electric bikes have been observed on some of the most vertically challenging natural trails in the area (District and CRD trails).
- Those using mobility-assisted devices, particularly scooters and wheelchairs, are benefitting from advances in battery technology which is resulting in these devices having greater range and more ability on challenging terrain.
- New fabric technology is allowing greater access to beach areas (see section 6.0 re. mobi-matts).
- IT applications (‘apps’) pose both opportunities and challenges, as certain apps allow for:
 - Identification and recording of plants, animals and fungi (including invasive species), such as through SEEK and iNaturalist.
 - Locating trails, such as through “All Trails.”
 - Locating overnight camping spots (“pass-through camping”), even in places where camping isn’t permitted. Overnight camping has been observed in in certain parks and trailhead areas.
- Signs can now convey much more information through the use of QR codes, which allow for swift/easy access to on-line information.

The impacts (positive and negative) of these technologies have yet to be fully understood. The following recommendations are intended to enhance opportunities and limit risks.

3.4 Biking

PTASC heard concerns about the impact of bikes on certain trails, particularly on the trails originating on steep slopes. In such cases, the risk of erosion and significant wear on trails exists. There is also the risk of collisions between down-bound mountain bikers and pedestrians or equestrian users (or other bikers). A key recommendation is that biking not be permitted on the following trails:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the access points of all parks • Branson-Duke Trail • Gemini Trail • Libra Trail • Lisandra Trail • Horse Trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wayne’s Rock Trail • Bob Mountain Trail • Montreuil Hill Trail • Top of La Bonne Trail • La Bonne Connector Trail • Lusse Way Trail
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- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| • Matheson Lake Trail | |
|-----------------------|--|

Biking has also been noted on trails such as Hillman, 100 Acre Wood and in the Gemini/Libra trails. While these trails can become muddy in the wet months, they are less steep and less likely to see significant damage from biking. It's likely that the limited use these trails see from bikes are those commuting from point to point, as opposed to actively mountain biking as recreation. Biking also occurs on certain roadside trails. In these cases, this use is encouraged, particularly to support active transportation.

In seeking a balance between avoiding trail damage and allowing residents a safe space for transit, it's likely that safe transit can occur on certain trails without significant damage.

Within CRD parks, biking is allowed only on specifically designated trails. The CRD's website states: "Cyclists are welcome in regional parks on trails specifically designated for cycling..." These include GGRT, Hartland, Mt Work and Harborview Parks. No biking allowed off the GGRT into Matheson Lake Regional Park.

3.5 Volunteer Base

Perhaps in no other jurisdiction in the Greater Victoria region do volunteers play such an important role as in Metchosin. In addition to monitoring, maintaining and (sometimes) building Metchosin trails and parks, volunteers play vital roles in community events, local organizations and maintaining District assets, such as the School, Community House and Pioneer Museum.

PTASC has recommended the re-establishment of a Trail Stewards program to expand the number of people who monitor Metchosin's parks and trails assets. At the time of developing this plan, the District was considering certain aspects of its volunteer program and confirming how it manages risks relating to various volunteer roles.

Many of Metchosin's long-serving volunteers are getting older and many reducing the type of activities and duration they can be involved in. Continuous recruitment of new volunteers is essential.

Volunteer activities undertaken in natural/wildland areas comes with some risks, including the potential of danger trees, trips/falls, insect bites (ticks/wasps) and wildlife encounters. It's important that the District continue to assess its approach to risk reduction and risk management. Similarly, the District should review how it engages volunteers with the goal of defining a clear, easy and efficient process for registering and documenting volunteer efforts.

3.6 Invasive Plants

Invasive plant species represent a significant threat to Metchosin's biodiversity values, whether on public or private lands. Metchosin residents have acted, individually and collectively, to remove species such as Scotch Broom, English Holly, Daphne, Canada Thistle, Tansy Ragwort

and others. These efforts have seen considerable success, but the work to manage invasive species in our parks requires a long-term commitment and attention, particularly to emerging threats. For example, Shiny Geranium was detected as a new species on southern Vancouver Island in 2020 and is now widespread. It was found in Metchosin in 2025.

In terms of action on invasive species, volunteer resources are pivotal.

3.7 Easements/Covenants, Statutory Rights of Way and Road Allowances

Statutory Rights of Way, Road Allowances and Easements are important elements of several Metchosin trails and park areas, including lands that may become District-owned parkland in the future. This section describes the specific nature of each land title element and identify key considerations, including:

- Landowner privacy and rights
- Public right of entry
- Environmental concerns
- Future use

Easement/Covenant

An easement is a legal right that allows for the use of another’s property for a specific purpose, including trail access. Easements are attached to the title of the land (often referred to as an “Instrument on Title”) and are binding on current and future owners of the property. Easements are often referred to as covenants. A “Section 219 Covenant” refers to section 219 of the *British Columbia Land Title Act*. This section of the Act permits a body of the Crown, including a municipal government like the District of Metchosin, to define uses for a private property. Often these are done as conditions of a re-zoning or subdivision application.

Easements often come with specific language around the long-term use of the Easement. For example, one easement agreement in Metchosin states the following:

“The Grantor [the property owner] hereby grants and conveys in perpetuity and at all times to the Municipality, its servants, employees, agents, contactors, invitees, licensees, administrators, successors, and assigns the full, free and unrestricted and uninterrupted right, licence, liberty, privilege, easement and right of way with respect to that portion of the Lands known as the Statutory Right of Way to...enter, go, return, pass, and repass without vehicles...”

There are often specific restrictions on uses. For example (and as noted above), vehicle access can be forbidden, and survey information can be included to show the exact location of the easement area (as in, where walking is permitted).

Easements/Covenants are in place for the following trails:

- Ash Mountain Look-Out
- Sea Bluff Trail

- Top of La Bonne Trail
- Montreul Hill

Considerations regarding parks and trails:

- Trail access points covered by easements across privately owned land; as such, landowner respect is crucial in terms of privacy, and minimizing noise, trash, etc..
- Any efforts to disrupt, discourage or block access to these areas should be reported to the District.
- Maintaining easement areas will normally be the District's responsibility, , but this needs to be confirmed in the specific wording of the covenant document.
- Easements may be considered in connection with donations of land.

Statutory Rights of Way

Statutory rights of way (SRW) are those rights that a municipal or industrial user has over certain lands. For example, municipalities often have statutory rights of way (usually along roadways) for water or sewer uses. Utility companies, like BC Hydro and Fortis, have rights of way over lands for their hydro and gas lines. Unlike an easement, which typically exists between property owners, a statutory right of way doesn't typically involve questions of land ownership.

That said, the term "statutory right of way" can be used in other forms, including easement and covenant documents.

Considerations in terms of parks and trails:

- Several roadside trails are located in areas with SRWs, including Rocky Point Road, bottom of Duke Road, Kangaroo Road.
- The District's requirement to consider hydro and or gas lines in their planning.
- The District has cost responsibility if there are uses that will disrupt utility infrastructure.

Road Allowances

Road allowances are parcels of land owned by the District that are, or may have been, designated as potential roadways. These allowances were frequently established during initial land surveys, particularly for residential subdivisions. In the subdivision process, certain areas allocated for trails may also be classified as road allowances, even if there is no current intent to develop a roadway. Historical examples would be Blaney Trail and the road allowance at the end of Winfall.

A more current example is the connector trail to the Galloping Goose Regional Trail (GGRT) from Beckingham Road, which will be turned over to the District by the property owner and designated as a 6-metre wide metre road allowance. This will then be owned and maintained by the District.

The 100-acre Section 95, which is part of the 2017 Reconciliation Agreement, has two road allowance connectors off of Neild Road and Wild Cherry Drive. As Section 95 is expected to come to the District as parkland (see section 5.3.3) following the conclusion of the Sc'ianew Nation's treaty process, the District should consider how to best manage these areas and ensure adequate notification and consultation with adjacent neighbours.

3.8 Land Donations for Donation Receipts (Municipal)

Local governments can offer donation receipts to private landowners as compensation for land donations. The donation receipt mechanism provides local governments, like the District of Metchosin, with the ability to acquire land other than through outright 'cash' purchase.

To qualify, the land in question (whether a whole or a portion of a parcel) must contribute to a demonstrable public interest or community benefit. Examples where a land donation could serve public interest or community benefit include space for a:

- playground
- roadside trail
- municipal facility
- public amenities (parking lot, bathroom facilities, space for emergency management service)

The value of the donation receipt provided is typically calculated based on the assessed value of the land. In the simplest terms, if a landowner donated 10% of their land to allow for a roadside trail, that landowner would be offered a donation receipt valued at 10% of the property's assessed value.

There would likely be additional costs for such arrangements, including legal and surveying costs.

The donation receipt mechanism is distinct from federal and provincial programs. For example, the federal government's [Ecological Gifts Program](#) focuses on lands that have ecological sensitivity and normally involves third party organizations that become responsible for managing the donated land parcels. The [BC Parks Land Acquisition Program](#) focuses on land donations that can be included in parks, protected areas, wildlife management areas or other conservation areas.

Section 4 – Metchosin Trails

4.0 Overview

The District of Metchosin and its volunteers manage a network of 51 trails, which include over 20 kms of walkable area. These community trails provide opportunities for physical activity, active transportation opportunities, connection with the natural environment and social interaction. Our trails are a vital part of Metchosin’s rural character.

Metchosin’s trails are located on both public (District-owned) land and private property, where access is often granted from easements/covenants.

‘Connectivity’ is an important planning consideration in the development of Metchosin’s trail network, with a number of our trails connecting in ways that allow walkers to move through the community via its , natural pathways.

The purpose of this section is to:

- Provide a broad overview of Metchosin’s trail assets, including the types of trails that exist in Metchosin.
- Outline the key management principles and considerations, including trail design standards.
- Recommend future actions for the protection, care and maintenance of Metchosin’s trails.
- Identify opportunities for further extending our trails network.

4.1 Management Principles

With the abundance of trails already in Metchosin, the onus in terms of future planning is on the maintenance and enhancement of the existing trail network. However growth opportunities will continue to be pursued, particularly when these are part of any new subdivisions or through resident donations.

The following principles guide the management of Metchosin’s trails:

- Prioritize the maintenance of Metchosin’s nature trails so that these provide a safe and enjoyable experience of the natural environment.
- Support active transportation options, in particular roadside trails will be managed and maintained to allow for bike use and (where possible) mobility-assisted devices.
- Pursue opportunities for improved accessibility to those with mobility limitations, where such opportunities are likely to see high use and can be achieved with minimal environmental impact.
- Promptly address threats to the local environment or biodiversity, such as invasives or damage through human use.
- Pursue land dedications and high value trail opportunities, particularly as these opportunities come as a result of subdivisions.

- Encourage and enable volunteer support for appropriate levels of the District's trail maintenance.
- Amenities (such as bathrooms, garbage, parking, benches, signage) will continue to be limited, except in cases where amenities such as benches serve as aids to accessibility.

4.2 Roles and Responsibilities

The following outlines the roles that key participants:

District Council

- Approve and affirm broad planning principles (including this Master Plan)
- Approve annual budgets.
- Approve budgets for special projects.
- One member serves as the liaison to PTASC.

District Chief Administrative Officer

- Authorizes and directs work on the parks and trails network, including who undertakes the work and when.
- Authorizes volunteer action by groups or others, including inmates at William Head Institution.
- Advises Council of issues or the need for action on priority areas.
- Provides regular updates to Council on special projects.

Public Works Staff

- Public Works staff play an important role in trails maintenance, particularly the maintenance of roadside trails or significant work required within parks.

Other District staff

- The District's Planner will have expertise in land use matters and general planning of parks assets.
- The District's Chief Financial Officer develops annual operating and capital budgets, which include allocations for parks and trails matters.

Parks and Trails Advisory Select Committee (PTASC)

- Makes recommendations to Council on parks and trails matters.
- Identifies priority work on parks and trails; brings matters to the attention of the CAO.
- Provides volunteer assistance in maintaining parks and trails. PTASC has traditionally turned to the District's Public Works team for maintenance of roadside trails, but undertakes maintenance on trails within parks.

- While PTASC has previously undertaken work to construct roadside trails (Pears, Kanagroo), matters like insurance coverage and road safety make this unlikely in the future.

District Trails Coordinator

- Key contact for public concerns regarding parks and trails.
- Advises the CAO and PTASC about trail development and maintenance issues.
- Organizes efforts to address issues in coordination with the CAO.
- Organizes efforts related to PTASC's annual maintenance plan.

4.3 Metchosin's Trail Network – Trail Types

The broader trail categories include:

Park-based trails

With one exception, trails are found in all of Metchosin's parks, including Blinkhorn, Buckbrush, Eleanor Mann and Metchosin Wilderness Park. The exception is the Carlton Kosh Nature Park.

Connector Trails

These trails are routes that connect other trails, roads, neighbourhoods. They are often narrower or steeper than roadside trails and are not always suitable for all types of users.

These are the most common types of trails within Metchosin and include the following trails (to name just a few): Branson-Duke, Graceland to Gilbert, Hillman, Lusse Way, Gemini, Ed's Lane, Farhill-Latoria Creek Bridge.

Destination/Viewpoint Trails

These are trails that are either notable or take visitors to specific community viewpoints. Examples of these trails include Blaney Trail, Deer Park Lookout, Mount Ash Lookout, Montreul Heights, and Sea Bluff.

Roadside Trails

Roadside trails, as their name suggests, travel parallel to roadways. Preferably, these are physically separated from the roadway, but may be directly adjacent in constrained locations. Roadside trails are to be located within the road right-of-way, permitting long, continuous routes. These are intended for direct, long distance travel by pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian users. In terms of maintenance, the District's Public Works crew will normally be assigned to complete needed work.

Metchosin has numerous roadside trails, including those on Duke Rd, Kangaroo Rd, Pears Rd, and Rocky Point Rd.

Village Trails

These trails are highlighted due to their concentration in the Village area, and the role that these paths play in assisting in safe passage to community destinations. These trails include the Municipal Field trail, the Madill Trail, the Happy Valley Road Trail, and the William Head Rd trail. Of note, is the passage between the historic St. Mary's Church on Metchosin Road, through the cemetery to the School field.

4.4 Equestrian Use

There's a long history of equestrian use and stewardship of Metchosin's parks and trails network. Since its inception, PTASC has had significant membership involvement by equestrians. Metchosin Equestrian Society (MES) members were involved with building and maintaining trails. Some of the trails developed-due to equestrian initiative include those in the Metchosin Wilderness Park, Wayne's Rock Trail and Hillman Trail. There are currently no restrictions on horses being allowed on either natural or surfaced District trails. A continuation of this approach is recommended. Riders should continue to exercise good judgement in terms of which trails are accessed and when. Other trail users should use common sense around horses and yield to riders.

4.5 PTASC Annual Maintenance Plan

Annually, PTASC will develop a parks and trail maintenance plan for review and discussion with the District's CAO. The plan should consider the following:

- Damage that should be addressed on a priority basis. Issues may include flooding (leading to 'trail braiding'), downed trees, erosion, or unauthorized trails.
- Vegetation overgrowth. Certain trails may become impassable due to overgrowth, particularly Himalayan blackberries.
- Invasives. The plan may highlight areas where invasive removal is important for protecting biodiversity elements.
- Biodiversity enhancement. In addition to invasive removal, actions could include planting of native species or trees; riparian protection; signage to inform visitors of sensitive areas.

Time and resources are important elements to consider in developing the plan. In terms of PTASC, volunteer time may only allow for four to five work parties during the year. It's important to prioritize and focus on achievable goals.

4.6 Trail Stewards Program

A Trail Stewards Program (TSP) previously existed in Metchosin, and it's recommended that this program be reintroduced. The TSP would involve residents volunteering to be the 'eyes and ears' of a set trail or group of trails. Their main function would be to advise the District and the Trail Coordinator on needed work (invasives, fallen trees, etc..) or situations that need attention (unauthorized trails). Decisions around the work required (and who does this) would be made by the District's Chief Administrative Officer.

4.7 Sea Bluff Trail

Sea Bluff is a key destination trail in Metchosin, offering spectacular views of the ocean below and the opportunity to see active farming. There is also a large stand of native Alaska Onion Grass near the William Head lookout point. While a section of the trail is within a District road allowance (off Wootton Rd), the other three sides of the trail are wholly within private land. In 1988, Geoffrey and Jacqueline Mitchell granted this easement for the public trail “Sea Bluff Trail” around the edges of the land parcel. Current landowners maintain this agreement. This area is actively farmed and sheep often graze this land.

In granting the Right of Way, the original landowner stipulated several conditions: that gates be maintained at Wootton Road and Parry X Roads; that no motorcycles or motor propelled vehicles are permitted on the Right of Way; that dogs are not permitted on the trail unless on a leash.

The following additional recommendations are made with the goal of assuring continued quality use of the trail:

- District staff will consult with the property owners regarding any future maintenance work on the trail, including invasive removal.
- No further memorial benches or monuments will be considered for Sea Bluff, unless these are first proposed by the landowners.

4.8 Trail Standards

Two main standards are recommended for trail development, and subsequent maintenance.

Natural Trail Standard

The goal of these types of trails is to minimize the impact on the surrounding environment. The trail width is to be 1.0 meters with a cleared zone of 2.0 meters wide and 3.5 meters high. The trail base structure only requires compacted native soil, but may be augmented with additional surfacing when required. The right-of-way is to be a minimum of 4.0 meters. The trail grade is not to be limited, but information about the degree of difficulty or specific information about the trail terrain may be placed at the trailhead. It is desirable to provide natural barriers that separate the trail user and any adjacent landowners, where privacy may be an issue. Native plant life is most appropriate for barriers.

Surfaced Standard

Surfaced trails are specifically constructed and have a gravel/aggregate surface. These are the multi-use trails that are intended for situations where use is likely to be high and will involve a range of activities (walking, cycling, equestrian).

This type of trail requires careful planning and development, as well as requiring yearly review and regular maintenance. The trail width is to be 2.0 meters with a cleared zone of 3.0 meters wide and 3.5 meters high. The base structure requires an equivalent of 75mm of 25mm crushed

base course (CBC), over 100mm of 75mm selected granular sub-base (SGSB). The top layer should be composed of 50mm of 10mm crushed rock (screenings) or 75mm of wood chips. Landscape cloth should be installed under the base course where necessary. The right-of-way is to be an average of 6 meters with a minimum of 4 meters. The maximum trail grade is to be within 10% for sustained distances and may be 15% for distances less than 100 meters. It is desirable to provide barriers that separate the trail user and adjacent landowners where privacy may be a concern. Signage or natural (native plant life) barriers are recommended.

4.9 Growth Opportunities for our Trails Network

In terms of expanding the trails network, the emphasis should be on opportunities that are of 'high value' (per the criteria listed below) and/or of community significance.

This section identifies several high value opportunities and establishes criteria for assessing those opportunities. This section also reviews the efforts that were undertaken on trail development following completion of the 2009 Trail Network Master Plan. During the public engagement process a number of 'desired' trails were also identified for potential development. Areas where new trails are not recommended for development are also identified.

4.9.1 Criteria for new trails

The following should be used to assess new trail development opportunities:

- **Prioritization.** The potential trail is included in the Parks and Trails Masterplan.
- **Community interest.** The community has shown support for the development.
- **Neighbourhood consultation.** Neighbours have been informed and their input considered in trail planning.
- **Connectivity.** The potential trail connects to an existing asset like the Galloping Goose Regional Trail (GGRT), a local park or a community facility, such as a school or arts centre, or adjacent neighbourhoods.
- **Safety.** Where development of a trail, particularly a roadside trail, supports greater pedestrian safety or enhances active transportation efforts.
- **Constructability.** The trail can be built economically and with minimal land disruption.
- **Suitable Trail Type.** The trail type (Natural, Surfaced) is appropriate for the location, environment and potential uses.
- **Minimizing environmental impacts.** Where possible, avoid tree removal, avoid sensitive or protected areas, minimize the potential of flooding or slope erosion. Where possible, multiple on-site visits should occur during separate seasons to better understand site-specific flora/fauna.
- **Land Tenure.** The land involved in the project is either under the District's jurisdiction or neighbours will consider a donation or access arrangement (see section 3.8)

- **View point.** Trail provides access to a viewpoint or other point of interest.

Actions in planning new trails should also include:

- On-site visits during different seasons and conditions when possible.
- Assessing flora, fauna, gradients, environmentally sensitive areas, etc..
- Assessing safety hazards and safety issues.
- Considering historical uses, e.g. ‘desire lines,’ existing uses, presence of old trails, and skid roads.
- Determining suitability of use types: walking only, multi-purpose (including cycling)
- Determining trail type and connectivity: destination, loop, connector.
- Determining constructability requirements and on-going maintenance.
- Assessing impact on current and future residences.
- Reviewing parking needs.
- As needed, reviewing alternatives. If substitution is requested, consider relocation only when a trail of equivalent type and value is offered.
- Assessing regulatory considerations, particularly the provincial Streamside Protection and Enhancement Act if any trails are within 30 metres of a water course.

These criteria should be regularly reviewed during the development process of specific opportunities.

4.9.2 High Priority Trail Development Opportunities

The following table lists opportunities that were identified as priorities by PTASC and through the public engagement.

Location	Description
<p>Hans Helgesen School via Tavane Rd</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Hans Helgesen School via Rocky Point Rd (east side) from Lombard Dr</p>	<p>Tavane Rd has connectivity to the GGRT and may provide a eastern access point to the school grounds, pending discussion with neighbours.</p> <p>The east side of Rocky Point Rd may also hold potential for a roadside trail, based on discussions with neighbours. The 40 to 60 metre segment before the School has the potential to be a nature trail that can provide safe passage, while still being near the roadway.</p> <p>Opportunities to develop a roadside trail on the west side of Rocky Point have been assessed and found challenging from a constructability standpoint.</p>

Top of Mount Blinkhorn from Blinkhorn Nature Park	The summit is an important viewpoint. District currently owns a strip of land near the summit. This would require negotiations with the property owners.
Mount Metchosin	This area is privately owned and is part of the Olympic View Golf Course property, which also cover Colwood and Langford. The property is zoned CR2/CR3 and thus there is the potential of a future subdivision. Trail development and/or land preservation opportunities may arise in future discussions with the property owners regarding subdivision plans (if/when these arise). An informal trail network currently exists on the Metchosin portion of the property.
Duke Road East	Work is continuing on assessing options to improve pedestrian safety on this roadway. Options include the potential of a roadside trail on the lower portion of Duke Road. In October 2025, the driving lanes were repainted from Albert Head Road to Metchosin Road to create a wider shoulder on the east side of the road. The wider shoulder will allow for more space for pedestrians and cyclists.
Duke Road West	Several local residents have indicated there would be value in developing a roadside trail from Metchosin Road down to the lower portion of Duke Road, ideally connecting with the existing roadside trail that connects to Duke Road East.
Rocky Point Road	There has been interest in a roadside trail on the westside of Rocky Point Road between Arden Road and Windover Terrace. This may be explored in connection with any future trails to Hans Helgesen. This is identified as a project of interest in the Active Transportation Plan

4.9.3 Additional Opportunities for Trail Development

The following are other opportunities that may be considered in terms of trail development. Several of these opportunities are identified in the District’s 2025 Active Transportation Network Plan (ATNP).

Location	Description
Village Centre Improvements	<p>Focused improvements in the Village Centre were identified in the ATNP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a roadside trail on the north side of Happy Valley Road between the Schoolhouse Museum and Metchosin Road; • spot improvements and widening of the trail on the south side;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • safety improvements at the Happy Valley Road / Metchosin Road intersection; • new safe crossing opportunities at the Happy Valley Road / Rocky Point Road intersection.
Metchosin Road	<p>Roadside improvements here are noted in the ATNP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • including the East side of the Metchosin Road between Colwood and Duke Road, including the potential of a crossing at Metchosin Road at Duke Road / Pelican Drive; • the east side of Metchosin Road between Duke Road and Pears Road; • the east side of Metchosin Road between Pears Road and Happy Valley Road.
Helgesen Trail (Lombard Road) Extension	An extension of the existing Lombard Trail to Rocky Point Road. (ATNP)
Kangaroo Road	Roadside trail on the north side of Kangaroo Road between Morland Road and Rocky Point Road, with spot improvements to existing trail sections further west on Kangaroo Road. (ATNP)
Happy Valley Roadside Trail to the Village core from the GGRT at Lindholm Road.	This was suggested at the April 2025 open house. This was included in the 2009 plan and was subsequently reviewed by PTASC and found to be unfeasible at that time. Depending on other priorities, this route may merit a further assessment.

4.9.4 Trail Development during Subdivision Planning

Future subdivision projects are likely to be the means by which Metchosin gains new trails or parks. The District’s parks and trails network has grown significantly as a result of dedications from previous subdivision projects, including those in the LaBonne Road, Albert Head, and Beckingham areas.

A key recommendation in this plan is that trails identified as amenities by the District and subdivision developers are constructed and made useable / accessible during the subdivision development process, thus entering the District’s parks inventory as an active trail. If this work does not occur **prior to final approval** there is a greater risk that trail (and park) space never be developed as intended. While subdivision amenities will likely serve nearby residents, these should be accepted for the benefit of the entire community.

4.9.5 Partnership opportunities

There are several trail development opportunities that the District should consider pursuing in partnership with the CRD and the City of Colwood, as these are likely too costly for Metchosin to pursue on its own. These are typically opportunities that:

- Have the potential of expanding Metchosin’s trails network.
- Would enhance cross-jurisdictional active transportation opportunities.
- Have the potential to enhance safety for both cyclists, pedestrians and motorists.
- Have regional applicability (i.e. many of the cyclists that use Metchosin roads live elsewhere).

Location	Description
Metchosin Rd – Cycling Lanes	Metchosin Rd is a popular cycling route. The shoulder in each direction is under-sized. A partnership with the CRD and Colwood on enhancing the shoulders here would provide a region-wide amenity for the cyclists (many of whom do not live in Metchosin. Interest in roadside improvements here noted as a priority in the Active Transportation Network Plan (ATNP).
Happy Valley Rd – Cycling Lanes	The 2009 Trails plan identified a continuous roadside trail on Happy Valley, noting the significance of Happy Valley Rd as a key cycling route in the CRD’s identified regional network of the time. Opportunities may be considered here for partnerships with the CRD and Langford to further enhance the roadside shoulders here.
Parking lot on Metchosin Road – Colwood side	There has been discussion about the potential of a parking lot just after Farhill Rd (on the Colwood side). In tandem with a wider shoulder on Metchosin Road and pedestrian safety improvements on Duke Road East, a parking lot could help reduce traffic on Metchosin roads and better enable residents to access public transit.
Albert Head Lagoon Park	The route to this CRD park is through Metchosin. Parking is noted as constrained in the park entry. Additional active transportation support (bike lanes, walking shoulders) or the development of a parking lot on Metchosin Rd would help alleviate some of this congestion.

The crossing of Duke Rd & Pelican Rd at Metchosin Rd is noted as dangerous for both trail/recreational pedestrians, particularly school-age children waiting for buses. A partnership opportunity between Colwood and Metchosin should be explored.

Partnership opportunities may also exist with the City of Langford in terms of the Buffer Land, but further planning by the District is required before these opportunities are better known.

4.9.6. Projects in 2009 Trails Master Plan

The 2009 Trail Network Master Plan identified 12 priority areas for the development of roadside trails. Following approval of the 2009 plan, PTASC began work on evaluating and executing these projects, where they proved viable based on the situations and realities of the time. Of the projects, seven were completed or are partially complete.

Many of the projects were determined to be “not feasible.” Based on discussions with past and current PTASC members feasibility assessments were done looking at costs, constructability, land ownership/tenure issues, and other factors.

Based on input received during the public engagement process for this plan, the District and PTASC may wish to re-evaluate the following roadside trail segments or projects:

- Happy Valley Rd (potentially with partnerships (CRD or other))
- Metchosin Rd (potentially with partnerships (CRD or other))
- Arden Rd
- Rocky Point Rd (sections of)
- William Head Rd (sections of)

A list of the projects in the 2009 Trails Master Plan can be found in Appendix 3.

4.9.8. Trail Projects Not Recommended for Development

The following have been considered and are not recommended for trail development at this time.

Winfall Road, East Road Allowance

There has been past consideration of a connector trail to the GGRT using the Right of Way at the end of Winfall Rd. PTASC has previously assessed the potential of such an extension and has determined that this would require a significant construction effort given the slopes and terrain in the area. Nearby connections to the GGRT also exist off of Morland Rd, Rocky Pt Rd, with another access point being constructed in the Beckingham subdivision area.

Saddleback and Hi-Mount Linear Parks

No trail development is recommended in the three linear parks in this area. This is based on the following:

- Lack of neighbour support for trails. A group of neighbours raised concerns regarding trail development in 2008, 2015 and most recently in 2024.
- Council has not directed PTASC to consider trails in these parks.
- Area neighbours have formed an environmental stewardship group for this area. The group has cited a number of reasons for excluding trails from this area, including fire risk, protection of riparian values, ground cover and natural vegetation as well as numerous species of wildlife that coexist with neighbours in this area.

It's recommended that District and PTASC maintain contact with this neighbour group and offer support for activities like invasive removal or dealing with any encroachment issues on these public lands.

Trail from Graceland Park to Duke Road East

The park at the end of Graceland has been identified as an under-utilized park space. There has been recent evaluation of a connector trail from Graceland, through this park space to Duke Road East. While there is a strip of vacant land adjoining the park area, this has been identified as a collectively owned land strip done at the time of the subdivision. The exact nature of the ownership of this parcel – thus decision-making processes – is unclear. Unless a priority need is identified, trail development is not recommended here.

Section 5 – Metchosin Parks

5.0 Overview

The District of Metchosin owns or has active management of over 101 hectares (249 acres) of land, designated as “park”. Two additional parcels (the Buffer Land and section 95) with a combined area of 85 hectares (213 acres) are expected to be added to these assets in the future. Our parks assets include large parks like Blinkhorn Nature Park and Buckbrush Swamp, and smaller parcels such as the pocket parks in the Albert Head area.

The purpose of this section is to:

- Identify specific risks and issues, and strategies to mitigate these risks.
- Outline the key management principles and considerations.
- Identify opportunities for additions to our parkland assets.
- Recommend future actions for the protection, care and maintenance of Metchosin’s parks.

Parkland has special legal protection from the potential of sale (“disposal”) by local governments. However, overall management decisions, including decisions about what type of “park” a land parcel should become, are largely left to the discretion of local governments.

5.1 Issues, opportunities, risks

Metchosin’s park network provides areas that allow for recreation uses, preserve natural landscapes, and serve to maintain the rural character of the community. The District, PTASC, and volunteers need to continuously assess vital matters in protecting our parkland, such as:

- Ensuring adequate funding for maintenance and desired development.
- Balancing conservation/protection with public access.
- Impacts of increased visitation from population growth in neighbouring communities.
- Addressing environmental risks such as inappropriate use, habitat loss, water quality and quantity, and the management of invasive species.
- Managing costs and quality of work.

5.2 Management principles

The following management principles have been developed based on the District’s limited resources, the history of Metchosin’s parks and trails as natural spaces with limited amenities (i.e. parking, bathrooms, etc.), and an on-going interest in maintaining or enhancing environmental protection and biodiversity.

The principles guiding management activities within Metchosin’s parks are:

- Maintaining the natural features of our parkland will be prioritized.

- Natural trails will be the primary means of accessing our parkland, with the exception of where appropriate opportunities exist to enhance accessibility for those with mobility impairments.
- Efforts to minimize threats to the local environment or biodiversity (such as invasives or erosion through human use) will be prioritized.
- Volunteer support for appropriate parks maintenance will be encouraged and enabled by the District (see section 3.5).

An annual parks and trails maintenance plan developed by PTASC is covered in section 4.5 and applies to this section.

5.3 Parkland Assets

Parks are provided by a municipality to meet local recreation and conservation needs with the intent of improving quality of life for residents and their families. In the context of this plan, a park is defined as a piece of land or water which has been specifically identified but not necessarily acquired or prepared yet for public use or conservation purposes.

5.3.1 Current parks

- **Blinkhorn Nature Park** (20 ha; 49 acres): This park at the geographic center of Metchosin was originally considered for a regional water reservoir. Designated as a parkland in 1998, it features a **1-km trail** around Blinkhorn Lake. The lake's outlet stream flows into Veitch Creek and ultimately into the Sooke Basin.
- **Buckbrush Swamp Park** (3.2 ha; 7.9 acres): A wetland area that provides important habitat for local wildlife. The park features diverse vegetation and serves as a natural floodplain, helping to regulate water levels and support biodiversity. It contains a natural trail loop, half of which is easily accessible and half less so.
- **Carlton Cosh Nature Park** (0.91ha; 2.24 acres): A small, forested park adjacent to Kangaroo Road, known for mature trees, native plant, and birdwatching opportunities.
- **Eleanor Mann Park** (17 ha; 42 acres): A scenic park that provides green space for relaxation, walking and equestrian activities.
- **Libra Trail Area** (Section 28 (20 ha; 50 acres): This section of land contains a set of trails that connect the Aquarius-Gemini-Libra neighbourhood to the GGRT. Ownership of this property will transfer to the District as part of the 2017 Reconciliation Agreement Land Swap (see Sec. 5.3.2). Presently, this property is owned by the provincial government but operated by the District through a Licence of Occupation agreement.
- **Metchosin Wilderness Park** (40ha; 100 acres): The largest park and natural space in the District known as the "100 Acre Wood" and formally referred to as "Section 25." Ownership of this property will transfer to the District as part of the 2017 Reconciliation Agreement Land Swap (see Sec. 5.3.2). Presently, this property is owned by the provincial government but operated by the District through a Licence of Occupation agreement.

- **Municipal Grounds and Village Area** (4450 Happy Valley Road): Includes a cricket pitch, covered spaces for farmers' market stalls, the Metchosin Pioneer Museum, and recreational dirt jump park for biking, and an equestrian facility.
 - The Municipal offices, Fire Hall and the Community House reside on portions of these lands.
 - The northeast portion of these lands contains a grass field, which is used for additional parking for large community events. This space is currently being considered as a location for a replacement for the existing Fire Hall.
 - The School Field (4475 Happy Valley Road), contains a large field that includes the District's tennis courts and a community garden space. Adjacent to the field is the Old Metchosin Schoolhouse Museum.

5.3.2. Future Parkland Assets from the 2017 Reconciliation Agreement

In 2017, the District completed an agreement with both the Sc'ianew First Nation and the City of Langford on a comprehensive land swap. That agreement immediately transferred one parcel, the 46 ha Buffer Land, to Metchosin, and upon completion of Sc'ianew's Treaty, three additional land parcels will transfer ownership to the District to serve as parkland:

- Section 95: 40 ha (100 acres), located adjacent to the Buffer Land.
- Section 28: 20 ha (50 acres), contains the Libra trails.
- Section 25: 40 ha (100 acres), known as 100 Acre Wood or Metchosin Wilderness Park.

All three of these parcels are Crown-owned lands, held by the province. Regarding sections 28 and 25, the District currently has a Licence of Occupation (LoC) with the provincial government to allow for use of these lands as trails. Section 95 is not covered by an LoC.

Increased visitation and use either is or is expected to be is a challenge for many of Metchosin's parks, particularly as residential development continues in Langford and Colwood (e.g. Centre Mountain, Royal Bay/Beach Lands). Action is likely required for parks that may see increased visitors due to their proximity to densely populated areas.

5.3.3. The Buffer Land

The Buffer Land (46 ha; 113.5 acre) is currently owned by the District, as a result of the 2017 Land Swap. This is composed of a north lobe (zoned Commercial Recreation (CR) 2) and a south lobe (zoned CR 3). A large section of Metchosin Creek runs through the north lobe, before it enters the Bilston Creek system.

At the time this plan was being prepared, the District was considering dedicating the Buffer Land as a park under Sec. 30 of the Community Charter and placing a Sec. 219 environmental protection covenant on the property followed by rezoning this parcel from CR 2/3 to a new zoning designation that would create a designated park, with a conservation focus. This

recommendation emerges from a community working group process that took place from April to October 2023 and featured numerous public engagement opportunities.

The Buffer Land Working Group’s (BLWG) October 2023 report came with the following recommendations and observations:

- That the District of Metchosin retain ownership, control and autonomy over the Buffer Land.
- Protection and enhancement of the area’s ecological values is vital and managing access and limiting certain activities within the Buffer Land is central to achieving this goal.
- The Buffer Land is unique among Metchosin’s greenspaces in that it is immediately adjacent to a future residential subdivision, located in another jurisdiction (City of Langford).
- This fact means that the Buffer Land potentially presents a considerable management challenge to the District of Metchosin.
- The “do nothing” option (maintain current zoning; minimal management) was assessed by the BLWG. This option was viewed as irresponsible, and also one that increased risks in terms of District liability, ecological degradation, public safety, and negative impacts to nearby residents.
- The BLWG believes that if Metchosin is to remain as the owner of the Buffer Land it has a responsibility to care for, protect and manage this land effectively.
- Look for opportunities to have Buffer Land be the site of ecologically-oriented research, potentially in partnership with local post-secondary institutions (RRU, UVic, Camosun).

5.3.4 CRD Parks

There are five regional parks located within Metchosin, which are managed by the CRD. These include Albert Head Lagoon, Devonian, Matheson Lake, Tower Point, and Witty’s Lagoon.

There are several District owned trails that are used to access these CRD parks, including:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annie Jackson • Bradene Steps • Bob Mountain Trail • Beckingham (forthcoming) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matheson Lake Access Trail • Top of La Bonne • Wayne’s Rock
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5.3.5 Unmanaged Parkland

The District also owns land parcels that are undeveloped, but do not function as established parks,. These parcels include:

- Branson Trail Pocket Park
- Graceland: a pocket -park (0.416 ha / 1.02 acres) from a past subdivision in the Albert Head neighbourhood.

- Hi-Mount/Saddleback : linear park space granted from a original subdivision process serving as a nature space in these areas. Three park parcels extend at a range of points from Hi-Mount Drive to Saddleback Road.
- Undeveloped linear and pocket park connecting Saddleback Road to Sundance Drive, of approximately 1.5 acres.
- Kasani: a 0.66 ha (1.6 acre) park parcel at the end of Kasani Place road.
- Metchosin Rd: this space includes the “Welcome to Metchosin” sign, donated by Ron Aubrey, and is located at the corner of Metchosin Rd and Briarwood Ln.
- Metchosin Road: a pocket park between 3740 and 3790 Metchosin Road.
- Saddleback-Stirrup Place: linear park space granted from the original subdivision process now serving as a nature space in these areas. Extends from Saddleback Road to Stirrup Place.
- Seaspray: a pocket park from a past subdivision in the Albert Head neighbourhood.
- Spellman: an pocket park located across the Lindholm Rd near an entry to Blinkhorn Nature Park. The parcel was once considered as a parking area for Blinkhorn.

Additional comments are made below in section 5.6.

5.4 Potential Parkland Acquisitions

Future additions to the District’s parks assets may occur in several ways:

- Subdivision processes or rezoning processes (including Amenity Rezoning).
- Purchase, such as through the District’s Parkland Acquisition Fund (see section 5.6) or funds from other sources (i.e. funds from organizations or individuals)
- Donation by a private landowner (see section 3.8)

Subdivision processes have been previously used as a means of obtaining parkland. Under the BC’s *Local Government Act* (section 510) developers have an obligation of providing either parkland or a payment to the District of the market value of the land that could have been donated. It is the developer’s choice as to what approach they take.

Certain limitations are set out in the legislation:

- The amount of land required for park by local governments cannot exceed 5% of the total land being proposed for subdivision.
- The parkland requirement does not apply to subdivisions of fewer than three lots.
- The requirement does not apply to subdivisions where the “smallest lot being created is larger than 2 hectares” (4.94 acres).
- Funds provided by a landowner in lieu of parkland must be placed in a reserve fund for the purpose of acquiring parkland.
- The donated land must be in good condition.

The District's ability to acquire more park lands is also limited by both availability of funds, and land availability for purchase.

In addition to the criteria outlined in section 4.9.1, the addition of new land parcels should be assessed based on the potential of these to:

- Expand existing green spaces.
- Improve connectivity by enabling additional trails between parks and residential areas.
- Have clear biodiversity and environmental values, including protection of wildlife corridors.
- Have recreational or other tangible community value to Metchosin residents, including the potential of developing community gardens or gathering spaces.

Metchosin's 1986 Parks and Recreation Master Plan listed parcels that had potential value as parkland. These are found in Appendix 4.

5.5 Under-utilized Park Parcels

The District of Metchosin owns several land parcels which are designated as parks, but which have (based on PTASC's knowledge and experience) low public usage and, in some cases, low value as "parks." These land parcels have previously been referred to as to as "Orphan Parks."

The low use is likely due to a number of circumstances, including:

- Limited recreational value, mainly due to a lack of natural features and/or no connectivity with other park parcels or connective roads.
- The location of the parcel,
- Poor signage or no signage, and;
- Privacy or trespass concerns from adjacent neighbours.
- Terrain constraints (e.g steepness).

While it is recognized that undeveloped, natural space has considerable value in terms of conservation and biodiversity enhancement, certain land parcels may serve a greater public good by being designated for other uses. For example, if certain parcels were sold for other uses, such as appropriate residential use, the District could see financial benefit for its Parks Acquisition Fund (see below).

The sale of parkland has special requirements as outlined in Section 27 of the *Community Charter*. "Approval of electors" must be obtained. This would likely be done through an alternative approval process (AAP). In this process, those opposed to a sale are required to sign a District approved form indicating their opposition. If at least 10% of electors oppose the initiative through the AAP process, Council could not proceed with a sale without holding a referendum on the initiative.

Metchosin has an existing Parkland Acquisition Reserve Fund (see 5.6), to which the funds of any sale of park land would be directed.

(DRAFT) Recommendations:

1. That the District assess the future of under-utilized parkland, with the goal of taking one of two actions.
 - **Potential action 1: Enhancing biodiversity and/or recreational values**, or other elements of community benefit (e.g. community gardens, or shared space for community connections); this may be done with partner organizations or with the involvement of neighbours and neighbourhood stakeholders; or
 - **Potential action 2: Assessing the sale of such parcels** with funds being placed (as is required) in the Parkland Acquisition Fund.

2. That criteria be developed to assess the suitability of lands for potential sale. This option may be considered where a land parcel that nominally serves as parkland has:
 - Low recreational potential (low connectivity, low potential as a credible nature park).
 - No community amenities, or the potential for amenities, such as playgrounds or parking.
 - Low biodiversity values (i.e. lands not supporting wildlife corridors; riparian protection).
 - Gained no interest among adjacent landowners in terms of stewardship actions (i.e. removing invasives; monitoring for dumping activity or encroachments)
 - Clear signs of significant and intentional neighbour encroachment or appropriation (i.e. potentially reducing public recreational access and biodiversity values)
 - Potential for residential development, in terms of parcel size and location.

3. That the District regularly review priority lands for possible sale.

5.6 Parkland Acquisition Fund and Potential Acquisitions

As of January 1, 2025, there was \$284,546 in Metchosin's Parkland Acquisition Reserve Fund (the "Parkland Fund"). This fund was established in 2009 based on a single allocation of funding from a development in the Tower Point area. To date, this fund has not been used. Based on current market values, it's estimated that the District would need a minimum **of \$500,000** <<TBC>> to acquire a land parcel of meaningful size and value.

It's recommended that the District watch for opportunities to acquire suitable parcels in the following areas: Metchosin Mountain, Blinkhorn Mountain, Rocky Point Rd/Tavane Rd, Mount Matheson. Additional opportunities should be reviewed in terms of these lands: Eemdyck Passage and Edye Point Beach, Bentinck Island, Whirl Bay Beach, Buck Hill, Garibaldi Hill, Church Hill, Glinz Lake.

The 1986 Parks and Recreation Plan identified a number of parcels for possible purchase for park space. This list can be found in Appendix 4.

Section 6 – Beaches

6.0 Overview

This section covers Weir Beach and Taylor Beach. Both beaches receive thousands of visits a year, whether from local residents or those in the greater Victoria area. Both beaches are part of a complex chain of shoreline features spanning over 50 kilometres. These features include rocky shores, marsh shores, accretion beaches, erosion beaches and pocket beaches. The environmental significance of the marine shorelands in the community is noted in Metchosin's OCP, which contains the following policy directive: "To manage marine shorelands in a manner compatible with the biological and physical processes acting on and within them" (OCP - 2.2.5). Additional policy objectives regarding marine shorelands are found in section 2.6 of the OCP.

While the tidal areas typically fall under the jurisdiction of the provincial and federal governments, the District of Metchosin has responsibilities related to both beaches. These include traffic management (parking), garbage collection, emergency management, fire protection, land use and bylaw enforcement.

The activities on both beaches (particularly Weir) have the potential to impact residents and community members, particularly with high visitation from outside of the community. Residents have raised concerns about parking, traffic safety, garbage, human waste (no bathrooms exist in these areas), dogs, beach fires, and the use of District resources.

This section does not cover the beaches at Witty's Lagoon Regional Park, Devonian Regional Park, and Albert Head Lagoon Regional Park as these are managed by the CRD or under the jurisdiction of other levels of government (federal/provincial)

6.1 Jurisdiction in Coastal Areas

All three levels of government and First Nations have a jurisdictional scope along and near ocean shorelines.

The **federal government's** jurisdiction is generally considered to begin at the low tidal mark and continue off-shore.

The **provincial government** owns most of the foreshore from the natural land boundary to the low water level. Of note, in the case of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the provincial government also owns the seabed.

Municipal governments have the authority to plan and regulate within their boundaries. In Metchosin's situation, the area where regulatory oversight begins is generally considered to be the boundary between the tidal area and the terrestrial land boundary. It's notable that the District can enforce certain bylaws in relation to the beach, including the prohibition on beach fires and animal control (i.e. dogs not being under-control).

First Nation authority over coastal waters is complicated and will depend on the right being exercised and what provisions may be contained in treaties.

6.2 Weir Beach

Weir Beach is located at the southern end of the District and is accessible from Sandgate Road via William Head Road or by a set of stairs at the far end of the beach near the intersection of William Head Road and Pearson College Drive. A designated park under municipal jurisdiction is located within the beach areas and covers 0.22 hectares (0.54 acres), which includes ~140 metres of beach front. The entire length of Weir Beach spans ~540 metres.

There is a significant residential area around Weir Beach, with over 20 residences accessible from Sandgate Road. A RV park with space for as many as 50 units exists on the southern end of the beach. As noted below, the number of people living in the area means that Weir Beach is popular. Concerns have been raised about leaking septic systems and impacts on the beach and marine environment.

There are two freshwater lagoons/ponds behind the beach. These border several of the residences and a portion of one of these bodies is included in Metchosin's park boundary. There are two memorial benches located on the path within the park area.

There are no garbage cans or bathrooms at Weir Beach. In the past, residents have organized garbage clean-ups on Weir Beach. There has been previous discussion about the potential of adding a permanent space for garbage cans and adding bathroom facilities. Both ideas were considered challenging in terms of the additional staff workload and added costs resulting from servicing bathrooms.

Parking is limited in this area. There are approximately 19 stalls near the beach. Residents have expressed concern about parking along William Head Road during peak beach season, particularly near the Weir Beach Stairs. In that area, the road is narrow and winding, making pedestrian safety a legitimate concern. During Covid, with the increase in beach and trail usage, the District had a yellow line painted along one side of Sandgate Road and portions of William Head. No Parking signage was also erected so that first responders could attend emergencies in a safe manner. A number of residents in the Weir Beach area have experience with beach visitors entering private property, often to 'go to the bathroom' in the bushes. Signage will make them aware of trespass in such situations.

There has been some consideration of expanding parking. On this, OCP policy statement 5.3.11 is notable: "Parking should be restricted to environmentally insensitive areas adjacent to the park and should be developed and buffered from adjacent land uses particularly residential uses and should complement the aesthetics of the surroundings."

From time to time, there has been consideration of adding bathrooms to Weir Beach (and/or Taylor Beach). The cost of constructing even simple bathrooms is likely to be significant. Given the popularity of these beaches, maintaining these bathrooms will require significant budget allocation and staff time. An experiment in late 2023 with receptacles for animal waste (small-sized doggie-bags) saw the containers being overwhelmed within a few days of being emptied. The disposal of animal waste requires a different process than regular waste, and thus more cost.

Beach fires are prohibited on Weir Beach (and Taylor Beach), and violations can be enforced by Metchosin Fire Department staff. Residents have raised concerns about beach fires as a result of late night noise and the mess from the fire debris. Residents have noted that ‘beach toys’ are increasingly being left on the beach. The observation is that such items are often concentrated in the area around the RV park

In terms of broader connectivity, the Ron Weir Trail is accessible via William Head Road and Pearson College Drive. The Weir Beach stairs allow walkers to access Pearson College Drive, which eventually connects to a network of trails in the college area, which lead to the Galloping Goose Regional Trail. Likely the most common trail use is the natural loop formed by walking along the beach, climbing up the Weir Beach stairs, and the returning via William Head and Sandgate. The Weir Beach stairs were replaced in 2025, but will need to be monitored due to their proximity to the tidal area.

6.3 Taylor Beach

Taylor Beach is valued for its clear waters and accessible shoreline. While there is no designated municipal “park” on Taylor Beach, the District has responsibilities here in maintaining a small parking lot at the end of Taylor Road. No other parking is allowed on Taylor Road. When the weather is warm it is a popular place with limited parking!

Taylor Beach itself spans over 1 km of ocean front and is also accessible from the CRD-managed Devonian Regional Park with its larger parking lot. The beach serves as frontage for several large residential properties and farms north of Devonian Park.

Name	Location / Parking	Description	Difficulty	Connectivity & Access Points	Management Considerations	Biodiversity Elements / Special Features	Signage	Recommendations
Blaney Trail	Corner of Duke Rd. and Olympic View Dr. Limited parking near trail head.	Short walk through native plants to two memorial benches overlooking the ocean.	Easy	Connects to lookout.	Ongoing invasives control.	Bench Ocean views. Native plants have been added and cared for.		Encourage ongoing stewardship by neighbours.
Blinkhorn Nature Park Trail	Kangaroo Rd. Small parking lot	Natural trail circumnavigating Blinkhorn Lake	Easy	Accessed off Kangaroo Rd. and Lindholm Rd.	Invasives species like European Ash, bluebells. Periwinkle, Herb Robert.	Bench for Moralea Milne. Small lake.		Control invasives. Maintain trail annually.
Bob Mountain Trail	Corner of Liberty Dr. & Woodley Ghyll Rd. Parking on roadside	Natural trail that is easy for first half but steep descent for second half.	Easy to challenging	Connects Liberty Dr. down to the Galloping Goose and over to the Wayne's Rock Trail	Wet spots and over growth of vegetation.	Adjacent riparian zone at Liberty Dr. end.		Brushing out of first third top portion as needed down to trail junction.
Bradene Steps Trail	End of Bradene Rd. Limited parking.	Stairs to Witty's Lagoon	Easy	Connects to Witty Lagoon	Stair railing still needs replacing	Ocean views and access		Replace stair railing.
Branson/Duke Rd. Trail	Branson Rd. to Duke Rd. W. Parking in nearby Cul de sac.	Short trail connecting Branson Rd. to Duke Rd. West	Moderate. Section by Branson Rd is steep	Trail connects the Chapel Heights Subdivision to Duke Rd. West	Heavy blackberry growth	Blackberry harvesting		Trail requires yearly maintenance due to blackberry overgrowth
Buckbrush Swamp Park	Liberty Dr. Parking on Roadside and cul de sac off Eagle tree Place.	Natural trail circumnavigating wet land.	Moderate on Liberty Dr. side. Easy on far side.	Loop trail	Vegetative growth	Riparian zone.		Brush back trail as needed. Currently done by neighbours.

Name	Location / Parking	Description	Difficulty	Connectivity & Access Points	Management Considerations	Biodiversity Elements / Special Features	Signage	Recommendations
Chapel Heights Trail	Chapel Heights Dr. to Metchosin Rd. Parking on roadside.	Short straight trail between 2 properties.	Easy	Chapel Heights Dr. Thru to Metchosin Rd.	Well maintained - presumably by adjacent neighbours. Has unlocked gate installed in a section of chain link fence. No signage at either end so looks like private property.	None		Install signage at each end. An overhanging branch at each end that could be removed to increase visibility of trail entrance. Herb Robert on trail and adjacent property.
Clapham Dr. Trail	Clapham Dr. Parking on roadside.	Short natural trail into Metchosin Park.	Easy	Entrance to Metchosin Park	Shiny geranium infestation. Vegetative growth.	5 trunk cedar candelabra tree.		Brush out vegetation periodically. Control shiny geranium.
Cliff Trail	Intersection of Olympic View Dr. and Cliffe Dr. Limited parking	Short steep walk from Olympic View Dr. to Witty's Lagoon	Moderate, with steep sections.	None	Vegetative growth.	Ocean views		Brush as needed.
Cook Rd. Trail and Joe Lodge Trail	Accessed off both Cook Rd. at the end of the pavement and the Metchosin Park interior loop. Parking on Cooke Rd.	From the interior 100 Acre Wood loop trail, the Joe Lodge loop is well signed natural trail marked with reflectors. The offshoot trail that leads to Cook Rd access is not signed, although it is well marked with reflectors until it leaves the tree cover.	Challenging. Moderate to steep inclines. Could be slippery when wet.	Cook Rd. connects to Rocky Point Rd.	No sign at top of interior loop indicating direction of Cook Rd. Upper portion of Joe Lodge Trail gets heavy vegetative growth.	Horned owl nest in area. Open forest of tall trees with dappled sunlight. Possible wildflowers in upper meadow.		Install signage. Brush out trail.

Name	Location / Parking	Description	Difficulty	Connectivity & Access Points	Management Considerations	Biodiversity Elements / Special Features	Signage	Recommendations
Deer Park Trail Lookout	Top of Deer Park Trail road. Parking in nearby cul de sac.	Natural trail leading to lookout.	Difficult scramble up over rocks to lookout last 50 meters or so. Hazardous in wet conditions because of mossy rocks and in dry conditions because of slippery grasses.	None	Trail is currently overgrown and hard to determine in spots.	Spectacular views out over Olympic Peninsula. Attractive split rail fence delineates it from neighbouring property.		Suitability of trail should be assessed. Recommend site visit with PTASC members.
Duke Rd. South Roadside Trail	Duke Rd. South From Duke Rd. West to Duke Rd. East. Limited parking.	Screenings surfaced trail.	Easy	Duke Rd. South From Duke Rd. West to Duke Rd. East	Grass growth on verges.	Bench honouring John Harris at a bus stop.		Mow as needed.
Eales Rd. Trail	Connects both sides of Eales Rd. Limited parking in nearby cul de sac.	Very short connector trail.	Easy	Connects both sides of Eales Rd connecting Arden Rd. and Kangaroo Rd.	None.	None		None
Ed's Lane Trail	Ed's Lane. Limited parking.	Nature trail with natural surfacing.	Easy to Moderate	Connects to Metchosin Wilderness Park and surrounding trails.	Small parking area cul de sac subject to very occasional over-night parking and also dumping of yard waste. Currently bluebells from said dumping need to be controlled. First part of trail is steep and rocky and subject to washouts in strong rain.	Attractive stretch alongside seasonal stream (Cripple Creek). Riparian zone. Seasonal stream. Wildflowers.		Needs brushing out occasionally. Broom removal in parking area. Monitoring for overnight camping and refuse dumping.

Name	Location / Parking	Description	Difficulty	Connectivity & Access Points	Management Considerations	Biodiversity Elements / Special Features	Signage	Recommendations
Farhill Trail / Latoria Creek Community Bridge	Farhill Rd. to Duke Rd. East. Limited parking off Farhill Dr.	Well surfaced trail. Newly renovated bridge over Latoria Creek known as the Latoria Creek Community Bridge. Sign thanking all who donated time and resources to the bridge. Fairly steep incline both sides of the bridge.	Moderate	Farhill Rd. to Duke Rd. East	Trail is well used and maintained. Heavy ivy infestation that does not affect the useability of the trail, but will adversely affect the trees eventually. East side of the bridge has gravel runoff from the trail that collects on the bridge deck boards. Slipping hazard and also faster deterioration of the boards.	Beautiful treed setting in the ravine. The creek runs through. Riparian Zone		East side of the bridge has gravel runoff from the trail that collects on the bridge deck boards - solution still needed. Encourage removal of invasives.
Ferncliffe Trail	Ferncliffe Dr. Parking on roadside.	Short natural trail. Steep and rocky in places.	Moderately challenging.	Ferncliffe Dr. to the Galloping Goose	Brushing.	None.		
Gemini Trail	Gemini Rd. to Galloping Goose. Limited parking.	Natural trail with some grade.	Moderate	Gemini Rd. to the Galloping Goose.	Vegetative over growth and windfalls.	None		Brushing out as needed.
Graceland Dr. to Gilbert Dr. Trail	Graceland Dr. to Gilbert Dr. Limited parking in nearby cul de sac.	Well maintained short connector trail.	Easy	Graceland Dr. to Gilbert Dr.	Brushing.			
Helgesen/Lombard Trail	Rocky Point Rd to Galloping Goose along Lombard Rd. Parking off of William Head prior to Lombard.	Well maintained screenings trail.	Easy	William Head Rd. to Galloping Goose	Ivy, blackberry and hawthorne trees. Aged Lombard Poplars due to be removed.	Beautiful scenic trail with partial views.		Investigate what to replace poplars with. Control invasives.
Hillman Trail (Mac Paige Bridge)	Hillman Rd. to Pears Rd. Limited parking at the end of Hillman.	Trail through forest and alongside Metchosin Golf Course from Hillman Rd. to Pears Rd.	Easy to moderate	Trail corridor connecting Hillman Rd. and Pears Rd.	Drainage issues in several spots, muddy sections. Vegetative growth. Bridge.	Crosses Bilston Creek at Mac Page Bridge where there is a memorial bench to sit and relax.		Address muddy spots where feasible. Brush out as needed. Check bridge condition annually. Bench should be replaced

Name	Location / Parking	Description	Difficulty	Connectivity & Access Points	Management Considerations	Biodiversity Elements / Special Features	Signage	Recommendations
Horse Trail	Liberty Dr. to Labonne Rd. Limited parking on roadside.	Natural trail	Moderate	Labonne Rd. to Liberty Dr.	Vegetative overgrowth. Has one culvert near Liberty Dr. end. Crosses Wildwood Creek at Labonne Rd. end. Creek gets high and hard to cross in winter. Currently there is a wooden pallet installed on rock carapace. Will likely get washed away in winter.	2 seasonal stream crossings.		Brush out annually. Assess culvert annually. Keep watch on Wildwood Creek crossing.
Joe Lodge Trail (See also Cook Rd. Trail)	Cook Rd. No parking.	Natural Trail.	Moderate to challenging.	Cook Rd. to Metchosin Park	Within Metchosin Park, the Joe Lodge loop gets overgrown. Lower portions show signs of water run-off with loose rocks.	Horned owl territory.		Brush out upper reaches of trail loop.
Kangaroo Roadside Trail	Kangaroo Rd. (Rocky Point Rd. to Eales Rd.) Limited roadside parking	Screenings surfaced roadside trail.	Easy	Morland Rd to Eales Rd.	Vegetative growth near 700 block of Kangaroo Rd.. Appears to be maintained currently by unknown parties.	Keep travellers safe and off roadway. Has some nice windy sections through trees.		Brushing out needed in wooded portion in 700 block.
Liberty Dr. Roadside Trail	Liberty Dr. @ Ed's Lane to Buckbrush Swamp Trail. Parking at Ed's Lane.	Interrupted roadside trail.	Easy	Ed's lane Trail to Bob Mtn. Trails and Buckbrush Swamp Park.	Big rock outcrop on a blind corner forces people onto roadway. Not maintained so gets very overgrown with broom.	Safety aspect of keeping residents off the road		Adjacent property owner recently hired crew to remove broom. This would be the perfect opportunity to reestablish the trail bed. Signage would be needed at both ends.
Libra Trail	Libra Rd. to Galloping Goose.	Mostly natural trail.	Moderate.	Libra Rd. to the Galloping Goose	No signage at either end.	Goes through nice forest.		Install signage. Clean out culverts and ditches at upper end annually.

Name	Location / Parking	Description	Difficulty	Connectivity & Access Points	Management Considerations	Biodiversity Elements / Special Features	Signage	Recommendations
	Limited parking near trail head.				Culverts and ditches get clogged annually			
Lisandra Trail	Lisandra Rd. to Tiswilde Rd. Limited parking off Lisandra.	Natural trail. Moderately steep, potentially slippery.	Moderate.	Neighborhood connector trail linking Lisandra Rd. and Tiswilde Rd. enabling loop walks.	Winter rain creates muddy conditions, particularly at first corner down from Lisandra. BlackBerry in middle of trail needs yearly attention. Some invasives. Daphne, broom	Glimpse of Victoria in distance.		Monitor muddy top portion of trail. Cut back blackberry annually.
Lusse Way Trail	Arden/Cardsview /Eales Rds. Parking on roadside and cul de sac.	Natural trail. Steep grades up from road access points. Mostly level in center portion.	Moderate to challenging.	Neighborhood connector, enabling loop walks connecting Eales Rd., Arden Rd. and Cardsview Rd.	Gets over grown with salal.	Open woodland either mossy or salal. Quiet, shady, wildlife trees.		Brushing salal and clearing deadfall as needed.
Madill Trail	Municipal Hall/Grounds to Williamhead Rd. Parking at Municipal Grounds	Linear trail with screenings and grass sections. Lined with blackberries along much of the length both sides, but passable. Fully fenced corridor.	Easy Very good other than a bit steep at top end.	Riding ring and Municipal grounds to Williamhead Rd.	Rampant blackberry growth.	Pleasant wide trail adjacent to farm lands.		Cut back blackberry as needed.
Matheson Lake Trailhead Trail	Labonne Rd. .75 km past Liberty Dr. intersection. Some roadside parking.	Natural surface multi-use trail. Steep.	Moderate to challenging because of grade and footing.	LaBonne Rd. to Galloping Goose and Wayne's Rock Trail and Cougar Ridge Trail	None	None.		None
Metchosin Rd. Roadside Trail #1	Metchosin Rd. between Happy Valley Rd. and Wooton Rd.	Screenings surfaced roadside trail.	Easy	Happy Valley Rd to Wooton Rd.	Gets some grass growth.	Keeps foot traffic safe.		Minor weed eating annually

Name	Location / Parking	Description	Difficulty	Connectivity & Access Points	Management Considerations	Biodiversity Elements / Special Features	Signage	Recommendations
Metchosin Rd. Roadside Trail #2	Metchosin Rd. (Duke Rd. West to Chapel Heights Dr.)	Short roadside trail.	Easy	Duke Rd. West to Chapel Heights Dr.	None	Keeps foot traffic safe.		None
Metchosin Rd. Roadside Trail #3	Metchosin Rd. (Chapel Heights Dr. to Duke Rd. East).	Roadside Trail	Easy	Chapel Heights Rd. to Duke Rd. East	None	Would facilitate safety along Metchosin Rd.		Poorly delineated and incomplete, but has potential for much greater use.
Montreul Hill Heights Lookout Trail	Rocky Point Rd. to Montreul Hill Summit. Access off private gated strata road from Rocky Point Rd. Minimal parking.	Steep walk up private road to end of cul de sac. Short walk down fire road, then short steep hike along a game trail to a rock lookout.	Intermediate	Out and back to Montreul Hill summit and viewpoint.	Top section of the trail (beyond roadside portion) is not well marked and is overgrown. Difficult to see trajectory of the trail. Should have young broom removed. Grass cutting would help trail visibility. Not clear where the public lookout boundaries are.	Southwesterly view of water. Sunsets.		Pedestrian access only up strata road. Add trail markers and clean up portions of the trail. Move signage at bottom of road to in front of the entrance gate and add map on signage.
Mt. Ash Trail	Laboone Spur Rd. just beyond approx. 3km up La Bonne Rd. driveway. Minimal parking.	Very steep natural surface trail.	Short but challenging.	Out and back to Mt. Ash summit viewpoint.	Needs maintenance for broom control on a regular basis.	Wonderful views to Olympic Mountains. Moss balds and wildflowers		Ensure regular maintenance to keep trail open.
Municipal Grounds Trail	Happy Valley Rd. to Madill Trail along fenceline. Parking on municipal grounds.	Narrow trail with screenings bordered by landscape ties.	Easy	Happy Valley Rd. to Madill Trail	Floods over towards Happy Valley Road after very heavy rain. Cypress trees / hedge about 150' long at Madill end is getting wide enough to interfere with trail soon.	None.		Address trimming of cypress hedge

Name	Location / Parking	Description	Difficulty	Connectivity & Access Points	Management Considerations	Biodiversity Elements / Special Features	Signage	Recommendations
Park Dr. Trail	Park Dr. to Park Dr./Farhill Rd. Minimal parking.	Wide trail with good surfacing.	Moderate due to incline.	Connects Farhill Dr. to Park Dr. near Delgada Rd. Excellent shortcut to Albert Head Lagoon from Metchosin Rd.	No signage at either end. Entrance off Park Dr. appears to be on Private property, unless you know the trail is there as it starts about 50 m from the road.	Forested		Add signage at each end.
Pears Rd. Roadside Trail	Pears Rd. (Hillman Trail to Bilston Rd.). Roadside parking.	Roadside Trail between Bilston Place and Hillman Trail	Easy	Roadside Trail between Bilston Place and Hillman Trail	Gets overgrown and hard to distinguish.	Adjacent to pasture land.		Needs regular mowing or brushing
Pearson College Dr. Roadside Trail	Pearson College Dr. from William Head Rd. to Moss Hill Pl.	Screenings surfaced roadside trail.	Easy	William Head Rd. to Moss Hill Place.	Minor grass growth	Pleasant		Minor weed eating/mowing of grass
Pearson/Galloping Goose Connector Trail	Pearson College Dr. to Galloping Goose. Roadside parking.	Short access trail with screenings.	Easy	Connects Pearson College Dr. and Galloping Goose	Culvert	Wide and inviting. Riparian zone.		Minimal. Check culvert annually
Rocky Point Rd. Roadside Trail	Rocky Point Rd. (H.V. Rd. to Kangaroo). Limited roadside parking.	Surfaced roadside trail.	Easy	Rocky Point Rd. (H.V. Rd. to Kangaroo)	Hedging and trail edges get overgrown.	Keeps users off road.		Needs brushing- out annually
Ron Weir Trail	William Head Rd. to Pearson College Dr.	Easy to walk flat natural trail through forest.	Easy	William Head Rd. to Pearson College Dr.	Culverts and potential wet spots.	Nice, forested walk.		The sign-posts on both ends are 9 feet tall and are hard to see, need to be lowered. Check culverts annually.
Sea Bluff Trail	Wootton Rd/Parry Cross Rd. Parking at the end of Wootton.	Wide perimeter trail surfaced half naturally and half 1"minus and screenings.	Easy	Wootton Rd. to Parry X Rd.	Trail is crosses private land and active farming area. Owners must be consulted about maintenance work.	Active farming area. Dogs must be on leash. Pastoral and ocean views. Picnic table 2 benches and memorial plaques.		Blackberry and holly brushing should be considered. Look into replacing scissor gate latches.
Section 25 loops	Metchosin Wilderness Park (aka 100 Acres).	Mostly natural surfaced trail.	Easy	Accesses off Clapham Dr.,	Windfalls and vegetative growth	Nice walk through mature forests.		Remove windfalls as they occur. Brush out as needed.

Name	Location / Parking	Description	Difficulty	Connectivity & Access Points	Management Considerations	Biodiversity Elements / Special Features	Signage	Recommendations
	Limited parking at each entrance.			Arden Rd. Ed's Lane.		Cripple Creek, Seasonal stream.		
Sweet Chestnut / Larbonne Trail	Sweet Chestnut Rd. to Liberty Dr. Limited roadside parking.	Natural surface.	Easy	Trail connects Sweet Chestnut Rd. to Liberty Dr. and Eleanor Mann Park	Goes thru a culverted riparian zone with occasional seasonal flooding. Salal over growth.	Goes between neighbouring properties.		Brush out annually.
Sweet Chestnut Connector Trail	Sweet Chestnut Trail to Eleanor Mann Park Trail	Natural surface	Moderate	Connects Sweet Chestnut Trail to Eleanor Mann Park Trail	Suffers from water erosion on the steep lower half in winter. Vegetation over growth.	None.		Needs occasional brushing out.
Taylor Beach access	Taylor Rd. Parking at end of Taylor	Natural Surface	Easy	Taylor Road to Taylor Beach	None.	Bench honouring Bill Brownlee.		Maintain as needed.
Top of LaBonne Rd. Trail	Labonne Rd. to Roche Cove Park. Parking in cul de sac.	Steep unsurfaced trail with lots of rock rubble.	Challenging on account of footing and grade	Labonne Rd. to Roche Cove Park and Matheson Park trails	Subject to significant unavoidable water erosion in winter. Also subject to downed trees.	Old logging remnants.		Remove deadfall as required.
Upper/Lower Connector Trail	Starting at the bottom of Deer Park Trail road and ending halfway up the road. Limited parking on roadside.	A narrow winding natural trail with some roots and rocks to navigate. Good horse trail.	Moderate	Links to the main inside loop trail via a steep hill.	Vegetation overgrowth. Steep lower section subject to runoff damage	Forested.		Needs a little brushing in spots and water control on steep rocky part.

Name	Location / Parking	Description	Difficulty	Connectivity & Access Points	Management Considerations	Biodiversity Elements / Special Features	Signage	Recommendations
Upper/Lower LaBonne Rd. Connector Trail	Upper Labonne Rd. To Lower Labonne Rd. From beside 5000 block of LaBonne Rd. to opposite . in 5200 block. Limited roadside parking	Very rough nature trail.	Challenging	Upper and Lower Labonne shortcut. Carries on across road from the Horse Trail which connects Liberty Dr. to Labonne Rd.	Very overgrown with vegetation. No major obstacles. Reasonably well marked. Modest plank bridge over a wet area. Another wet area that could use similar treatment. 2 trail routes near mid section. Original dedicated one, and a secondary one on Camosun property put in by adjacent landowner for privacy.	Moss bald full of shooting stars near bridge		Should be on list to resurrect at some time in future.
Happy Valley Rd. Roadside Trail (Village Trail)	Metchosin Rd. to Rocky Point Rd. along Happy Valley Rd. Parking on municipal grounds.	Interrupted roadside trail.	Easy	Metchosin, William Head, Rocky Point roadside trails.	No proper trail exists from Happy Valley Rd to crosswalk. Separated with screenings bed from there until Municipal grounds where surface becomes large, wheel unfriendly gravel	Pedestrian safety		Annual brushing and grass cutting needed. Grass encroaching in front of Community House. Virtually no trail from municipal land to Rocky Point. No crosswalk on Happy Valley at either end or on Rocky Point Rd. Safety aspect of keeping residents off the road

Name	Location / Parking	Description	Difficulty	Connectivity & Access Points	Management Considerations	Biodiversity Elements / Special Features	Signage	Recommendations
Wayne's Rock Trail	Woodley Ghyll Dr. to Galloping Goose. Limited roadside parking.	Fairly steep trail with natural surfacing.	Moderate	Woodley Ghyll Dr. to the Galloping Goose and Matheson Lake and Roche Cove Park trails.	Beginning of trail is steep and surface gets washed out in heavy rain. Has had extensive re-surfacing and ditching in the past to no avail. Some larger holly trees. Wildwood Creek crossing has a minimalist board that gets washed out in high water and re-installed by locals.	Wildwood Creek is very picturesque seasonal creek. Usually crossable in winter unless board bridge out temporarily. Wayne's Rock is an erratic...a remnant from the ice age.		Water bars and just raking rubble on initial steep section when required recommended. Permanent Bridge crossing not recommended at this time. Would require considerable level of construction.
Weir Beach Stairs	Off William Head Rd. after Weir Beach Resort. Limited parking.	Narrow, hilly, short trail. Could be slippery when wet.	Moderate	Weir Beach access	Narrow dirt trail between private parcels with short steep stairway to beach ending in cement steps.	Beach access and Tsunami escape route.		Beach end of stairway likely to suffer winter rain run-off and surf damage. Hopefully new cement base will have addressed this. Annual brush cutting needed.
Weir Beach Trail	Off Sandgate Rd. Parking near beach.	Natural trail	Easy	Connects to Weir Beach resort.	Very overgrown.	Memorial bench. Seaside plants.		Brush out.
William Head Rd. Roadside Trail	William Head Rd. from Happy Valley Rd. to Parry Rd.	Screenings/natural roadside trail.	Easy to moderate	Can cross to Madill Trail, but no crosswalk. Continues past village core along Metchosin Rd.	First part is a poorly separated trail from Happy Valley Rd. towards Parry Rd. Lower third may suffer winter rain damage. Annual brushing and grass cutting needed.	Safety aspect of keeping residents off the road		Need to address on-going issue of roadside parking on the trail at the top third.



Friends of the Buffer Land

To: Mayor and Council, District of Metchosin

From: Friends of the Buffer Land Steering Committee

Re: Request for Council Direction on Academic Research Opportunities Supporting the Buffer Land

Dear Mayor and Council,

The Friends of the Buffer Land Steering Committee is writing to request that Council consider the attached set of rationale statements and research-oriented questions at its **April 13 Committee of the Whole meeting**. These statements outline the ecological, community, and strategic rationale for pursuing academic research partnerships that support the long-term stewardship of the Buffer Land.

Since the formation of the Buffer Land Steering Committee, we have been actively engaging with Royal Roads University (RRU), whose faculty and students have expressed strong interest in using the Buffer Land for academic research. We established an initial connection with RRU, and more recently the acting program head of their Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) program met with us to discuss potential projects. As they explained, “the BBA is a project-based learning program. That means that students spend a number of weeks acting as junior consultants, focused solely on projects that benefit local clients (public, private, or non-profit).” RRU emphasized that they are continually seeking projects within their local Western Communities region, making the Buffer Land an ideal fit.

In addition, we have been contacted by an RRU Master of Science student who hopes to use the Buffer Land as the foundation for his thesis in natural asset management. He is currently developing his thesis topic, and the Buffer Land presents a unique opportunity for applied research that aligns with both academic and community priorities. While direct contact has not been made with researchers at the University of Victoria, we believe there’s high potential for interest there as well.

These emerging academic connections reinforce the importance of the foundational considerations outlined in the attached document, including that “Metchosin’s Buffer Land serves as a vital ecological asset that supports biodiversity, habitat connectivity, and long-term environmental resilience” and that “understanding the ecological systems, species interactions, and environmental pressures affecting the Buffer Land is essential for informed stewardship and sustainable management.”

They also complement the document’s emphasis on community-engaged research, which “strengthens local stewardship by integrating academic expertise with lived experience and local knowledge.”



Friends of the Buffer Land

The attached Appendix highlights several foundational considerations, including that *“Metchosin’s Buffer Land serves as a vital ecological asset that supports biodiversity, habitat connectivity, and long-term environmental resilience”* and that *“understanding the ecological systems, species interactions, and environmental pressures affecting the Buffer Land is essential for informed stewardship and sustainable management.”*

It also emphasizes the strong local commitment to stewardship, noting that *“community-engaged research strengthens local stewardship by integrating academic expertise with lived experience and local knowledge.”*

In addition, the document outlines a series of “How might we...?” research questions designed to encourage innovation and collaboration—for example: *“How might we assess the current ecological health of the Buffer Land and identify priority areas for restoration?”* and *“How might we develop community-friendly monitoring tools that generate reliable ecological data?”*

Together, these statements and questions form a coherent foundation for exploring research partnerships that could meaningfully advance the District’s conservation, education, and public engagement goals.

Our Request of Council

To support the responsible development of research opportunities, we respectfully ask Council for:

1. Clarity on Council’s position regarding the pursuit of academic research partnerships

Specifically, whether Council supports exploring research initiatives with Royal Roads University that contribute to the continued environmental protection and conservation of the Buffer Land.

2. Direction on the appropriate process for bringing forward and approving research projects

This includes understanding which committees or staff should be involved, how proposals should be evaluated, and what criteria Council would find most helpful.

We anticipate that Council may wish to refer this matter to **PTASC** and **MEASC** for their input following the April 13 discussion. To support that process, the Steering Committee is prepared to develop a **draft research-review process** for consideration by Council and its committees. This



Friends of the Buffer Land

would allow Council, PTASC, and MEASC to refine and improve a proposed framework rather than begin from scratch.

Purpose of the Attached Appendix

The attached statements and research questions are intended as a starting point for Council's discussion. They articulate:

- the ecological importance of the Buffer Land;
- the community's longstanding commitment to its protection;
- alignment with the Friends of the Buffer Land's strategic goals;
- existing knowledge gaps; and
- opportunities for innovation through inquiry.

They also highlight that *"long-term protection of the Buffer Land requires ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and adaptive management informed by rigorous research."*

We believe these considerations can help guide Council's deliberations and support a shared understanding of the value of academic partnerships.

Thank you for your attention to this request and for your ongoing commitment to the stewardship of the Buffer Land. We look forward to supporting Council, PTASC, and MEASC in developing a thoughtful and effective approach to research collaboration.

Respectfully submitted, **Friends of the Buffer Land Steering Committee**



Friends of the Buffer Land

APPENDIX: Rationale Statements Supporting Academic Research for the Buffer Land

Ecological Importance

- Metchosin's Buffer Land serves as a vital ecological asset that supports biodiversity, habitat connectivity, and long-term environmental resilience; and
- Understanding the ecological systems, species interactions, and environmental pressures affecting the Buffer Land is essential for informed stewardship and sustainable management.

Community Commitment

- District of Metchosin residents and others has demonstrated a strong and ongoing commitment to protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Buffer Land for current and future generations; and
- Community-engaged research strengthens local stewardship by integrating academic expertise with lived experience and local knowledge.

Strategic Alignment

- The Friends of the Buffer Land has articulated clear goals related to conservation, education, public engagement, and responsible land management; and
- Academic research partnerships directly support these strategic priorities by generating insights that inform planning, programming, and advocacy.

Knowledge Gaps & Research Needs

- There remain important knowledge gaps related to ecological health, land-use impacts, climate resilience, cultural values, and community engagement opportunities within the Buffer Land; and
- Interdisciplinary research can illuminate these gaps and provide actionable recommendations for stewardship and policy.

Innovation Through Inquiry

- Research framed through open-ended "How might we...?" questions encourages creativity, innovation, and collaborative problem-solving; and
- Such inquiry-driven approaches support the development of new models, tools, and practices that can enhance conservation outcomes.

Long-Term Stewardship

- Long-term protection of the Buffer Land requires ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and adaptive management informed by rigorous research; and
- Academic partnerships can provide the data, analysis, and expertise needed to support evidence-based decision-making.

Regional & Broader Impact

- Research conducted on the Buffer Land can contribute to broader regional and global conversations about sustainable land stewardship, climate adaptation, and community-based conservation; and
- The insights generated through such research can serve as models for other communities seeking to balance ecological protection with human use and enjoyment.



Friends of the Buffer Land

Research Projects Ideas:

Ecological Health & Biodiversity

How might we...

- assess the current ecological health of the Buffer Land and identify priority areas for restoration?
- best study the Buffer Land to observe what animals transit through there?
- better understand the species that rely on the Buffer Land and the conditions they need to thrive?
- monitor long-term ecological changes in ways that support adaptive management?

Land Stewardship, Climate Resilience & Risk Reduction

How might we...

- determine the most effective stewardship practices for maintaining ecological integrity over time?
- best insulate the Buffer Land from fire risk?
- identify and mitigate human impacts on sensitive areas of the Buffer Land?
- design stewardship models that balance conservation with public access and enjoyment?

Community Engagement & Education

How might we...

- better communicate the land use and intent of the Buffer Land?
- better engage the community regarding an appropriate name for the Buffer Land?
- deepen community understanding of the Buffer Land's ecological and cultural significance?

Monitoring, Data & Decision-Support

How might we...

- develop community-friendly monitoring tools that generate reliable ecological data?
- use mapping, remote sensing, or citizen science to track changes across the Buffer Land?