

# The Acorn

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Wherever you live in Royal Oak, you probably have neighbours. Did you know that the people who live around you can be a major factor in determining the quality of life in your community? Getting to know the people on your street can be a step forward in developing or maintaining a safe, healthy and friendly neighbourhood. Active neighbourhoods contribute to a vibrant Community Association! Here are four suggestions to help take that first step:

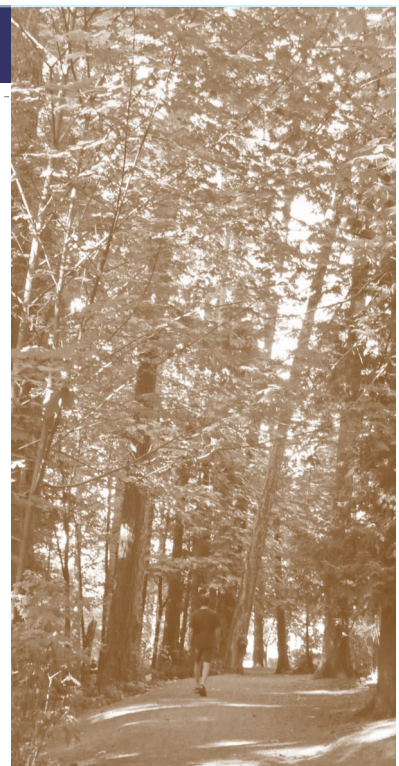
- Go for a daily walk around your neighbourhood, and take advantage of opportunities to introduce yourself to your neighbours. The bonus is some fresh air and exercise!
- If you're handy, build a '[Little Free Library](#)' stocked with a variety of books. There are a few already in Saanich, including a popular one (*shown above left*).
- Help establish a '[Blockwatch](#)' for your street or help out with an existing one.
- Organize a 'get-to-know-the-neighbours' social for your street, which can be as simple as passing out invitations to bring a lawn chair and beverage to your front lawn on a summer evening.

Happy neighbourhood building! The next Royal Oak Community Association meeting is at 7 p.m., **Wednesday May 27** in the Music Room of Royal Oak Middle School (4564 W Saanich Rd). Come out and meet more of your Royal Oak community neighbours!

Marsha Henderson, ROCA President



*Enjoy neighbours and share your garden secrets in Royal Oak*



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### Special points of interest

- Find out how to grow your community (p1) and your garden (p2, Spring Tips)
- Read about Royal Oak's rail history, and check out community events (p 3)





### SPRING GARDEN TIPS

#### Grow your own vegetables!

April to June is the best time to sow seeds for carrots, beets, lettuce, spinach, onion, peas, parsnips and potatoes. May is a good time to start celery, cucumber, corn and eggplant.

#### Enhance your garden with native plants

from the Swan Lake's Annual Native Plant Sale (over 4,000 plants and over hundreds of species). Saanich's Master Gardener volunteers will help you choose the perfect plants to enhance your home garden (see **Calendar**).

#### SAVE THE DATE: MITP 2015

ROCA is busy planning Music in the Park for Tuesday, July 14, from 6:00 – 8:00 pm in Brydon Park. We are excited to announce that the band will be... Rukus! This band is sure to have all ages up and dancing! Kids (and adults) can check out the Saanich Fire truck! Learn about Saanich Block Watch and Saanich Emergency Program. Just finalizing Ace, the Saanich Police Mascot, and clowns as part of kids entertainment!

Martha Barber, Social Director



## HOW TO HAVE YOUR SAY: DEVELOPMENT IN ROYAL OAK

Did you know that at any given time, throughout Saanich, there are projects underway that require public input? These projects will impact where you live, work and play. The more informed and involved citizens and community groups are, the better able we all are to build the community we want. For more information, see the District of Saanich's [Public Process Handbook](#) (2014) available on their website.

### Four Ways to Get Involved

Elections may be over but here are some other ways you can have your say on issues affecting Royal Oak community:

- **Get involved with your local community association.** Part of ROCA's mandate is to monitor development proposals in the community, inform residents of current issues, seek community input, and encourage developers to consult with the neighbourhood. *See page 4 for details.*
- **Attend the Public Hearing.** These occur when there is a proposed amendment to the Zoning Bylaw, Official Community Plan or a heritage designation (sometimes for development permits). Saanich distributes notices to affected residents and publishes notices on its website and in newspapers at least 10 days before the hearing. ROCA helps announce these for Royal Oak neighbourhood. Public hearings are usually

held on Tuesday evenings twice a month. You may also submit a letter to Council by mail, fax (250-475-5440) or email until 4 p.m. on the hearing day.

- **Suggest an agenda item** for the relevant advisory committee to Council. To find out more, visit <http://saanich.ca/living/mayor/boards>. Meetings are open to the public. Dates are published weekly in the newspaper.
- **Email [council@saanich.ca](mailto:council@saanich.ca)** with ideas / suggestions for Saanich Council.

### Did you know?

One document provides the direction for growth and change in the Royal Oak community: the [Royal Oak Local Area Plan](#) (LAP) (2001), which is also available on ROCA's website. The Local Area Plan was adopted as part of the District of Saanich's Official Community Plan (OCP) in 2008, after public consultation. It provides policy direction in Royal Oak for community needs such as housing, social and cultural services, historical/heritage resources, public works (sewer, storm drain, water), agriculture, environment, open spaces and parks, mobility (e.g. road and pedestrian networks, transit service, bicycle facilities), commercial and industrial uses of the land, and community institutions (schools, residential care facilities). Saanich considers the LAP, OCP, Zoning Bylaw and Regional Sustainability Strategy when making decisions about permissible developments.

Following is a quick update on the status of some current applications in Royal Oak:

- **4734, 4744, and 4754 Elk Lake Dr** – develop a 161-unit multi-family project within four separate buildings over underground parkade – *pending*
- **788 Viaduct Avenue East** – boundary adjustment with 4407 Leney Place to create two additional lots – *approved*
- **520 Normandy Rd** –rezone to create three additional lots for single family dwelling – *public hearing coming shortly*
- **4349 West Saanich Rd** – rezone and subdivide for a new 40 unit multi-family housing building, day care centre and existing uses – *Saanich has granted conditional approval*
- **4396 West Saanich Rd (Tri-Eagle Plaza)** – Development Permit Amendment to allow a 5 storey office/commercial and surface parking – *pending*
- **4400 West Saanich Rd (BC Hydro)** –discharge a Land Use Contract and rezone from M-2 (wholesale, warehouse and office) zone to P-2 (utility) zone in order to redevelop the BC Hydro operational facility – *pending*

For more details on these and other developments, check out the District of Saanich website: <http://www.saanich.ca/business/development/royaloak.html>





### FUN FACT

The community became known as “Royal Oak” after a description by one of the pioneer families who farmed this area from the early 1860s. Jane Cheeseman described a particularly large oak tree in the area as a “Royal Oak.”

Source: Saanich Heritage Register 2008 - Royal Oak.



### CALENDAR

**Sun. April 19, Saanich Cycling Festival:** *Time to get your bike out from storage!* (Bike rides start at 11 a.m. from Camosun College [Landsdowne] or University of Victoria’s Parking Lot #10)

**Sat. April 25, Native Plant Sale** (9 a.m., Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary, 3873 Swan Lake Rd)

**Sat. April 25 and Sun. April 26, Spring Plant Sale** (9 a.m. –4 p.m., [Horticulture Centre of the Pacific](#), 505 Quayle Rd)

**May 3–9, Emergency Preparedness Week:** *Get tips to prepare you and your family to survive a disaster with this brochure available from the Capital Region District’s website:* [A Guide to Emergency Preparedness in the Capital Region](#) (PDF)

**Wed. May 27, ROCA General Meeting** (7 p.m., Music Room, Royal Oak Middle School, 4564 W Saanich Rd)

**First Tues. of Each Month, RON Talks:** *Hear three great ideas, each in 15 minutes or less; like TED Talks but live in your community!* (7 p.m., Crumsby’s Café, 4525 W. Saanich Rd; turn up or [find out the topic\(s\) first](#) :Ron Talks)

### NEWSLETTER

**Royal Oak community event or story you would like to share?** Drop us an email with details before June 15: [President @royaloakcommunityassociation.ca](#)

## ROYAL OAK TIES TO THE PAST (PART II)

A couple of editions ago I told you about the Victoria and Sidney Railway which ran through Royal Oak leaving behind remnants of its right-of-way in the bases of roads and trails in the neighbourhood. There were also two other railways on the island, one of which has still profoundly affected the neighbourhood to this day.

Once the Victoria and Sidney line was up and running, other railway companies tried to get in on the act. One of them was connected to the mainland and served as a means of getting freight to and from the island and the other was purely a commuter line, which in a way, exists to this very day.

The freight line was built by the Canadian Northern Railway. It ran along what is now Lochside Drive, having started from the Canadian National Rail yards just across the Selkirk trestle on the inner harbour. It ran up what is now the Blenkinsop Trail through the Blenkinsop Valley and on Lochside Drive through Cordova Bay and Central Saanich. It passed by Sidney and travelled through the airport and terminated at a wharf built out onto Patricia Bay.

The other rail service still exists today although there is no rolling stock and no tracks. It was called the B.C. Electric Railway and it began from downtown, not far from where the E & N had its depot. It ran along Interurban Road and passed through Saanichton on Wallace Drive. It passed through the airport lands as well, and went through North Saanich on Wilson and Tatlow Roads until it terminated at a wharf on the north side of Deep Cove.

If you think that the name “BC Electric” sounds familiar that it because after the trains had ended their service it became the entity that ran the buses in Victoria and generated the power in British Columbia. Eventually the buses became a part of BC Transit and the power company became BC Hydro.

So, the more things change, the more they stay the same. The transit companies are trying to re-establish the Light Rapid Transit that they started out as and the No. 21 bus is retracing the route of its predecessor, “The Interurban.”

Paul Whitworth  
ROCA Vice-President

## ROYAL OAK COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

VISION: To enhance, maintain and protect the quality of life for the residents of Royal Oak

### MISSION:

- Encourage participation of all residents of Royal Oak
- Provide community input to all levels of government on issues affecting our neighbourhood
- Inform and educate residents on current community issues
- Monitor development proposals
- Seek neighbourhood input
- Encourage developers to consult with the neighbourhood
- Encourage respectful dialogue amongst members

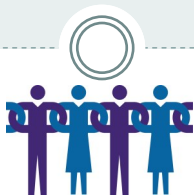
The Royal Oak Community Association (ROCA) is volunteer-run and was formed to try to ensure land use zoning and developments are for the benefit of all residents of Royal Oak.



### Royal Oak Community Association

PO Box #50  
Unit #106, 4480 W. Saanich Rd.  
Victoria, BC, V8Z 3E9

Email:  
President@royaloakcommunityassociation.ca



*Quick's Bottom Park: visit this nature sanctuary in Royal Oak*

## BECOME A MEMBER!

**Passionate about Royal Oak? Interested in Community Development? Trails? Traffic? Land Use? Parks? Or just want to get involved in your community?**

### We would love for you to join the Royal Oak Community Association!

Help make a difference in how Royal Oak is shaped and preserved as a great area to live. ROCA encourages the participation of all Royal Oak residents in shaping the community for the benefit of all. Saanich also looks to ROCA for comments, approval, or disapproval on all development proposals in the community.

Everyone is welcome to attend and comment at ROCA meetings, which are held at Royal Oak Middle School five times a year (May, September, November, January [AGM] and March). Members can vote on development and other issues at these meetings and receive emails notifying them of upcoming meetings as well as any new important issues.

Your membership contribution allows us to publish this newsletter and to bring many other services to our community including our website, annual events (e.g. Music in the Park, general meetings, Strawberry Festival participation) and advocacy to Saanich Council, Administration and all the other community groups active in Saanich. Memberships (\$6 a year per person) can be purchased at any of the meetings or by emailing ROCA with notice of your interest in membership. An application form will be mailed to you.

Mary Bennett, ROCA Registrar

## ADVERTISE WITH US: ROCA BUSINESS DIRECTORY

If you have a local business in Royal Oak, consider listing your business with us. ROCA is expanding its [local businesses' page](#) on the website. Keep checking back as we're adding more advertisers and showing our support for more local businesses all the time!

## YOUR ROCA EXECUTIVE

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