



GORGETILLICUM

Neighbourhood

Gorge Tillicum Community Association SUMMER 2022

NEWS

The Gorge Canada Day Picnic Returns

After a two-year hiatus, this major community event is returning to Gorge Road West on Friday July 1st this year! If you are new to the neighbourhood, you may not know that the GTCA and dedicated committee volunteers have been putting on the Gorge Canada Day Picnic for over 20 years. Gorge Road West is closed to traffic for the day and over 10,000 people come down to stroll the beautiful Gorge waterway.

The day starts with a community parade from the Tillicum end and a Pancake Breakfast at the Admirals end. The day is filled with Food Vendors, a Canada Day Market, and features Gorge on Art – a chance to meet local artists and perhaps buy some of their creations. There are kids' activities and there is always a game of road hockey going on throughout the day that you are welcome to join.

Last held in 2019, the event returns this year with the familiar layout it has had for many years. We expected some changes, and indeed many Food Truck operators have closed down or are not yet reopening. We will have over 15 Food Vendors but



that is fewer than prior years, so we ask for your patience if they are busy. Perhaps this is the year you bring a picnic lunch to the mainstage and sit on the grass to enjoy the entertainment! As always, our Strawberry Tea at the Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club is sure to be a hit with yummy fresh strawberries topped with whipped cream.

There will be plenty of roving entertainment along the street to keep you smiling and be sure to stop by the music tent at Gorge on Art which will feature hourly performances from the Victoria Conservatory of Music. If you're making your way down to the Tillicum end to catch some mainstage performances, you might get distracted by the classic car show, but if you like to dance, make sure you get to the main stage for the final act of the day that are sure to get you up and jiving!

We thank everyone in the neighbourhood for welcoming friends, neighbours, and other visitors to our community. We appre-

ciate your patience with the road closures, the many cars parking on our side streets, and the bus re-routing. We especially appreciate those Gorge Road residents who are front and centre and without vehicle access to their driveways during the day.

We look forward to welcoming you to the 2022 Gorge Canada Day Picnic this coming July 1st! The website at gorgecanadaday.ca includes an interactive Google map that you can use to find the First Aid tent, the location of your favorite food vendors, and exactly where everything and everybody is located! We hope you'll come down to the main stage area in the afternoon for some great acts – bring a blanket, hats, sunscreen, and a picnic!

-Chris Kask
Chair, Gorge Canada Day Picnic

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We welcome comments—please let us know what you think of your newsletter!

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Unsolicited articles welcome.

The deadline for submissions & advertising for the next issue is Sept. 15, 2022.

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Distribution:

All 3,800 copies of this newsletter are delivered by volunteers, and we could always use more help. Please contact Scott Karpes at 778-679-3545.

GTCA Board Meetings

The Board normally meets at 7pm the second Thursday of each month from September to June. Please check our website for the most up to date information.

Everyone is welcome to attend board meetings. If you want to put an item on the agenda please email our president one week in advance.

Agendas will be posted to the GTCA website a few days in advance of the meeting.



This Canada Day Come See Us - We'd Love to Hear from You!

Please come visit the red GTCA tents this Canada Day. We will be located in ZONE 1, across from Amica.

We missed seeing many of you and we'd love to hear about what you would like to see in the community.

As an added bonus you can enter to win a wonderful new BBQ, generously donated by Canadian Tire (View Roya).

The GTCA is now on  **Instagram**
gorgetillicum

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The GTCA boundaries are the Gorge Waterway and Portage Inlet shorelines, the Trans-Canada highway to the north and Harriet/Whittier/Harriet to the east.

To learn more about Saanich Community Associations and view the boundaries, see <https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/community/community-associations.html>

GTCA Update

On May 11, 2022, the GTCA hosted our Annual General Meeting at the Victoria Native Friendship Centre. After last year's virtual AGM, it was nice to once again meet in person.

We had several board members leave the board. Erica McCollum resigned from the board to spend more time with her young family but hopes to rejoin us in the future. Pam Loadman, a long time board member and most recently the GTCA's secretary, has decided to move on to new adventures. Pam was instrumental in many projects to improve our community, including some of the traffic calming measures around the neighbourhood, getting boulevard trees planted, delivering newsletters and the Boulevard Brigade. Pam will continue to participate with the Boulevard Brigade, and for this, we are very grateful. Thanks for all your hard work, Pam. You will be greatly missed on the board.

Our board has fourteen members – you can see the complete list on the adjoining page. In addition, Arden Little has agreed to be our secretary, a position he has held in the past.

The board does not meet in July and August, but the work continues. We will kick off the summer with the Gorge Canada Day Picnic on July 1. This has been our signature event, and it will be wonderful to bring it back to the community. In addition to the Picnic, we will host several small events over the summer and look forward to seeing you and having many more community conversations. (See page 4 and page 9 for event details.)

Also coming this summer will be the completion of the Albina Street Supportive Housing development, currently slated to open in August. As is typical with these developments, BC Housing will form a Community

Advisory Committee, meeting monthly starting one month before tenants move in. The committee will comprise one representative from each of the following: Our Place, Island Health, School Board, Saanich, Saanich Police and BC Housing. In addition, they will select five community members (local residents, community organizations, businesses and neighbouring residents), and we anticipate having a GTCA representative on this committee.

In addition, we expect roadworks on Gorge Road West and Tillicum Road to start soon. There is an update on page 11, but we still do not have many details. As we learn more, we will post to our website and on Facebook.

Have a wonderful summer!

Vera Wynn-Williams
On behalf of the GTCA Board



Thanks very much to those of you that were able to respond to our invitation to volunteer with one or more of our work groups. With your help, we can do more with and for the neighbourhood.

Join Us By Becoming a GTCA Member

Support your local community by joining the Gorge Tillicum Community Association. The larger our membership, the greater our voice with the District of Saanich on issues that affect Gorge Tillicum.

Our membership is individual and available to all members of a household who are 18 years of age or older. The price is only \$5.00 per person per year or \$25.00 for businesses that are located or operate in our community.

You can pay and/or join online via our website: www.gorgetillicum.ca. You can also join by completing and mailing the membership form on page 12. Your e-mail address is important to us so please ensure you include your e-mail address with your membership or payment form. This will assist us in communicating with you efficiently. We don't share our member information with anyone else.

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Arts & Culture this Summer

MUSICAL MORNINGS ON THE GORGE

Leave your headphones at home - let us provide your weekend stroll soundtrack on the third Saturday of each month this summer. The Gorge Tillicum Community Association is bringing a series of local musicians to the Gorge Waterway at the foot of Austin and Dysart between 10am - 12pm.

Empty hands? We've got that covered, too. Coffee and treats are on us!

June 18 - Danielle Lebeau Petersen (folk)

July 16 - Jaya Bremer Trio (classic jazz from the 30s, 40s, and 50s)

August 20 - Classical Music



GET BACK TOGETHER

Are you thinking of planning a Block Party this summer?

To celebrate the return of neighbourly fun, we want to help take your celebration up a notch by providing free treats, neighbourhood information, interactive art and perhaps a performance!

Reach out to us at info@gorgetillicum.ca for details!

(If you've never organized a block party before, you can find a complete set of instructions at saanich.ca - note that Saanich requires 4 weeks advance notice to approve a Block Party)



We are so pleased to be partnering with Saanich once again for the popular Music in the Park series, which is now in its 15th year. Our local show will take place at Rudd Park on **August 2** and features opening performer **Alex Berg** at 5:30pm, followed by funky hip-hop soul group **The New Groovement** at 6:10pm.

The show is free and you're encouraged to pack a picnic or visit one of the on-site food trucks.



#Curb Appeal Wrap-up

Thanks to all those who participated and brought a bit of whimsy and fun to our community!
Here is a selection of the displays that popped up around the neighbourhood.



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The Green Space

DOGS AND MIGRATORY BIRDS

WITHIN MIGRATORY BIRD SANCTUARIES
IN THE VICTORIA AREA

<https://publications.gc.ca/pub?id=9.905671&sl=0>

NEW REPORT JUST
RELEASED!

A summary of the key messages from the report are as follows:

- We understand that a day at the beach is a great thing for dogs and their people; but these beaches are very important for migratory birds, which as a group are experiencing significant declines (<https://www.3billionbirds.org/>)
- While dogs have other options for exercise areas (such as a grassy park), many migratory birds do not have suitable habitat elsewhere.
- The VHMBs, SHMBs and ELMBs are federally protected areas that are important for the preservation and conservation of migratory birds/habitat.
- The Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994 (MBCA) and its regulations protect migratory birds and prohibit the disturbance or destruction of migratory bird nests and eggs in Canada.
- Under the Migratory Bird Sanctuary Regulations (MBSR), S.5(1) "No person who owns a dog or cat shall permit the dog or cat to run at large in a migratory bird sanctuary."
- Under the Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994, Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) is authorized to protect migratory birds, their nests and populations and to regulate potentially harmful human activities that may impact them.
- Off-leash dogs impact birds within these MBSs by:
 - Displacement from foraging areas / reduced foraging rates
 - Reducing colony attendance / colony abandonment
 - Increased predation rates
 - Direct mortality
- Shorebirds use the MBSs year round. Many shorebirds (including SARA-listed Red knot) use the MBSs as a migratory stopover to rest and replenish their energy reserves as they migrate north in the spring, and south in the fall. Other shorebirds are known to overwinter in the MBSs. Three species of shorebirds species that breed within the MBSs; they are ground-nesters, meaning that nests and fledglings are particularly vulnerable to harassment by off-leash dogs, though all shorebirds are susceptible to harassment due to their shoreline habitat association.
- It is anticipated that this report will help improve knowledge and awareness, enable prioritization of compliance promotion activities within Migratory Bird Sanctuaries, and ultimately improve outcomes for migratory birds and species at risk.
- If you have questions please direct them to Enviroinfo@ec.gc.ca so that your inquiry can be directed to the department/branch that may be best able to respond.

James Reynolds, Protected Areas Officer
Pacific Region | Canadian Wildlife Service



PEOPLE, PETS & PARKS A District Wide Strategy for Sharing Saanich's Parks

Council has decided that an overarching District Wide People, Pets and Parks Strategy that encompasses the entire municipality is the preferred approach to addressing the community's calls. The scope of work for the project includes researching best practices, other successful municipal strategies, current park use and behaviour in Saanich, reviewing commercial pet related businesses (in parks), opportunities for bylaw amendments/enforcement, physical infrastructure requirements and public engagement.

This process is currently underway and there is still time to participate. Saanich's online survey is open until June 19th.

In the fall there will be more community engagement including:

- Virtual Stakeholder Workshops
- Public Open House
- Public Survey
- Park/Beach Pop ups

If you are concerned, please take some time to have your voice heard.

For more information about this project please see:

<https://www.saanich.ca/EN/main/parks-recreation-community/parks-parks-trails-amenities/saanich-ppp-strategy.html>

A Rare Duck on the Colquitz River



Cinnamon Teal

la Sarcelle cannelle

Photo: Angela Wyatt

On April 19, 2022 a pair of Cinnamon Teals were spotted in the Colquitz estuary.

Trio of Owlets Fly the Nest



Photo: Angela Wyatt

Cuthbert Holmes Park, Great Horned owlets, now fledged have left the area. This is the second group of three owlets to be successfully raised in the installed nesting basket.

Cuthbert Holmes Park: Refuge or Killing Field?

When the Admirals Road overpass was built, a great deal of effort was needed to save what was left after the provincial highways department took a bite out of it. Step one was to build a working rapport with provincial and municipal counterparts. Eventually, this resulted in several new investments in wildlife protection. Cuthbert Holmes Park includes the Colquitz River, which is part of Victoria Harbour Migratory Bird Sanctuary. Wildlife protection measures now include extensive information signage, nesting boxes, a fish counting fence, observation areas and fenced sensitive areas.

So, the problem: some people want to protect wildlife and some people want to give their dogs as much freedom as possible. The two goals are not compatible and, at present, wildlife is suffering.

This is not to say that dogs are somehow bad but only that they're dogs and it's in

their nature to be interested in birds and other small animals. It's up to owners to control them.

Recently, there have been several incidents where packs of dogs have been let free to run by irresponsible owners. Perhaps they see nothing wrong in this. But the birds they harass, and those of us uncomfortable with dogs, certainly do. Moreover, the combination of wildlife protection measures and uncontrolled dogs creates a kind of "killing field". Since Saanich is one of the few municipalities in the CRD without a bylaw against off-leash dogs in public areas, there is little that animal control officers can do to force more responsible behaviour from dog owners. Fencing off the Colquitz River and other sensitive areas would cost a fortune and do too much damage to vegetation. What to do?

To some extent, there will always be tension between differing visions for this park because of where it sits in relation to the rest of the community. If we want wildlife to be protected as part of our attempt to reduce the environmental destruction we see all around us, then we must find some way to convince our elected officials to pass an appropriate bylaw, along with a budget for enforcement. They also need to spend a bit of money on more effective fencing in certain areas. If we think it more important to let dogs be dogs in this area, then we should probably stop wasting time and money trying to protect wildlife. To try to do both will make no one happy. There is a fall municipal election coming up.

- Phil Lancaster

Walter Park – Spring 2022 Update

This spring has been a busy time. We started by clearing the meadow and the north bed, along the fence, of invasive plants including the Himalayan blackberries, thistles, bluebells, periwinkles and cyclamens. We uncovered a few red currant bushes as well as common camas, snowberries and a young arbutus tree.

Saanich supplied us with more than a hundred native plants, which we planted in the beds along Dysart, Walter and the north fence. Right now the seablush, cinquefoil and common camas are in bloom. The few flowered shooting stars and red currant bushes have finished blooming and still to come are the satin flower, goldenrod, small-flowered alumroot and yarrow plants.

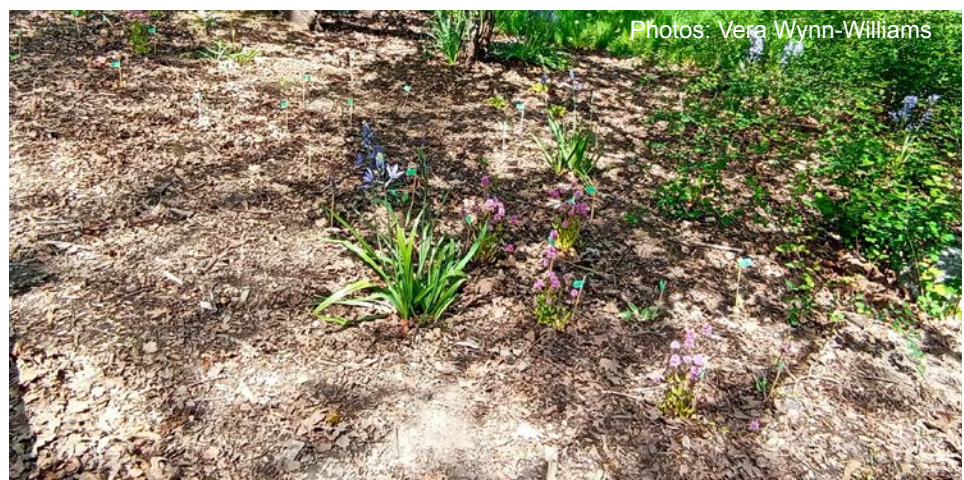
Although the bluebells look lovely at this time of year, in order to promote the growth of the newly planted native species, the removal of bluebells and the clearing of invasive plants is necessary and on-going. If you are interested in volunteering to help please contact lead stewards Steve or Anne at genuistlegg@hotmail.com.

Walter Park is a wonderful little park for everyone to enjoy. We thank you for keeping it clean and respecting the newly planted areas.

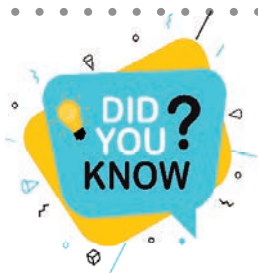
-Anne Genuist & Steve Legg



Walter Park in spring bloom. The small green flags indicate new native plantings.



Photos: Vera Wynn-Williams



The property at 574 Walter (at Dysart) was gifted to the District of Saanich, with the stipulation the land become a natural state park. The park was created in 2017.

The GTCA hopes that more such 'pocket parks' can be created from Community Amenity Contributions resulting from new developments in our community.



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GORGE TILLICUM
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Call out for Artwork:

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ART SUBMISSIONS ACCEPTED JUNE 10TH TO JUNE 20TH.

Submissions no bigger than 9"x12" please.

Submission packages with art paper available or use
your own! Details, questions, or for the address for
paper or submission drop-off, email:

gtpollinatorproject@gmail.com



FAMILY FRIENDLY ALL AGES EVENT

So What Are the Development Rules?

As proposals come forward, we have become increasingly aware of much confusion regarding what is allowed. It's not surprising as it's complicated and also in a state of transition.

The Tillicum Local Area Plan (LAP) is woefully out of date, as are most of the Saanich LAPs, so Council has directed Planning to pause work on updating them and instead focus on a Corridors, Centres and Villages approach. This makes sense as most development pressure is already in those areas, and higher density makes the most sense in areas with transit services and local amenities.

In 2021, with the goal of speeding up local approval processes and getting more housing built, the Province of BC amended the Local Government Act to:

- **remove the default requirement for local governments to hold public hearings for zoning bylaw amendments that are consistent with the official community plan; and**
- **enable local governments to delegate decisions on minor development variance permits to staff.**

In essence, if a development complies with the Saanich Official Community Plan (OCP), then it does not require a public hearing. So, what is allowed in the current OCP?

Saanich Official Community Plan (2008) – The Plan Currently in Use

<https://www.saanich.ca/assets/Local-Government/Documents/Corporate-and-Annual-Reports/2008%20OCP.pdf>

In major centres (i.e. Tillicum and Burnside) pg 4-18, Map M-4

7. Support the following building types and land uses in Major and Neighbourhood “Centres”:

- Townhouse (up to 3 storeys)
- Low-rise residential (up to 4 storeys)
- Mid-rise residential (up to 8 storeys)
- Live/work studios & Office (up to 8 storeys)
- Civic and institutional (generally up to 8 storeys)
- Commercial and Mixed-Use (generally up to 8 storeys)

In village centres (i.e. Tillicum and Gorge Rd.) pg 4-19

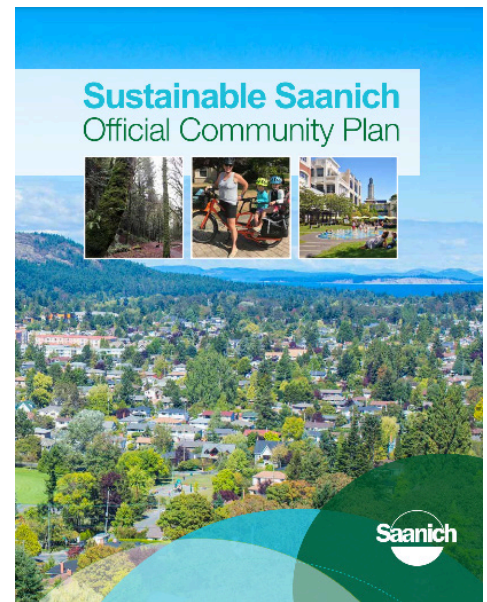
9. Support the following building types and uses in “Villages”:

- Small lot single family houses (up to 2 storeys)
- Carriage/coach houses (up to 2 storeys)
- Town houses (up to 3 storeys)
- Low-rise residential (3-4 storeys)
- Mixed-use (commercial/residential) (3-4 storeys)
- Civic and institutional (generally up to 3 storeys)

Neighbourhoods (everything outside the villages, centres and rural areas). pg 4-21

3. Support the following building types and land uses in Neighbourhoods:

- single family dwellings;
- duplexes, tri-plexes, and four-plexes;
- townhouses;
- low-rise residential (up to 4 storeys); and
- mixed-use (commercial/residential) (up to 4 storeys).



Copies of the OCP can be downloaded at the link above or copies can be purchased from the Planning Department at the municipal hall.

Saanich is also working on a strategic update of the current OCP, a process which will take about 18 months. In March, staff recommended and Council approved an interim policy that stated – “In the Interim and in order to acknowledge the viability of six-storey construction and recent precedents, Staff recommend that Council adopt an interim policy to support six-storey buildings on portions of major corridors.” One of the major corridors identified is “Tillicum Road, from Gorge Road to Trans Canada Highway.” You can view the report at: https://saanich.ca.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=1&clip_id=630&meta_id=44575

-Vera Wynn-Williams

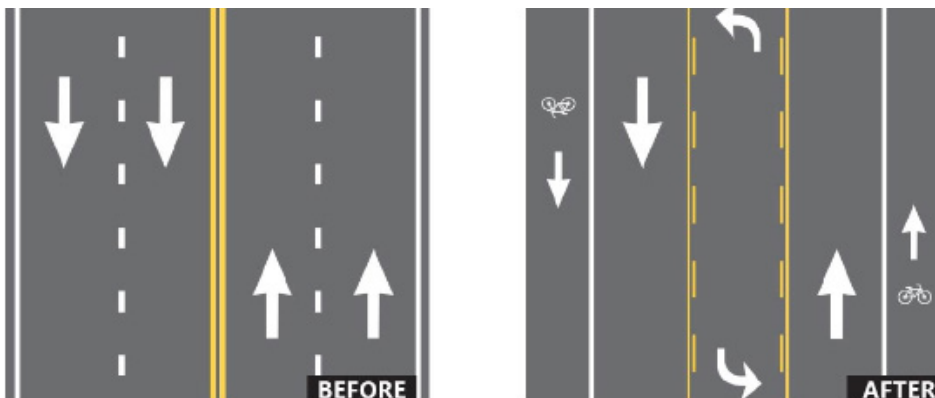
Mobility and Transportation Updates

In the last issue, we reported Saanich Council's decision to implement a 'quick build' design change for Tillicum Road between Arena Road and Gorge Bridge this year. Since then Saanich Engineering has kindly shared more information pertaining to their long term design aspirations as well as some details pertaining to Gorge Road on both sides of Tillicum and some developing plans to improve traffic safety adjacent to Tillicum Elementary School. In point form:

- Tillicum will be subject to a 'road diet' to create space for bike lanes within the existing road allowance. This will entail lane reductions and the introduction of a centre turn lane along with measures to improve safety at intersections at Walter, Vincent and Obed. The plan includes a redesign of the Tillicum and Gorge intersection to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety.
- Storm drain work under Gorge Road West between Admirals and Tillicum will begin this summer and is scheduled to take 18 months. Saanich will go ahead with their plan to redesign this section of road to include an all ages and abilities bike lane on the south side and an improved sidewalk on the north side. There will also be a reduction in the number of bus stops to align them with cross walks.
- Work on Gorge Road West between Tillicum and Harriet will begin sometime next year and will include a 'road diet', bike lanes and more traffic lights. The design will tie into Victoria's design.
- The preliminary design for improved sidewalks, passenger drop-offs and curbs along Albina, Orilla and Maddock is nearly finalized. Most existing trees will remain and a number of new ones will be planted. Work is expected to begin early next year.
- The GTCA Board of Directors continues to advocate for lower speed limits and more frequent enforcement throughout our neighbourhood. We anticipate that these design changes will help.

This information was provided to us as a courtesy and does not imply that the GTCA Board has any say in the ultimate design features. Please address any concerns or questions directly to Saanich Engineering.

- Phil Lancaster



Sample of a 'road diet' - a four lane to three-lane road conversion. Various studies have shown that these conversions dramatically reduce accidents, and 'road diets' are being implemented throughout North America.



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P.O. Box 44152, Victoria, BC V9A 7K1

www.gorgetillicum.ca |  /GorgeTillicum

Membership Application

Membership in the GTCA is by calendar year. In December of each year, those paying membership fees during December may designate them to be the fee for the upcoming calendar year and, in such cases, membership is valid from January 1st to December 31st of the following year. Join or renew by mail or online on our website!

DATE: _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

*EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

*This will be added to our distribution list for occasional emails regarding upcoming events or community issues.

If you are paying for other members of your household, please list the other Members' names:

PAYMENT:

Please enclose payment and mail to above address

Individual: \$5/each x _____ memberships = \$ _____

Couples : \$10/each x _____ memberships = \$ _____

Organization: \$25/each x _____ memberships = \$ _____

Donation: Your extra support helps offset Newsletter and other costs. Thank-you! + \$ _____

Total Payment Enclosed = \$ _____

DETAILS:

Membership is open to any resident or property owner who is 19 years old or older living at a fixed and officially recognized street address within the Gorge Tillicum neighbourhood and to businesses and other organizations operating at a fixed and officially recognized street address within the Association territory.



FRIDAY, JULY 1, 2022 ROAD CLOSURE ADVISORY

On Friday, July 1, 2022 the Gorge Tillicum Community Association is hosting the Gorge Canada Day Picnic to celebrate community and our beautiful neighbourhood. We again expect over 10,000 people to attend and stroll along Gorge Road itself and the Gorge Waterway paths.

An integral part of the day is the closure of Gorge Road West between Tillicum and Admirals. We applied for and received a Special Event Permit from the Municipality. This road closure is sanctioned by the Municipality of Saanich and the Saanich Police and coordinated with BC Transit. Here are the details of the road closure.

1. Gorge Road West between Tillicum Road and Admirals Road will be closed to vehicle traffic from 7:30am to 5:00pm on July 1st.
2. Vehicle access to/from Gorge Road West properties will be for emergency purposes only, and so residents are requested to park their cars on the side streets on the evening of June 30th and all day on July 1st until 5pm if you need to leave the area. Access to and from all side streets will be by Vincent Ave, Cowper Ave, and Admirals Rd (for Rockwell & Inlet).
3. Many side streets will be blocked for the day by a police vehicle or an unattended parked vehicle.
4. The westbound lane of Gorge Road West is a designated emergency access route for police, fire, and paramedics. It MUST be kept free of obstacles for emergency vehicles if necessary. Please do not set-up games, furniture, or anything at all on the road or public sidewalks.
5. No residential parking is permitted in Gorge Road West parking lots/areas between 7:30am and 5:00pm on July 1st.
6. All BC Transit bus service will re-route from Gorge Road West during the road closure.

Clearly a road closure like this is asking everyone to be as understanding as possible. Thank-you for your co-operation. For further information and a detailed map of the Picnic, please visit the Picnic website at gorgecanaday.ca



Photo courtesy Saanich News