

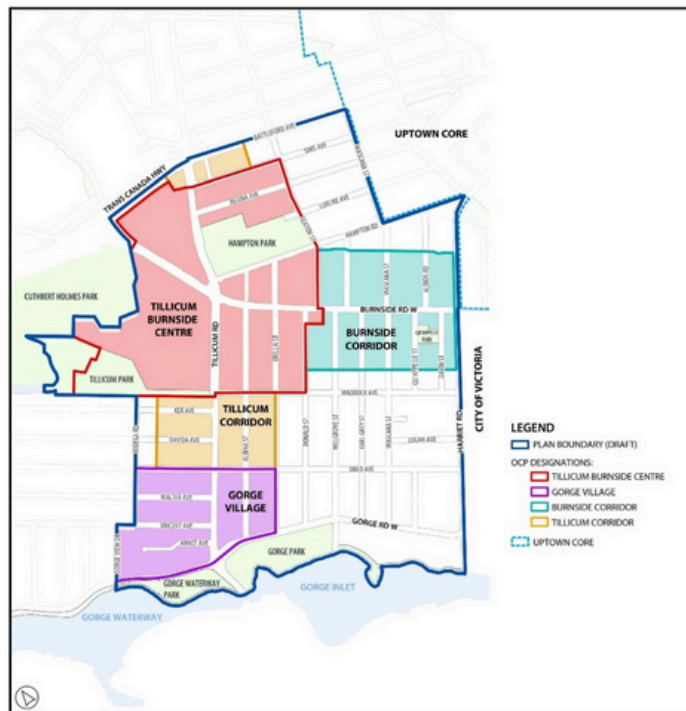
# Neighbourhood

# NEWS

## Tillicum Burnside Plan - Planning Process to Start in May

In November 2024, Saanich Council approved a budget for the Planning Department to support the development of the Tillicum Burnside Plan. The public consultation part of this process was supposed to begin in February or March of this year, with a view to developing a fully-fledged plan for development of those parts of our community designated in the Official Community Plan (OCP) as forming a Centre, Corridor or Village, by mid 2026. A copy of the Terms of Reference can be found at Hello Saanich, along with links to the OCP and other relevant documents. Though the CCV designation covers a large portion of the Gorge Tillicum Community, it is intended to concentrate new development along Tillicum and Burnside roads, where transit and other amenities already exist.

There are several key elements of the process the should be kept in mind. First, the overall aim is to create new housing as part of liveable, walkable communities in such a way as to reduce dependency on cars and reduce per capita GHG emissions. While some of the impetus behind the process reflects provincial direction, which is itself a response to a national housing crisis, it also links to a broader goal of revitalizing our community. This is an opportunity to get some of the things missing from our community. If more housing density is coming, which seems very likely, then it could bring some



Map 1: Tillicum Burnside Plan, Study Area Boundary

**Note:** Unlike the previous Local Area Plans, the new planning process will only look at the area outlined in the map above.

much needed improvements with it if we are clear in stating what we want.

Those familiar with the outcry generated by the planning process for the Mackenzie corridor will know that there is more at stake than first meets the eye. However, the GTCA Board of Directors would remind all our members that whatever plan emerges from this process, nothing is likely to happen quickly and none

*cont'd on page 5*

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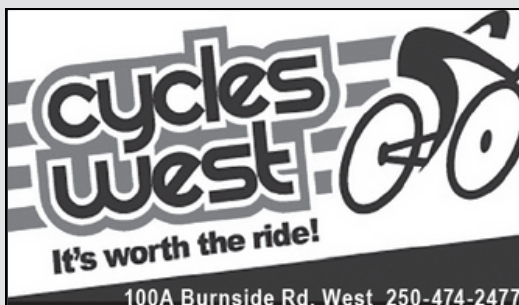


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## GORGE TILLICUM COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

### Our Neighborhood

The GTCA boundaries are the Gorge Waterway and Portage Inlet shorelines, the Trans-Canada highway to the north and Harriet/Burnside East/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>

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### How to Stay in Touch



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gorgetillicum

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





## Annual General Meeting & Gala Celebration

**Date:** Thursday, May 8, 2025

**Time:** 7:00 - 10:00

**Place:** Esquimalt Gorge Pavillion

Join us as we celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the GTCA with a special Annual General Meeting and community celebration! We're excited to host this milestone event at the stunning Esquimalt Gorge Pavillion, offering beautiful views of our neighbourhood. This will be a wonderful opportunity to reflect on our neighbourhood's history and honour the incredible volunteers who contribute to our community.

To receive an invitation and participate in the elections, please ensure your GTCA membership is up to date. Renew easily through the the GTCA website - **GorgeTillicum.ca**



Esquimalt Gorge Pavillion, Esquimalt Gorge Park

## Share Your Memories & Stories!

We're collecting historical information, photos, personal stories, and your favorite things about our neighbourhood! Your input will help shape our AGM presentation, future newsletters, the Gorge Tillicum website, and social media.

Be part of our community's story—we'd love to hear from you!



You can scan the QR code to bring up the survey or check the GTCA website.

You can also mail us at:

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



**GORGE**  
**CANADA DAY**  
**PICNIC**

**Interested in being a part of the  
25th Gorge Canada Day Picnic?**

**To see volunteer opportunities check out:  
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## Celebrating 25 Years of Community: The Gorge Tillicum Community Association

This year marks a special milestone for the Gorge Tillicum Community Association (GTCA) as we celebrate our 25th anniversary. It's no coincidence that this also marks the 25th anniversary of the beloved Gorge Canada Day Picnic. Unlike many associations that form in response to opposition, GTCA was built on the foundation of bringing people together. From the very beginning, we put tremendous time and energy into fostering a sense of belonging through community celebration.

That first year set the tone for what has become a defining tradition in our neighbourhood. Organizing a community-wide event like the Canada Day Picnic took an extraordinary effort from a diverse and dedicated group of volunteers—an effort that continues to this day. While the next edition of this newsletter will delve deeper into the history of the picnic, I want to take this moment to thank the countless individuals who have given their time and energy to making this community stronger.

Some of those early volunteers are still involved with GTCA today and we are continually inspired by newcomers who step up to do their part. Our community thrives on this dedication, with volunteers taking on projects that enhance local parks, advocate for safer streets, and promote art in our community. Over the years, we have seen the GTCA evolve to meet the changing needs of our neighbourhood, always guided by the same core principles of inclusivity, collaboration, and community spirit.

As part of our ongoing commitment to enhancing our community, GTCA is actively working on adding two exciting new murals to beautify our neighbourhood. The first mural will be on the washrooms at

Craigflower-Kosapsum Park, where we are collaborating with the District of Saanich and the Esquimalt First Nation to create a meaningful and visually striking piece of public art. The second mural will be located on Burnside Road at the Albion Mall, just down the road from the beloved Sunflower Girl mural. This large-scale project, to be created by local artist Collin Elder, represents a significant investment in our public spaces. To help bring this vision to life, we will soon be launching a GoFundMe initiative, inviting the community to take part in making this artistic contribution a reality.

For our 25<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting (see details on page 3) our board decided to do something special. We will be honouring our dedicated volunteers, reflecting on the rich history of our neighbourhood, and looking ahead to the future. This milestone is not just about looking back—it's also about reaffirming our shared vision for the years to come. We invite you to join us, whether you've been here since the beginning or have only recently made Gorge Tillicum your home.

In these challenging times, it's reassuring to know that we live in an inclusive, welcoming community where people look out for one another. Our neighbourhood has grown and changed over the past 25 years, but one thing has remained constant—our commitment to building a vibrant, connected, and caring community. Here's to 25 years of building connections—and to many more to come!



**Vera Wynn-Williams**  
GTCA President

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of the proposed developments will come about unless and until developers step up to build according to the plan. **The missing piece of past development plans has always been an implementation plan and, so far at least, the forthcoming Tillicum Burnside Plan seems likely to suffer from the same defect - unless we can make ourselves heard.**

We believe the process is important if we want to have any say about what happens in our neighbourhood. The GTCA Board of Directors believes it is better to try to influence development planning at the beginning of the process rather than getting upset after the fact. This needs public attention and participation. Those interested in helping influence the future layout of our community should watch for Saanich communications regarding public consultation opportunities. The easiest way to do this is to register with [Hello Saanich](#). Meanwhile your GTCA Board will be busy trying to ensure that whatever design is agreed in the final Tillicum Burnside Plan includes a budget, timetable and identification of action items needed to bring it to life. More information will follow as available.

– Phil Lancaster



[Click for more information on the Planning Process](#)

## NEW SAANICH DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL PROCESS

In response to the ongoing housing crisis, the provincial government has introduced legislation aimed at accelerating the development approval process. Since municipal development is guided by an Official Community Plan (OCP), the new provincial legislation states:

***“A local government must not hold a public hearing if a proposed zoning bylaw is consistent with the Official Community Plan (OCP) in effect for the area.”***

To align with this change, Saanich expedited the update of its OCP, which was approved by Saanich Council on May 7, 2024.

In practical terms, this means that if the OCP allows buildings up to a certain height—such as six storeys in a designated area like Tillicum Road—then a six-storey development on Tillicum Road is considered OCP compliant and does not require a public hearing. This marks a significant shift from the previous process, where public hearings were required for most developments.

As a result, the OCP has become a crucial document in shaping new developments in Saanich. On the next page, you'll find details on the approved allowances.

While the GTCA will continue to provide input on proposed developments, our focus will shift away from height-related concerns, as those guidelines are now well-defined. Instead, we will advocate for mixed-use spaces, improved community amenities, and essential infrastructure considerations, such as sidewalks, public spaces, and loading/unloading zones.

– Vera Wynn-Williams



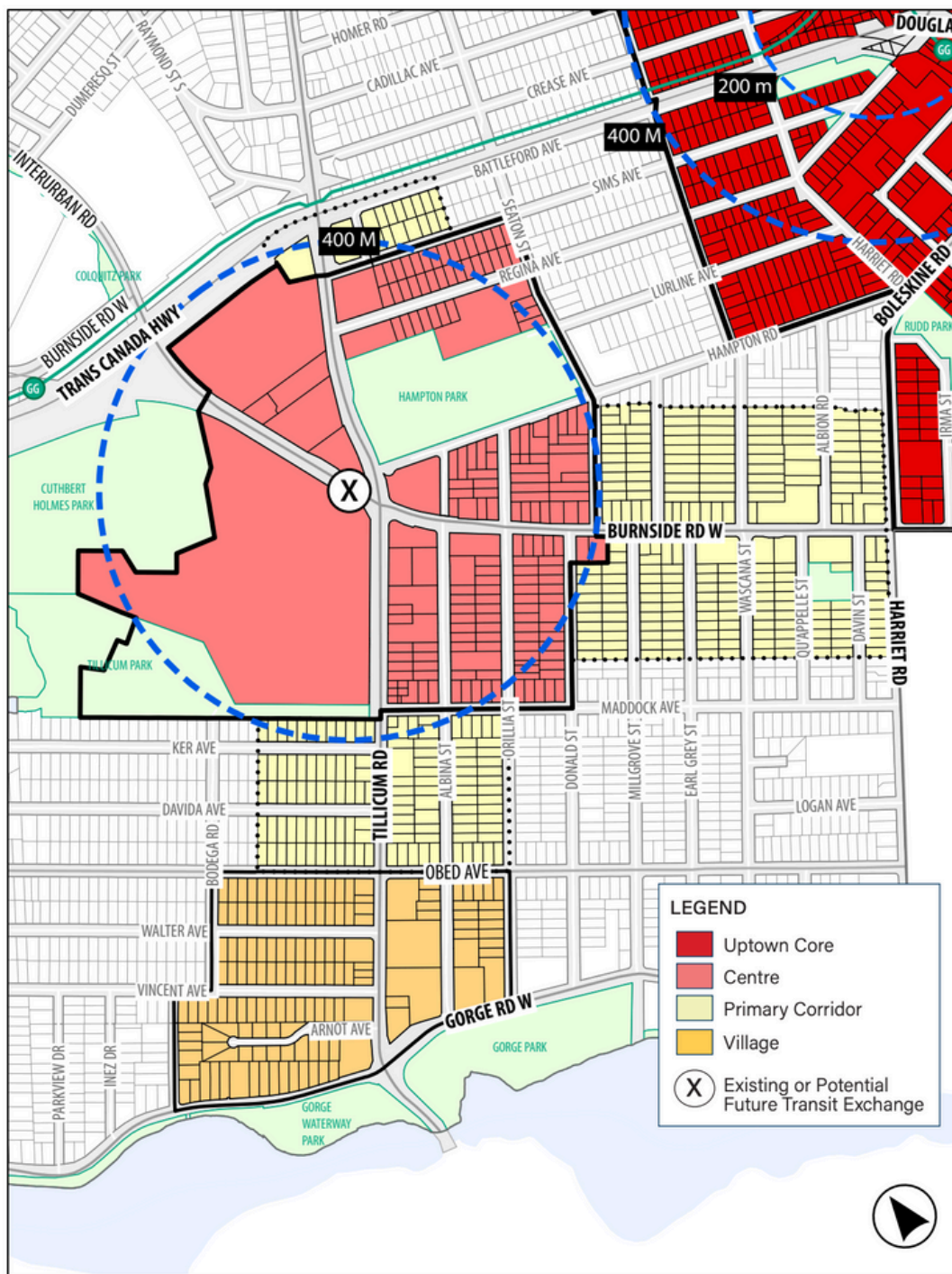
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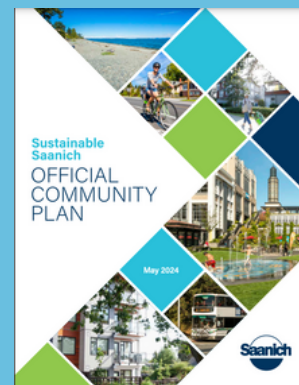


Gorge Village and Tillicum-Burnside Centre

### Confused on the difference between the Official Community Plan (OCP) and the Tillicum Burnside Plan?

Well to be honest, so are we. "The Tillicum Burnside Plan will guide future changes in the area over the short, medium, and long term (20 years) to build a livable, vibrant, and transit-connected community. The long-term vision for the area will be influenced by the Official Community Plan's direction of One Planet Living and the 15-Minute Community". *Tillicum Burnside Action Plan Terms of Reference*.

Stay tuned for upcoming info sessions. Once we hear from Saanich we will update our website and Facebook.



## OCP MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE BUILDING HEIGHTS

### CENTRES

#### Up to 18-storeys

considered where a Centre is located along two Primary Corridors as per policy 7.3.24 (McKenzie-Quadra, Tillicum-Burnside, University Centre).  
OCP - Page 54

### VILLAGES

#### Up to 6-storeys

considered where a Village is located along a Primary Corridor (Gorge, Four Corners, Feltham) or within a Transit Oriented Area (Broadmead Village) as per policy 7.3.28. Up to 4-storeys in all other villages within the Urban Containment Boundary (Strawberry Vale, Cordova Bay, Cadboro Bay).  
OCP - Page 55

### CORRIDORS

Up to 6-storeys  
OCP - Page 55



A vibrant poster for the Fairy Door Festival. The background is a dark, textured rock face. At the top, a small logo of a bridge and trees is next to the text 'Presented by GORGETILlicum COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION'. Below this, the title 'Fairy Door Festival' is written in large, pink, stylized letters with a white outline. Underneath the title, the dates 'MAY 1 - 14' are displayed in large, yellow, block letters. A central text block reads 'PUT A FAIRY DOOR ANYWHERE THAT'S VISIBLE FROM THE STREET!' in white, bold, sans-serif font. At the bottom center, there is a detailed illustration of a small, arched, teal-colored wooden door set into the rock. The door is surrounded by green foliage, pink butterflies, and small mushrooms. In the foreground, several large, bright yellow daffodils are in bloom. On the left side, a fairy with large blue wings and a blue dress is flying. On the right side, another fairy with pink wings is partially visible. The website 'gorgetillicum.ca' is printed at the bottom of the poster.

Presented by  
GORGETILlicum  
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

# Fairy Door Festival

MAY 1 - 14

PUT A FAIRY DOOR ANYWHERE  
THAT'S VISIBLE FROM THE STREET!

gorgetillicum.ca

For more information on the Fairy Door Workshop  
see the GCTA website an Facebook.



## Celebrating LOCAL ARTIST

Visual artists in the Gorge-Tillicum area generally have little local visibility. Though we have garden tours in the area, we have never, to my knowledge, had an arts tour. Yet I am constantly amazed to discover that some small, undistinguished house or apartment in our area is home to a collection of vibrant and interesting artworks. My latest discovery is Karen Guilbault, who couldn't be more local; she lives in the next building to mine in the Cedar Shores condominium complex.

Karen is also local in the sense that she was born in Victoria and graduated from the University of Victoria. But, interestingly, and perhaps a little unusually for an artist, her course focus was on family and social development, and her whole career involved work with special needs children and adults in the school system. A considerable part of this career was spent in Nelson, where she also taught out-of-school classes and workshops for children in drama, and mask making. However, after her son moved to Victoria and starting having children, she and her

## KAREN GUILBAULT, MIXED MEDIA ARTIST



*Infinity Knot Maiden*

husband frequently travelled back to this city, moving back here finally in 2018.

What most strikes me initially about Karen's artistic output is its diversity. She makes: pine needle baskets, mostly surrounding an image painted on stone; decorative masks, often surrounded with a dried seaweed border; ceramic or papier mache faces, mostly with woven borders; and paintings of owls, ravens, and of many forest or island scenes.

The techniques and materials Karen uses might suggest a First Nations influence, and certainly she shares with First Nations artists an interest in using natural materials, weaving, mask-making, and, in general, valuing the wild natural world as a favourite subject. However, the images in Karen's work convey no mythology, First Nations or otherwise. Instead they convey another, quite intangible quality,



Artist Karen Guilbault



the quality of mystery. What are these self-contained, smiling faces experiencing? Why does a female mask have a turtle on its forehead? Why does another have a Celtic knot in the same place?

The quality of mystery that I find central to Karen's work is, for me, most powerfully conveyed in a fascinating series of paintings of islands with extensive reflections in the sea that surrounds them. Many of these islands are depicted as a collection of large boulders with trees, mainly spruce, growing out of them.. But what is reflected in the water is far from an exact reflection of what is above it. Instead these reflections, usually larger than the islands themselves, are rendered as a honeycomb of black lines, or blocks of contrasting colours, or intermingling washes of colours, or strange lightning-like downstrokes, or all of these together.

When I ask, Karen lets me know that the reflections are created by a mixture of direct painting, metal leaf, paper collage, and stencil. The effect is to create the sense of an underwater world that is large and utterly mysterious. And sometimes this mystery affects the islands themselves, so that the rocks glow with



*Deep Reflections*

multiple colours, and start to move towards abstract forms. It's easy to believe that this series of paintings is making a statement about the relation between the mind and an unknowable unconscious. However it is equally possible to see the series as explorations in technique, and quite likely both interpretations are valid.

Unfortunately, Karen Guilbault's solo show at the Gage Gallery runs from March 11-30, 2025, and is likely to be over by the time this article appears. But there is a sample of her different artworks permanently on display at the Gallery, which is an arts collective based in downtown Victoria at 19, Bastion Square. Even if you've missed the solo show, I highly recommend a visit to the Gage to see the work of this fine local artist.

**-Chris Bullock**

***To see more of Karen's art go to  
[karenguilbaultart.ca](http://karenguilbaultart.ca)***

**Are you a local artist working  
working in the Gorge Tillicum  
community who would like to be  
featured in a future issue?**

**Please drop us a line at  
[info@gorgetillicum.ca](mailto:info@gorgetillicum.ca)**



*Bunny Basket*

# Gorge Park Cleanup

**Saturday  
April 26, 2025  
9 am - noon  
(rain or shine)**

**Free coffee and donuts.**

Join us in Gorge Park, across from Fairway. Look for the GTCA red tent. Most supplies are provided but bring gardening gloves if you have them.



**THIS POPULAR  
EVENT WILL BE  
BACK!**

Details will posted  
on the GTCA  
website and  
Facebook.





# Interested in a Native Plant Garden?

There is native plant garden in front of the Sunflower Girl mural on Wascana Street. The garden is an ongoing collaboration between the Gorge Tillicum Community Association and the current building owner.

Initial funding was provided by the UVic Map Shop.

This spring an interpretive sign will be installed at the Wascana Native Plant garden to highlight the plants in the garden and promote native plants in the community.



Satinflower



Spring Gold



Farewell to Spring



Western Buttercup



Sea Blush



Monkey Flower

**To see the colour poster scan the QR code:**





# GORGETILlicum

## COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

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Donation to Newsletter Fund: *\$5 offsets printing costs of your 3 issues each year* + = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Donation to Arts & Culture Fund: *Thank-you for any help towards events* + = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Donation to GTCA: *Your extra support helps the GTCA operate. THANK YOU!* + = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL PAYMENT ENCLOSED:** = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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.

Membership is valid from the time of payment of membership fees to the end of the 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.