

While out for a sunny day walk along Beach Drive and McNeil Bay the other week, I got to talking with a number of people along the way. We caught up on friends, local activities, events, issues, and ideas. Some were running, others were cycling, many were walking, and one was exercising her dogs.

All were flush and smiling with the fresh air, sunshine, and glow of physical activity. It's a good reminder of how we all benefit from activity, social connections, and municipal recreation infrastructure. Improving all aspects of physical and mental activity are core to the goals of the Oak Bay Parks, Recreation, and Culture staff and Board.



Kevin Murdoch, Mayor, District of Oak Bay surrounded by council.
Standing left to right: Tara Ney, Andrew Appleton, Hazel Braithwaite, Cairine Green,
seated: Esther Paterson, the Mayor, and Eric Wood Zhelka.

Oak Bay Council and staff have invested time and money in making our parks, recreation centres, tennis courts, beaches, sidewalks, cycling infrastructure, and more as attractive and usable as possible – with the understanding that good facilities will encourage use, and all the social and health benefits that brings. Our excellent Parks and Recreation staff work daily on innovative and quality programming and instruction, as well as maintaining our parks and facilities to a high level. Our staff and volunteers provide support for community classes, events and amenities like public art. All of us appreciate suggestions you may have for making our community better.

Through this winter and into 2019 you will see Oak Bay Recreation and Council continuing to work towards facilities, activities, and events that meet the needs of everyone from toddlers to nonagenarians. You will see continued efforts to expand services through volunteers and community partnerships like GVPL, school districts, Island Health, colleges and universities, musicians, artists, community groups, and others. These partnerships allow for an ever-expanding range of services and programs to serve the community.

For example, some new events this fall included the indoor farmers' markets at Monterey Centre, "Baby and Toddler" social gatherings, storytelling, and more. I encourage you, if you haven't yet, to sign up for a new class, a new exercise program, or a new activity through any of our recreation centres. There are activities for all interests, ages, and physical abilities, and our community is made stronger through our connections, our mental engagement, and our health.

I also invite you to join me for the annual Mayor's New Year's Walk, as part of our Municipal New Year's Levee.

Have a great and active winter season, and I look forward to seeing you at the recreation centers (or out on a walk) this season.

Kevin Murdoch
Mayor, District of Oak Bay