

## FAQs - Civic Redevelopment March 2026

### **Why is rezoning happening at 1903 Mt Newton before any building concepts exist?**

At this stage, Council is being asked to consider land use—not building design. Rezoning is the step that establishes the rules and limits for future development, such as maximum building height, overall density, and permitted uses. It does not approve a specific project or design.

By completing rezoning first, the District can:

- Clearly define what is *allowed* on the site and what is not
- Ensure future proposals align with the Official Community Plan and the Saanichton Village Design Plan
- Provide certainty to developers before requesting detailed proposals in order to attract the best pool of candidates for development
- Protect community interests by setting clear expectations up front

This approach allows Council and the community to shape the framework before design decisions are made, rather than reacting to a single concept after the fact.

### **Why is this level of density being considered for 1903 Mt Newton?**

- **Financial benefits to residents:** The density being considered is part of the District's long-term plan to have no additional tax increase result from the Civic Redevelopment project. The plan would provide the most financial benefit to residents at the outset of the project and generate long-term financial value that supports municipal services across the District. A lower density could result in increased taxes or the use of additional reserves/savings earmarked for other important infrastructure projects.
- **Amenities:** More community amenities can be achieved in the development, such as affordable medical space, housing, greenspace and more.
- **Land use:** The core of Saanichton Village will grow in the coming years, and this site can help shape this growth by fostering an active, walkable village centre with community-centered spaces.

## **Are there building designs for 1903 Mt Newton?**

As of March 5, 2026 (date of publishing), there are currently no development concepts or building designs for 1903 Mount Newton. No developer has been selected, and no architectural drawings exist. Detailed design will come this spring through a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process. Once a developer is selected, the community will see:

- Building form and layout
- Setbacks and transitions to neighbouring properties
- Public spaces and amenities
- Parking, access, and landscaping
- How impacts to neighbours are minimized

Community input will be required by the developer before Council finalizes the acquisition of the site.

The density being discussed—up to approximately 400 homes and a maximum of six storeys on some of the lot—represents upper limits, not targets. This would be the maximum development that could be considered under the zoning. The outcome may be less dense and lower in height, depending on:

- Design quality
- Community benefits
- Financial feasibility
- How well proposals respond to neighbourhood context and RFP criteria and preferences

## **Why is the new municipal building design not part of the rezoning for Hovey Road?**

The rezoning for 1882 Hovey Road is intentionally limited to land-use, set backs and height, not detailed building design. This is a standard planning approach.

Preliminary schematic designs were developed to assist Council and residents with determining options for the location and costs of a new building for the Central Saanich Police, Fire Station 2 and municipal hall. Now that a location at 1882 Hovey Road has been endorsed by Council, rezoning is proceeding and the project architects are refining schematic designs for a three-storey building that includes 10,000 sq ft of recreation space for the Peninsula Recreation Commission. Construction is anticipated to begin in the fall of 2026 following the approval of the building design, completion of construction drawings and refined costing.

## How has public feedback been used?

Community input has directly influenced priorities, financial planning, site options, and design principles. Going back about 15 years, residents raised concerns during the 2012 Town Hall project about affordability and financial risk. Council delayed the project to create ample debt capacity; implemented an Asset Management Plan; and grew capital reserves.

In more recent years we heard through the Panorama Recreation Needs Assessment, the Official Community Plan, and the Saanichton Village Design Plan, residents consistently expressed interest in expanded amenities. Council integrated these priorities into long-term planning documents and facility considerations.

### From 2023 to present, the following feedback was received and acted on:

- **Concern about affordability and taxes** | Developed a plan that results in no anticipated tax increase attributable to the project
- **Strong interest in recreation amenities at Hovey Road** | Provided land to the Peninsula Recreation Commission for a 10,000 sq. ft. recreation facility integrated into a new municipal building
- Community identified amenity priorities for the 1903 Mt. Newton site | Updated design principles to reflect these priorities
- **Concerns about building height at 1903 Mt Newton** | Selected a mix of four- and six-storey buildings with the taller building on Wallace and Mt Newton in the Village core buffered by a four-storey height limit along the west and south edges adjacent to single-family neighbourhoods
- **Concerns about traffic and parking** | Launched a Traffic Area Impact Assessment, scheduled for completion in summer 2026; required underground parking; committed to monitoring and regulatory enforcement
- **Requests for greater transparency** | Provided regular updates, FAQs, access to background reports once legally advisable and commissioned further building condition assessment, and schedules further neighbourhood input sessions
- **Requests to reconsider development at 1903 Mt. Newton** | Expanded redevelopment options to include three concepts with cost estimates; published a comprehensive assessment of renovation studies and costs for the municipal hall
- **Requests to protect cherry trees on Hovey Road** | Directed architects to protect and incorporate the trees into the design
- **Concern about construction impacts on neighbours** | The District is developing a Good Neighbour Policy to establish expectations for all construction sites in the District.

Public engagement has shaped this project over time—from financial planning and site selection to building height, amenities, and design principles. Council has not made a final decision, and community input remains a key part of the public record informing that decision.

## **Will residents have an opportunity to give design input into the new municipal hall and Council Chambers?**

Council has directed staff to engage with the public on any design features that would better assist the community in accessing Council Chambers in the new Municipal Hall. This engagement will take place in the coming months as the building design is finalized and approved by Council.

## **What is the status of the Municipal Yard Project?**

The District's long-term plan to replace the aging Municipal Yard buildings is progressing. A financially responsible approach to renewing these facilities is being undertaken with the District exploring opportunities to subdivide and potentially sell the portion of the yard site that is not needed for future operations.

This spring, the District is undertaking important stabilization work on the embankment located behind the yard. This work is necessary to ensure the slope remains structurally secure and continues to protect the yard, neighbouring properties, and surrounding infrastructure. It will also create flexibility and reduce future project costs and increase flexibility as planning progresses. Residents and businesses near the Keating industrial area may notice increased truck traffic over the coming months as a significant amount of fill will be delivered to the site. The District will work to minimize disruptions where possible and appreciates the community's patience as we complete these works.