

it's your City!



Understanding Parksville's Fire Service The Future



This is the final article in a series on the PVFD. Residents are encouraged to stop by the fire hall or send comments to info@parksville.ca.

Over the next few years, the PVFD will face a number of challenges - recruitment and retention of volunteers, the continuous evolution from a strictly "fire suppression" service to a broad "multi-disciplined emergency response" service, and the continuing challenge to provide properly trained and equipped crews. All will have significant effects on the future of the department.

High turnover in the department has meant shorter

lengths of service and less experienced members. The demographics of our community and the lack of local career opportunities will affect department turnover. The PVFD recognizes the commitment required; significantly different from most volunteer jobs. The smaller the community, the smaller the resource to call upon for volunteers. At this time, there are 39 volunteer firefighters, just enough but the department would prefer to see a waiting list.

The PVFD, similar to other departments, faces budget pressures and must continually assess service delivery options to ensure fiscal responsibility while at the same time meeting the expectations of citizens. The longer an effective volunteer force can be maintained, the less financial burden on the City. The PVFD and the City will need to consider the economy of a volunteer department versus a paid department. A slow transition is expected over time, with two staff added closer

to 2020, intended to take care of equipment maintenance, pre-incident planning, training and inspections. This will help to fill workload gaps and relieve pressure on volunteer resources. Factors which could trigger further staff increases include increasing call volumes, volunteer unavailability or the inability to recruit enough volunteers. Other influencing factors could include boundary expansion leading to increased building inventory, infill with higher density construction, population and/or call volumes, which might also trigger the need for an additional station or stations.

Although it is impossible to predict the future, the PVFD actively plans for the future by maintaining comprehensive data on trends, historical data on calls for service and on membership. The department plans such as the staffing plan are updated regularly and the strategic plan is updated at least every five years. The department monitors municipal plans and attempts to predict likely outcomes in terms of emergency services impacts and future needs. The crystal ball might look something like this:

"We are optimistic about the future of the department. Recruitment will always be a challenge; it's a struggle to get volunteers and most importantly, to retain them. Our firefighters have full or part-time day jobs in addition to training and volunteering. We recognize it's not easy," said Fire Chief Doug Banks.

- Two additional positions by 2020.
- Little change in terms of volunteer staffing foreseeable for next 10 years.
- One station for foreseeable future unless changes in the municipal boundary or amalgamation.
- Possible move to a more paid-call system for volunteer members.
- Consider more ways to recognize service commitments such as medical and dental benefits or savings plans for volunteer members.
- Possibility of looking at a part-time, availability based, scheduling and paying of firefighters to ensure on duty coverage for times when volunteer staff are historically unavailable.

Around The City

Parksville eNews

Stay up to date on Parksville news with our new electronic newsletter. Parksville eNews is municipal news delivered directly to your inbox. Members of the community should be comfortable email addresses will not be used for any purpose other than for this newsletter. If you would like sign up, please subscribe from the home page link on the City's website or by texting PARKSVILLE to 22828.

Great BC ShakeOut Drill



Reminder to mark your calendars and register for the 2013 Great British Columbia Shakeout drill.

Participation is a great way for you and your family or for businesses to become better prepared to survive and recover quickly from major earthquakes. Participating creates a positive understanding of the importance of earthquake awareness and emergency preparedness. For updates and resources please visit www.shakeoutbc.ca and the City's website.

City Services

Spring Chipping Program

It was announced earlier this year that due to budget constraints, the City's wood chipping program will be held only once per year, in the spring, identified as the most practical and efficient time for the program. In previous years, residents have commented to us that collection following Thanksgiving was too early for annual pruning. Because collection takes about two weeks and the City's seasonal staff finish the end of October, this was the latest we could collect in the fall.

The spring program should provide residents with sufficient time to collect pruned branches, winter storm fall and dispose of Christmas trees. If you have branches to be chipped and are not able to keep them until spring, please take to the Church Road Transfer Station.

Temple Street Upgrade



If you were not able to attend the Temple Street upgrade open house held last week, the information presented at the session is now on the web <http://parksville.ca/cms.asp?wpID=461>

City Notices

Town Hall Council Meeting

The next town hall Council meeting set for October 21 at the McMillan Arts Centre will provide a less formal occasion for residents to engage with Council. The Council meeting starts at 6 pm with the town hall meeting at 7 pm. One of the items to be discussed is the possibility of reducing Highway 19A to two lanes from the Orange Bridge to the end of City limits. Additional agenda items will be determined by the Mayor in collaboration with Council and staff. We hope you will attend.

Utility Notices

Notices covering water, sewer, garbage and recycling were mailed on September 30. If you do not receive your notice by October 9, please call 250 954-4653.

City Dates

October 10	Coffee with Council
October 10	Council Meeting (Budget)
October 14	Thanksgiving Holiday (office closed)
October 17	Great BC ShakeOut Earthquake Drill
October 17	Advisory Planning Commission
October 17	Coffee with Council
October 21	Town Hall Council Meeting
October 24	Coffee with Council
October 31	Coffee with Council
November 4	Council Meeting
November 7	Coffee with Council
November 11	Remembrance Day (office closed)
November 14	Coffee with Council
November 14	Advisory Design Panel
November 18	Council Meeting
November 21	Advisory Planning Commission
November 21	Coffee with Council

The public is encouraged to attend Council meetings held on the first and third Mondays of the month and is welcome to observe advisory committee meetings. Please refer to the website for agendas, dates and times as well as Council meeting highlights and minutes.

How to Reach Council

MAYOR

Chris Burger..... 250 954-4661

COUNCILLORS

Al Greir.....250 248-1285
 Marc Lefebvre250 248-2292
 Peter Morrison.....250 240-4050
 Bill Neufeld250 954-2063
 Sue Powell.....250 951-1082
 Carrie Powell-Davidson.....250 954-3758

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Facebook: [facebook.com/cityparksville](https://www.facebook.com/cityparksville)

Twitter: twitter.com/city_parksville

Pinterest: [pinterest.com/cityparksville](https://www.pinterest.com/cityparksville)

It's Your City is published in the PQB News on the second Tuesday of the month with a copy on the City's website. We are committed to improving communications with our residents and you can help by providing your comments and suggestions to 250 954-3073 or communications@parksville.ca.