

Dear Mayor and Council

October 27th, 2017

Subject: The Independent Review of EDPA

We write on behalf of the members of Saanich Action For The Environment (SAFE) concerning the Independent Review of the EDPA bylaw commissioned by Saanich Council. **We respectfully encourage you not to rescind the EDPA bylaw and to use the recommendations in the Review report to clarify and improve the existing bylaw.** Our comments are as follows:

1. We support Saanich's long-term commitment to sustainability and protection of the environment as embodied in the OCP, in the creation of the Urban Containment Boundary and many other provisions in Saanich bylaw and policy.
2. We encourage you to use the investment in the existing EDPA bylaw as the basis for improvements per normal municipal practice. You have demonstrated foresight and flexibility by initiating the Independent Review, making temporary changes to the bylaw and implementing an appeal process while the Review was being conducted.
3. We support the recommendations in the report and encourage you to move forward as quickly as possible to clarify and improve the existing bylaw in accordance with the recommendations to bring closure to a divisive controversy in our community.
4. We believe there is broad community consensus on the bylaw's provisions to protect sensitive environmental areas for rezoning and subdivision applications. It has been the confusion associated with the bylaw's application to single-family properties that has been so controversial. It is this aspect of the existing bylaw that requires your leadership and focus.
5. It is critical to maintain the protections currently embodied in the existing bylaw while you and our community deliberate on changes to the bylaw with regard to single-family homes.
6. Given Saanich's history of environmental leadership in the Province, it would be a contradiction to remove the EDPA bylaw, resulting in elimination of existing protections and long term damage to sensitive environmental areas. Saanich will have the dubious distinction of being the only municipality that rescinded its EDPA bylaw. This will impose a larger, protracted, challenging and divisive effort on community, Council and staff at considerable additional cost over what has been expended.

The members of SAFE are able and willing to work with Council, community and staff to apply the recommendations in the EDPA Independent Review to the existing bylaw. This course of action is achievable and desirable for the long-term health of our community and environment.

Yours sincerely,

Members of SAFE