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CAPITAL REGION PROFILE

Overview

www.crd.bc.ca



The Capital Region Profile and the related Fact Sheet series are designed to provide individuals, students, business and government information on trends and current conditions on land use, economy, transportation and population in the Capital Regional District.

Where is the Capital Regional District?

The Capital Regional District (CRD) is located on the south coast of Vancouver Island. It has a rich maritime history originating from its roots as the principal supply outpost and gateway to British Columbia, as well as a major fur-trading centre and early gold-rush town. The CRD is also a part of the Georgia Basin Watershed, which includes those parts of Mainland BC and Washington State that drain into the Straits of Georgia and Juan de Fuca, and Puget Sound. The Capital Region is located in a unique physical setting with varying topography creating one of the most attractive areas in North America.

What is the Capital Regional District?

The Capital Regional District, established in 1966, is a government body that provides services including regional recreation and park facilities, water supply, liquid and solid waste management, as well as regional land-use and transportation planning. A primary benefit of regional government is that it

can provide cost-effective solutions by achieving economies of scale for issues that transcend municipal boundaries. The CRD encompasses an area of approximately 2,450 square kilometres and is composed of 13 incorporated municipalities, 3 electoral areas and 10 first nation bands with their associated reserves. The CRD is governed by a board composed of representatives of the member municipalities and derives its revenue primarily from property tax levies.

Physical Setting

The Capital Region can be described as a unique Canadian west-coast atmosphere rich in cultural and natural heritage. The landscape is diverse and includes some of the rarest ecosystems in Canada, many of which are protected in our world-class parks system (www.crd.bc.ca/parks).

The Region has two general physiographic areas. The first, consisting primarily of the northwest portion, hosts the Insular Mountains which, includes Sooke Hills. This is an area characterized by steep slopes and frequent outcrops of dark volcanic bedrock. Elevations above sea level in



this area vary dramatically from 0 to 1100 metres. The second area, the most southern and eastern portions of the Region, includes the Saanich Peninsula and the Gulf Islands and consists mostly of a coastal plain characterized by rolling hills, varying in elevation from sea level to 200 metres. The maritime climate of the region is temperate year-round and can be characterized by warm, dry summers and mild, wet winters. It is often described as similar to that of the Northern Mediterranean region.

First Nations

Rich in art, culture and history, the Region is home to 10 First Nation Bands, listed below, who are currently working with the Province to develop a new relationship founded on reconciliation, recognition and respect of Aboriginal rights and title.

Beecher Bay	Esquimalt
Malahat	Pauquachin
Pacheedaht	Tsawout
Songhees	T'Sou-Ke
Tseycum	Tsartlip



The regional workforce is highly-educated and local firms have been able to lure talented workers to the region...

Labour Market

The Region has a vibrant and diverse economy. As the Provincial Capital, public administration is the dominant sector, with health care & social assistance and retail trade following close behind. With over 1.1 billion dollars injected into the region in 2004 alone, the tourism industry is continually growing to play an ever important role in the Capital Region's economy. Other rapidly growing sectors include education, and the high-tech industry. The Regional workforce is highly-educated and local firms have been able to lure talented workers to the region based on its desirable lifestyle. Additionally, the Regional unemployment rate has traditionally been well below the provincial average.

Urban Core

POPULATION: 235,013*	174 sq. km
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The Urban Core includes the municipalities of Victoria, Oak Bay, Esquimalt, Saanich and View Royal. It contains the metropolitan core of the Region, with the greatest concentration of population, employment and services. The sub-region also hosts the location of the original town site laid out by Sir James Douglas in 1852 and thus, boasts the oldest neighbourhoods in the CRD. The Urban Core also contains B.C.'s Provincial Capital and Canada's second largest naval base and dockyard.

Saanich Peninsula

POPULATION: 42,276*	104 sq. km
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This sub-region includes the municipalities of Central Saanich, North Saanich and Sidney. It is often the first place visitors see when entering the region as it hosts both the Victoria International Airport (YYJ) and the BC Ferry Terminal. The area contains a large proportion of the region's productive farmland, as well as a number of rural and suburban residential areas, smaller commercial areas and the Region's largest contiguous industrial area.



West Shore

POPULATION: 61,449* 1,763 sq. km

This area is composed of the municipalities of Colwood, Langford, Metchosin, Sooke, Highlands and the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area. The diverse scenery of this semi-rural area can be explored via the Galloping Goose Trail. There is also extensive commercial development in the urbanized areas as well as some light industry. The municipalities of Colwood and Langford are able to accommodate a substantial increase in population in the Region helping ease the development pressure on the agricultural lands in Metchosin and on the Saanich Peninsula.

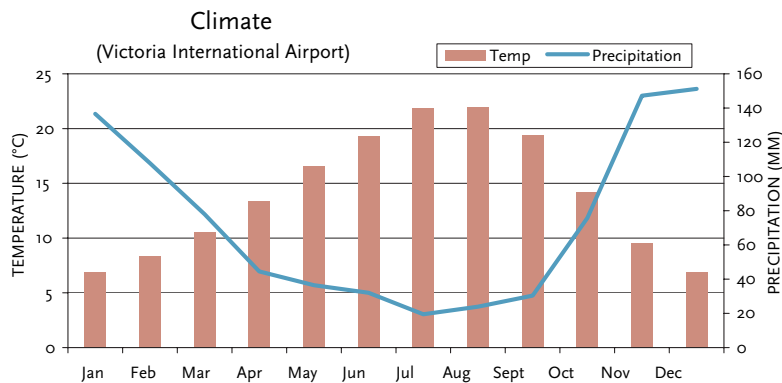
Saltspring and Southern Gulf Islands

POPULATION: 15,468* 410 sq. km

This sub-region is a part of a chain of islands that extend the length of Vancouver Island and into Washington State. While these areas are members of the CRD, they fall under the planning jurisdiction of the Islands Trust (www.islandstrust.bc.ca), helping to maintain their individual character. The Southern Gulf Islands E.A. includes North and South Pender, Mayne, Galiano, Saturna and numerous small islands. Each island has a unique flavour, and typically includes a mixture of farming and craft industries, fishing and mariculture. They are widely known as a popular tourist destination and a favourite weekend getaway for Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island residents.



Due to its geography the Capital Region is located in a unique physical setting with varying topography creating one of the most attractive areas in North America.



Regional Growth Strategy

www.crd.bc.ca/growth

In August 2003, the members of the Capital Regional District adopted a Regional Growth Strategy that sets out a vision of compact growth and rural protection, and proposes action in eight areas to achieve this vision of regional sustainability and quality of life.

- Keep urban settlement compact
- Protect the integrity of rural communities
- Protect regional green and blue space
- Manage natural resources and the environment sustainably
- Build complete communities
- Improve housing affordability
- Increase transportation choice
- Strengthen the regional economy

The Regional Growth Strategy includes three related initiatives and can be found on the web at www.crd.bc.ca/growth

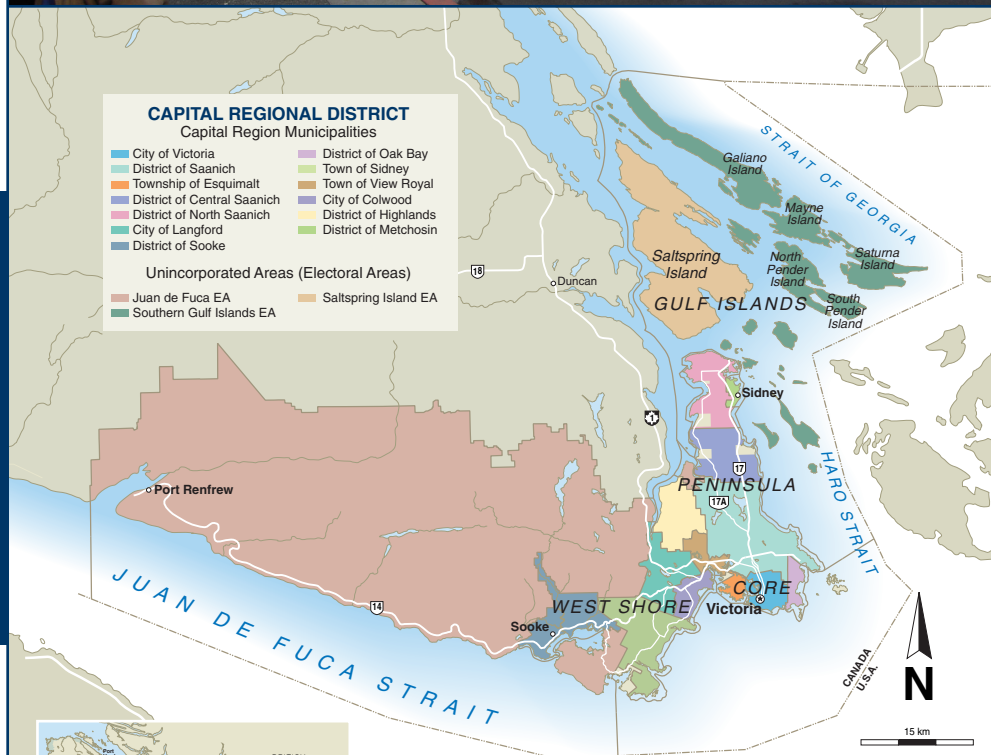
- Regional TravelChoices Strategy
- Regional Housing Affordability Strategy
- Economic Development Blueprint

TECHNICAL NOTES:

*2005 estimated population

Factsheets providing further detail on this topic are available from the Regional Planning office of the CRD

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CRD

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