

Your Vote Can Make the Difference



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Municipal Elections are Saturday, Oct 15th and voters have two responsibilities – become familiar with the candidates and vote.

Voting for even a single candidate can make a significant difference in the cost of your new home or renovation.

Candidates should understand the market forces impacting housing supply and affordability.

They should realize overly restrictive land use regulations limit affordable land, resulting in housing shortages and rising costs.

According to the CD Howe Institute, zoning restrictions plus federal, provincial, municipal fees and taxes represent an additional \$230,000 to the cost of new homes in Greater Victoria.

At the very least, mayors and councils should be able to create a simple, reasonably efficient, building permit application process.

So far, despite past promises, many councils have been incapable of delivering on that task. Municipalities such as Saanich, Oak Bay and Victoria - with the highest property taxes in the CRD - have become slower and more costly.

When VRBA filed a Freedom of Information request this year, Saanich claimed to have no written procedure for building permits.

This is not an issue of rezoning, it's about providing a transparent, efficient service for taxpayers.

Candidates' claims to support housing affordability must start with the most simple, administrative tasks to build or renovate homes.

Leading up to election day, ask candidates if they will commit to providing an efficient building permit service.

Langford is the gold standard for administrative efficiency where basic building permits are processed in one week vs many weeks or months in other municipalities.

Voters may hold elected officials accountable only once every four years – make sure they deliver on their promises.

Einstein said it best – “We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.”

New thinking and your vote can make the difference.

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