

With land purchase, Langford middle school could be built in a few years

JEFF BELL
Times Colonist

A new middle school in Langford could be opening its doors within the next few years.

Details of the purchase of a three-hectare property on Gateway Road, near Costco, for the middle school for \$25 million were announced Monday, with the province providing about \$21 million and the school district putting up close to \$4 million.

Three to five years is the usual time it takes from buying land to completing a school project, said Sooke School Board chair Amanda Dowhy.

Work underway to complete a retaining wall and other measures is part of the purchase agreement, Dowhy said.

The site is directly across the road from a previously announced secondary-school project, to be located on 4.8-hectares purchased four years ago for \$20 million.

Langford Mayor Scott Goodman said the newest land purchase is "fantastic news."

A new middle school is "very much needed and it can't come soon enough," he said. "Our schools are absolutely filled, we've got portables."

Amenities at the two schools could include all-weather playing fields or a track that would benefit the larger community as well, said Langford-Juan de Fuca MLA Ravi Parmar, former chair of the Sooke School Board.

Dowhy said that providing enough space for students in the fast-growing school district is an

ongoing concern for the school board and district officials. She said the district has seen growth throughout Langford and at all age levels. "We're seeing it all across the board right now as new families continue to move into our communities."

There will be some relief when SCIANWY STELTIGER Elementary School is completed in 2025 — although it is expected to be at or near its 480-student capacity when it opens, Dowhy said. Modular additions at Ruth King and David Cameron elementary schools should help, as well, she said.

PFOXSTEN Elementary opened in 2022 is already full and Centre Mountain Leilum Middle School, also opened in 2022, is getting close to capacity, Dowhy said.



Sooke School Board chair Amanda Dowhy, left, and MLA Ravi Parmar announce details of a \$25-million land purchase for a new middle school at 2460 Gateway Rd. in Langford on Monday.

ADRIAN LAM, TIMES COLONIST

The other priorities in the school district's capital plan include an elementary school on Flint Avenue in north Langford, an elementary school in the Royal Bay area of Colwood, and an elementary school in the vicinity of Sooke's Sunriver

Estates. Land has been secured for all of those projects.

The district's student population has grown by 40 per cent in the past 15 years and is now up to 13,700. That is expected to jump to 16,000 by 2030. jbell@timescolonist.com

Biden gets rousing ovation from Democrats as he gives Harris enthusiastic endorsement

The Associated Press

CHICAGO — U.S. President Joe Biden delivered his valedictory address to the Democratic National Convention on Monday night, as his party worked to end his reelection bid released new-found energy within his party with Vice President Kamala Harris's elevation to the top of the ticket.

After 52 years rising to the pinnacle of influence within his party, Biden, 81, received a hero's welcome for the act of stepping aside for Harris, weeks after many in his party were pressuring him to drop his bid for reelection.

One month after an unprec-

edented mid-campaign switch from Biden to Harris, the opening night of the convention in Chicago was designed as a hand-off from the incumbent to his hand-picked successor — albeit four years before he intended for her to follow him.

A visibly emotional Biden was greeted by a more than four-minute-long ovation and chants of "Thank you Joe."

"America, I love you," he replied.

Democrats are looking to the weeklong event to give a graceful exit to the incumbent president and slingshot Harris toward a faceoff with Republican Donald Trump, whose comeback bid for the White House is viewed by Democrats as an existential threat. Having taken over the ticket just one month ago, Harris and running mate Tim Walz must now win over a divided country that is viewing her more positively but still making up its mind about the election.

"Democracy has prevailed, democracy has delivered, and now democracy must be preserved," Biden said.

"Because of you, we've had the most extraordinary four years of progress ever period," Biden declared.

And then he interjected,

"I say 'we,' I mean me and Kamala," sharing the credit for his most popular successes with the vice president who replaced him atop the ticket.

Harris made an unannounced appearance onstage as the convention's prime time program began Monday evening to thank Biden for his leadership in advance of his speech later on.

"Joe, thank you for your historic leadership, for your lifetime of service to our nation, and for all you'll continue to do," she said. "We are forever grateful to you."

Biden's speech, billed as the marquee event of the evening, was pushed into late night as the convention program lagged more than an hour behind schedule.

The president recalled the 2017 "unite the right" rally, when torch-carrying white supremacists marched in Charlottesville, Virginia, an episode he credits with cementing his decision to run for president in 2020 despite his ongoing grief over the death of his son Beau Biden.

"I could not stay on the sidelines," Biden said. "So I ran. I had no intention of running again. I'd just lost part of my soul. But I ran with a deep conviction."



U.S. President Joe Biden, with daughter Ashley, wipes a tear during the Democratic National Convention on Monday in Chicago.

CHARLES REX ARBOGAST, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Volunteers with the Alberni Valley Rescue Squad were called to assist with a rescue on the Juan de Fuca Marine Trail on Friday. It was the group's fourth rescue of the week.

ALBERNI VALLEY RESCUE SQUAD

Four-rescue week keeps Alberni Valley group busy

The Alberni Valley Rescue Squad responded to four incidents last week, capping off the busy stretch with a second call to the Juan de Fuca Marine Trail on Friday.

The team assisted Juan de Fuca Search and Rescue in getting an injured person to a helicopter to be flown to a waiting ambulance in Jordan River.

It was one of three mutual-aid requests the Alberni Valley team

responded to during the week, including a previous incident along the Juan de Fuca Marine Trail on Aug. 11 involving a person who had fallen into the ocean and suffered a leg injury.

The team also led a rescue on Wednesday after a woman became stranded on a Wally Creek logjam after the current took her over a waterfall. She did not sustain any serious injuries. —Times Colonist

Consultation begins on development near Uptown in Saanich

Times Colonist

Public consultation on transit-oriented, mixed-use development close to Uptown shopping centre in Saanich has started and will run into September.

This process ties in with the provincial changes to zoning rules to encourage more density and more homes.

Transit centres are areas identified by the province as suitable for more intensive development. The province announced in spring that it had purchased two lots, for a total of \$9.3 million in the Uptown area to support hundreds of new homes.

That area is destined to be a central transit hub for the capital region, Transportation Minister Rob Fleming said in a statement released Monday.

Plans call for new homes, a compact community with public spaces, jobs in commercial areas, and services such as child care and health clinics, he said. "It's important we get it

right," Fleming said. "That means gathering public feedback so we can create a project that reflects the wants and needs of area residents."

The province is asking for feedback on a potential transit exchange beneath the residential buildings that could be integrated with the Lochside and Galloping Goose regional trails.

A transit exchange could serve as a central connection for active transportation and public transit, with connections to downtown Victoria, the West Shore and the Saanich Peninsula.

A pop-up event is set for Sept. 3 from 4 to 6 p.m. next to the Galloping Goose overpass near the Uptown shopping centre. An in-person interactive open house will be held Sept. 12 at the New Life Church at 3900 Carey Rd.

An online survey is open for public feedback until Sept. 18 at engage.gov.bc.ca/uptowntransit-orienteddevelopment.

		
August 10 - September 2, 2024		
<i>Schedules are subject to change without notice.</i>		
VANCOUVER ISLAND - LOWER MAINLAND		
SWARTZ BAY - TSAWWASSEN		
LEAVE SWARTZ BAY		
4:30 am	12:00 pm	6:00 pm
5:00 am	1:00 pm	7:00 pm
8:00 am	2:00 pm	8:00 pm
9:00 am	3:00 pm	9:00 pm
10:00 am	4:00 pm	◆ 10:00 pm
11:00 am	5:00 pm	
LEAVE TSAWWASSEN		
4:00 am	12:00 pm	6:00 pm
5:00 am	1:00 pm	7:00 pm
8:00 am	2:00 pm	8:00 pm
9:00 am	3:00 pm	9:00 pm
10:00 am	4:00 pm	◆ 10:00 pm
11:00 am	5:00 pm	
↓ Mon-Sat, except Sep 2.		
◆ Sun & Sep 2.		
◆ Sun & Aug 31, Sep 2.		
◆ Except Aug 31.		
NANAIMO (DUKE POINT) - TSAWWASSEN		
LEAVE DUKE POINT		
5:15 am	12:45 pm	8:15 pm
7:45 am	2:00 pm	10:45 pm
9:00 am	3:15 pm	
10:15 am	4:30 pm	
LEAVE TSAWWASSEN		
5:15 am	12:45 pm	8:15 pm
7:45 am	2:00 pm	10:45 pm
9:00 am	3:15 pm	
10:15 am	4:30 pm	
11:30 am	5:45 pm	
NANAIMO (DEPARTURE BAY) - HORSeshoe BAY		
LEAVE DEPARTURE BAY		
6:30 pm	1:40 pm	8:40 pm
9:05 am	4:00 pm	10:45 pm
11:25 am	6:20 pm	
LEAVE HORSeshoe BAY		
6:30 pm	1:40 pm	8:40 pm
9:05 am	4:00 pm	10:45 pm
11:25 am	6:20 pm	
BRENTWOOD BAY - MILL BAY		
LEAVE BRENTWOOD BAY		
4:30 am	11:00 am	3:35 pm
5:40 am	12:15 pm	4:45 pm
9:50 am	2:25 pm	5:55 pm
LEAVE MILL BAY		
4:30 am	11:00 am	3:15 pm
5:40 am	1:35 am	5:40 pm
10:25 am	3:00 pm	6:30 pm
◆ Except Sun.		
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