
November Update from Teale!

1 message

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Rainbow over Swan Lake. Photo Credit: Stephanie Ferguson

A Fall Update from Teale

Friends,

It has been a busy fall and I've got plenty of updates for you. Before I jump into updates, I wanted to acknowledge a few recent events. Sadly, we lost two important voices in Canadian politics this month. I was grieved to learn about the passing of former BC Premier John Horgan. I am so grateful for everything John did for this province, he truly cared about making things better, and our household will miss John deeply.



Hanging out with John at a BC NDP Convention. We took a selfie and he insisted on taking a second one wearing my hat!

I wanted to take a moment to show respect to [Murray Sinclair](#), the chief commissioner of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, who has been a voice for compassion and helped positively transform Canada for decades.

The other big event this month was the US election. I don't know about you, but I was shocked at the results. It is horrifying to see the rise of far-right extremism south of the border. There is still a lot of uncertainty as to what a Trump government means for the USA, Canada, and the world. Things don't look good, and it's clear that a Trump government is going to do some harm.

I know at times like this we can often feel like we are helpless or depressed. Unfortunately, neither of these are motivating emotions, and at times like this we need action. Don't give in!

Instead, my advice is to set about trying to make the world a better place by working on one or two smaller, manageable issues. I've long felt that the best way to address large, seemingly intractable issues like climate change, the patriarchy, housing crisis, or other issues facing our world is to break them down into smaller, bite-sized chunks.

I'll be working hard to fight to make BC and Canada a beacon of hope for reproductive justice, and doing what I can to support friends working on similar issues in the US. Scroll down to the end of this email to learn more about my ongoing work with the AccessBC Campaign.

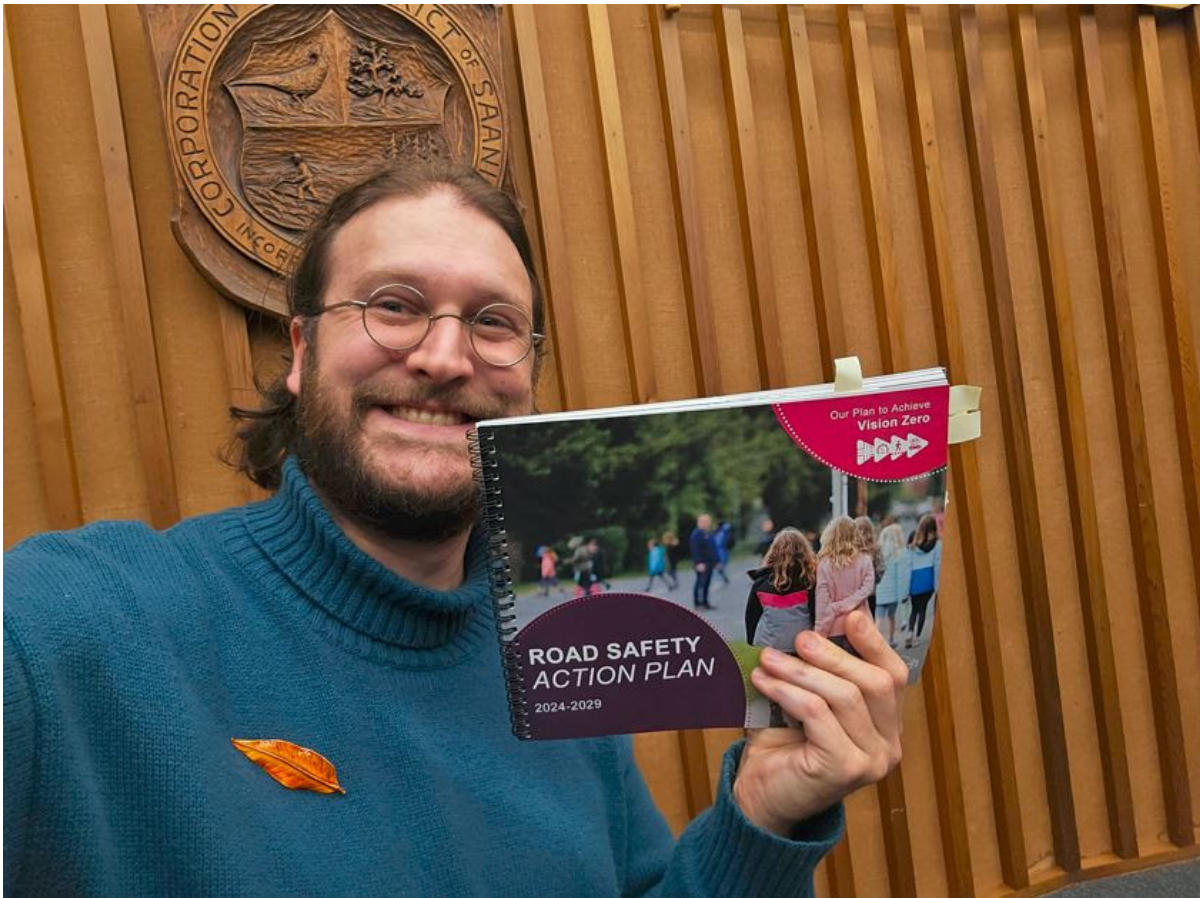


Here's this year's Little Free Library Jack-O-Lantern! We had a fantastic Halloween. We organized neighbours and set up a table in front of our building to give out candy, as trick or treating in apartments is a challenge.

A little closer to home, let's talk Saanich news! I am so excited to say that Saanich has officially adopted a [Road Safety Action Plan](#)! This ten-year plan will help us achieve Vision Zero in the District, that is, zero fatalities and serious injuries on our streets.

Improving the safety of our roads is one of the reasons I ran for office and I am so please to see this plan get adopted. It uses systems thinking – called the Safe System Approach – and it outlines an integrated process and 30 actions to address safe speeds, safe road users, safe vehicles, safe road design, post-crash care and safe land use planning. I encourage folks to review the [full plan](#), and you can also learn more from a [CFAX interview I gave](#), or pieces in the [Times Colonist](#), [CHEK News](#), [CBC Radio](#), the [Saanich News](#), [CTV News](#), and from the [District's press release](#).

There is, of course, more work to be done around implementation, but this is a fantastic step in the right direction. No one should have to worry about death or serious injury when they ravel around or through Saanich.



Saanich's new Road Safety Action Plan!

Let's jump into some other Saanich highlights from this past month, in no particular order:

- **Draft Quadra McKenzie Plan:** The District has officially launched public consultation around the [draft Quadra McKenzie Plan](#). The draft plan outlines a vision, policy direction, and priority actions that will guide future development and transformation of this important area over the next 20 years.

The Plan looks to address the climate and housing crises and lays the foundation for creating healthy communities that feature a diversity of housing options, active transportation infrastructure, vibrant public spaces, and services and amenities within walking distance for residents. It seeks to explore, and get ahead of, future transportation challenges and proposes a very interesting and innovative density framework. You can learn more about the plan and how to share your thoughts [here](#).



Attending a community input session about the draft Quadra McKenzie Plan.

- Shelbourne Valley Action Plan Update:** The District is seeking feedback on updates to the Shelbourne Valley Action Plan. This update will not impact the Shelbourne Street Improvement Project, which is currently implementing a number of cycling, pedestrian and underground infrastructure improvements, and almost done. And some areas in the University Centre (Shelbourne McKenzie Centre) are currently planned for via the ongoing Quadra McKenzie Plan (QMP).

Engagement at this stage of the process is focused on collecting input on issues and opportunities and receiving feedback on preliminary concepts. Based on public input and staff analysis, a Draft Updated SVAP will be presented for public input in Spring 2025. I'm looking forward to seeing it and thank you to everyone for sharing their thoughts about the plan. Learn more about [engagement opportunities here](#).



Feedback at a community input session about the draft Quadra McKenzie Plan.

- **Saanich's First Town Hall:** A big thank you to everyone who attended and shared their views at the Districts first community Town Hall, held on October 22, at the Cedar Hill Golf Course clubhouse. We had a lot of input from members of the community on a wide range of issues, from bike lanes to tree protection, climate change to house deconstruction. You can read more in the [Saanich News](#), and stay tuned for news about our next Town Hall.

This was our first Town Hall, so we will be working on adjusting and improving the format, but I thought it was a good start. So if you had any constructive feedback on the format, please let me know!



Planting trees in Cuthbert Holmes Park.

- **Tree Planting!** November 4th was Tree Appreciation Day, and there was a bunch of tree-related news this month. The District of Saanich received a \$5,000 funding contribution from TD Bank, dedicated to enhancing the Pulling Together Park Stewardship Inclusion & Diversity Program. [Learn more here](#). I also got to get my hands dirty and plant some trees in Cuthbert Holmes Park with folks from Formwell Homes, [learn more here](#).
- **Parking Minimums:** I am pleased to announce that the bylaw I've been working on with Councillor de Vries has been adopted. This bylaw:
 - Lowers parking minimums to one stall per unit for residential projects of 12 units or less, with some exceptions.
 - Introduces parking maximums of up to 1.5 stalls per unit for residential projects of more than 12 units, with the requirement of these projects embracing sustainable transportation options. With the bylaw establishing a number of different traffic demand management measures that projects can adopt, such as car shares, enhanced cycling infrastructure, bus passes and more.

- Requires residential buildings of more than 12 units to provide onsite loading zones for delivery vehicles.

You can learn more from CHEK news [here](#), and [here](#), and from the [Victoria Buzz](#). And you can find the full bylaw in our [recent agenda here](#).



The Saanich Cenotaph after the November 11th Remembrance Day Ceremony.

- **More payment options:** Saanich will be introducing credit card payment option for municipal transactions. [Learn more here](#).
- **Help design Mayor and Council's 2024 Holiday Card!** Young artists in Saanich are once again invited to share their designs for Mayor and Council's 2024 holiday card. [Learn more here](#).
- **Energy reporting for large buildings:** Council unanimously endorsed a motion this week requiring energy-use reports for buildings over 30,000 square feet starting in 2026. [Learn more here](#).



I had the honour of representing the District at a couple of convocation ceremonies at UVic this month. A huge congratulations to all the graduates!

- **Saanich Climate Action Plan Update:** Council recently adopted updated terms of reference that will guide the process that will update our Climate Action Plan. An updated plan with new targets will be developed over the next 18 months in collaboration with regional partners. We have made progress implementing our existing plan, but are currently not hitting our targets and there's more work to be done. Learn more from [Capital Daily](#).
- **Housing Targets:** Similar to our climate targets, we are making progress on the housing front, but more work is needed. This past year Saanich added 338 units to our housing stock, which is below the provincial target set at 440 for this reporting period (Oct. 1, 2023 and Sept. 30, 2024). There are a lot of building permits in the works, and only new units with occupancy permits are counted in the targets, so I feel we are on track to hitting the provincial housing target of 4,610 new units by 2028, but it's going to take some hard work. Learn more from the [Vancouver Island Free Daily](#).
- **Mayfair Lanes!** And speaking of much needed new housing, I am pleased to say that we are finally going to see development at the old Mayfair Lanes site. This will be a \$300-million project by Vancouver-based developer Townline, in partnership with site owner Loblaw, and it will feature three towers of 555 rental residential units, commercial space and a Real Canadian Superstore outlet! Learn more from the [Times Colonist](#).

There are a number of other upcoming engagement opportunities, and as always you can learn about these and participate on the [HelloSaanich platform](#).

Reproductive Justice Advocacy



With the results of the US election and the rolling back of reproductive rights south of the border and around the world, it is a perilous time. I don't know about you, but I found the US election results to be shocking and very worrying. It is disappointing and nerve-wracking to see so many people buying into harmful far right ideology.

At times like this, we cannot give in to sadness and depression, but rather, it is a time to mobilize and fight back! As such, we are ramping things up on the AccessBC Campaign, pushing hard to improve things here in Canada and to make our province a beacon of hope for reproductive justice. Our two current focuses are a) working to ensure the swift implementation of Bill C-64, the national pharmacare plan, in BC and across the country, and b) working to expand and improve the existing program here in BC.

For our first goal, we are just putting the finishing touches on a letter to the new provincial Minister of Health, urging them to sign a formal agreement with the federal government on pharmacare. This follows BC signing an [MOU with the federal government](#) in September. We are also working to support our sister campaigns who are similarly urging their provincial governments to do the same.



Here's something you can do right now to help in the fight for reproductive justice across Canada. If you have not yet done so, please sign the [petition urging the Quebec](#)

[Government](#) to make prescription contraception free! Please sign before the Nov. 25th deadline. Anyone can sign, you don't need to be a Quebec resident, and the goal is 100,000 signatures. When I checked this morning we were close to 85,000! You can learn more from this [excellent CTV news story](#).

Here are a couple of other news stories about the AccessBC Campaign and reproductive justice in Canada that you may have missed. [This piece from the Tyee](#) explores Bill C-64's impact on BC, and [this piece from The Peak](#).

Pour mes amis francophones, regardez [cet article inspirant de Radio Canada](#) au sujet de le nombre de personnes qui ont déjà bénéficié d'une contraception sur ordonnance gratuite au Manitoba, presque 12,000!

But wait! There's more, the new Holt government in New Brunswick just had their first speech from the throne, wherein they promise to make contraception free! [Check out the full speech here](#) (free contraception is on page 9).

Little Free Libraries



Teale and Tegan pose with a copy of "The Book Witch, the Wee White Dog and the Little Free Library" at the Rutledge Park LFL.

The Pocket Places Project hosted a book giveaway to celebrate Halloween and a fantastic new children's book all about little free libraries!

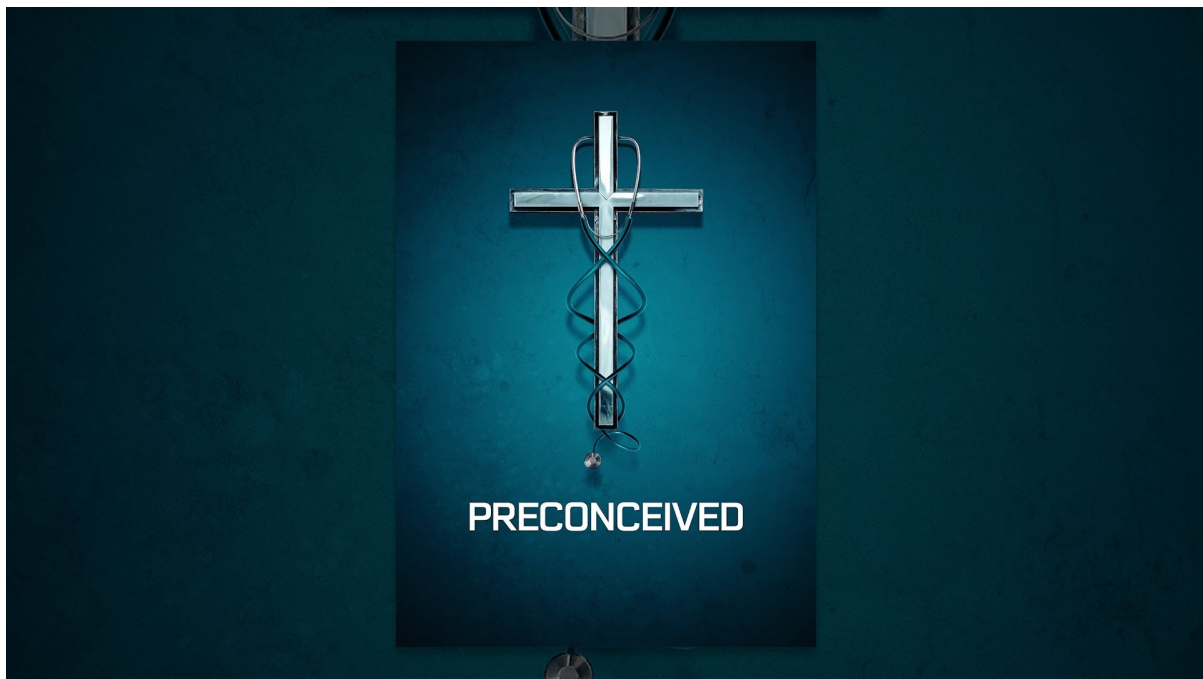
Victoria-born illustrator Tegan Thomas, hid three copies of her new book in little free libraries across the region. Tegan is the illustrator of "[The Book Witch, the Wee White](#)

[Dog and the Little Free Library](#),” written by Lana Shupe and published with Nimbus Publishing.

It is a beautiful book that tells the story of a Book Witch and her dog. After having spent a lifetime filling their sweet houseboat to the brim with books, a gust of wind and a hurt tail forces them to reconsider their collection. They set out to find new homes for the books.

Our little free library network continues to grow and help build community across the region. We are getting perilously close to the 900th LFL in our region. Stay tuned for an exciting announcement as we hit this huge milestone!

BC Humanist Research



I wear a lot of hats, and one of my roles is as the liaison between the BC Humanist Association (BCHA) Research Team and the [Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada](#) (ARCC) research group.

This December, both organizations are teaming up for a free online screening of “Preconceived” – an award-winning documentary film that will give you a raw and insightful look into the rise of anti-choice CPCs across the United States. These centres are a part of a movement striving to make abortion “unthinkable” and illegal, and the film explores the complex role of deception, finances, faith, and privacy.

“Preconceived” follows the stories of two women, Maleeha in Texas and Maria in Colorado, whose searches to terminate their unplanned pregnancies misled them to anti-abortion centres. The film also features testimonies from individuals on both sides of the issue, including leaders of the CPC industry and experts who caution why many CPC practices are problematic.

The film is available from December 1 at 12:01am ET to December 7 at 11:59 pm ET. You can [learn more about how to register here](#). And [watch a trailer here](#).

But wait, there's more! ARCC and the BCHA are co-hosting an informal discussion panel to dissect the film, and to talk about anti-choice pregnancy centres in Canada. It's on Wednesday, December 11, from 4-5pm PT. Registration is also free, and I'll be speaking on the panel. [Sign up here](#).

Last year, the BCHA and ARCC collaborated on a report investigating the websites of CPCs, and if you are interested, you can [find the report here](#). This winter, I will also be working on another report taking a deep dive into CPCs in BC. Stay tuned for more.

I hope everyone is keeping toasty as the weather gets colder, and that the wind storm wasn't too bad on your local trees.

Warm regards,



Dr. Teale Phelps Bondaroff

P.S. - If you have Saanich friends and neighbours who might like to receive these newsletter, do please share [this link](#) with them.



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