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Oak Bay News

Bowker Creek rehab plans firmed up

By [Patrick Blennerhassett - Oak Bay News](#)

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Oak Bay to continue funding restoration work on waterway

When it comes to watershed renewal, the people behind the Bowker Creek Initiative want to be prepared for what might come down the road.

Initiative co-ordinator Tanis Douglas, who presented a detailed watershed implementation plan to Oak Bay council on Monday, said the strategy takes into account four major areas: land use, a master drainage plan, environmental and social considerations.

“The whole point is to get ready for any land changes that might happen in the long term,” she said. Having conceptual plans ready will help the group be ready in the event of land ownership changes, she added.

“We’re paying close attention to places like the area around Richmond school, which is being used to house (other) schools temporarily that are going through seismic upgrades. We don’t know who’s going to own that land in the future, so we want to be prepared.”

In the short term, the group is undertaking restoration work in the creek at Monteith Street across from Fireman’s Park, starting with an ivy pull on June 27.

The plans call for removal of invasive species

and replacement with native species, as well as adding a few vegetable plots and native plant gardens, Douglas said.

Meanwhile, Oak Bay has put its stamp on further support for the Bowker Creek Initiative. At Monday's meeting, council approved funding for Douglas's position for another three years.

But Coun. John Herbert said Oak Bay is, as usual, doing more than the 18 per cent it is allocating in funding for the BCI.

The creek, which also runs through Victoria and Saanich, seems to get special attention in this neck of the woods, he said.

"I remember when I was a kid, Bowker Creek was a ditch in the road and now look at it," he said.

"(Coun.) Alan Cassidy said it best when he said we're the only municipality that considers Bowker Creek an asset."

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