

## MESSAGE FROM MAYOR STAPLES

The past few months have been undeniably tough. The rising cost of living coupled with incidents of violence, discrimination, and petty theft filling our social media feeds has weighed heavily on our collective spirit. Adding to this strain is the uncertainty fueled by threats from our neighbours to the south, testing our sense of security. It's easy to let anger take over, to lash out with blame and divisiveness, and it will take courage, strength, and resilience to work toward the deep changes needed to address the inequities and injustices faced by those who have fallen through the cracks of our system.

Community safety remains a top priority as we continue to navigate these ongoing challenges. The safety of our streets impacts the well-being of every person in our city, and we are committed to collaborating with all levels of government, the RCMP, and our community partners to support and build sustainable solutions. I understand that when we don't see immediate change in our neighbourhoods, when we witness the suffering of others and feel like nothing is being done, it can be easy to lose hope. But the truth is, in our region—just as in many places across Canada—there are dedicated individuals working tirelessly every single day to ease the impact of homelessness, mental health issues, addiction, and systemic challenges. Your neighbours, friends, and community members are advocating for solutions, and pushing for the emergency responses we need as we work toward the long-term infrastructure that will make a real difference. Imagine what it would look like if we tried to tackle this crisis alone at the local government level without the support of provincial or federal partners. The financial strain would be insurmountable. However, as a province, and as a nation, if we decided to come together and take real action, this crisis could be addressed. We must act, for the sake of everyone's health, well-being, and dignity.

While we continue to address these urgent needs, we are also facing a heavy financial burden. A significant portion of our tax increase this year, 11% of the 11.3% increase, is directly tied to increased policing costs as our city has grown past 5,000 residents and assumed additional responsibilities that were previously covered by the province. Only 0.3% of this increase goes toward other essential city services. Without the careful planning of our dedicated city staff and previous councils, we could have been looking at a tax increase of up to 30%.

As we approach a federal election, we are at a pivotal moment in history. Canadians are reflecting on our values and deciding what kind of country we are and what we want to become; focusing on what unites us rather than what divides us. Do we want to be a country that turns away from the suffering of others, pointing fingers, and placing blame? Or do we want to be a nation that looks out for one another, ensuring no one is left behind to suffer? Taking care of one of us means taking care of all of us.

I didn't want to write to you about this again as there are so many other things to share and discuss. We are so much more than the national struggles that have reached our region and small city. We reflect the heart and soul of each individual here: the small business owners and employees, the innovators, and the creators who bring life to our streets and neighbourhoods; the city workers, who ensure we have clean water, safe roads, and beautiful parks; the bylaw and RCMP officers who patrol our streets; the artists who fill our spaces with beauty; the musicians who bring us together; and the volunteers who give countless hours to make our community stronger. These are the faces of our city, the people who make this place truly special. We have always found strength in unity. Yes, we face challenges, but we are a community of people who rise to meet them, who find ways to support each other, to build solutions that bring hope and healing.

Let's continue that work together, with the same compassion and commitment that makes this small city the place we love and call home.

## COMING SOON! AUTOMATED COLLECTION SERVICE

Automated curbside collection is coming soon to the City of Duncan.

New carts and information packages will be delivered to City properties this Spring.

Please visit [bigconversations.duncan.ca/automated-curbside-collection](https://bigconversations.duncan.ca/automated-curbside-collection) for detailed information, or contact the Public Works Department at 250-746-5321 or [publicworks@duncan.ca](mailto:publicworks@duncan.ca) if you have questions.



Comments, questions, or concerns?

Visit [duncan.ca](https://duncan.ca) | Phone 250-746-6126 | Email [duncan@duncan.ca](mailto:duncan@duncan.ca)

## WATER MAIN FLUSHING

Each spring, the City conducts annual water main maintenance by flushing water through the water pipe system and out a fire hydrant. This year's water main flushing will occur from March 17 to May 30, 2025.

This program is intended to clean water distribution pipes of sediment that builds up over time. Any discoloration of water during this time can be resolved by running a cold water tap.

To find out about specific flushing dates for your street, please contact Public Works at 250-746-5321 or email [publicworks@duncan.ca](mailto:publicworks@duncan.ca).



## ENSURING SAFE DRINKING WATER

As a water utility operator, the City is regulated by the Federal government and must abide to the Canadian Drinking Water Quality Guidelines that are enforced in British Columbia by the Ministry of Health. The City has been chlorinating for the past three and a half years to protect all residents from waterborne viruses and bacteria.

The allowable range for chlorine is 0.2 – 2.0 mg/l in drinking water. The chlorine in the City's water system hovers around 0.2 mg/l, which is well below the highest limit acceptable (2.0 mg/l).

Most cities or towns in Canada use chlorine disinfectants to treat drinking water and there is no evidence that chlorine disinfectants are harmful to people when used in the small amount needed to disinfect drinking water. The taste and smell are mostly undetectable; however, if you don't like the taste or smell of chlorine in the drinking water, consider using a filter system (such as a pitcher filter) or let the water sit (in the fridge, if preferred) for a few hours to allow the chlorine to dissipate.

## STATION STREET PLACEMAKING PROJECT ALMOST COMPLETE

The Station Street Placemaking Project is on schedule, with project completion expected by April 30, 2025. When complete the park will include:



- An accessible public washroom
- Water bottle filling station and fountain
- Trees and native plant landscaping
- A new name in English and Hul'q'umi'num'
- Refurbished totem poles
- Public art
- Park lighting
- Tables and seating
- An accessible stage
- Bike racks

Visit our public engagement page for more information: [bigconversations.duncan.ca/stationstreet](https://bigconversations.duncan.ca/stationstreet).

## MARCHMONT ROAD RENEWAL

Underground utilities work is now complete as part of the Marchmont Road Renewal Project. Work will resume in the early Spring to complete the road works including full repaving and new concrete sidewalks.

You can stay up to date on all City Projects and Roadworks by signing up for e-mail updates at [duncan.ca/category/city-projects-roadwork/](https://duncan.ca/category/city-projects-roadwork/).



## INTERIM ZONING AND PARKING UPDATES TO SUPPORT HOUSING

Later this year and into 2026, the City will be undertaking a comprehensive update to the Zoning Bylaw, which regulates land use, parking requirements for new development, and other aspects of development.

In advance of those more significant updates, the City is considering a smaller number of strategic updates to the zoning and parking regulations in April of this year to align the Zoning Bylaw with Duncan's Official Community Plan to support new investments in housing, and to fulfill the City's commitments under the Housing Accelerator Fund Program ([bigconversations.duncan.ca/HAF](https://bigconversations.duncan.ca/HAF)).

To learn more about the interim updates and determine if the updates will impact your property, please visit [bigconversations.duncan.ca/zoning](https://bigconversations.duncan.ca/zoning).