

## Youth Outreach May 2018

Eric Diller, Sidney Community Association board member, spoke to grade 10 and 11 Social Studies classes at Parkland Secondary School this month about the municipal election. Topics included a brief description of the differences in mandate of federal, provincial and municipal levels of government; why the main stream media doesn't cover municipal affairs very well, and how municipal laws affect the built environment that students observe around them.

He also talked about why some of the things students see now are radically different from how they have traditionally been in cities and towns, and the role of municipal government in making those changes. He also described some of the outcomes of these changes such as public transit and changes in the cost of living.

Finally, because the students are too young to vote, he suggested some strategies for them to participate in the election:

1. Get involved in your local community association: North Saanich Residents Association, Sidney Community Association or the Central Saanich Community Association. Other relevant groups include the Victoria Cycling Coalition, the Better Transit Alliance or Island Transformations.
2. Learn Learn, Learn!!! Learn about candidates - sometimes difficult because they all seem to say the same thing. Most people who are re-elected are re-elected because many voters don't know who the alternatives are, so they vote for a familiar name without really knowing what that person has actually done.
3. If you like what a particular candidate is offering, volunteer to help with their campaign. There is lots to do: door knocking, sign delivery and installation and removal, phoning, etc.
4. Talk to your parents, grand parents, neighbours, friends' parents.
5. Write to your Town Council - don't state your age, just that you are a resident. Stating your age allows people to blow you off as too young to know anything.
6. Write on social media, online forums, to the newspapers. Again, Eric's advice was not to mention your age. Age does not define what you know or the value of your opinion.
7. Can't drive? Find someone who may not vote and offer to take care of their kids while they do it. Talk to them about who you would vote for if you could, and why.
8. If you can drive, offer to give someone a ride to the voting booth. Tell them who you would vote for yourself, especially if they are undecided about who to vote for.