



Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society

Dedicated to Protecting Victoria's Living Artifact

July 19, 2026

Mayor and Council
District of Saanich

Re: Support for the Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Tree Motion

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing in support of Councillor Nathalie Chambers' motion on the July 20, 2026, Council agenda to endorse the principles of the **Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Tree** and explore how they may be reflected in Saanich's planning and policy framework.

As a Director of the Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society (GOMPS), I welcome this opportunity to recognize trees not only for the services they provide, but also as living beings with ecological, cultural, and community value. The motion does not create new legal rights; rather, it asks staff to consider how these principles could inform the ongoing Tree Protection Bylaw update, Urban Forest Strategy, Official Community Plan, and related planning processes.

I was encouraged to learn that **Terrasse-Vaudreuil, Quebec**, recently became the first municipality in Canada to endorse the Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Tree. Saanich now has an opportunity to thoughtfully consider whether these principles can help strengthen the protection and stewardship of our urban forest, particularly our globally rare Garry oak ecosystems.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Carollyne Yardley
Director, Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society (GOMPS)