
From: Legislative Services email
Subject: FW: James Bay OCP Plans

From: L H
Sent: September 5, 2025 11:46 AM
To: email@publichearings.ca; Victoria Mayor and Council <mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca>
Subject: Fwd: James Bay OCP Plans

Hello,

I am writing to voice my grave concerns over proposed changes to the James Bay's Official Community Plan.

With the upzoning proposed to all single family and duplex properties allowing four to six stories amongst other changes this will drastically change the neighbourly feel of James Bay with character homes being torn down and new tall apartment builds going up in all areas of the community. Many of these old homes have multiple units, suites that rent at affordable rates. This will also mean demolishing the beautiful character homes that characterize James Bay as well as many of the trees and urban canopy within the community. Please remember that James Bay is the oldest neighbourhood on the West Coast of North America North of San Francisco. Our tourism industry uses James Bay as a focus for tourism.

I urge City Council to not allow for this upzoning throughout James Bay. Instead of allowing it to result in the demolition and complete change of our neighbourhood to instead encourage growth of multi family, affordable units by allowing for more suites within existing character homes and secondary small homes on properties. We do not want to see James Bay be ruined by turning it from a neighborhood to a downtown style setting. This zoning also unfairly targets James Bay, a community which has taken on more than it's fair share of high density. We are 40% denser than other Victoria communities!

Please respect my neighbourhood of James Bay, a community that is like no other and one that us James Bayers love to call home!

Lara Hurrell
James Bay resident

From: Steve Bokor

Sent: September 5, 2025 4:50 PM

To: Victoria Mayor and Council <mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca>

Subject: updated official community plan

I am writing as a property owner and tax payer in the city of Victoria to voice my opposition to your updated official community plan. What we have seen over the last five plus yeas has been a complete disaster for maintaining the atmosphere and neighbourhood spirit in our city. Take Cook Street Village as an example. Traffic has ground to a near standstill since you allowed increased housing density without the corresponding number of parking spots. Southbound drivers used to be able to sit in a left turn lane in order to park at the Beagle or Root cellar. That is gone thanks to the idiotic island in the middle of the intersection. There used to be a perfectly good traffic light to regulate the movement of cars. Now it backs up three blocks as drivers get stuck trying to cross oncoming traffic along with pedestrians moving both East/West and North South.

And forget about getting a street parking spot if you want to go to the Beagle unless you want to pay loan shark rates to the parking demons running the lot on the back of Rexall. You may recall I predicted all of this when you approved a rezoning application for a 5 story building on the West Side of Cook across from the root cellar. The last time I tried to meet friends for a drink I had to park 3 blocks away in a quasi residential parking spot only.

You rocket scientists seem to forget that Cook Street is a major artery for residents of Fairfield and we now see commuters using Vancouver Street (the designated bike lane route which I use when I cycle). Speaking of stupidity. You have blocked off Fairfield Road at Cook Street, Richardson is now also blocked off, which means everyone needing to access Fairfield must come through Cook Street Village and use May Street or Dallas Road to get home every day. Either that or zig zag their way from Rockland or for those on the Eastern boundary, Richmond Avenue.

By the way I hear you are planning on increasing the density of Richmond Ave from Oak Bay Ave, South to Richardson. SHAME ON YOU. There is a school there with parents dropping off and picking up children there every school day.

Your utopian view of increased density without cars in most areas of Victoria are turning our streets into dangerous, narrow corridors with parked cars lining the roads in every direction.

Have you driven down St Charles, Pemberton since you allowed developers to run rampant in this neighbourhood? You don't need to post 30KM signs on these streets because drivers are paralysed with fear of hitting an elderly neighbour or grandchild with all of the cars on the road, not to mention the horrible deer situation in this city.

I cannot wait to see how much gridlock will develop once you redevelop Harris Green with minimal parking spots.

And what kind of lunacy is your plan for increased density on Dallas Road?? The street is already a virtual parking lot as weekend dog walkers hit the off-leash area along the waterfront.

AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST, PLEASE INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PARKING SPOTS ON CLOVER POINT. Moss street is a complete cluster**&CK thanks to the city digging a hole at the intersection of Moss and May Street, not to mention the pile of dirt at the intersection of Dallas Road and Moss Street. What is the point of doing a project if you don't have all of the pipes and valves ready at the time you commence the dig?? Don't forget you rocket scientists also blocked off Fairfield road for god knows how long sending the drivers down to May Street to go east bound. It is only a matter of time before someone gets hit by a car there.

YOU need to stop and think about creating density in areas where the roads cannot support the existing traffic congestion. Adding more homes will only make it worse and destroy our neighbourhood completely.

If you continue to move in this direction I will be forced to sell my 100-year home to a developer so that they can knock it down and put up a four plex and I use the money to move to another part of the island.

Thank you.

PS I cannot make the meeting on the 11th so I am hoping at least one council member responds with a clear and logical answer to my queries and observations and make note I object to the increased density plan you are trying to execute.

There are numerous areas along the waterfront that could see major developments much like Granville Island was redeveloped in the 1970's and 1980s. that allowed the city to keep low density housing in areas like upper Kitsilano and from Arbutus to Dunbar from 11th ave to 41st as is. No wait, there are two huge towers being developed on Arbutus and 29th that mark my words will destroy the ambience of the neighbourhood. But at least they are putting some parking spots underneath.

If you allow the developers to destroy Fairfield, you will have removed an area that has remained constant for over 100 years.

Steve Bokor CFA®
Portfolio Manager, Branch Supervisor

From:
To: [Public Hearings](#)
Subject: A paradise for land-developers, a hell for citizens
Date: September 6, 2025 9:04:11 AM

Dear Victoria Mayor and Councillors,

As a resident of an old multiplex in Rockland, I beg you to come to your senses and cancel your misguided new community plan. Allowing developers a free hand in extracting wealth from beautiful treed neighbourhoods like Rockland harms everybody (except the developers themselves).

This new OCP is an outrageous misuse of your power, and will destroy Victoria's communal assets a hundred years in the making. Healthy green neighbourhoods, the ones people want to live in, take decades to evolve; neighbourhoods like Rockland have been allowed to flourish because limits have been placed on the rapaciousness of capitalist enterprises like land-development companies. Left to their own devices, developers will build 18 stories everywhere, right to the property line; they make the most profit that way.

Why would you want to grant such profit-making entities near-total freedom in shaping the future of our city? Are you Trumpists? Do you hate trees? Do you have relatives in the real-estate, construction, and land-development industries? Do you love concrete? Are you contemplating a career in the air-conditioning industry after you leave City Hall?

Your plan to remove existing limits on the greed of land-developers will have major adverse consequences for all Victorians: 1) currently affordable streets like Oak Bay Avenue and neighbourhoods like Rockland will become unaffordable to all but the very rich; 2) the renters who currently make up over 75% of the people living in Rockland will be made homeless thanks to you as developers are allowed to buy up and tear down their affordable multiplexes to make way for expensive new apartments and condos; 3) the irreplaceable shade canopy so crucial for life in cities in the coming years will be destroyed; 4) a handful of developers and their families will be vastly enriched while the rest of us are impoverished by the loss of Victoria's commonly held, life-enhancing assets: its leafy neighbourhoods, its beautiful old buildings, its 100-year-old trees and gardens, and, above all, its affordable, multi-tenanted living spaces.

With all due respect, it is apparent that you have been brainwashed by the PR machines of local developers into believing that unfettered development in the oldest and most beautiful neighbourhoods of the city will somehow fix the housing crisis. It will not. As independent economists and policy analysts have amply demonstrated, new construction in established, desirable neighbourhoods ends up being much more expensive than the existing housing in such places, and disadvantages the poor.

It's not too late; you've all but drunk the Developers' Kool-Aid. But you don't have to swallow it!

Yours in the hope that sanity will, at the last moment, prevail,
Jennifer.

Dr. Jennifer Wise
Associate Professor Emeritus

Department of Theatre
University of Victoria
Victoria, British Columbia
Canada V8W 2Y2
Songhees, Esquimalt & WSÁNEĆ Traditional Lands

From:
To: [Public Hearings](#)
Subject: OCP Public Hearing
Date: September 6, 2025 2:05:13 PM

Hello City of Victoria Staff

I own a home in Victoria and I live in this home.

I am very concerned about the cost of living for the citizens of Victoria especially those that are renters.

It seems the municipal government (MG) wants to alter bylaws to make it easier for developers to build housing that is 4 storeys and taller.

There is a belief that there is not enough housing in Victoria.

I heard the rental vacancy rate was 2.6% in December 2024 and that a healthy vacancy rate for any city is 3%.

I don't want to make it even easier for developers to build housing that is 4 storeys and taller between now and 2050 because I don't believe this will decrease the cost of living for the citizens of Victoria.

If they are building condos to sell, I think most renters can not afford to buy them.

I believe that the people who can afford to buy and become landlords are charging too much for rent.

If the developers are building condos and they themselves are renting them out, I think they will be charging too much for rent.

Current rental rates are lower than they were a year ago and that's good.

I don't think we need to change the current bylaws.

What I do believe is most employers in Victoria are not paying their staff enough.

Regardless of whether these are companies that have 5 employees or 500 employees in Victoria, I think they should be paid at least \$20 an hour.

Yours truly, Connie Low

From:
To: [Public Hearings](#)
Subject: Trees matter!!!!
Date: September 6, 2025 7:14:40 PM

Existing mature trees MUST be allowed to live & thrive now, no matter what developers want. They don't care about trees!!! They are intent on raping the earth for their greedy insatiable profits.

WE'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS INSANITY in BC, & on planet Earth.

Every single tree is precious beyond compare, & must be protected from these corrupt cruel mindless corporations NOW!!!

Please strengthen & enforce diligently Tree Protection NOW!!!!

YESSSSSSSSS!!!! Create an Urban Forest Technical Advisory group NOW!!!

Our exquisitely beautiful & diverse province has already suffered enough destruction of green space & cruel murder of our precious trees!!

We need trees to breathe!!

Stop violating our human rights to support scammers intent on rape.
Protect the Divine Earth Mother with all we have left!!!

For the Love of BC & her exquisite forests,

Dawn Atargatis

From:
To: [Public Hearings](#)
Subject: Victoria's Official Community Plan Update
Date: September 6, 2025 11:35:52 PM

Dear Council...

I felt I couldn't take on the stress of trying to save more trees because inspite of clear arguments against this destruction, the healthy trees in question were chopped down. But, I would feel worse if I didn't try again..

Please re-consider the drastic plan I believe you wish to impose on our community by greatly reducing protection for the precious trees while greatly increasing the density of 6 story housing in our city.

It already takes a great deal of time to get out of James Bay by car when I have to drive my brother, who has special needs, to appointments, etc. Traffic jams often occur in front of The Empress and now the southern part of Blanshard. Many drivers are stressed with these jams. Also, it's actually quite risky being a pedestrian these days with all the traffic and many drivers who don't obey the traffic laws: like stopping at pedestrian crosswalks, stopping at red lights, stop signs etc. I'm on full alert, when walking beside my brother on his mobility scooter, as I have to assess if drivers will be courteous to him and follow the laws as we cross at designated crosswalks and intersections. Increasing density in James Bay will only make things more difficult with more drivers. Many cyclists are quite aggressive too and disobey rules and ride too fast. We are grateful for courteous people out there and we show it by waving at their kindness and awareness of us.

Please help us mere pedestrians and occasional drivers... seniors and us with special needs as we navigate through an increasingly difficult journey throughout the city. Along the way, trees provide us with shade and beauty as we go about this journey in our city. Think of the hot days we had this summer. Think of the mature trees that gave us respite from the direct sun. Please help us and find the right mix.

Yours sincerely,
Janet Borlase
James Bay resident
Humbled to live on the territory of The Lekwungen speaking Peoples

From:
To: [Public Hearings](#)
Subject: protecting large trees while increasing density
Date: September 6, 2025 9:22:50 AM

Hi. I wanted to express my concern over the new OCP. Urban forests are a proven asset for community health. It is possible to protect existing mature trees as well as planting trees that will be large in the future while also increasing density. It might cost a little more but the long term benefits offset those expenses.

Please ensure the new plan protects Victoria's urban forest. We will all benefit from this critical urban asset.

Thank you,

Sheryl Sackman

Subject: Official Community Plan. September 11
Date: September 7, 2025 7:51:28 PM

Mayor and Council seemingly fail to recognize that James Bay is not just another residential neighbourhood but, along with downtown, is a critical economic driver of the city.

It is home to an active port with two international ferries, a heliport, a major cruise ship terminal, the Canadian Coastguard, border security services, high tech enterprises, a fishing fleet and fish processing, as well as numerous marine industries. There are approximately 100 visitor accommodations ranging from large international hotels to family owned BnB's, plus multiple long term care and supportive living facilities. Numerous restaurants, cafes, pubs, stores and personal services call James Bay home. Not to mention the tourist attractions and providers ranging from the Royal BC Museum and the Provincial Legislature to whale watching, foodie tours and everything in between. Thousands of Victorians are employed by the private and public sector in James Bay providing good, long term jobs. It also has a residential density that is 36% higher than the Victoria average. The Lekwungen people occupied James Bay for thousands of years and it is the oldest residential area on the west coast north of San Francisco. It is a place of national importance and international repute.

This means that James Bay has a very complex and diverse demographic, and has to accommodate an equally complex traffic and pedestrian mix. This includes 53ft semi trailers, tractor trailers, delivery trucks, trades vans, medium-heavy duty vehicles, tourist buses, transit buses, handyDART, commercial vehicles, recreational vehicles of all shapes and sizes, mini buses, taxis and Uber, limos, Government cavalcades, security vehicles, personal vehicles, emergency vehicles, pedicabs, rickshaws, golf carts, horse carriages, mobility scooters, cargo bikes, pedal bikes, all forms of e-machines and, last but not least, pedestrians. Pedestrians are not a homogenous entity but include seniors, many who use walkers and stability aids, wheelchair users, young families with strollers, daycare children, school groups, runners, sightseers, walking clubs, guided tours etc.

The City has already closed Government Street and reduced Blanshard to a single lane in each direction. The OCP intends to close Douglas Street northbound at Belleville so BC Transit can park up to 13 buses outside the Crystal Gardens and the new signature Telus Ocean building opposite the Convention Centre which itself is another major economic driver. This is despite the fact that the distance between Belleville and Burdett is insufficient to safely fit 13 buses and the de-facto downtown bus exchange is by the Bay Centre. In addition, 500 buses a day will loop south along the single lane Blanshard to Superior and back down Douglas. This loop encompasses high rise apartments that include senior accommodations as well as the culturally important Thunderbird Park.

Any casual observer standing at the intersection of Belleville and Blanshard can see that the new single lane "road improvement" on Blanshard between Belleville and Courtney cannot handle the existing traffic let alone traffic diverted from Douglas. Putting in additional traffic lights will only make things worse as there is not enough lane storage between intersections. Consequently, the closure of Douglas and the new bus loop will cause gridlock within James Bay similar to Wharf Street. This gridlock and the lack of egress from the neighbourhood will endanger all residents and workers. Along with the new parking restrictions, it will increase the cost of doing business in the inner harbour/downtown core making it even more unaffordable for residents and commercial enterprises. More shoppers will avoid downtown and go to the malls. More businesses will fail or move away creating a viscous circle.

The same observer can see that the holly hedge alongside St Ann's Academy on Blanshard by Humboldt is already covered in particulate filth from the diesel emissions as trucks and buses have to accelerate up the hills in either direction. The east side of James Bay has a population density more than double many of the residential neighbourhoods such as Gonzales and Fernwood and all these residents have to breathe this pollution every day. The closure of Douglas and the bus loop will increase the air and noise pollution.

St Ann's is a national historic site. Emily Carr lived in James Bay. The OCP fails to protect the history of James Bay or respect the First Nation ties to this area. Instead it encourages the development of 6-12 storey sterile monolithic apartment buildings filled with shoe box sized "residences" that, developers in Vancouver now admit, no-one wants

and are not buying. This will destroy the unique nature of James Bay that draws visitors to the City.

6-12 storey buildings need substantial mechanical systems. All mechanical systems produce heat. The bigger building footprints reduce the green space and mature tree cover. As a result, the city heat island effect will increase while diminishing the natural cooling provided by the Juan de Fuca straight waters thereby undermining climate adaptation efforts.

Quite simply, the OCP will stifle James Bay and downtown. It will make them less attractive as places to live, work and play. Where then will the people of Victoria work and where will the City get the revenue to keep the lights on?

Douglas Street is the TransCanada highway that goes from coast to coast. It is marked by Terry Fox memorials at the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Except that that under this plan it won't. All Canadians should be ashamed.

Only weeks after stating that downtown Victoria is in crisis, will you have the courage and integrity to admit that the "one size fits all" approach of the OCP is fundamentally flawed? Will you follow the lead of Saanich and instruct staff to go back and actually listen to residents and business owners rather than pursue their predetermined "solutions"? Or will you rubber stamp the OCP with platitudes about what a great job staff have done? Do you want to rejuvenate Victoria as one of the great vibrant small oceanfront cities of the world or will you put in motion its demise and decay?

Fundamentally, are you going to seek re-election in a year's time as independent thinkers truly representing the best interests of the citizens of Victoria or as sycophants in the pockets of the developers and lobby groups?

Alan Humphries
James Bay

From:
To: [Public Hearings](#)
Subject: Nurturing biodiversity
Date: September 7, 2025 11:04:39 AM

How dare you think of murdering another tree?!????!!!!!!

Trees are my best friends!!!
STOP killing them now, for the developers convenience

Trees are valuable resources being ravished by the greedy lumber industry
Each tree left in Victoria, in BC, on Earth, is so precious. Precious beyond compare

Trees provide food & shelter for wildlife.
Trees keep our air fresh & alive!
Trees provide cooling shade!
Trees provide employment.
Trees beautify the landscape.
Trees attract tourists.

Developers must stop all tree removal now.

Sincerely,
Dawn Atargatis

From:
To: [Public Hearings](#)
Subject: Public Comment for Hearing - Sept. 11, 2025 - Zoning Bylaw Changes
Date: September 7, 2025 3:09:43 PM

To Mayor and Council,

I am writing in strong support of the proposed zoning bylaw changes before you.

We are decades past the point where fears of “over-providing” housing with lax zoning rules could be justified. Victoria has been in a housing crisis for as long as I can remember, and we are now in such a deep hole that bold, decisive action is required. Upzoning is a necessary step to provide the homes our community desperately needs.

As a 27-year-old professional, I feel myself being squeezed out of this city despite having a good-paying job. Suitable, stable housing remains out of reach, and the life I want to lead — one rooted in walkable urbanism, a low carbon footprint, and a strong sense of community — feels increasingly unattainable. My friends and peers, many of whom earn less than I do, often face even greater uncertainty. It is painful to see this precarity grow year after year.

Other similar jurisdictions such as New Zealand, as well as long-standing pro-housing zoning codes ranging from Europe to Asia, have shown the positive effects of zoning reform: more housing options, greater affordability for both renters and owners, and stronger, more resilient communities. Victoria cannot afford to fall further behind.

Finally, I want to stress that the majority of voters in the last election put housing first. We voted for more housing, more density, and more choice in how and where we live. For too long, zoning decisions made decades ago — long before my generation had any say — have limited our options. Now is the time to correct course.

Please act boldly and adopt this bylaw.

Sincerely,
Jack Forgrave

From: [Janet Pelley](#)
To: [Jeremy Caradonna \(Councillor\)](#); [Marianne Alto \(Mayor\)](#); [Official Community Plan Update](#); [Public Hearings](#)
Subject: feedback on the OCP, Sept 11 hearing
Date: September 7, 2025 2:58:18 PM

Dear Councillor Caradonna, Mayor Alto, and hearing officials,

I live in the Fairfield neighbourhood and have watched with distress as escalating land prices and explosive growth in wealth inequality have driven low- and middle-income residents out of our city because they can't find budget-friendly homes. I had hoped that our city council's proposed Official Community Plan (OCP) would tackle the housing affordability crisis. Instead, the OCP promotes housing for the wealthy that serves developers, not the folks who need affordable nonprofit and co-op housing.

The OCP is based on the myth of trickle-down housing, which holds that increasing the supply of housing will eventually drive down prices. A large body of research shows this supply argument to be false. For instance, a recent study shows that while new home builds in Vancouver have far outpaced population growth for decades, housing prices have continued to sky-rocket. In fact, increasing housing supply could even worsen affordability by triggering market speculation and inflation of land prices, according to housing experts in a recent open letter to BC Premier David Eby.

Another concern I have is that the OCP will encourage demolition, not preservation of existing affordable housing units. My neighbourhood hosts many rambling old homes that provide relatively low rents to tenants who bring welcome diversity to the area. When these homes are eventually sold, the OCP does nothing to ensure that they continue to provide affordable housing. Rather, the OCP creates incentives for their loss. A shabby old home in an over-heated land market is destined for demolition, especially when the OCP says that it can be replaced by multi-story complexes priced for the wealthy. This kind of zoning will inflate land values, promote speculation, and drive demovictions.

Finally, the rigidity and one-size-fits-all approach of the zones in the proposed OCP completely eliminates any flexibility to take local context and concerns into account. Once the OCP becomes official, there is no chance for local communities to have any input on the form of development in their area.

As our City Council prepares for a public hearing on September 11, I urge you all to jettison the proposed OCP and its flawed assertion that ramping up housing supply is the pathway to affordable homes. City Council should revamp the OCP by allowing more civic input for the form of development, putting affordability first, preserving existing affordable homes, and boosting investment in public, nonprofit housing.

Best,
Janet Pelley
1317 Point St.
Victoria, BC V8S 1A4

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Janet Pelley [she/her]

1317 Point St.

Victoria, British Columbia V8S 1A4

Canada

September 7, 2025

RE: 2050 Victoria Official Community Plan

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to express my disappointment and opposition to the draft 2050 Victoria Official Community Plan.

The draft presents an inadequate understanding of the issues facing our city, proposing ideological rather than pragmatic solutions.

While the draft correctly identifies housing as a central issue to be addressed, the proposed solution of extreme densification, which demands four and six-storey buildings and allows tens-of-storey buildings, will provide more supply but will not address the real problem of affordability. Unfortunately, the rental stock (and rents) is controlled oligopolistically by a handful of property management entities who set the rents. Furthermore, the envisioned extreme densification will further increase the price of land, directly impacting the price of housing.

This environment is highly advantageous to developers who have lobbied strenuously in its favour. The Council has not insulated itself from the decision-making and the influence of the developer industry. The draft OCP still involves the Council in cases of rezoning or variance (page 53).

The proposed draft OCP envisions an idealized future city where interconnected local villages and town centres provide services and activities to their residents. While this vision is promising, it presents an unrealistic goal. Such an environment can be designed if one begins with a blank slate. However, the draft OCP fails to account for the existing built environment, including its networks of streets and services.

Densifying the existing environment to the extreme will introduce more challenges than solve existing ones. Existing streets are narrow, and allowing high-rises along narrow streets will create dark, windy, and unwelcoming corridors. Imperial capitals like Paris and Vienna are adorned with wide boulevards that were constructed centuries ago after the complete destruction of existing neighbourhoods and buildings (as exemplified by Haussmann's reconstruction of Paris). Victoria is not an imperial capital and cannot afford the cost of such drastic interventions.

The introduction of green corridors may sound appealing, but implementing this requires removing the streets on which they are to be established away from their intended use, namely transportation. The planners seem to have been inspired by such corridors in cities like New York or Paris. However, the fallacy lies in the fact that the green corridors there were established on abandoned rail and did not diminish the active transportation infrastructure.

The proposed extreme densification is predicated on highly optimistic projections of population growth. The draft OCP accepts (page 30) without evidence a population increase for the next 30 years (2021-2050) of 47,000 (94,900 to 142,000). However, in the past 50 years (1971-2021), Victoria's population grew by only 30,000 (61,761 to 91,876) (Wikipedia). Furthermore, the population growth of the Central Region of the District of Columbia was a mere 0.75% in 2024-2025 (<https://www.macrotrends.net/global-metrics/cities/20405/victoria/population#:~:text=The current metro area population,a 1.03% increase from 2021.>)

The persistent emphasis on low-carbon transportation solutions is commendable. However, the interpretation of this policy presents a car- and bus-averse environment, favouring cycling, rolling, and walking (page 101). The assumption is that 55% of all trips will be of these short-range types. The vision then becomes one of confining the population within their neighbourhoods. Transit is projected to account for only 25% of trips by 2050 (an overly optimistic projection). The aversion to cars is reflected in the 20% of the other category, which presumably includes car-sharing and taxi services. This is a fallacy, as in a modern society, it is crucial for the population to maintain close contact with both near and far. Electrification of cars and buses is indeed a low-carbon solution, and it has been adopted at a remarkable pace.

Car-averse policies envision the elimination of parking in new developments, the closure of roads to traffic other than cycling, and extreme densification.

Through these policies, the extreme density will be concentrated in specific neighbourhoods (e.g., James Bay), while more affluent areas will continue to be less densely populated. Car and truck ownership is a necessity for professional employment, resulting in streets that are doubly parked and extreme congestion. Residents would avoid these areas in favour of less dense, less expensive areas further away and not within Victoria itself.

Victoria is not isolated; rather, it is integrated with several other municipalities within the Central Region of Development (CRD), each of which is preparing its own OCP. However, no coordination appears to be evident, and policies and targets may be contradictory.

Victoria is serviced by the Victoria International Airport and BC Ferries from Swartz Bay. The OCP does not address how to improve access to these facilities. There is no public transit serving the airport, and it takes as long to cross Victoria as it would to drive the rest of the way to the airport!

James Bay, the oldest neighbourhood in Victoria, boasts numerous historically significant locations and edifices. However, the draft OCP fails to adequately address these considerations.

Furthermore, it is concerning that such a comprehensive document as the draft OCP, which has the potential to profoundly alter the city's character and environment, has been prepared with such haste and with minimal public input.

In light of these concerns, I respectfully propose that a robust public consultation and draft improvement process be initiated before the adoption of a revised OCP that preserves the city's unique character and implements realistic and effective solutions to the high cost of housing.

Sincerely,
Nikitas Dimopoulos, PhD, P.Eng.
149 Medana Street
Victoria

From:
To: [Public Hearings](#)
Subject: 11 Sept Public Hearing Draft OCP
Date: September 7, 2025 6:22:27 AM

To Mayor and Council,

I have several concerns regarding the draft Official Community Plan. These are not limited to the items outlined below, but they are too numerous to detail fully within this correspondence. My foremost concern is the process the City has undertaken in developing this document.

The Official Community Plan is a living document that serves as a sort of “contract” between the City, the Community, and the Development Industry. It is evident—from both documentation and statements made during Committee of the Whole meetings—that the City and some Councillors have engaged formally and informally with the Development Industry and its advocates before, during, and after Staff presentations to Council on the draft OCP. However, the third key stakeholder group, the very residents who elected you, and whom you were elected to serve, has been substantially shut out of the process until the public hearing.

The Province of BC outlines the process* for developing an OCP as follows:

1. Research
2. Technical analysis
3. Preparation of a draft bylaw
4. Decisions about which persons, organizations, and authorities to consult
5. One or more opportunities for consultation and engagement
6. Possible revisions to the bylaw
7. A series of formal bylaw readings
8. A public hearing
9. A fourth reading of the bylaw (adoption)

All Stakeholder groups are clearly meant to be consulted and engaged after the draft OCP has been prepared. Yet in this case, the City consulted the Community beforehand. While Council members were afforded time to provide ideas and suggestions on the draft OCP (consistent with the standard three phase engagement approach) with Staff reporting back a month later, no equivalent opportunity was extended to the public, as we were relegated to a compressed “single stream engagement” approach.

Since the last two phases were skipped, I would expect that the 11 September 2025 public hearing will be paused and used as an opportunity to collect community feedback, and that Staff will be directed to report back to the community in a month’s time on public input, before the bylaw proceeds to

another/continued public hearing. If that is an unworkable option, the City must find another approach to rectify the problem of no proper public consultation and engagement with the Community on the draft OCP.

Vision

The “One City, One Plan” approach does not reflect the unique character and identity of our neighbourhood villages. Staff has acknowledged that we are a “City of Villages,” and historically this has been captured in our OCP. Eliminating Local Area Plans may streamline the planning process, but it results in a generic, soulless framework. The character-defining aspects of LAPs must be integrated into the OCP.

Rezoning and Development Policy

The absence of specific, quantified limits on height and density, along with other vagaries, such as boundaries for “Node Areas,” and whether or not (the failed practice of) Land Lift Analyses will continue, instead a specific per square foot dollar amount collected for bonus density over base density (in addition to the new ACCs), etc, undermines certainty for all stakeholders. Ambiguity and general qualitative information permits OCP requirements to be reinterpreted over time by different staff or different applicants. Communities need and deserve confidence in a process and plan that are consistent, transparent, and reliable. Land use and decisions about future development should not happen behind closed doors using a black box formula. It’s a tidy way to avoid OCP amendments, in order to sidestep public hearings, but it is not good governance.

Heritage

Heritage protections are also inadequate for existing heritage and for adding new properties to the heritage designation and registry. Whether heritage properties exist in small clusters or in broader enclaves, the draft OCP fails to provide clear direction on how they will be identified, preserved, and enhanced. The mechanisms to protect, preserve and rehabilitate heritage assets must also continue to be reviewed and arbitrated in public by a qualified body of experts with decisions based on the National Standards and Guidelines in order to meet the interconnected goals of maintaining our cultural/historical identity, providing unique educational opportunities, while reaping the economic benefits related to tourism and investment, ensuring urban liveability and environmental sustainability and resilience.

Urban Forest, Parks and Green Spaces

Equally concerning is the lack of protection for the city’s urban forest; our tree canopy most of which exists on private property. By recommending higher site coverage with smaller setbacks and perimeter block housing forms, the draft OCP jeopardizes existing trees on private property and threatens critical root zones of boulevard trees. As new construction threatens existing tree canopy and green space, the

creation of additional parks becomes even less attainable. This contradicts one of the stated goals of the OCP and ignores the disproportionate harm borne by equity-seeking communities during events such as COVID-19, the 2021 heat dome, and in the face of the ongoing urban heat island effect.

Regarding parks and green space, our plazas and other hardscaped areas are not adequate substitutes. The City's mapping should accurately reflect how much usable green space exists in each community. If the base data is flawed, then the needs assessment and resulting policy will also be flawed. The fact that the City consistently refers to, and maps, concrete areas such as Centennial Square as "parks" only elicits more public frustration and distrust.

In closing, the draft OCP in its current form falls short of its responsibility to balance the needs of the development industry with the values and well-being of the community it is meant to serve. The process has lacked meaningful public consultation at a critical stage, and the plan itself is vague where it must provide clarity, weak where it must provide protections, and generic where it must reflect the unique identity of our neighbourhoods. I urge Council to pause, correct these deficiencies, and ensure that this OCP truly reflects the voices, priorities, and character of the communities of this city.

Regards,

Wendy Bowkett

Resident of the City of Victoria

From:
To: [Public Hearings; Victoria Mayor and Council](#)
Subject: Comments on the motions in the Sept 11 COTW
Date: September 8, 2025 7:07:02 PM

I submitted a pre-recorded video submission in support of the OCP. However, I also wanted to comment on the last-minute motion by Councillor Gardiner around declaring associations.

Although I'm sure it's not the Councillor's intent, I'm very concerned that this motion, given that all the examples included are generally going to be pro-housing, will cast all pro-housing voices as "nefarious developer shills" while leaving anti-housing voices as "just concerned citizens".

I'm pro-housing *because* I'm a concerned citizen - I believe in building communities that serve the people and making sure we have an abundance of housing options so younger people don't have to go through what I did.

I think even considering these motions so close to the OCP, without proper notice, sets the stage to poison the conversation in similar ways to what's happened in Saanich.

Best regards,
Christine Astle

Also in case my video did not come through, this is basically my comments:
My name is Christine Astle. I live near Shelbourne and MacKenzie - given the harassment some people who've spoken out in favour of housing have received in Saanich, I don't feel comfortable being more specific. And yes, I'm speaking in support of the OCP.

That said, I admit I'm disappointed that it didn't go further, that it doesn't allow 6 storeys everywhere. I worry that this will leave us in the same place as the Missing Middle Housing Initiative did - a place where building that housing is not feasible and so doesn't move the needle.

I understand if, after the Quadra MacKenzie circus in Saanich, Victoria staff are, pardon the phrase, 'gun shy'. However, there are Saanich residents like myself who are exceptionally disappointed with what's happening now in Saanich, with the revision of the QMP.

You might say, this is about Victoria, not Saanich. And yes, it is. I've been looking to Victoria as a beacon of hope, of what we could have, and, when it's time to move on from my condo, as the place that I would want to move to. Which is why I'm disappointed the potential for housing is limited in so many areas. I'd much rather gentle density across the city than the 'grand bargain' of towers only on our busiest streets so we don't have to impact single family home owners.

However, I hope that, unlike the missing middle initiative, this provides us a good foundation for moving forward.

Housing aside, I love that the plan continues to lean into low-carbon, lower resource intensive methods of transportation. Given that the non-personal vehicle mode share for Victoria was already 54% in the last Origin-Destination survey and a growing number of households are

car-free or car-lite, we're well on our way. And based on the counters on bike lanes it seems like many of the new bike lanes have picked up riders while the older routes hold steady, which really speaks to the pent up demand. When I come into Victoria, I almost always cycle. Though I appreciate the recognition that loading spaces are needed.

Overall, I urge Council to move forward with this plan. If anything, I urge you to be bolder on housing.

1790 Carrick Street
Victoria BC V8R 2M2

September 8, 2025

Mayor Marianne Alto and Council
City of Victoria
#1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

RE: Response To City of Victoria's Draft Official Community Plan

Dear Mayor Alto and Council:

I am writing to express my considerable concern regarding the City of Victoria's Draft Official Community Plan (OCP) prompted by the public hearing scheduled for September 11, 2025. In spite of the troubling fact that word on the street is Victorians are wasting their time registering concerns with current Council (e.g., "they rubber stamp everything," "no real consultation"), I am nevertheless moved to lend my voice to an apparently unheard chorus of dissent.

I am the owner of 1790 Carrick Street, a designated heritage house located in the North Jubilee neighbourhood, an area that the draft OCP identifies as a Priority Growth Area. My house is the first property on Carrick Street off Richmond and thus would be profoundly affected by future development along the Richmond corridor. Aryze Development currently has a rezoning proposal before Council that includes the demolition of four buildings along Richmond proceeding from the corner of Carrick where I live and replace them with a six-story 101-unit apartment building with a mere 26 parking spaces; thus, I have had the opportunity to consider the effects of such development on both my property and my neighbourhood. You may be interested to know that Aryze's public information meetings proceeded on the assumption that the draft OCP is a done deal and thus their development proposal a *slam dunk*. See also my letter to Council dated June 15, 2025 (attached) which provides a closer look at the potential effects of the Aryze proposal.

I believe that the draft revised OCP is ill considered and not in the best interests of the residents of Victoria. I am asking Council to step back, listen to the voices you have heard and will hear on September 11, and reconsider some of the fundamental issues at the heart of the revised OCP:

- describe and analyze the individual characteristics of our residential neighbourhoods including their history and heritage value
- cast a more critical eye on identified Priority Growth Areas and assess their housing densities and use such assessments as the basis for increasing density on a variable basis; one size does not fit all
- discourage the demolition of viable single family dwellings by encouraging more creative use of the land
- in some areas consider replacing the *up-to-six-story* building height with a more neighbourhood-friendly approach such as houseplexes, multi-family dwellings more closely related to single family dwelling neighbourhoods such as mine
- give greater prominence to affordable, rent-geared-to-income housing; not just more housing but housing for those who most need it

.../2

- recognize that while 25% of Victorians do not drive, 75% of them rely on automobiles; consider more realistic parking quotas for new residential buildings (we all wish for a world where everyone walks, cycles, and buses, but we are not there yet); complete your parking consultation, assess residential parking reality, and adjust the revised OCP accordingly

Thank you for taking the time to consider this view of the proposed revisions to the City of Victoria's Official Community Plan.

Sincerely,

Catherine Luke

Attachment

1790 Carrick Street
Victoria BC V8R 2M2

June 15, 2025

Mayor Marianne Alto
and Council
City of Victoria
#1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

RE: Pre-development proposal for 2812-2628 Richmond Road

Dear Mayor Alto:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the pre-development proposal for 2812, 2616, 2620, and 2628 Richmond Road. Aryze Developments is proposing to demolish three single-family homes and a commercial building and build a six-story apartment building, the entrance to which would be on Carrick Street.

I am the owner of 1790 Carrick Street, the designated heritage house which is the first on the north side of the street as you enter Carrick off Richmond. What follows is a brief summary of my four major concerns with this proposal -- the building design, impact on parking and traffic congestion, commercial space in the building, and, finally, the impact on my heritage property.

Building design

The proposed building is too large for this location and contains too many units. The height of the proposed six-story building is 20 metres, which would make it the tallest building on Richmond north of Bay Street. It is worth noting that tallest building at Royal Jubilee Hospital is the patient tower which stands at 32.5 metres. I believe the building is simply too high and too large for that particular space and for my neighbourhood. Moreover, although the architect who spoke at the community consultation on June 3, 2025 referred to the building design as “timeless,” I am not of that opinion; it seems to me a huge, characterless facade, especially in the context of local historic architecture. I suggest that Aryze’s proposed design is indeed compatible with the similarly unattractive “timeless” apartment built in 1972 directly across Richmond from the proposed development site.



2325 Richmond Road



Aryze's proposed structure

Parking and traffic congestion

This is an exhausted but important issue. I understand the importance of reducing automobile use and promoting the use of public transit and bicycles. However, this is a very poor setting in which to encourage or rely on these behavioural changes. Cars remain a reality, especially for the working people who seem to be the target demographic for the proposed rental building. The 101-unit apartment building proposed includes only 26 parking spaces. While it is a nice idea to imagine that at least 75% of its tenants will walk, bus, or bike to work, I have no reason to believe that this is the case. I urge you to ask Aryze to analyze the tenancy at other such rental buildings (e.g., Aryze's Journal in Jubilee on Fort Street or 2623 Richmond). I understand that 25% of Victoria residents do not own cars but I am not convinced that tenants in the proposed building would be those people.

Richmond Road is a major transportation artery — it is an ambulance route, bus route to the university, and the route to two schools on north Richmond — but is a narrow street given its heavy traffic and one without dedicated bike lanes.

Carrick Street, like others that intersect Richmond, is a dead end. Other streets such as Kings and Haultain have a variety of traffic-limiting features. As a result, the parking lot in front of the Sleep Centre at 2628 Richmond and its driveway off Carrick currently serve as one of the only available spaces for cars to adjust their direction in the face of dead ends, bike routes, and other traffic calming measures.

Parking congestion at the entrance to Carrick Street has been (over my 30+ years here) and continues to be considerable. Many houses on Carrick have secondary suites resulting in four or more cars per household, the overflow of which occupies this area. In addition, the apartment block located directly across from the site at 2623 Richmond seems to have inadequate parking for the tenants of its 85 units which also contributes to the bumper to bumper parking at the entrance to Carrick. As I have a driveway with only one vehicle, the major issue is safety as I am often unable to see moving traffic that is obscured by parked vehicles as I back out of my driveway.

Although Carrick Street is designated *Resident Only Parking*, hospital employees, tenants of the neighbouring apartment building at 2623 Richmond (located in Saanich) and hospital employees regularly park here. This photo is the entrance to Carrick from Richmond and was taken on a typical weekday morning. There is simply no more room for on-street parking.



Proposed retail space concept

I think that the developer's concept of providing retail space on the main floor of the apartment block, a coffee shop for example, is a very poor one. This nod in the direction of "community building" seems to me to be offered as an empty promise of an unwanted contribution to the neighbourhood to offset its negative impact. I do not think my neighbours need or want a place to buy coffee or sit on the edge of a very busy transportation artery. Most important, such a business would simply attract more traffic congestion at the corner of Richmond and Carrick. A design with more than 26 parking places would be far friendlier to this neighbourhood than a coffee shop.



1790 Carrick Street



crack in foundation to be repaired in 2025

Impact on Historic Property

As the owner of 1790 Carrick Street, a designated heritage building, I am concerned about the effect the proposed construction would have on the integrity of my structural stone house. I have owned my home for over 30 years and for the past four I have been having the masonry walls repaired; this work is not for any immediate benefit to me (the house is not falling down) but to ensure that the house continues to stand for another 100 years. When this year's work is completed, I will have spent more than \$100,000, \$30,000 of which has been grants from the Victoria Heritage Society. If the proposed development is approved, which I sincerely hope will not be the case, I will be asking Aryze to engage a structural engineer to assess the current condition of the masonry, monitor the effect of the proposed construction on the stonework, and recompense me (and the Victoria Heritage Society) for any remedial work that is required as a result of this construction.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this view of the proposed development in my neighbourhood.

Sincerely,

Catherine Luke

copies to:

From: [Christopher Petter](#)
To: [Public Hearings](#)
Cc: |
Subject: Submission to Public Hearing on the 2025 OCP
Date: September 8, 2025 8:49:49 AM

Create a housing goal of 30% affordable housing

I am not in favor of the proposed OCP being put before Council on September 11th for many reasons but mainly because it doesn't address the challenge of providing a significant amount of new affordable housing .

The supply-based developer-influenced plan of the proposed OCP will not provide affordable housing. This proposal encourages property owners and developers to maximize their profits from the increased zoning density. More than doubling the allowable density without demanding affordability puts public benefit into to private hands and effectively excludes non-profit developers from the land market. Now less than 5% of units being built are affordable. Council should ensure that a minimum of 30% of new units are affordable! (Affordable is defined as no more than 30% of average Victoria income.)

There is a way in which 30% affordable non-market and below-market housing could be ensured in order provide more opportunities for young families to stay in Victoria without increasing the costs for the city.

The increased zoning density on any residential parcel in the city should give preference to an owner or developer who agrees to supply affordable housing units and whose rents for those units will be permanently pegged to average household incomes in the region.

An approach pegged to average household incomes would put downward pressure on the land price "residual" value of potential development parcels, making them affordable to Coops and non-profits who would then be competitive against market developers.

To be consistent with the City's climate goals allotment gardens should be considered instead of all-concrete water and skate parks.

Victoria officials should also be very careful to consult with **neighbourhood groups** about their plans for the neighbourhood before approval. The character of the neighbourhood is important to all present and future community members. Neighbourhood concerns should be respected in the choice of architecture for the new buildings. The grass roots politics of development should never be ignored as is asserted by Patrick Condon an urban planning consultant and UBC professor with 40 years of experience.

Based on <https://www.biv.com/news/economy-law-politics/patrick-condon-behold-vancouver-where-there-are-housing-solutions-be-found-8271577>

From:
To: [Public Hearings](#)
Subject: Trees enhance overall wellbeing
Date: September 8, 2025 10:42:23 AM

How many trees are being destroyed by wildfires right now?
How many have been burnt?

We certainly need to cherish every tree that we have left!!!

Trees muffle sound pollution.
Trees prevent flooding & soil erosion!!
Trees improve our mental, emotional, spiritual & physical wellbeing!
Trees lower stress & anxiety.

Yesssssssssss!!!!
Strengthen & enforce Tree Protection now!!!
YESSSSSSSSSSSSSS!!!!
Create an Urban Forest Technical Advisory group now!!!!

I implore you to protect every existing mature tree in Victoria now!!! This must be our priority!!!

NOT what developers want
NOT their nasty negative attitudes of razing trees off of our Beloved Earth
NOT past patterns of destruction!!!!

May all benefit

Dawn Atargatis

From:
To: [Public Hearings](#)
Subject: Meeting on 11th regarding OPC
Date: September 8, 2025 7:53:37 PM

To Whom it May Concern"

I have given a great deal; of feedback to City Hall about new developments for South Jubilee over the last few years.and generally feel it goes nowhere. I have the impression that some of the city council have no interest in what the community wants and needs as they are fixated on the plans they want to institute. I am horrified at the heights and density you are imposing on us and as usual all trees and bushes have to be removed in advance order to maximise the size of the building on the lot (lots of special waivers being granted from which the community gets no benefit). This and a failure to address parking issues is what passes for greener development!

If the new buildings did no more than provide (usually ugly) housing which was actually geared to people of modest income that would do something improve the housing situation although not the aesthetics of the area.. Many of us would be more open to increased density there was more care in the designs, colours and materials and genuine response to the community feedback.. The Jawl apartment on Oak Bay actually enhances the local area and that kind of quality would be welcomed by many of us.

The attitude of the City to the closure of Leighton Avenue for several months during Fort St roadworks last year without any consultation with the community epitomises the arrogance of some city staff and counsellors towards the community. I thought about writing yet more feedback for the meeting on 11th but honestly it feels like a total waste of time and will make no difference to what is to be imposed upon is.

Thanks so muc for your attention to this feedback.,

Dorrie Collins

1904 Duchess St

From:
To: [Public Hearings](#)
Cc:
Subject: Submission to One City One Plan - OCP Public Hearing
Date: September 8, 2025 11:04:05 AM

Hello,

As residents at 1793 Haultain Street, we are writing to oppose the proposed Official Community Plan as presented. We most specifically oppose the inclusion of six-storey buildings in residential areas. In recent years, the city has undergone much transition through growth and development, to the extent that the downtown core is no longer recognizable. The plan to allow six-storey buildings in residential areas will destroy the character of neighbourhoods and detract from what drew residents to the city – its small city feel, its abundance of green space, and its neighbourhoods.

While the rationale for allowing buildings with six storeys is that it addresses the housing crisis, we think that council needs to take a step back and consider where we are currently at in terms of the cost of construction. The increased cost to developers will be passed along to the owners/renters of the buildings and will exacerbate the real crisis – the affordability crisis.

Please do not move forward with this plan as it is presented.

Sincerely,

Jim and Elaine Hays
1793 Haultain Street

From:
To: [Public Hearings; Victoria Mayor and Council](#)
Subject: Taxpayer concerns about OCP updates!
Date: September 8, 2025 10:43:08 AM

Dear Mayor Alto and City of Victoria Councillors,

My family resides in the 900-block of Richmond Avenue, between Richardson Avenue and Brighton Avenue (one block south of Oak Bay Avenue).

We were surprised to learn that our block of Richmond has been rezoned as a "Priority Growth" area in the draft Official Community Plan (OCP). Apparently this rezoning has occurred because our section of Richmond has been identified as part of a "Transit Priority Network" with future potential for transit expansion on to Richmond Avenue, south of Oak Bay Avenue.

Other nearby streets in this network, such as Fairfield, Fort, and Oak Bay Avenue, have had bus service for decades, but our part of Richmond has none. It is also notable that Richmond Avenue runs parallel to the existing transit service on Foul Bay Road which is a mere 2-4 blocks away.

We are homeowners who **have resided on Richmond Avenue for over 25 years, paying taxes dutifully to the City of Victoria**, along with the general sense in the last few years that our votes and opinions for our city are not heard.

Over the past few years we have seen major changes to traffic flow in our neighbourhood, without effective consultation or input opportunities. These changes seem to be one-off in nature being made without a comprehensive lens for the impact on our neighbourhood. For example the reduction in traffic measures to support bike traffic on Richardson Ave, augmented by a sudden closure to car traffic on Gonzales Avenue between Richmond and Rockland, made even worse by the addition of new stop light/right turn at the Fort Street junction that are now clogging traffic up for those traveling up Fort towards the whole of Oak Bay.

The resulting increase in traffic on the 500-900 block section of Richmond Avenue sees traffic regularly backed up from the Oak Bay and Richmond intersection all the way back to the 900 block of Richmond, such that we residents are often unable to enter or exit our driveways. **Have any comprehensive studies been done to review the results of the recent changes to traffic flow in this area - particularly before additional demands are placed on the area?** Or considered the impact when Glenlyon Norfolk School starts major construction at their Richmond Avenue campus in the upcoming years?

The addition of higher density homes and additional transit lines on Richmond Avenue

will not help, but further hinder the flow of traffic and parking availability for tax paying residents.

My family is eco conscious, community oriented and we engage in many groups and programs offering support to our communities throughout the CRD. We ride bikes, we walk, we take transit and we care. Due to professional obligations and life choices we do need to use our car to get places and we need the ability to be able to pull out of our driveway without waiting for 15 minutes to find a kind driver who will yield for us.

Another point that I believe has not been fully discussed for approval in the "priority growth" plan is the fact that the proposed 6 storey buildings with single exit stairs (SES) is new to the BC Building Code and is not harmonized with the National Building Code. **The BC Building Code also states that SES is not suitable in all jurisdictions depending on several factors such as capability of the local fire department and/or fire inspection program and water supply - causing us serious safety concerns as citizens in this section of Richmond Avenue**

Furthermore, research indicates that The City of Victoria Fire Department is currently not able to meet the NFPA staffing requirements within required timelines for this type of building (whether mutual aid departments are utilized or not). In addition, The Fire Chiefs Association of BC is not supportive of SES. This points to some very large gaps in information supporting these proposed plans.

With all this in mind, our family respectfully asks the Victoria City Council to remove our homes from the maps and terms of the draft OCP identifying them in a Priority Growth zone.

Please remove the 500-900 block of Richmond from the maps and terms of the OCP rezoning them for Priority Growth and renew my faith in our City.

Signed,

A family of frustrated tax payers.

Joanne, Morgan and Taylor Macdonald

927 Richmond Avenue

From: Janet Pelley

Sent: September 7, 2025 2:58 PM

To: Jeremy Caradonna (Councillor) <jcaradonna@victoria.ca>; Marianne Alto (Mayor) <MAlto@victoria.ca>; Official Community Plan Update <ocp@victoria.ca>; Public Hearings <PublicHearings@victoria.ca>

Subject: feedback on the OCP, Sept 11 hearing

Dear Councillor Caradonna, Mayor Alto, and hearing officials,

I live in the Fairfield neighbourhood and have watched with distress as escalating land prices and explosive growth in wealth inequality have driven low- and middle-income residents out of our city because they can't find budget-friendly homes. I had hoped that our city council's

proposed Official Community Plan (OCP) would tackle the housing affordability crisis. Instead, the OCP promotes housing for the wealthy that serves developers, not the folks who need affordable nonprofit and co-op housing.

The OCP is based on the myth of trickle-down housing, which holds that increasing the supply of housing will eventually drive down prices. A large body of research shows this supply argument to be false. For instance, a recent study shows that while new home builds in Vancouver have far outpaced population growth for decades, housing prices have continued to sky-rocket. In fact, increasing housing supply could even worsen affordability by triggering market speculation and inflation of land prices, according to housing experts in a recent open letter to BC Premier David Eby.

Another concern I have is that the OCP will encourage demolition, not preservation of existing affordable housing units. My neighbourhood hosts many rambling old homes that provide relatively low rents to tenants who bring welcome diversity to the area. When these homes are eventually sold, the OCP does nothing to ensure that they continue to provide affordable housing. Rather, the OCP creates incentives for their loss. A shabby old home in an over-heated land market is destined for demolition, especially when the OCP says that it can be replaced by multi-story complexes priced for the wealthy. This kind of zoning will inflate land values, promote speculation, and drive demovictions.

Finally, the rigidity and one-size-fits-all approach of the zones in the proposed OCP completely eliminates any flexibility to take local context and concerns into account. Once the OCP becomes official, there is no chance for local communities to have any input on the form of development in their area.

As our City Council prepares for a public hearing on September 11, I urge you all to jettison the proposed OCP and its flawed assertion that ramping up housing supply is the pathway to affordable homes. City Council should revamp the OCP by allowing more civic input for the form of development, putting affordability first, preserving existing affordable homes, and boosting investment in public, nonprofit housing.

Best,
Janet Pelley
1317 Point St.
Victoria, BC V8S 1A4

From:
To: [Public Hearings](#)
Subject: Comments on the OCP JAMES BAY
Date: September 8, 2025 12:15:48 AM

To: Victoria City Council

I am writing regarding the proposed changes that City Hall wants to make in James Bay.

Yes, this proposal will provide housing for more people but it will be at the cost of taking homes from many low income residents who live on "unaffordable" income in this community.

The building in which I now live houses many seniors who are "low income". If the tenants of this building were renovicted (which is highly likely if the OCP goes ahead) most tenants would not be able to pay the rent in any of the proposed "six story" new buildings.

I am dismayed to know that your consultation and feedback for the OCP was from ONLY 6000 people. This is very small sample with which to make such huge proposed changes.

James Bay is the jewel of Victoria with thousands of tourists walking, rickshaw-riding or clipclipping in a horse and buggy through the streets of James Bay. They are attracted by the history of the community and the many character heritage homes. Just today I spoke with a group of cruiseship tourists who were taking pictures of a home on a nearby corner. They were thrilled with the outstanding beauty of James Bay.

Having lived here for more than 35 years I have found James Bay to be a REAL community where residents know, care and support each other. This sense of community would disappear should the proposal for increased density in our community be carried out.

I beg you as City Councillors to rethink the current proposal for James Bay. Don't throw away this precious jewel of James Bay. It will be gone forever if you do.

Sincerely
Lois Pegg
204 160 Government St V8V2K7

From: Legislative Services email
Subject: FW: Re the OCP Plan

To ALL

When realizing what is in the proposed OCP, I was shocked at how weird it is. It goes against what is; sustainable for future, helpful for general health and climate, and bringing stability, particularly for renters.

Three main points:

1. The basic vision of changing our city to look like London is really strange. London is an inner city in an older country with deep European history; we are a Canadian open-fee west coast with a scenic harbour, mountains views and a cultural history including aboriginals and contact influences of San Francisco. Our West Coast look is very successful, financially as well, and we have been voted the most sustainable.

2. This OCP does not do anything about the high prices of housing and would destroys a mass of sturdy wood-built structures-many presently offering lower cost rentals-to create higher priced housing of plywood and pressed wood (always gassing off) . Councillor Thompson's estimate of 7000 units so far shows the lack no "drip-down effect;"; prices just keep on going higher. **Additionally, 20% off of market price for renters likely would not be enough cut for middle and definitely not for all the lower incomes.**

3. This "Plan" is not a plan, but an excuse for rezoning, much of which goes against the concept so much so that the councillors will not be faced with needing to look at difficulties or defining specific aims.

- A. Examples in "The Plan" include concepts like **heritage**, but only for a limited number of areas, Anyway, **where are the heritage regulations in the plan?**
- B. **Another example is the basic human need for trees and green space.** With so much new housing, need arises for more (real) parks. Plazas with parking cannot be parks;
- C. climate change would be even more encouraged with the multiple losses of bigger trees replaced, *if they are*, by much smaller types. Gonzales area has wonderful endangered oaks. Would you want to live with **so few trees around under heat domes?**
- D. **The Plan's ideas go against some parallel legislation provincially and in the municipality. Please, examine those (e.g., on trees), and make The Plan conform.**

My request is that you go back to some "real planning" and "real consultation" with those who will have to put up the results!

Mary E. Doody Jones

From: [M.Genton](#)
To: [Public Hearings](#)
Subject: Update of Victoria's Official Community Plan
Date: September 8, 2025 1:04:59 PM
Importance: High

To Mayor and Council,

Regarding the City of Victoria's plan for wholesale up-zoning: I am writing to express my grave concerns about the loss of trees and green space that will result from this sweeping proposal. Our trees are essential elements of Victoria's Garry Oak ecosystem. As a member of the Native Plant Study Group I understand the value of trees, which includes: food and housing for wildlife, shade which is even more important in the face of climate change, and trees' ability to absorb thousands of litres of water, thereby mitigating the swamping our sewer system during heavy rain events. **Climate change is upon us** so these services provided by trees should be recognized and protected. Finally trees add beauty and interest. They are both food and shelter for birds and studies have proven that they make humans feel better.

I understand that reviewing development proposals can be tedious work for council members, but we simply can not afford to abandon this task to unelected individuals who may not be acting in the best interest of our communities or the environment.

I am a volunteer with Victoria Parks in my 7th year of restoring and preserving a Garry Oak Meadow in my neighbourhood at the junction of Brighton and Amphion. As folks walk or cycle by they often thank me for my work and are curious about various native plant species including the Garry oaks on the site. This is to say there is a growing awareness for preservation of natural elements, particularly in the face of unfettered development.

The changes proposed are too sweeping. Please help keep what makes Victoria so attractive not only to humans but for all the natural elements and creatures who share our space. Focus density on main routes that have already lost their tree cover, and preserve our essential green spaces, including trees on private property.

Thank you for listening,

Monique Genton



North Park Neighbourhood Association
PO Box 661
#185-911 Yates Street
Victoria, BC, V8V 4Y9
Unceded Lək̓wəjən Territories

ATTN: Mayor, Council, and Lauren Klose

CC: Gary Pemberton, Geordie Gordon, NPNA Board, Executive Director

Re: North Park Neighbourhood Association's Response to the 2025 Draft Official Community Plan

April 22nd, 2025

The North Park Neighbourhood Association (NPNA) is writing in response to the City of Victoria's 2025 Official Community Plan (OCP) update. The OCP is a vital planning document that will guide the city's growth over the next decade. After reviewing the draft OCP, we would like to highlight several key concerns, recommendations, and implications for the North Park neighbourhood.

Urban Parks and Green Space

The North Park neighbourhood currently lacks vital amenities, particularly green space. As a greenery-deficient neighbourhood, our only publicly accessible parks are Central Park and Franklin Green. The OCP update presents a crucial opportunity to implement policies prioritizing increasing green space in North Park.

Upon reviewing the draft OCP, we are concerned that the proposed future park at the Urbana-Romeo's site (1725-1745 Blanshard Street) is not included in the Parks and Open Spaces map. The omission of this site as designated future park space raises serious questions about whether the park will ever be implemented, leaving the community uncertain about the future of this much-needed green space. As these properties were previously identified for conversion into a park within the next three years, they should be formally recognized as such in the OCP.

Additionally, while Royal Athletic Park (RAP) continues to be designated as green space for North Park, the reality is that access to this space is highly restricted. Most of the time, RAP is used for ticketed events, limiting access for neighbourhood residents. Given North Park's lower-than-average household income, many residents have little to no access to this space. If the OCP continues to classify RAP as part of the neighbourhood's allocated green space, it is essential that it be made more publicly accessible in alignment with this designation.

The OCP does, however, prioritize climate resiliency by emphasizing the integration of green infrastructure and natural assets into the urban environment. These features are essential for improving residents' everyday access to greenery and enhancing climate adaptation measures, such as mitigating urban heat, managing stormwater, and supporting biodiversity. Additionally,

parts of North Park have been identified as priority opportunity areas for linear parkways, which aim to create park-like destinations, such as street parks and plazas, that support both ecological and community functions. Given North Park's existing green space deficit, it is critical that these planned improvements move beyond conceptual ideas and result in tangible, accessible public spaces for residents.

Equitable Distribution of Supportive Housing and Services

North Park continues to bear a disproportionate share of Victoria's supportive housing and social services. We remain concerned about the ongoing concentration of these services in our neighbourhood, and the OCP presents an opportunity to address this imbalance. The plan's focus on housing diversity, mixed-income developments, and family-friendly housing is critical, as rising housing costs have pushed many families out of North Park. To support a more balanced and inclusive community, North Park must see a greater mix of housing types that meet the diverse needs of residents. To achieve this, we urge the City to incorporate policies that ensure a fair and equitable distribution of supportive housing across all neighbourhoods in Victoria. This would help prevent further overconcentration in North Park while fostering a more integrated and sustainable approach to housing and community services citywide.

The OCP includes a policy stating that temporary shelters must be located near supportive services. While service accessibility is important, this approach raises concerns about the continued overconcentration of supportive services in North Park, particularly in residential areas. Currently, the City of Victoria's zoning regulations restrict social services to residential zones, making it significantly more difficult to establish them in industrial or commercial areas due to rezoning requirements. This zoning limitation has led to a disproportionate clustering of supportive services in residential neighbourhoods like North Park, reinforcing an ongoing imbalance. By requiring new shelters to be near existing services, this policy risks further exacerbating this issue.

To address this, we propose the following actions:

- **Expand Permitted Zoning for Social Services:** Adjust zoning regulations to allow supportive services in commercial, industrial, or institutional zones. This would help distribute services more evenly across the city, reduce rezoning barriers, and enable service providers to secure locations that best meet their needs.
- **Set Distribution Targets:** Establish policies to ensure an equitable geographic distribution of supportive services, preventing overconcentration in specific neighbourhoods like North Park.
- **Prioritize Proximity to Transit and Employment Centers:** Instead of exclusively siting temporary shelters near supportive services, the City should also consider locations near transit hubs, employment centers, and healthcare facilities. Additionally, transportation demand management measures could be implemented through transit pass programs,

providing free or subsidized transit access to residents, enhancing connectivity to regional destinations.

A more balanced approach to zoning and service distribution is essential to ensuring all neighbourhoods share in the responsibility of the ongoing need for supportive housing, while also maintaining a diverse and thriving community.

Housing Growth and Affordability

A key focus of the OCP update is housing policy and affordable housing strategies. These policies present significant opportunities for densification, including the introduction of mid-rise developments (4–6 storeys) and a streamlined development approvals process. This approach could be particularly beneficial for North Park, especially within North Park Village, where revitalization and increased housing options are needed.

However, for these policies to truly benefit the community, they must prioritize affordable housing strategies above all else to ensure that current residents are not displaced due to rising housing costs. It is essential that a range of affordable housing options be provided, offering various housing types to meet the diverse needs of North Park residents. Given the growing demand for housing, these policies have the potential to support an expanded housing supply in the area—but only if affordable housing is prioritized and protected.

Tenant Protection

The draft OCP does not include any policies to protect renters. With the City's proposed approach to encouraging housing growth, there is an increased risk of tenant displacement as older rental properties are redeveloped. Without adequate protections, existing tenants may be forced out of their homes without sufficient support.

To address this gap, the OCP must include strong tenant protection policies that require developers to provide meaningful assistance to tenants who are displaced due to redevelopment. At a minimum, tenant protection measures should include:

- Assistance in finding a new rental home, if requested by the tenant.
- Financial compensation in the form of rent top-ups or lump sum payments to bridge the gap between the tenant's current rent and the cost of a comparable unit at current market rates.
- Financial assistance for moving expenses and help coordinating moving arrangements, if requested.
- The right of first refusal, allowing tenants to return to the redeveloped building at their original rent (plus any applicable increases allowed under the Residential Tenancy Act), in a unit with the same number of bedrooms.

The City of Burnaby's Tenant Assistance Policy provides a strong example of how tenant protections can be implemented. Burnaby's policy requires developers to actively support displaced tenants through financial compensation, moving assistance, and relocation support.

As the City of Victoria moves forward with the OCP update, it is critical to embed robust tenant protection policies into the plan. This will help ensure that renters—who make up a significant portion of Victoria's residential population—are not left vulnerable to displacement without support, and that developers are held accountable for minimizing the negative impacts of redevelopment on existing residents.

Mobility Hubs

Three areas within North Park have been designated as mobility hubs, yet there is little clarity on what this designation means for the neighbourhood. We seek further explanation on whether these hubs will prioritize transit-oriented development along key corridors, enhance cycling infrastructure, or identify areas for future transit improvements. Greater transparency is needed to understand how these designations will impact North Park and how they align with the City's broader mobility goals. Clear policies and implementation strategies should accompany these designations to ensure they result in meaningful improvements for residents.

Strengthening North Park Village and Community Vibrancy

The OCP's emphasis on strengthening villages and neighbourhood centres as hubs for local businesses, community activities, and pedestrian-friendly design is a positive step forward. The NPNA supports this initiative, particularly as it has the potential to revitalize North Park Village and enhance its role as a vibrant community focal point. Growth and development policies that prioritize urban villages present an opportunity to strengthen the core of North Park, making it more dynamic, accessible, and welcoming for residents and visitors alike. We encourage the City to ensure that these policies are backed by concrete actions and investments that will support North Park Village's long-term revitalization.

Consultation Process

We would like to express our concerns regarding the engagement process for the OCP update. The survey provided was lengthy and filled with technical planning jargon, which likely deterred many residents from fully participating or fully understanding the material. Furthermore, the in-person consultation process appeared to be limited and rushed. OCP updates typically involve a more extensive and targeted engagement period to ensure a thorough understanding of the community's needs.

It was particularly disappointing that the City did not reach out to the NPNA for consultation or implement neighbourhood-specific engagement measures. Neighbourhood associations are well-positioned to speak to the unique needs of their communities. A more general approach to engagement risks not capturing the full range of perspectives, particularly those from specific

neighbourhoods. Neighbourhood associations should have been formally engaged as key stakeholders in this process to ensure a more comprehensive and representative consultation.

We appreciate your attention to these concerns and look forward to your response as the City continues to update the Official Community Plan.

Sincerely,

Courtenay Miller
Land Use Planning Advisor

Jessica Murray
Executive Director

Board of Directors
NPNA

Homes for Living – Letter regarding the OCP

Submitted: Sept 8, 2025

Dear Mayor and Council,

Thank you for your continued work on alleviating the housing crisis. The proposed OCP is ambitious and contains many positive housing elements, but there are significant areas of improvement.

The Good:

The plan shows an excellent vision for the future of the city. The focus on perimeter blocks is encouraging, and should be expanded upon further in future updates. Moreover, allowing small-scale commercial by-right on corners is enormously important for creating walkable, liveable communities, and has tremendous potential to positively transform many neighborhoods.

The Bad:

As it stands, however, the OCP's complexity could result in a repeat of Victoria's Missing Middle policy or the Rapid Deployment of Affordable Housing (RDAH). Both of these efforts have failed to generate the types of housing they intended to create in significant quantities (i.e., family suitable housing in the case of Missing Middle or below market housing in the case of the RDAH). The designated town centres and villages, for example, is complicated, and will make it even harder to accomplish the stated goals of this document.

In addition to being complex, the document's goals could be further eroded by other policies. The proposed parking policy, for example, which threatens to eliminate the possibility of car-free living in Victoria, and a zoning overhaul that will force too many housing units through a staff review, will be important to re-consider in light of this OCP's vision.

Furthermore, the OCP ignores important seismic concerns around the new BC Building Code requirements that will make many areas of planned density impossible to build. This will further limit the positive impacts of the new OCP.

The OCP also continues to require separate development permits, another barrier to housing not required by many other municipalities.

Finally, growth is oriented almost entirely away from neighbourhoods with larger lots with relatively low land costs per square foot and low densities. These neighbourhoods and lots are the perfect place for family housing and do so at a meaningfully lower cost than along transportation corridors which generally possess higher land costs per square foot and high densities. Instead, development is being forced onto roads with fast-moving car traffic and towards lots where affordable existing rental buildings already exist, leading to higher displacement.

Homes for Living – Letter regarding the OCP

What to do:

1. Embrace a housing first mindset and take a less is more mantra to heart. By removing as much ambiguity as possible, city staff will be better able to review housing proposals expeditiously and more accurately fulfil the OCP's vision.
2. To ensure the OCP is working as intended and achieving its stated objectives, council should schedule a check-in with city staff annually.
3. To better address the needs of the homeless and low-income residents, Council should exempt non-profit builders from the OCP and zoning bylaws, as well as any and all city taxes, fees, and charges.
4. Victoria residents [asked](#) for more density. This density should not be confined to specific areas within the city. Council should listen to the feedback from residents and revise the OCP to allow 6 storey apartments, by right, across the city. Moreover, council should consider ambitious reforms to empower more family suitable housing such as bonus densities for three- and four-bedroom homes, the abolition of FSR limits for family friendly housing, and increased height limits.
5. The biggest barrier to success with this OCP is the accompanying zoning update. Council should direct staff to bring the zoning update in line with established provincial practices.

The draft OCP is a good start, and contains a lot of promise, but it is just the beginning, and much more work will be required to reduce the cost of housing for residents. While we have reservations about this draft, it is a significant improvement on the status quo in a number of areas; we urge you to adopt it and improve upon it where possible.

Sincerely,

Philip MacKellar, on behalf of the Homes for Living Team

ABOUT HOMES FOR LIVING:

We are a community housing advocacy group, composed exclusively of volunteers concerned about the housing crisis in the capital region. Homes for Living is advocating for more homes through policy reform to make Victoria more affordable for people across the income and housing needs spectrum.

More information can be found here: <https://www.homesforliving.ca/>



From: [Richard Cane](#)
To: [Public Hearings](#)
Subject: O.C.P.
Date: September 8, 2025 9:18:07 AM

As a rockland home owner and resident these plans make me very nervous. 30 years ago when we bought our home we made the choice based on the fact that this was an established area with lots of green space and very quiet and secure. We know all our neighbours and we watch out for each other and have community events and interact on many levels. As someone living alone there is a feeling of security with these relationships. So my fear is if this plan goes through we will loose all of these valuable assets. We will also loose our privacy, freedom of movement and green spaces. Many of the homes here are unique beautiful designs that could now either be torn down or worse buried by huge buildings or multi plex stuctures distroying the character and beauty of this area. So in closing I want to clearly say I am strongly opposed to this plan. Thank you for the opportunity to voice my concerns and objections. I sadly can't physically make it to the meeting so I am glad I can participate in this way

From:
To: [Public Hearings](#)
Subject: Sep 11 Public Hearing comments (OCP)
Date: September 8, 2025 2:11:19 PM

I am strongly opposed to the proposed OCP with its radical increase in density for Victoria. The plan would turn a city of gardens and quiet streets into the most crowded city in Canada, with nothing but hi-rise condos and row houses, and worse, it would accomplish NONE of the stated goals for the city.

"We need housing" is the argument usually given. According to Statistics Canada, Victoria is already in the top ten most densely populated cities in Canada. At any given time, there are hundreds of units listed for sale in Victoria, from small condos to large houses. Victoria has housing, and the claim that we need more is an outright falsehood.

"People can't afford to live in Victoria" is another argument, but increasing density will do nothing to create affordable housing. We know this because it never does. Being one of the most densely populated cities in Canada has only made Victoria more expensive. Vancouver is the most densely populated city in Canada, and it also has the highest prices. Across the world, high density means high prices. The proposed OCP would only make Victoria less affordable.

What's worse is that Victoria cannot support significantly higher density. The city is hemmed in by water and other cities, and there's no place to put the roads or transit to allow people to get around the city. Already traffic downtown is at near gridlock, and people trying to get from the Fairfield and James Bay to anyplace outside of the city contribute to the congestion. Saying "Let them ride bikes" is an arrogant and contemptuous non-solution to the citizens who cannot commute or shop by bus or bike.

It's time to listen to the citizens of Victoria, something which the city council has thus far refused to do.

Raymond Fischer
1149 Faithful Street
Victoria

From: [Steve New](#)
To: [Public Hearings](#)
Subject: OCP public hearing - Sep 11, 2025
Date: September 8, 2025 9:29:17 PM

Dear Mayor Alto and Council,

I do not support the OCP update. I'm writing to comment against the excessive supply of up-zoned residential land in the OCP and the Urban Form and Land Use proposal.

I'm in favour of more people and dwellings in Victoria. The OCP's 2050 population forecast drives the urgency to meet demand for housing, employment, and services. But the forecast seems too high. The BC Government forecast for Victoria to 2046, extrapolated 4 years to 2050, is significantly lower – 27,000 new residents, not the 47,000 projected in the OCP. Inflated demand will produce an excessive supply of up-zoned and pre-zoned land and can encourage land speculation, increase land values, decrease housing affordability, and potentially result in demolitions and tenant displacement. I urge you to validate the 2050 population forecast and revise the OCP accordingly.

I'm against the collapse of all residential zones into one zone, with 2 sub-areas – Infill (up to 4 storeys) and Priority Growth (up to 6 storeys) to meet a demand that may be exaggerated. This seems destined to result in ad hoc new developments sprinkled across the city. This random densification will damage Victoria's unique character and disrupt neighbourhoods and residents. I'd like to see an OCP with more residential zones to reflect our diverse neighbourhoods and increase housing supply through widespread gentle density and targeted 4+ storey growth areas.

Thank you.

Steve New
1246 McKenzie Street, Victoria BC. V8V 2W5
E:

From: [Dawn Atargatis](#)
To: [Public Hearings](#)
Subject: Trees shield against wind & snow
Date: September 9, 2025 9:33:52 AM

We must not destroy one more tree in BC!!!

Africans are planting millions of trees to reclaim their best.

It is of paramount importance that we save all of our precious mature trees now!!!

Thank you to all who are supporting trees, wonderful worthy trees!!
Much appreciated!!!

Every blessing of Divine Love Light,
Dawn Atargatis

From: [Jeanne Good](#)
To: [Public Hearings](#)
Subject: James Bay OCP - Sep 11, 2025
Date: September 9, 2025 11:36:18 AM

Dear Council Members,

I do not believe the proposed OCP for James Bay adequately reflects input from residents in James Bay, nor of those who would like to reside here. People are attracted to James Bay because of its heritage homes and historic buildings, in addition to its mature tree canopy and green spaces. Equally important I don't see how we are addressing affordable housing by displacing residents in viable older buildings with unique architecture, which are then demolished, only to be replaced with new buildings few can afford. Residents are also content with our green spaces and the openness of Dallas Road! More plazas and shops would be an eyesore on Dallas Road, and the noise would not be welcome to those seeking quiet nature!

I believe the proposed OCP for James Bay requires much more thought, and thought-sharing, which must be actively listened to by our City Council much more than it has been. To forge ahead at such a rapid pace could have irreversible and irrevocable consequences.

Thank you for listening and for serving the residents of Victoria with an open mind.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Good
#324,440 Simcoe Street
Victoria, BC V8V 1L3
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