

# Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan

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I have been asked to comment on the Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan.

I am one of the people appointed by the Board of the VWCA to participate in a Neighbourhood Plan Working Committee to create a new Neighbour Plan. I subsequently joined the Board of the VWCA as Harbour Committee Chair.

The Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan has been put together over a two year period by a Working Committee appointed by the Victoria West Community Association working together with City Planning Staff. Ownership of that plan, in my view, rests with the Community represented by the Victoria West Community Association. I expect as plan owners, representatives of the VWCA will appear before council to comment on their Plan

The City Planning Staff facilitated the Working Committee Meetings. The City Planning Staff added their planning expertise and knowledge, set up and provided community engagement processes, and compiled the information from the Community to create a Draft Neighbourhood Plan. We need to recognize that it is challenging for young families to find time in their busy lives to participate in these processes. I commend all those who participated over a two year period and wish to state I was impressed by the knowledge and dedication of City Planning Staff. City staff went beyond my expectations in their willingness to expand the planning process to more fully engage the Community.

There is no one voice that speaks for a diverse community. The Community is open to hear all voices. A number of active VWCA members were concerned when they saw the Draft Plan and expressed concerns about projected change in the Community. These concerned individuals sought the support of the VWCA Land Use Committee and circulated a survey that specifically recommended how the survey questions were to be answered. The outcome of this survey was communicated to the City by the VWCA LUC. Some of the concerns have been addressed by revision in the Draft Plan. I commend all those who contributed their time and views in this process and support the concept that a Neighbourhood Plan must always be a living document that forms a basis for community involvement.

Planning is a process, not a product or document. It is a challenging process to develop a twenty-five year vision. We are more comfortable with the past than the future. We would all like to see single low cost family homes provided to families rather than condominiums. The reality is this may not be practical going forward.

The Neighbourhood Plan has strengths which regard to land use planning. The Plan has limitations with regard to painting a clear picture of how the health, well being, and quality of life in the community can be enhanced over the next twenty-five years. I note on page 11 there is a statement "Maintain the upper harbour for industry". This is nostalgia rather than vision. Unless you include Point Hope

Shipyards as being in the Upper Harbour, today's reality is the Upper Harbour is high density residential, with tourist facilities, and marine activity servicing tourists and residents.

I note on reviewing the Esquimalt OCP, that document references the harbour, the environment, and even the fact that Esquimalt Harbour makes up a section of the large Migratory Bird Sanctuary that also encompasses Victoria Harbour. I suggest the Victoria OCP needs to recognize what a great asset we have in our Harbour.

The current version of the Neighbourhood Plan is a snap shot in time that sets out a best guess of what may lay in the future. It will change and be refined as individual decisions are made each year.

We all need to bring more focus on ways to get the Community, represented by the VWCA, more integrated into refinement and implementation of their Neighbourhood Plan. If the Plan is to be effective in meeting the Communities needs and wishes, it is essential that the Community take ownership of the on-going planning process.

As the plan is a big picture view of the next twenty-five years, I personally see little value in commenting on or debating details of the plan. I suggest the City Council should approve the Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan as a current snap shot in time. This City approval should be given with the understanding that the Community will be actively involved in the details of implementation.

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John Mullane, Member of the Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

May 3, 2018

May 2 , 2018

Her Worship Lisa Helps  
And Council Members  
City of Victoria  
1, Centennial Square  
Victoria, British Columbia

Your Worship and Councillors,

Re: Vic West Neighbourhood Plan and OCP Amendments

The undersigned has lived in Pioneer Co-op in Vic West for the past 38 years. I have served on many boards and continuously volunteered on committees, including our Rules which were brought into force in April of 2005. More recently, I was the Facilitator for the Remediation of our Building Envelope which was completed in April 2017.

I am unable to attend the Public Hearing scheduled for the evening of May 10 and am exercising the option of writing to you and the Council members. I became aware of the proposal submitted by 'the Chair and a core group' for residential re-zoning, construction of a building, and plans for commercial development. This appears in Amendment 2 for Vic West. Since I am a member of the Vic West Community Association, my neighbors were asking about the plans for development. I knew nothing about any of these plans and neither did others in the co-op. On April 18, we had an Annual General Meeting and I asked for a discussion on the topic to be added to the Agenda. This was done and when I relayed the plans, a majority of the members present expressed surprise since the proposal should have come to the membership first. If the membership approved, that information would have been conveyed and the Board authorized to take it before the City Planner. There were 50 units represented at the AGM (our co-op has 74 units).

We will be having another meeting on May 16 since the AGM indicated that the 'matter be investigated and that the Board report back to members in writing'.

Can this item be removed from the OCP please? There is no approval from our membership and due diligence was not followed by the presenter (Michalovsky). Pioneer also has not given any approval for our land to be used for the OCP.

Respectfully Submitted



Sarjit K. Manhas  
1006 McCaskill Street  
Victoria, B.C. V9A 4B9



Cc:- Kristina Bouris  
Joanne Semmens, President, Vic West Community  
Association  
COHO Management Services

Victoria City Council  
1 Centennial Square

May 7, 2018

**RE: Vic West Neighbourhood Plan**

Dear Council members:

I am writing to share my full support of the Vic West Neighbourhood Plan and the work that went into ensuring it represents the views gathered in the community.

I have been involved with the redevelopment of the Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan since Sept. 2016 when I joined the neighbourhood working group as a representative of the Vic West Elementary parent community. In addition to regular meetings, I also attended neighbourhood plan engagement events in our community, assisting with feedback collection and group discussions, and hosted a Pizza and a Planner session in my home with several Vic West friends and neighbours.

There have been numerous opportunities to provide feedback on the plan in a variety of ways – guided walks, group discussions, interactive sessions, handwritten feedback, community pop-ups, email, online survey and more. Even for citizens who didn't attend formal feedback opportunities, for a while you couldn't go anywhere in the neighbourhood without seeing the posters or coming across city staff at Vic West community events ready for a conversation.

Throughout this process, Vic West residents were generous with their thoughts and ideas for their neighbourhood. Families shared their ideas for parks and pathways, couples shared their vision for art spaces, seniors imagined more employment opportunities, pet owners shared ideas for a pet-friendly future, business owners dreamed of more foot traffic, renters wanted affordable homes, homeowners supported increased density, others wanted less density – and all along people had the opportunity to dream together about what's possible for the future of our neighbourhood. I can say with certainty that what I heard from Vic West residents along the journey is well represented in the plan before you.

Finally, I want to share that I have been grateful for the openness and collaborative attitude of city staff involved in the Vic West Neighbourhood Plan. It was clear to me that citizens who took time to provide feedback were listened to, respected and their ideas recorded. I'm proud to have been part of this successful process.

Sincerely,



Amy Bronee  
749 Selkirk Avenue



**Pamela Martin**

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** May 8, 2018 10:39 PM  
**To:** Public Hearings  
**Subject:** Comments on Vic West Neighbourhood Plan

Note, please redact my address and contact information from the public record.

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am submitting this letter regarding the Vic West Neighbourhood Plan. I am a resident of Vic West, living at [REDACTED] I write this as a resident and as a father of a two year old child, whose future I am looking towards as I write this (I write this because, as a parent, it may be difficult to attend the meeting and I would like to make this contribution).

I enjoy living in Vic West. I have lived in two locations in Vic West in my five years living in Victoria, and it is my favourite part of the City. In particular, I really appreciate the Craigflower Village, the parks and the proximity to downtown and active transit routes. But I believe the neighbourhood could be better.

I was very excited to see the first draft of the plan. Had that plan been brought forward, it would have set Vic West up to have more people within the neighbourhood, increasing foot traffic for the businesses in the neighbourhood, and increasing the neighbourhood's vibrancy. The density within the plan was diluted in the first round of edits, with fewer areas identified for increased density. In reviewing this version of the plan, I am disappointed that there has been a shift towards even less potential housing in the neighbourhood.

A [recent article by Lloyd Alter in Treehugger entitled "Green Building Isn't Enough; We Need Green Zoning"](#) discusses density sufficient to support walking to destinations, but low enough to allow the use of low-carbon materials such as wood. He uses the term the "Goldilocks density" of not too much density but not too little (e.g. 4-6 storeys where feasible), enough to put more feet on the ground, more eyes on the street, and most importantly, more people closer to destinations. I believe that reasonably dense communities are more attractive and desirable communities. I am not asking that the whole neighbourhood be upzoned, but I believe the first draft was a reasonable, future looking document.

As the cost of land has increased dramatically in Victoria over the past four years, single family dwellings and ground-oriented, two storey or less buildings, become less affordable and exceed the reach of the majority of residents. Densifying our neighbourhood would help to maintain the mix of residents that we currently have, and enhance the community's liveliness.

The Victoria Census Metropolitan Area is growing. There were 312,000 residents in 2001, and that increased to 368,000 in 2016. The City of Victoria offers new residents like myself, and existing residents, the best opportunity in the region to live in a low-impact, livable community, where many of their destinations are in close proximity. And while Victoria proper added 11,500 people over those 15 years, Langford added 16,500 alone, while Colwood and View Royal added 3,000 each. We have seen several notable fights against densification in Victoria; it is not surprising that development has moved outward.

An extra 22,500 people in 15 years in these three western communities has impacts not only in those communities, but also for those of us who live along commuter routes. With many of the region's jobs located downtown, it means more commuters going through our neighbourhood. This traffic means more air pollutants

for us to deal with. It means more greenhouse gas emissions. It means more risk for our children and for all of us. Until people stop relocating to the Capital Regional District, which won't happen unless housing gets so expensive that the math of living here no longer works for people, every rejection of reasonable densification means longer commutes and more air pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions. At a time when we know that climate change is happening and affecting us, and we have tools to deal with this societal risk, watering down the plan as was done after the first and second drafts essentially tosses away the most effective of those tools within the hands of the local government.

Further, I feel that the City should be framing the neighbourhood plan as a tool to meet or contribute to its OCP target of 33% reduction in GHG emissions from 2007 levels by 2020. Urban design that continues to prioritize vehicles over other modes of transportation remains in the City, and maintains our current zoning, our current roads and our current public transit routes drives increased emissions and increases our City's climate risk and everyone's climate risk.

Notably, I disagree with the decision to limit building height around Skinner St and Craigflower Rd. These are optimal locations to add four storeys to the neighbourhood, along a transit corridor, in a way that is "sticky" and would slow traffic through the neighbourhood in a way that few other changes short of fully separated cycle tracks could (which, by the way, if it were included in this plan, I would wholeheartedly support).

I am happy to see the plans for improvements to active transportation routes and the plans to enhance connections across Bay St. I would encourage the City to add an all-ages-and-abilities (AAA) route in the west of the neighbourhood (e.g. the route west of Vic West Elementary School), along Harbour Rd (the 30 km/h speed limit is never followed), and to complete the AAA route on the E&N east of William St.

In conclusion, adding density would increase foot traffic to our local businesses and make our neighbourhood more vibrant, help to address climate change, enables those that might otherwise "drive until they qualify" to have affordable housing opportunities closer to town to welcome new neighbours, reduce traffic through our neighbourhood, and help mitigate issues such as speeding and air pollution.

Thank you for taking the time to read my comments on the Vic West Neighbourhood Plan.

Sincerely,

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**Pamela Martin**

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**Subject:**

FW: Heritage designation for Robert Street

**From:** Grant Augustus [REDACTED]

**Date:** May 8, 2018 at 6:20:51 PM PDT

**To:** <[lhelps@victoria.ca](mailto:lhelps@victoria.ca)>, <[jloveday@victoria.ca](mailto:jloveday@victoria.ca)>, <[pmadoff@victoria.ca](mailto:pmadoff@victoria.ca)>

**Subject:** Heritage designation for Robert Street

Mayor Helps, Councillors Loveday and Madoff,

My wife and I have lived on Robert Street for 16 years. Except for two large apartment blocks at the corner of Esquimalt Rd., the result of spot rezoning 40 years ago, Robert Street is a quiet, single lane, tree lined avenue to a small water-side park. The homes are older single-family residences and include three homes with heritage designation.

A heritage designation for Robert Street preserves the nature of the street and provides a controlled and quiet access for pedestrians, vehicles and cyclists to the small waterfront park.

Any change in the heritage designation would result in traffic congestion, major infrastructure changes and the destruction of the neighbourhood.

A city like Victoria needs areas of quiet refuge for its citizens to escape the rigours of city life. Robert Street is an ideal location for such a refuge as it provides access to a quiet waterfront park and the Westsong Walkway for the many apartment dwellers nearby.

The designation of Robert Street as a heritage area would benefit the city by preserving this quiet refuge for its citizens and maintaining the character of the city for visitors.



Thank you for caring,

Grant & Lynda Augustus

80-209 Robert St.

Victoria

{:-).

## Pamela Martin

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**Subject:** FW: Query re Amendment #4 & 5

**From:** Jim [REDACTED]

**Date:** May 9, 2018 at 1:06:12 PM PDT

**To:** Marc Cittone <[mcittone@victoria.ca](mailto:mcittone@victoria.ca)>, "[lhhelps@victoria.ca](mailto:lhhelps@victoria.ca)" <[lhhelps@victoria.ca](mailto:lhhelps@victoria.ca)>, "Jeremy Loveday (Councillor)" <[jloveday@victoria.ca](mailto:jloveday@victoria.ca)>, "[pmadoff@victoria.ca](mailto:pmadoff@victoria.ca)" <[pmadoff@victoria.ca](mailto:pmadoff@victoria.ca)>

**Cc:** Jim [REDACTED], Justine Semmens [REDACTED]

**Subject:** Query re Amendment #4 & 5

Hi Marc...I wanted to clarify the amendments which were proposed to traditional residential designations. These were at the public meeting with residents earlier this year.

Amendment #4 proposes to add opportunities for townhouses & small apartment buildings (up to 3 storeys) on selected properties south of Esquimalt Road, which would include Robert Street. In the draft OCP there was support for ground-oriented housing types on traditional residential designated properties with a height limit of 2 storeys & small apartment buildings are not currently supported in these properties. The reason for this amendment is that "the exceptionally deep lots on Robert Street present the opportunity for courtyard-oriented townhouses and apartments integrating open spaces, providing a desirable housing choice"

The above proposal seems to contradict what is in Amendment #5. Under the heading What's proposed, Revise the Traditional Residential Urban Place designation throughout Victoria West to clarify that some buildings may be up to 2.5 storeys in height (except along arterial and secondary arterial roads which permit up to 3 storeys). I would not consider Robert Street, which is a dead end street at Rainbow Park, to be an arterial or secondary arterial road. At the corner of Robert & Esquimalt Road, there is the Princess Louise apartments 3+ storeys & across the street, 3 storey strata townhouses. At the end of the block bordering Rainbow Park on the waterfront is Rainbow Estate strata townhouses consisting of 4 buildings from Robert St to Russell St. On the West side of Robert St the homes there back onto Seaforth Woods, also a 3+ story strata townhouse development. I think that any further proposals to allow 3 storey apartments on the remaining single family properties would be excessive, especially with the narrow road & limited street parking.

Under the heading Why is this proposed in Amendment #5, "we heard a desire for supporting a range of sensitive infill housing types (eg duplexes, townhouses, houseplexes) which are designed to be compatible with existing development. The current OCP policy for two storeys works well for single-detached houses, but can be challenging for other housing types envisioned in this designation." Since only 12 single-detached houses are left on the block a 3 storey apartment building would NOT be sensitive to the scale of the existing neighbourhood. Two examples of what does work well & which are sensitive in scale to the neighbourhood are demonstrated in the two City designated heritage properties at 614 Seaforth (conversion of heritage house to rental units) & 242 Robert St (conversion of heritage house to strata units). The same can happen on the "exceptionally deep lots on Robert Street" with 2 storey duplexes, garden units or townhouse considered for the rear of the properties but the street frontage should retain the look & feel of single family homes. I hope to request that Robert Street be designated as a Heritage Conservation Area in the OCP so this would provide some certainty on the streetscape, protect the integrity & character with the 4 City designated properties.

Marc, when we had the neighbours meet with you & hear your presentation at the pizza meet & greet gathering, I think that the residents did not want to see any 3 storey developments on the street,

whether apartments or townhouses. If I recall correctly, backing onto the East side of houses on Robert St there are 3 storey strata units which reduces sunlight but also, there is no privacy in the rear yards of these homes.

Please note that south of Esquimalt Road, only Mary, Russell & Robert Streets have single family homes left. On Mary they are mixed in with commercial on the East side as are the 4 (including a new duplex that is very sensitive to neighbouring houses) left on Russell. We have to ensure that Robert Street will be an example of our heritage & what makes this a unique & special surprise for people walking along the Westsong Way from the Songhees & Roundhouse developments!

In summary, no apartments or 3 storey developments since these are already here at both ends of Robert St as well as to the West & East. Any new developments should be no more than 2 storeys & be of a design that is sensitive to the character & ages of the existing houses. We applaud the change of the East side of the street from what was proposed, Urban Residential, to Traditional Residential so thank you for hearing our views.

Thanks-Jim Lee

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

## Pamela Martin

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**From:** Marc Cittone <mcittone@victoria.ca>  
**Sent:** May 9, 2018 4:20 PM  
**To:** Jim  
**Cc:** Justine Semmens; Public Hearings  
**Subject:** RE: Query re Amendment #4 & 5

Hi Jim,

Thanks for your questions, and for organizing the opportunity to hear from many of your neighbours earlier in this process.

To clarify, the two proposed amendments (4 & 5) apply to different situations. Amendment 5 clarifies that some housing types that could occur (subject to rezoning and development permit approval) throughout the Traditional Residential areas, such as duplexes with suites or townhouses, might be appropriate up to 2.5 storeys, whether this is defined as 2 storeys + a “garden level” basement (as is currently supported in most zoning and the OCP), or 2 storeys + a half storey above, limited by zoning height restrictions.

Amendment 5 is specific to recognizing that certain areas were deemed through planning to be appropriate for a somewhat different form of infill which could provide opportunities for additional housing diversity (e.g. stacked townhouses) at 3 storeys, for the reasons below.

We’ve heard a diversity of opinions, and sought to balance different perspectives on compatibility, change, and housing diversity in this area. Regarding the rationale for the staff recommendation, this has been indicated in Attachment 5 of the staff report (Matrix of Revisions to Neighbourhood Plan):

- Proposed height and density support housing diversity by supporting townhouse and courtyard housing forms with underground parking.
- Proposal responds to immediate existing context which ranges from single-detached and character conversions to 3-storey townhouses and multi-unit development.
- Appropriate location for housing near Frequent Transit, future shops and services, and within walking distance of downtown.
- Existing Development Permit Guidelines (DPA 16) address compatibility and contextual design.

Staff also noted that the 1901-1904 houses on Robert Street are either designated or on the heritage register, and have not been recommended for additional density.

I encourage you to share your perspective with Council, who will provide direction on the staff recommendation. Both your Feb 14 letter and your more recent communication reflected here have been included in the correspondence related to the proposed plan and OCP amendments.

Sincerely,

- Marc

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**From:** Jim [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** May 9, 2018 1:06 PM  
**To:** Marc Cittone <mcittone@victoria.ca>; Lisa Helps (Mayor) <LHelps@victoria.ca>; Jeremy Loveday (Councillor)

<jloveday@victoria.ca>; Pam Madoff (Councillor) <pmadoff@victoria.ca>

Cc: Jim [REDACTED]; Justine Semmens [REDACTED]

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Thanks-Jim Lee

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

TO: MAYOR & COUNCIL - CITY OF VICTORIA

RE: VIC WEST DRAFT OCP & REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION OF ROBERT STREET AS HERITAGE CONSERVATION AREA

THE UNDERSIGNED WOULD SUPPORT THE DESIGNATION OF ROBERT STREET AS A HERITAGE CONSERVATION AREA IN THE OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN FOR VICTORIA WEST & REQUEST THAT COUNCIL AMEND THE PLAN TO REFLECT THIS DESIGNATION

x M.S. LOVE 4-331 Robert St

NAME ADDRESS PHONE NUMBER/EMAIL  
SHARON FRASER #18-331 Robert

TONY GREEN Sharon Green 242 ROBERT ST.

KAREN MONTAN 242 Robert St

ALYSON HAWKSWORTH 1206-325 Montland St  
GARY CHILIBECK (OWNER) 614 SEAFORTH ST.

Margaret McLaren M.M. 301 Robert St.

Gary McLaren M.M. 301 Robert St

Jacquie Norrish 224 Robert St.

LIAN TRASH 40-211 ROBERT ST.

L. Brown 930 N. W. St

Anita Komar Anita Komar #10 211 Robert

DAVID PLAYER David Player 236 Robert

MURRAY CAMPBELL Murray Campbell 230 Robert

LINDA BOWN Linda Bown 215 Russell St

Tom Bown Tom Bown 215 Russell St

Augie Miller 219 Russell St

Chnette Leentree 216 Russell St

Peter Unrau 206 Robert St

RANDI GILL 233 Robert St

BETHEMAE SLYDELL 241 Robert St

Bernice Morris 206 Robert St

VIOLA WASHINGTON 224 ROBERT ST

Emily Gray 255 Robert St.



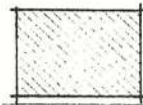
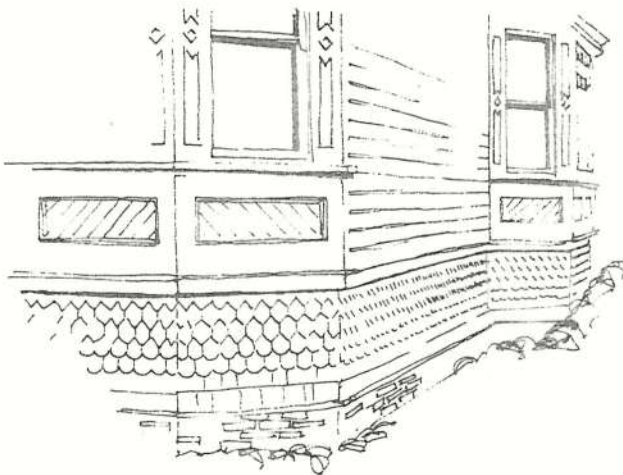
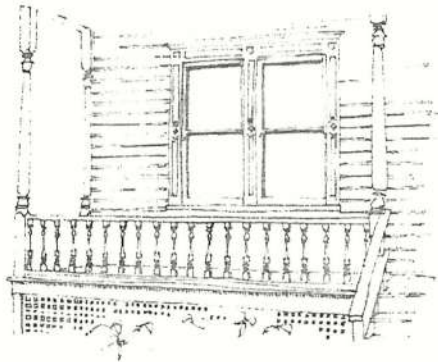
# ISSUES

VIC WEST 1985 BROADSHEET  
PLAN

## HERITAGE & NEW BUILDING DESIGN

- emphasize traditional forms in new construction.
- ★ conserve heritage buildings, recycle for new uses, e.g. consider traditional industrial structures for covered open space.

Note: See reverse for Victoria West history summary.



## INDUSTRY

- improved relations with residential.
- ban trucks from residential areas, e.g. block truck access to Wilson street from Dominion/Rothwell.
- acknowledge long-term relocation from some areas, e.g. LIME POINT.

## RAIL

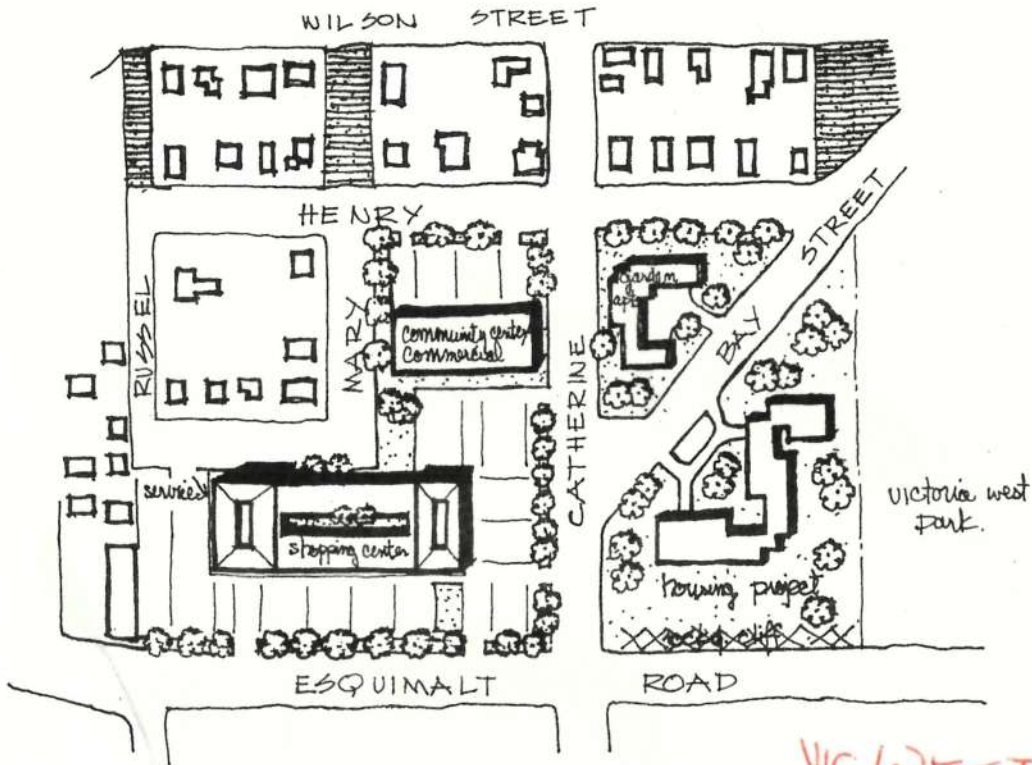
- conserve rail and roundhouse.
- future lines for transit, bike paths and walkway.
- buffer rail operations from inhabited areas.





## Northern Sector

This area has more immediate potential for redevelopment. The rocky slopes in the Industrial Reserve are sparsely developed and are being sewered. Land to the west of the Bay Street and Catherine Street intersection is being cleared, and with street closures, could be consolidated into a large strategic holding. This area is well suited to serve as a focal point within the future community, and redevelopment could include community facilities and a small shopping centre. (See Figure 9).



### 9 COMMUNITY CENTER



0 50 100 200  
SCALE IN FEET

## Western Sector

Detached housing predominates in this area, with scattered industrial development along Esquimalt Road and Mary Street. More land is zoned for industry than is currently developed, but further industrial use is imminent. Towards the Esquimalt boundary, apartment development is established. The Barnard Property will form the basis for a waterfront park and walkway system. This can be continued around West Bay and along the Milne Street right-of-way, and by possible public use of the Rainbow Barracks property.

In order to implement a long term concept for comprehensive residential and recreational development of the Transitional Area, industrial zoning should be limited to the extent of present industrial usage, and the remaining land between Robert Street and Catherine Street should be rezoned in a residential category with lower densities near the waterfront and higher densities towards Esquimalt Road.

VIC WEST - 1972  
DEPT OF COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT



# Designation how-to's available from heritage group

*Continued from A14*

Scaffolding is currently set up around the turret as he engages in the painstaking work of restoring decorative woodwork elements.

Benjamin Schweitzer, the managing director of Wentworth Villa historic home on Fort Street and a board member with the VHF, says the group protesting the demolition of James Muirhead Sr.'s former home at 527 Esquimalt Rd. went on to form the Hallmark Heritage Society. They also helped the city create the VHF.

"One of those things I'm battling," he said about designation, "is that it isn't nearly as restrictive as people think it should be."

There are certain stipulations around doing upgrade work when a homeowner has received a grant to help with the cost, but in general, owners of designated homes can do many things to enhance the buildings without fear of running afoul of the City, Schweitzer said.

"Almost every time I meet someone who has a house that should be designated, I find myself having to clear up misconceptions around the criteria," he said. "I find there's a lot of misinformation out there."

Homeowners who have applied for and received grants from the Foundation to help pay for restoration or repairs



This photo taken remotely by a drone, gives a sense of some of the restoration work being done on the former James Muirhead family home at 223 Robert St. in Victoria West. Owner Jim Lee continues to work on bringing the 1904 home to its past glory.

PHOTO COURTESY VICTORIA HERITAGE FOUNDATION

must complete the work within the calendar year.

One might expect that because no "new" old houses are being discovered around Victoria, the trend toward heritage designation would be on a downturn. But between 2014 and 2016, a total of 15 properties were given the distinction,

including homes moved as part of the Jawl Properties/Concert Properties' Capital Park development in James Bay to Michigan Street (580, 584, 588) and Dallas Road (222, 226).

Three other homes on Lewis Street (39, 43, 50) just off Dallas Road, including the former home of B.C. Finance Minister

Carole James and her family, were designated in 2014.

A list of designated and registered homes, a series of heritage home walking tours by neighbourhood, and details of the House Grants Program can be found at [victoriaheritagefoundation.ca](http://victoriaheritagefoundation.ca). More information about the heritage

designation program and the heritage registry is available at [victoria.ca](http://victoria.ca) – under the Residents heading, go to community planning then click on heritage.

– Sourced from *Victoria Heritage Foundation and Canada's Historic Places*

*editor@vicnews.com*



April 19, 2018 - VIC NEWS ARTICLE

## How to achieve home designation

The City of Victoria employs general criteria when assessing the heritage value of a building.

### Architectural Criteria

**Style/Type:** Is the building style representative of one of the City's significant development periods? Is it associated with a significant industrial, institutional, commercial or transportation activity?

**Design:** Are the buildings notable or are its special attributes of an aesthetic or functional nature? These may include massing, proportion, materials, detail, fenestration, ornamentation, artwork, functional layout, landmark status or symbolic value.

**Construction:** Does the building use unique or uncommon materials, or an early or innovative method of construction?

**Design/Builder:** Did the building's architect, designer, engineer or builder make a significant contribution to the City, province or nation?

### Historical Criteria

**Historical Association:** Does the building have a direct association with a person, group, institution, event or activity that is of historical significance to the City, province or nation?

**Historical Pattern:** Is the building associated with broad patterns of local history, including development and settlement patterns, early or important transportation routes, or social, political or economic trends and activities? Urban street pattern and infrastructure are considered.

### Integrity

How would changes to the building affect its style, design, construction or character?

# 1970s development pressures inspired designation program

## Preservation of built heritage part of city's cultural fabric today

Don Descoteau  
VICTORIA NEWS

Victoria's heritage designation program began as an attempt to save some of the city's most significant examples of early built heritage.

When it comes to designated heritage homes today, many have been restored to the point where it's clear to the onlooker that care has been taken to preserve or restore the original architectural features and the overall character of the structure.

In the 1970s, when local heritage advocates made it clear that development pressures were threatening the existence of such turn-of-the-20th century homes – especially those that had fallen into disrepair – city council began taking action to prevent widescale demolition.

Initially, specific homes with historical relevance and architectural significance were targeted for saving. In 1978 a program was initiated by the City of Victoria to help interested owners restore and repair designated homes, and by 1983, the City launched the Victoria Heritage Foundation (VHF) to administer grants and further encourage the preservation of older homes.

One of the original three homes designated in 1974 was 223 Robert St. in Victoria West, a 1-1/2-storey home steps away from what is now the Westsong Walkway. Known alternately as James Muirhead House for its original owner, and White Tower House for its prominent circular corner feature, the formerly



Jim Lee's home at 223 Robert St. in Victoria West is designated heritage and also a National Historic Site, based on its architectural and historical significance in the community. It is one of very few private homes given such a distinction. PHOTO COURTESY VICTORIA HERITAGE FOUNDATION

splendid home had become a run-down rooming house.

Local accountant Jim Lee bought the home not long after its designation and began the process of restoring it. He won a Hallmark Heritage Society Award in 1987 for his efforts, and in 1991, the home was declared a National Historic Site, one of few private homes to be given such a status. Oddly enough, the NHS distinction was given without Lee's knowledge.

The home was built for about \$2,000 in 1903-04 for newlyweds James Muirhead and his wife, Ella, on a subdivision of a family-owned property that stretched from Esquimalt Road to the nearby waterfront. It has a number of historical elements that render it significant,

including its design by noted Victoria architects Thomas Hooper and C. Elwood Watkins, who designed many downtown buildings, and its construction by builder Duncan McBeath.

It is seen as an outstanding example of the transition between Victorian and Edwardian versions of the Queen Anne style. It was constructed with high-quality standard and decorative wood products milled by Muirhead and Mann, co-owned by James' father – who was also James – and a supplier of millwork for the B.C. legislature.

Today the home sits behind tall hedges and is surrounded by multi-unit developments. Lee still owns the home and continues to work on restoring it.

*Continued on A15*

**Pamela Martin**

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**Subject:** FW: HCA on Robert St.

**From:** froux2 [REDACTED]  
**Date:** May 10, 2018 at 6:17:06 AM PDT  
**To:** <[pmadoff@victoria.ca](mailto:pmadoff@victoria.ca)>, <[Jloveday@victoria.ca](mailto:Jloveday@victoria.ca)>  
**Subject:** HCA on Robert St.

Bonjour Councillor Madoff and Councillor Loveday,

This is to inform you that I fully support the initiative of the designation of Robert St. as a Heritage Conservation Area. It is a position where one recognizes the importance of our heritage buildings clearly established in this neighbourhood, the architectural history of the area. It is paramount that any new development will have to first respect and take into account what is already existing, in order to retain the character and the feel of the street and the street space. Our neighbourhood is quiet, calm, and secure. Its space provides for an environment where one can retreat from the business of what downtown Victoria has become.

The current plan for Robert St would include townhouses 2.5 stories, apartments up to 3 stories which would destroy the look of the frontage on Robert St. Ideally, new construction would be behind properties with duplexes, garden units or low rise townhouses so as not to take away from the distinctive look & feel of our existing homes.

Please take into account the interest of our advocates to maintain a neighbourhood that shows that life does not have to evolve at full speed in the interest of the few. Our community is an example of genuine integrity faced with an adversity whose intents are short sighted. We want to preserve what has been established for more than a century.

Sincerely,  
Françoise Roux  
Strata 1209  
#3 - 242 Robert St.

**Pamela Martin**

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**Subject:** FW: OCP Vic West Robert St

**From:** Joanna Runnells [REDACTED]

**Date:** May 10, 2018 at 10:58:53 AM PDT

**To:** <[lhelps@victoria.ca](mailto:lhelps@victoria.ca)>, <[councillors@victoria.ca](mailto:councillors@victoria.ca)>

**Cc:** Francoise Roux [REDACTED]

**Subject:** OCP Vic West Robert St

I support changes to the proposed plan OCP for the southern blocks of Robert St. I support maximum 2 storey height & designation of street as Heritage Conservation Area. In fill with small lane-style houses or interior suites are OK but new apartment buildings are not.

Regards,  
Joanna Runnells

**Pamela Martin**

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**From:** Tamara Bonnemaïson [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** May 10, 2018 7:39 AM  
**To:** Public Hearings  
**Subject:** Vic West Neighbourhood Plan

Hello,

Just would like to submit a comment about the Vic West Neighbourhood Plan.

I was disappointed to see that the 'small urban village' at the intersection (Catherine at Edward) near the Oceanic Market got downgraded to mostly traditional residential. It would have been amazing to see that intersection develop with small apartment buildings that could support more commercial spaces at ground level. At least two of the 4 corners of that intersection are ripe for redevelopment. I am saddened that we missed such an easy opportunity to create affordable housing, active urban spaces, and local shopping experiences.

Thanks for hearing me out.  
Tamara Bonnemaïson  
919 Hereward Rd, Vic West.