

Old Town Design Guidelines – Public Engagement Comments

The project Working Group worked with staff to develop the Draft Old Town Design Guidelines which were then subject to a broader public engagement process. The following table includes a summary of all comments received through the public engagement and consultation process as well as the resulting refinements to the document.

Comments	Source	Change or Response
General		
• Think of streets as urban rooms	Open House	N/A
• Thanks for the opportunity to comment	Open House	N/A
• Great Improvement	Open House	N/A
• Adequate detail	Open House	N/A
• If passed, I hope it is enforced	Open House	N/A
• Must read design in context	Open House	N/A
• Fabulous!	Open House	N/A
• Good work, reads well, laid out well	Heritage Advisory Panel	N/A
• Great job! Appreciate range of examples	Heritage Advisory Panel	N/A
• Replace front cover image showing painted heritage buildings	Email	Replaced image with a different Old Town Streetscape
• I was impressed with the quality of the proposed guidelines and the upbeat look and feel	Email	N/A
• Overall great document. Nice balance, lots of good discussion. Good technical writing. Good precedent images. Reads as an architectural digest. Likes the separate rooftop additions section. Good layout.	Advisory Design Panel	No change.
• I was happy to see them building on the approach of the predecessor document and delighted that they strike a balance between providing examples and concrete advice without being too prescriptive.	Email	N/A
Prologue		
• The prologue and other parts of the document discourage traditional design approaches that could be more contextual	Email	The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, define distinguishable as follows:

than modern approaches. It is unclear what distinguishable means in this document (distinguishable to whom?)		<i>"To accomplish this, an appropriate balance must be struck between mere imitation of the existing form and pointed contrast, thus complementing the historic place in a manner that respects its heritage value"</i>
Comments	Source	Change or Response
Chapter 2 Old Town Context		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add a character defining element for the waterfront that addresses the aesthetic and scale of Old Town when viewed from the water 	Heritage Advisory Panel	Section 2.6 Character Defining Elements – Waterfront: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> View of Old Town from the water; defined by a concentration of small-scale historic buildings tiering up from the waterfront with a distinct rhythm and rich design quality.
Chapter 3 How to Use the Guidelines		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise wording to reference DPA 1 and DPA 9 as identified in the related map 	Open House	The purpose of the guidelines is to provide clarity on how to achieve the broad objectives for the Old Town heritage conservation area (SEE DPA1 (HC): CORE HISTORIC) and the Inner Harbour heritage conservation area (SEE DPA 9 (HC): INNER HARBOUR) as described within the OCP. It is important to note that the guidelines only apply within those portions of DPA 1 (HC) and DPA 9 (HC) as illustrated in Map 5. Property owners and architects should refer to the document prior to submitting an application and consider the following guiding questions:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include a map of DPA 1 and DPA 9 with an overlay of the OTDG sub areas to clearly identify where the guidelines apply. 	Open House	Map 5 has been prepared to show extent of DPA 1 and 9 along with outline of OTDG policy area.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise wording to suggest that guidelines should be referred to prior to considering any design work 	Heritage Advisory Panel	New wording in Chapter 3: Designers, architects and property owners should reference the guidelines and consider the following questions before undertaking or planning

		any design work related to new buildings or building additions within Old Town:
Comments	Source	Change or Response
Chapter 4 Design Principles		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider a different photo that better reflects the guidelines i.e. well-defined base, body and top. 	Heritage Advisory Panel	Image replaced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On page 18 it is stated that innovative, creative and timeless solutions are encouraged. The terms innovative and timeless seem to be at cross purposes. 	Email	No change - semantic difference of opinion. Timeless and innovative do not necessarily contradict one another. The unique combination of timeless elements to different degrees on a given site can be innovative. At a minimum it will be "new" because every site and local Old Town context is different.
Chapter 5 New Buildings and Additions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can density height and massing be even more strongly addressed in the document? 	Advisory Design Panel	No change – the design guidelines cannot alter zoning height or density, they however address massing quite extensively.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page 19 - 5.1. Include a more thorough explanation of the 15m height limit. The principle behind the 15 metre limitation was to ensure that new buildings were subordinate to the heritage buildings. 15 metres allows for a building that is not as low as some of the existing buildings but is not as tall as other buildings. The Royal Trust building on Government and View is often referenced as an example of why a new building should be permitted greater height. 	Email	Additional explanation of the 15m building height has been added into Section 5.1 Building mass, Scale and Siting.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page 20 -5.1.5. An excellent point, specific to scale, it might be useful to insert that the potential for three storeys must be within the 15 metre height limitation. 	Email	No change - Maximum building height is regulated through the Zoning Bylaw.

Comments	Source	Change or Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page 20 - 5.1.10. It is important that buildings along the water not detract from the prominence of landmark heritage buildings, such as the Empress Hotel, CPR Terminal and the Malahat Building. It is of equal, or greater importance, that these buildings do not detract from the landmark quality of Old Town itself and should be considered as creating the foreground to the historic district. 	Email	<p>Changed guideline: 5.1.10</p> <p>Buildings along the waterfront create the foreground for Old Town and nearby areas. Design new buildings to maximize views to Old Town and preserve views of landmark heritage buildings including the Empress Hotel, CPR Steamship Terminal and the Malahat Building.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page 22 - 5.2.8. Provides another opportunity to reinforce the principle that waterfront buildings should respond to the scale, pattern, articulation and architectural expression of Old Town, as a whole, and be seen as visually creating the foreground to the historic district. 	Email	<p>Changed guideline 5.2.8 Ensure that new waterfront buildings and additions create a complementary foreground to Old Town by reinforcing the existing scale, pattern, articulation and architectural expression of surrounding heritage buildings that are visible from the water.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page 26 - 5.4.16. Is it possible to actually prohibit back-lit plastic box signs? 	Email	No change - Regulated through City of Victoria Sign Bylaw.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide reference images of the Intent Statement 	Open House	All images have been reviewed and updated to better align with Intent Statements.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to set height limits as well as FSR – re: proposed development on east side of Johnson Street Bridge 	Open House	No Change - Building height and density are established through land use policies (DCAP) and the zoning bylaw.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It talks about buildings, how about 'space' need directions and guidelines to provide inviting connections to the waterfront (David Foster Way) 	Open House	The design guidelines address form and character of buildings located on private property, not access via public property. However, guideline 5.1.12 has been added to support connectivity with the Harbour Pathway for properties located directly adjacent to the pathway.

Comments	Source	Change or Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are not much of actual samples in town – most of the area is currently parking lots (Waterfront) 	Open House	Additional photos of the Janion and Mermaid Wharf as seen from the water have been added.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Photo for waterfront guidelines shows typology of Old Commercial District 	Open House	See above
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a Victoria example in this section 	Advisory Design Panel	See above
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.4.17 addresses garages – assumes we have vehicle access roads. Photo illustrates otherwise – inconsistent with the message. Roads in Old Town are not necessarily vehicular. 	Open House	No change – roads are used by cars
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.6 Liveability - Allow and encourage courtyards. 	Open House	Already supported through guideline 5.6.2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page 32 – The elevated courtyard at the Union building is not a good example of a courtyard, is bad for theatre alley and was a compromise to conceal parking. Reconsider using this example. 	Email	The focus of this example is separation distance and not the elevation of the courtyard. The word “ elevated ” has been removed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.7 Off Street Parking – (Background) assumes a potential increase in the demand for off-street parking. May not be the case. Inconsistent with photos elsewhere which highlight pedestrian only zones. 	Open House	Reference to potential increased demand for parking has been removed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.7 Off Street Parking – please include guidelines and intent in the case that more residents does not mean increased need for off-street parking. Intent statement should address both conditions (increase and decrease) 	Open House	See above. However, where off-street parking is not provided then the off-street parking design guidelines would not apply.

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Chapter 6 Rooftop Additions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page 34 - Rooftop Additions: Rooftop additions should be the exception not the rule. Revise section to make this clear. Rooftop additions compromise authenticity. Add specifics about where rooftop additions should not be visible from (i.e. the public realm.) Make sure it accounts for a variety of vantages not just across the street. 	Email	No change - Rooftop additions are a reasonable alteration to an historic building. Chapter 6 also reinforces that "if possible, new additions should be avoided and only pursued if other less invasive options are ruled out."
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page 35 - 6.1. Do not promote rooftop additions as a means of conserving and enhancing heritage buildings. The Tax Incentive and Building Improvement Program already support rehabilitation and should preclude the need to connect additions with rehabilitation 	Email	See above.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revisit photos to show successful international examples of rooftop additions 	Email	All photos have been reviewed and updated with additional international and local examples.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.1.1 should result in the conservation of the whole building, not just the side and rear walls 	Staff	Wording has been revised to highlight the conservation of the whole building to the greatest extent possible.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.3.2 Consider requiring a specified deeper setback for rooftop additions that are located on shorter buildings 	Heritage Advisory Panel	<p>6.3.2 Rooftop additions located on buildings three storeys or less should be setback a minimum of 3m from the facade of the building that faces a street in order to reduce the impact of the additional building mass on the public street, improve sunlight access on the public street and better distinguish the form and scale of the original heritage building.</p> <p>6.3.3. Rooftop additions located on buildings four storeys or greater should be setback a minimum of 4m from the facade</p>

		of the building that faces a street in order to reduce the impact of the additional building mass on the public street, improve sunlight access on the public street and better distinguish the form and scale of the original heritage building.
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