



Committee of the Whole Report

For the Meeting of October 24, 2019

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** October 9, 2019

From: Andrea Hudson, Acting Director, Sustainable Planning and Community Development

Subject: Local Area Planning – Next Phases

RECOMMENDATION

That Council direct staff to:

1. Undertake local area planning with a focus on integrated planning for land use, transportation, urban design and public realm, and limiting the scope to urban villages, town centres, frequent transit and mobility corridors in three phases as follows:
 - a. Phase 1: Villages and corridors within Hillside-Quadra, North Park and Fernwood neighbourhoods
 - b. Phase 2: Villages and corridors within Rockland, Fernwood, North and South Jubilee neighbourhoods (in particular, the Fort Street Corridor and Oak Bay Avenue)
 - c. Phase 3: Town Centres, villages and corridors within Oaklands and James Bay neighbourhoods;
2. Initiate work with Neighbourhood Associations on community-led planning components to support local area planning in accordance with the Terms of Reference attached to this report;
3. Reallocate previously approved funding for pre-work and community-led planning based on revised timing of neighbourhood plans, as follows:
 - a. \$10,000 each for Phase 1 and 2 neighbourhoods: Hillside-Quadra, North Park, Fernwood, Rockland and North/South Jubilee;
 - b. \$20,000 each for Phase 3 neighbourhoods: Oaklands and James Bay;
4. Use transportation planning funds previously allocated to local area planning, totalling \$180,000, for data collection, corridor planning or neighbourhood transportation management planning for the three phases.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present an approach to completing the next phase of local area planning. The approach is informed by lessons learned from previous local area planning processes. It is premised on a renewed focus on planning for areas where planning is needed due to pressures for growth and change and anticipated land uses, and on planning for areas that people identify with in their daily lives (such as villages and corridors) which may cross neighbourhood boundaries.

The purpose of upcoming local area planning is to:

1. Advance community-wide goals and objectives identified in the *Official Community Plan* and other adopted policies and strategies
2. Support other forthcoming strategies including the Sustainable Mobility Strategy and the Climate Leadership Plan
3. Identify how those goals and objectives can come to life in local areas
4. Develop implementation methods (e.g. development permit area guidelines, model zones, and consideration of pre-zoning)
5. Identify gaps in existing policies or bylaws, to better support community objectives at the local level

The next phase of local area planning will focus on integrated land use and transportation planning, urban design and public space for urban villages, mobility corridors and other key areas where new development and residents are expected. The process will identify opportunities to:

- Support and expand housing choice and affordability
- Support safe, convenient and low carbon mobility
- Improve existing and guide the design of new public spaces to be increasingly active, attractive and welcoming
- Support neighbourhoods with services and amenities for daily living close to home
- Support businesses, local economic development, and good jobs in our city

Key aspects of the proposed process include larger study areas which relate to how people use and experience their community, and a charrette-based process for village and corridors planning.

Local area planning would occur in three phases as follows:

- Phase 1: Villages, corridors and relevant areas within Hillside-Quadra, North Park neighbourhood, and the Fernwood Village area.
- Phase 2: Villages, and corridors within Fernwood, Rockland, North and South Jubilee neighbourhoods, related to the Fort Street Corridor, Oak Bay Avenue, and associated corridors
- Phase 3: Town Centre, villages and corridors within Oaklands Neighbourhood, and an updated plan for James Bay Neighbourhood

Refinement of land use policies for lower-density Traditional Residential areas would be considered through a parallel City-wide process for missing middle housing, including townhouses and houseplexes, consistent with Council's strategic directions and priorities in the *Victoria Housing Strategy*. A report proposing this process is expected to be presented to Committee of the Whole in November 2019.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present a proposed approach for the next phase of local area planning, as well as a terms of reference for administering grant funding to neighbourhood associations to support local area planning.

BACKGROUND

Local Area Planning

The *Official Community Plan* (OCP, 2012) represents a comprehensive framework for sustainability and liveability, providing direction on how Victoria may grow and change over the coming decades. The OCP identifies Local Area Plans as an important tool in the implementation of OCP objectives and policies, identifying a range of types of local area plans including corridor plans, urban village/town centre plans, district plans, neighbourhood plans and area plans.

Like all City plans, policies and bylaws, local area plans should be broadly consistent with the OCP and other city-wide policies and initiatives in order to support community objectives throughout all neighbourhoods. In this way, local area planning is a dialogue through which City-wide priorities, policies and initiatives are translated into more detailed, locally-specific guidance for consideration of future development and City investment. For instance, Local Area Plans provide more detailed guidance for the type and density of development, urban design and building form, public spaces, and mobility improvements in an area.

Based on the most recent update to the population projections in the Regional Growth Strategy, and policies within the *Victoria Housing Strategy*, an updated population and housing demand forecast and OCP capacity assessment will be prepared as directed by Council on September 19, 2019. This analysis will inform local area planning, which is generally focused in the areas identified by the OCP as strategic for accommodating future population growth in order to support multiple objectives including more sustainable mobility, efficient land use, complete neighbourhoods, economic vitality, housing affordability, and more.

A previous report presented on October 3, 2019 addressed lessons learned from recent local area planning processes, which has been integrated into this report.

Neighbourhood Association Pre-Planning Funding

Council allocated \$10,000 per neighbourhood for North Park, Fernwood, Rockland and North/South Jubilee to assist them in pre-work to support local area planning, and up to \$20,000 each to James Bay, Oaklands and Hillside/Quadra should those neighbourhoods wish to move forward with neighbourhood-led planning. Council also directed staff to develop criteria for how the money can be used, recognizing that neighbourhood associations have the flexibility to decide how they want to use the funds and encourage outreach for inclusion to expand diversity of voices such renters, low incomes, young families and racialized communities participating in the neighbourhood planning process. A proposal for community-led pre-planning work is included in this report.

City-wide Housing Initiatives

Through the *2019-2021 Strategic Plan* and the *2019-2025 Housing Strategy*, Council directed a number of initiatives which relate directly to local area planning:

- Identify opportunities for affordable housing in all neighbourhood plans

- Consideration of pre-zoning for rental and affordable housing
- Create and implement policies for ground-oriented housing forms to provide “missing middle” housing opportunities and support housing choice. These directions addressed townhouses and houseplexes, as well as the inclusion of lock-off suites in new ground-oriented housing, and consideration of a comprehensive amendment to the zoning bylaw.

ISSUES AND ANALYSIS

1. Proposed Framework and Approach

Purpose and relationship to OCP and other citywide objectives

Local area plans are intended to bring to life, at the local scale, the community-wide objectives expressed in the *Official Community Plan* and other adopted policies and strategies, including for sustainability, housing choices and affordability, sustainable mobility and parks and open spaces.

Local area planning is not meant to duplicate work already completed, underway or planned, such as the Sustainable Mobility Strategy, Climate Leadership Plan, Housing Strategy initiatives and planned updates to the *Tree Preservation Bylaw* or *Growing in the City* policies.

The City’s equity lens, which is currently in development, is expected to inform the framing and background analysis, engagement approach, and evaluation of expected outcomes from local area planning.

Within the framework outlined above, local area planning may:

- Identify how the City’s goals and objectives can come to life in local context
- Develop implementation methods (e.g. development permit area guidelines, model zones, and consideration of pre-zoning, conceptual road cross-sections)
- Identify local-level priorities, or gaps within existing policies, programs and bylaws related to the key topics

Scope

1. Focus on corridors, villages and town centres: Local area planning will focus on the following areas:

- a. villages and town centres
- b. mobility corridors, focused on arterial and secondary arterial roads already served by frequent transit routes or capable of being so, and properties fronting on these roads where there are opportunities for transit supportive/oriented development which is complete, connected, and compact
- c. surrounding areas anticipating medium to higher-density residential and/or commercial uses (e.g. Urban Residential, Core Residential and General Employment designations)
- d. other specific areas that may be strategic or experiencing pressure for change (e.g. public properties which may be subject to redevelopment)

2. Integrated planning for key topics: Local area planning will focus on integrated planning for the follow four topics:

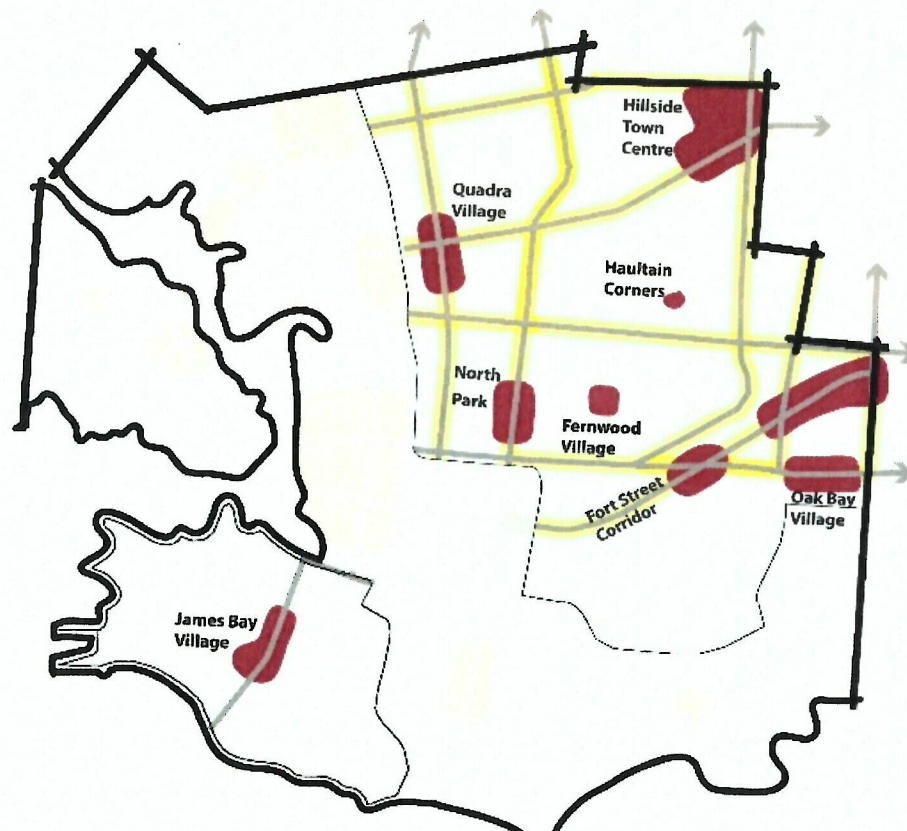
- a. land use
- b. mobility
- c. urban design

d. public spaces.

The objective is to create a clear yet flexible framework for the future, and identify opportunities to support key objectives including:

- Support and expand housing choice and affordability
- Support safe, convenient and low carbon mobility
- Improve existing and encourage new public spaces that are active, attractive and welcoming
- Support walkable, wheelable neighbourhoods with services and amenities close to home
- Support businesses, local economic development, and good jobs close to home

Local area planning will not result in capital spending, but rather set the stage for future decision-making by feeding into citywide considerations.



Corridors, Villages and Town Centres

3. Consider other topics of area-wide interest including desired neighbourhood amenities, sustainable mobility and public spaces. Other topics may be identified through pre-planning; however these topics should be within the scope of local area planning and consistent with City-wide objectives.

4. Relationship to Housing Initiatives

Local area planning presents an opportunity to advance key directions of the strategic plan and *Victoria Housing Strategy*, including the following objectives from (Housing Strategy Action 2: Increase Supply)

- Identify opportunities for affordable housing in all neighbourhood plans
- Explore pre-zoning opportunities for purpose-built and affordable housing
- Support faith-based, charitable and non-profit housing developers

The next phase of local area planning will generally be undertaken concurrently and overlap with a separate city-wide process to provide “missing middle” housing opportunities and support housing choice, consistent with the *Victoria Housing Strategy* and OCP directions for Traditional Residential areas.

5. Transportation Planning Funding for Local Area Planning

As a part of the 2018 Budget, Council allocated \$180,000 towards transportation data collection to support local area planning efforts in the neighbourhoods of James Bay, Hillside-Quadra and Oaklands, aligned with expected timing of local area planning.

Staff recommend providing broader direction that this funding may be used flexibly for data collection, corridor studies and/or traffic management studies aligned with local area planning, as needed. This recommendation is based on two changes which have occurred:

- Local area planning time frames and study areas are recommended to shift
- Through current transportation planning initiatives, the City is undertaking a city-wide approach to traffic calming, as directed by Council in 2019, while updating city-wide transportation planning through the Sustainable Mobility Strategy. Input through local area planning processes, including neighbourhood-led pre-planning, may contribute to these city-wide policies or may benefit from further analysis specific to corridors or neighbourhoods. This is best determined on a case-by-case basis.
 - For instance, although James Bay is recommended to be part of Phase 3 Local Area Planning, current and future transportation pressures relating to the evolution of multiple significant sites within James Bay (e.g. Ogden Point, Belleville Terminal, legislature traffic circulation changes) mean it may be strategic to establish base conditions as part of transportation data collection for initial round of studies supporting Local Area Planning.

2. **Proposed Study Areas, Sequencing, and Rationale**

Minor changes are proposed to the order of planning areas, compared to previous direction: planning for the Quadra Village area has been moved to Phase 1, while planning for the Fort Street corridor, Oak Bay Avenue and other corridors in North and South Jubilee have been moved to Phase 2. However, the proposed approach of focusing on villages and corridors rather than entire neighbourhoods will assist staff with moving on to subsequent phases in a more timely manner. The maps below present generally recommended geographic boundaries for study areas, which may be adjusted during the local area planning process.

Each round of planning is expected to take 12-15 months, based on a streamlined approach with more focused geographies and topics, direct linkages to citywide policies, and a parallel process to consider missing middle housing in Traditional Residential areas.

Phase 1: Corridors and Villages in Hillside-Quadra, North Park and Fernwood (2019-2020)

Staff recommend moving the Quadra Village area to Phase 1, due to development pressure within the village and on publicly-owned lands, as well as a desire to address livability issues, considering arterial roads bisecting the neighbourhood. This also reflects the original OCP direction.

North Park Village and surrounding areas are also experiencing pressure for change due to proximity to downtown. Neighbourhood association representatives have expressed interest in further consideration of services and amenities to support the economically-diverse population of the area, and accommodating affordable housing.

Areas west of Fernwood Village also face development pressure on publicly-owned lands, and this seems an opportune time to determine how the neighbourhood plan may respond to these changes. Stakeholders have pointed out the close overlap between North Park Village and areas of Fernwood.

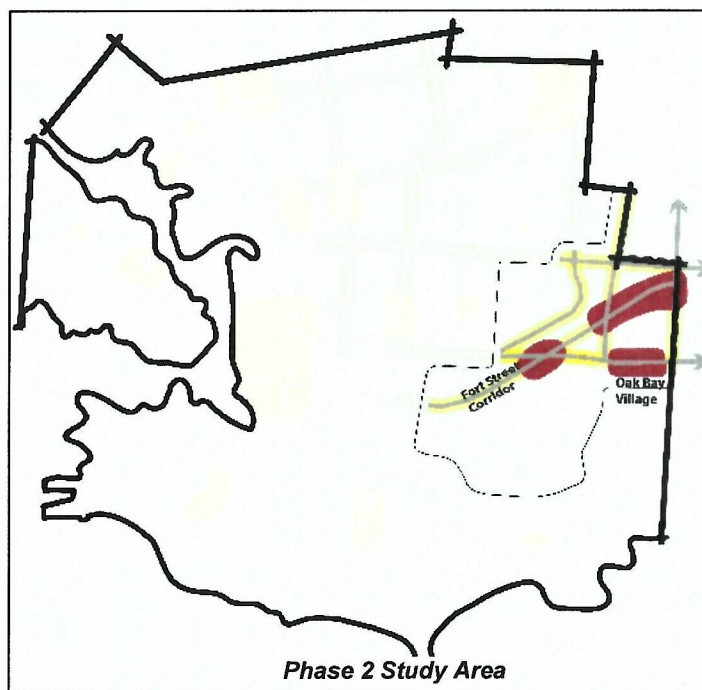


Phase 2: Fort Street Corridor, Oak Bay Avenue and Adjacent Areas (2020-2021)

The Fort Street Corridor provides opportunities for future housing and mixed-use development in Rockland, Fernwood and the Jubilee neighbourhoods. Parts of Fort Street also present a barrier to pedestrian mobility comfort and sense of place.

Oak Bay Avenue is also currently undergoing development pressures and would benefit from updated design guidelines and public realm policies. In fall 2019, the City will be initiating a process to identify the preferred All Ages and Abilities route in this area, which will inform local area planning.

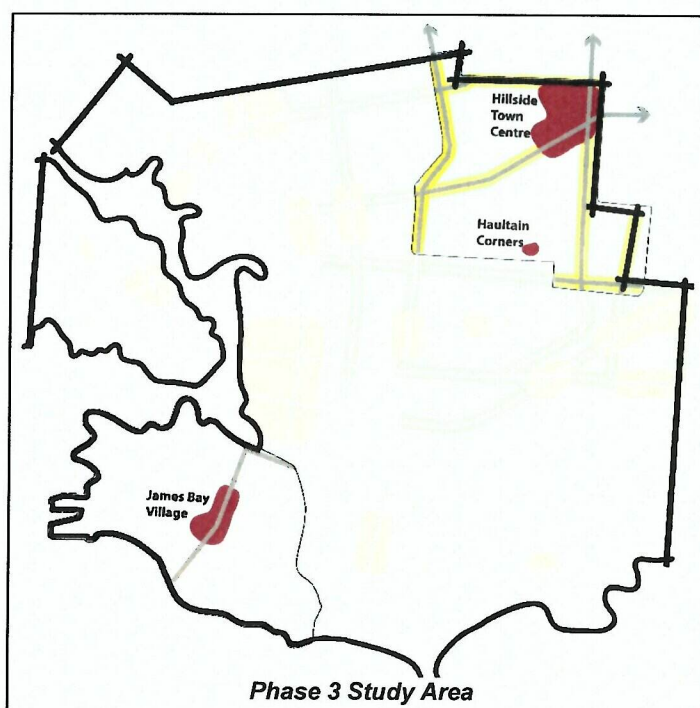
This phase would also consider corridors falling within the Jubilee Neighbourhoods, such as part of Bay Street and Richmond Road next to the Royal Jubilee Hospital.



Phase 3: Corridors, Villages and Town Centre in Oaklands; James Bay (2021-2022)

Phase 3 would include the remaining parts of the City. Focus areas for Oaklands have been identified as key corridors and the town centre, while an updated neighbourhood plan is proposed for James Bay as the geography of James Bay does not lend itself to a focus on corridors.

Both of these neighbourhood associations are recommended to receive planning grants of \$20,000 for neighbourhood-led pre-planning work. These organizations have indicated their intent to move forward with pre-planning work, with activities in James Bay focused on livability issues related to traffic, parks and environmental impacts; and with Oaklands Community Association indicating a desire to produce a community-led document informing the local area plan.



Engagement will focus on *how* we can maintain and achieve more livable, sustainable and inclusive neighbourhoods in the future, will convey *why* this planning is needed (issues related to demographic growth and change, sustainability, trends, and community vision), and *what* objectives are already well established in the OCP, Strategic Plan and other City-wide plans and policies, all in a way which is accessible to stakeholders.

3. Local Area Planning Deliverables

The following key deliverables are anticipated:

1. Consolidated community profile presenting data and city-wide trends, broken down by neighbourhood and summarizing key City policies and initiatives (to inform the process and community-led planning work)
2. Key policy and design directions following the charrette process
3. Updated Neighbourhood Plans as planning is completed
4. Updated Development Permit Areas and Design Guidelines
5. Other OCP Amendments needed to implement the plans, if needed
6. Zoning update (as model/template zones or pre-zoning as directed by Council).

4. Proposed Process and Methodology

The next phases of local area planning are proposed to be undertaken through a five-step process. These steps are shown in Figure 1.

Charrette-Based Process for Villages and Corridors

A charrette-based process is recommended for land use, transportation and urban design components of villages and corridors planning. “Charrette” does not denote a single event; rather, each charrette process would be an iterative process in collaboration with neighbourhood stakeholders and residents. The process would likely include kick-off meetings, development of a

design brief informed by engagement, a public charrette event or series of events over a short time and engagement on options developed during the initial charrette phase.

The focus areas within each study area would generally include the corridors, villages, town centres and related areas associated with each phase of planning. Charrettes would be “nested” within the broader process with two charrettes in round one: one for the Hillside-Quadra area and one for the North Park and Fernwood Village areas. Charrettes may be followed by a single, unified process for broader engagement in each study area, recognizing the interconnections between areas.

Role of Working Group

During the pre-planning phase in November - December, a working group will be created. The working group supporting Phase 1 will include members with connections to Hillside-Quadra, North Park and Fernwood (including those who live, work, play or access services in the area). The working group will meet approximately once a month from November 2019 until early fall 2021, with an additional meeting and two half days in support of the charrette, anticipated to occur in March or April 2020. Staff will solicit recommendations from key community organizations and groups, including neighbourhood associations, and ensure a broad diversity of voices, backgrounds and perspectives are represented.

Working group members will:

- Serve as an advisory body for process and engagement design and execution
- Act as a sounding board for policy formulation at key points during the process, considering the project scope, objectives and public input
- Serve as liaison to the community
- Participate in charrettes alongside members of the public

The Terms of Reference (Attachment A) provide greater detail on the diversity, role, and expectations of working group members.

Draft Process Diagram for Local Area Planning

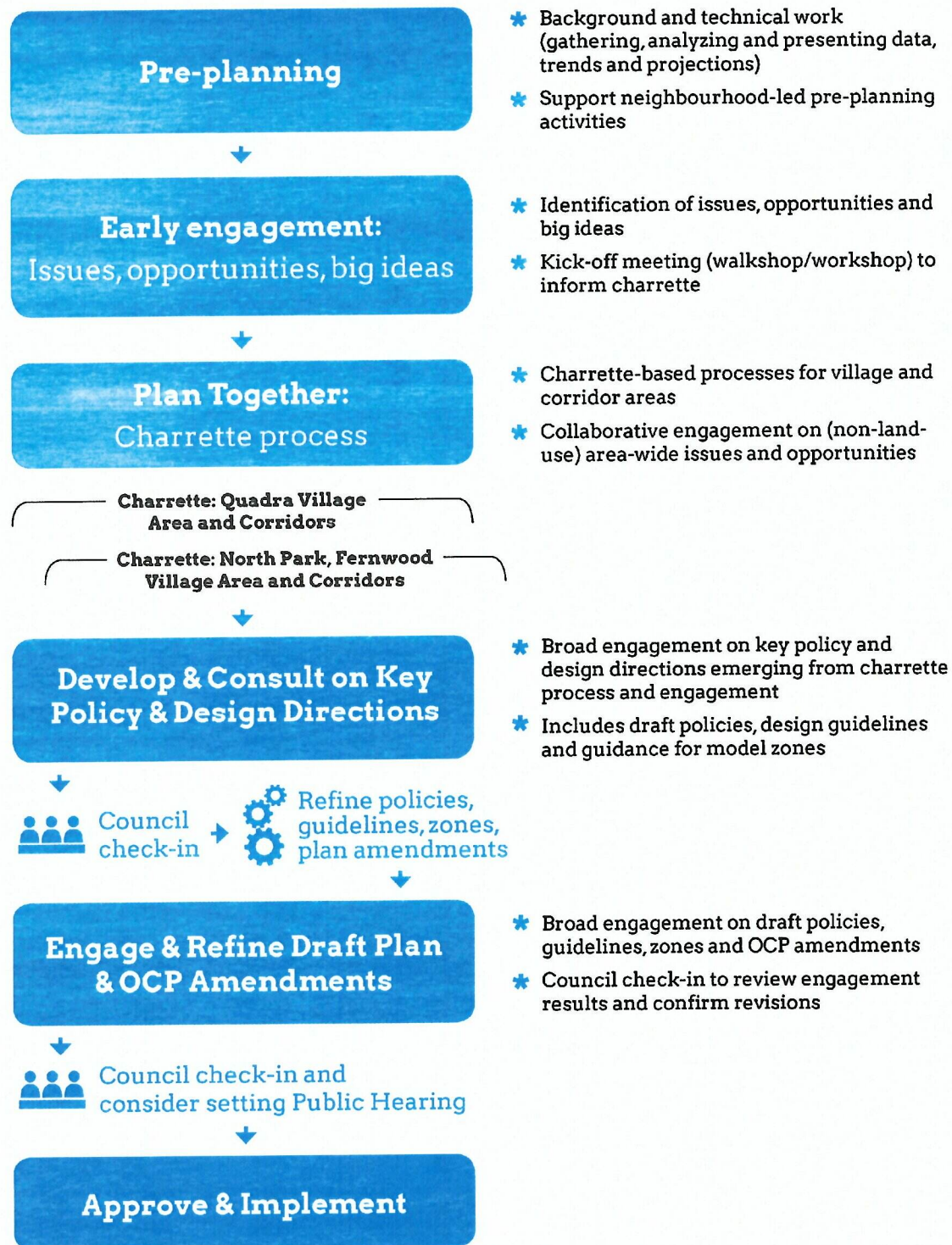


Figure 1.

Additional Topics of Area-wide Interest

Many community members are interested in exploring strategies for community-building and addressing topics of interest beyond the core topics of land use, transportation, urban design and public spaces. Recognizing that many topics are addressed by citywide policies, such as *Growing in the City*, the *Arts and Culture Master Plan*, or the *Climate Leadership Plan*. The role of local area planning may be to facilitate and empower stakeholders to envision how these policies might come to life. Community members may wish to form working groups or carry out dialogue parallel to the core local area planning process. Such discussions may be supported by community associations and/or appropriate City departments in conjunction with the City's Neighbourhoods Team. The results of these discussions may be integrated in a variety of ways, whether into neighbourhood plans, or into a strategic document that has community ownership, and may be implemented through programs such as the My Great Neighbourhoods program, other grant funding programs, or existing city programs and operations.

Early engagement focused on issues, opportunities and big ideas may help to inform where community members want to focus.

Engagement Approach

The engagement process will overall be focused at the level of involve (as defined by the City's *Engagement Framework*). Collaboration will occur at key points, including in designing early engagement and in developing alternative through the charrette process. In addition, opportunities for parallel collaborative engagement of related topics of interest to the community, and supportive of OCP objectives, may be proposed by community members.

The engagement plan will follow the City's *Engagement Framework* and emphasize the following specific considerations:

- Transparency: The process will clearly identify what decisions are being considered, opportunities to participate, and how engagement will be used in decision-making.
- Inclusivity: Ensure a range of stakeholders are represented, including different household types, ages, incomes, as well as renters and homeowners. Focus on increasing participation of youth, young families, persons with lower incomes, renters, indigenous persons and New Canadians. Engage key stakeholder groups, including neighbourhood associations and neighbourhood-serving organizations. Consider stakeholders who cannot speak for themselves: future generations and the environment.
- Support community-wide objectives within local contexts: Consider Victoria as a cohesive community, recognizing that village and corridor planning supports citywide and regional objectives such as housing choice and affordability, sustainable development and mobility, and livability as expressed at the local level. The perspective, lived experience and local knowledge of neighbourhood residents is important, but not exclusive. Recognize that where people live, work and spend time in Victoria's neighbourhoods changes over time as people grow up, form families, age, and make choices about housing. Consider future generations.
- Storytelling and Dialogue: Use storytelling methods to help communicate data and trends, encourage diverse dialogue and viewpoints.
- Data-informed engagement for decision-making: Provide data and trends relevant to decision-making, in an accessible and timely manner.
- Opportunities for citizen-led engagement: Provide opportunities for citizen-led activities and engagement on topics within the established scope of local area planning.

5. Neighbourhood Association Funding and Pre-Planning

Neighbourhood association funding is intended to support pre-planning and planning processes to encourage outreach for inclusion to expand diversity of voices such renters, low incomes, young families and racialized communities.

Pre-planning is premised on coming to a shared understanding of trends and identifying issues, opportunities and big ideas related to sustainability and livability in neighbourhoods. Pre-planning is envisioned to have two components:

- a technical component including gathering, analysis and presentation of data
- meetings with key stakeholders / stakeholder groups
- in collaboration with neighbourhood associations, formation of a working group composed of diverse members including residents, business and land owners, youth, seniors, renters, homeowners, and people of diverse backgrounds and family status. This working group would be expanded to form a charrette stakeholder group through applications received during the first phase of broad engagement.

Pre-planning work to be undertaken by the City would include:

- creation of a single profile document providing a range of data and trends for the City as a whole, and broken down by neighbourhood, projections for the future, and summaries of key City policies and initiatives. Staff will explore with stakeholders what collection of data is most useful in this document
- completion of an updated housing needs forecast and capacity assessment
- developing communication tools using a storytelling approach will be used to communicate City priorities, policies, and initiatives.
- confirm specific engagement activities to be included in consultation with neighbourhood associations and others involved in the pre-planning engagement.

Those neighbourhood associations in the first two rounds of planning have each been allocated \$10,000 to assist in pre-planning activities which encourage and build capacity for diverse engagement in the planning process. Staff will work with these associations to support and integrate their efforts into the local area planning process.

A proposed terms of reference and criteria for use of neighbourhood-specific funding is included as Attachment B.

Those neighbourhoods in later phases of local area planning (Oaklands and James Bay) have been allocated \$20,000 to undertake neighbourhood-led planning activities in support of local area planning. Oaklands and James Bay Neighbourhood Associations have identified two-year processes for work related to local area planning.

Hillside-Quadra was also allocated \$20,000 with the expectation of being in the final round of local area planning. If Council approves the staff recommendation to move Hillside-Quadra into the first round, Council may wish to consider re-allocating funding.

In addition to pre-planning, local area planning processes will include opportunities for community-led engagement and collaboration at key points in the process, where there is local capacity and interests.

OPTIONS AND IMPACTS

Accessibility Impact Statement

The creation of local area plans will be informed by City-wide policies for considering accessibility, including the upcoming Accessibility Framework.

2019-2022 Strategic Plan

The proposal supports Strategic Plan Objective 8.17, under Strong Livable Neighbourhoods: Develop Local Area Plans; and is intended to support a range of strategic plan objectives which may be furthered by Local Area Planning, such as 3.22, Identify opportunities for affordable housing in all neighbourhood plans.

Impacts to Financial Plan

The proposal would reduce total grants awarded to neighbourhood associations by \$10,000.

The proposal does not impact the financial plan. Local area planning funding for the Phases 1 and 2 would be delivered using existing funding for OCP Implementation. Upon completion of Phase 2, staff would evaluate further funding needs for planning related to Phase 3 (Oaklands and James Bay).

Official Community Plan Consistency Statement

The proposal is consistent with the OCP, in particular Section 20: Local Area Planning, which envisioned a range of local area plans, with a focus on corridors, villages and areas expected to undergo growth and change.

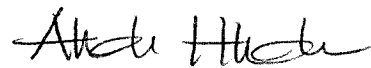
CONCLUSION

The proposed approach to local area planning provides for a more focussed, accessible process for completing local area planning in the next three years, informed by lessons learned from previous local area planning processes.

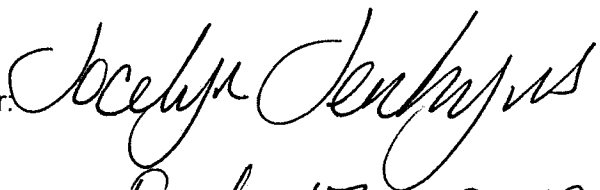
The approach is premised on a renewed focus on planning for areas where planning is needed due to pressures for growth and change, considering those areas that people identify with in their daily lives. The approach also establishes clear connections to approved community-wide policies and objectives related to sustainability, housing choice and affordability, and building a livable, walkable community for the future. Together with a more focused geographic and topical scope, this allows for more streamlined and transparent engagement process to allow for the completion local area planning for corridors, villages and town centres in a timely manner.

Respectfully submitted,


for
Marc Cittone
Senior Planner
Community Planning Division


Andrea Hudson, Acting Director
Sustainable Planning and Community
Development Department

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:


Date: Oct 17, 2019

List of Attachments

- Attachment A: Proposed Terms of Reference for Phase 1 Working Group
- Attachment B: Proposed Terms of Reference for Neighbourhood-Led Pre-planning