

Housing & Urban Design

Summary Report and Draft Directions



Village and Corridor Planning

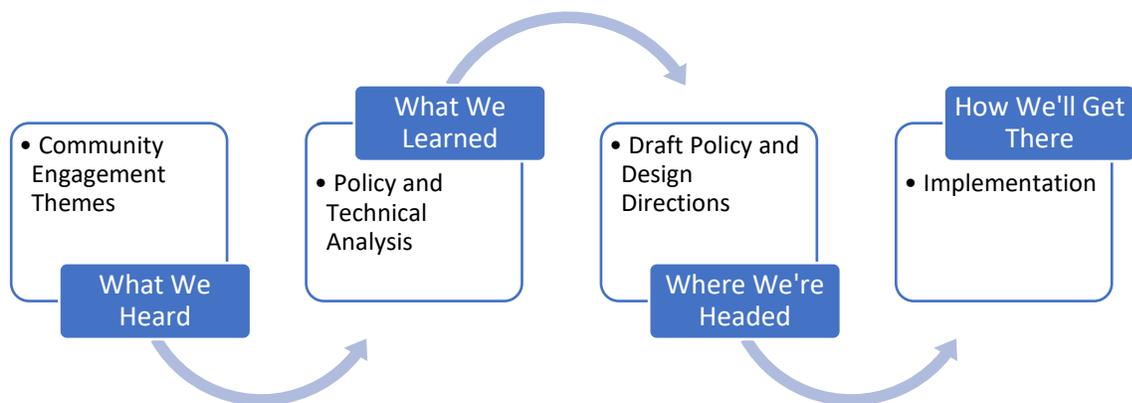
Quadra, Fernwood & North Park Villages, Corridors & Surrounding Areas

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About this Report

This report outlines the planning process and **draft housing and design directions for the Village and Corridor Phase 1 Study Area**, which includes areas of North Park, Hillside-Quadra, and Fernwood neighbourhoods. The report describes community engagement themes, policy and technical analysis, the resulting draft policy and design directions, and finally the required implementation steps.



Please see the Stage 2 Engagement Summary for details of the engagement process.

Urban Design Guidance for Development in Urban Villages

What We Heard & What We Learned

Please see the Urban Design and the Public Realm sections of the neighbourhood *Planning Summaries* for North Park, Fernwood, and Hillside-Quadra for:

- Summary of engagement relevant to each village
- Analysis of urban design conditions of each village.
- Summary of existing design policies (including design guidelines that apply in each village).

Where We're Headed

Draft Directions for **Design of New Development in Urban Villages**

The following principles and directions would guide the development of public spaces and of proposed Design Guidelines for the Development Permit Areas within villages. Much of the below is already contained in the City's existing design guidelines, such as the *Design Guidelines for Multi-Unit Residential, Commercial and Industrial* or the *Revitalization Guidelines for Corridors, Villages and Town Centres*. However, some of the below directions represent a refinement of existing guidelines and/or guidance that is unique to the area. The objective is to refine and consolidate guidelines with additional content focussed on emerging directions and specific place-based objectives. For this reason, this section is not a comprehensive listing of all design objectives and policies, but rather addresses what is new, noteworthy, or unique to these villages and proposed directions.

Principles for Urban Design in Urban Villages

1. **Identity:** Create a series of welcoming, diverse and inclusive public spaces that support community gathering, to reflect the community's identity and adapt to its changing needs over time.
2. **Historic Character:** Ensure new development in and adjacent to villages is compatible with and complementary to, but is distinguishable from heritage buildings, including the iconic, intact, and regionally significant heritage fabric of Fernwood Village.
3. **Liveability:** Ensure homes of all types have sufficient access to sunlight, air, views, privacy, open space, play areas and other amenities that support livability
4. **Great Streets:** Design, locate and shape buildings to create sunny, welcoming, and walkable public streets with space for pedestrians, patio seating and greenery. Emphasize Quadra St and Hillside Avenue as the core retail and pedestrian spines for Quadra Village and Central Park Village, and Cook Street for North Park Village. In Fernwood, emphasize Gladstone Street and identify opportunities to enhance pedestrian spaces along Fernwood Road, particularly in Fernwood Village, and Bay Street, particularly at the proposed Bay Street and Bay-Fernwood Villages, as well as frontages and corner spaces.
5. **Human Scale:** Design buildings and open spaces that create visual interest, diversity and identify when approached by pedestrians.
6. **Neighbourliness:** Ensure new buildings are good neighbours within the street and with existing and future buildings next door
7. **Urban Forest:** support a healthy, mature, and continuous tree canopy along all streets with a priority for key gathering spaces, pedestrian routes and connections to parks and other greenspaces.
8. **Making Room:** Make room for new housing in and near villages that appeals to households of different types, ages, incomes, and lifestyles.
9. **Sustainable Mobility:** Integrate support for sustainable mobility options (walking, cycling, transit, and electric vehicles and reduced on-site parking) into building and public space design.

10. **Public Spaces:** Create joyful and welcoming public spaces for everyday use and community celebration. Incorporate public seating and gathering areas appropriate to the scale of urban villages and commercial corners and consider opportunities for placemaking and/or new public spaces on both public and private lands.
- a. In Quadra Village, a series of interconnected, accessible public spaces of different sizes designed to welcome diverse use, both everyday and for smaller and larger events, in three or four seasons.
 - b. In Fernwood Village, to refresh Fernwood Square while maintaining its beloved function and character for everyday use and community celebration. Consider future public seating along Gladstone Street. Consider the establishment of a smaller public gathering space in the proposed Bay Street Village.
 - c. In North Park Village, to provide opportunities for public spaces or shared use streets at key locations near North Park Village, including North Park Street, Balmoral Street, and corners in general.
 - d. Along Bay Street Villages, to consider new public spaces at corners and explore opportunities for partial closure of a side street when there is sufficient activity to support a public space.
 - e. At Quadra Street at Tolmie Avenue, to identify improvements within and adjacent to the right of way that help create a "sense of place" naturally slow traffic.
 - f. At or near the Finlayson-Highview Community Corners, to consider opportunities for placemaking in the right of way relating to the community corners and/or Summit Park.

Urban Design Emerging Directions

This section identifies potential design directions which are new or in need of enhancement, including area-specific considerations.

Building Form and Siting

- Encourage the stepping back of the upper storey or storeys to create a sense of openness and access to sunlight.
- The height of the façade (portion of the building closest to the street) of buildings should relate to the width of the street and building-to-building distance. Generally, facades in urban villages are desired to be up to 3 to 4 storeys in height.
- Encourage building siting and massing that transitions to adjacent lower-scale development, with attention to impacts such as shading, overlook and privacy.
- Site and design buildings and public spaces to create activity at ground level (with entries, shops, services, and other "active" uses) and "eyes on the park/plaza" with windows and balconies above.
- On larger sites, site taller buildings towards the centre of the block or in places where shading of public spaces is minimized.
- Maintain sufficient building separation between buildings located on one site, and between new buildings and existing or potential future buildings on adjacent sites.

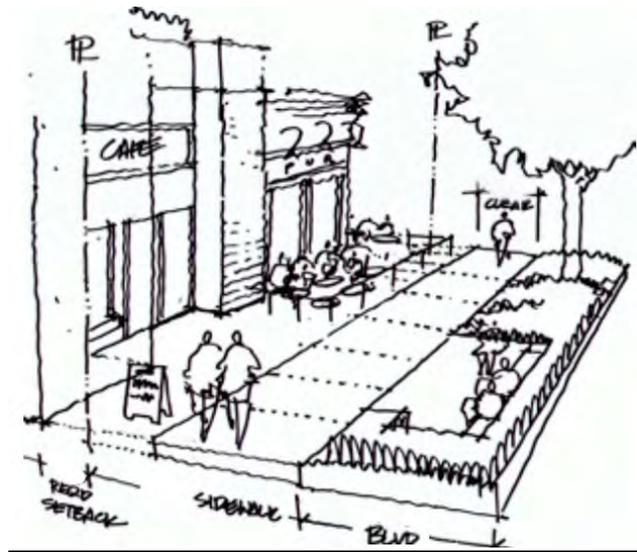


Figure 1. Building frontages set back to accommodate patio spaces in private lands, a clear sidewalk, and a boulevard zone with space for street trees.

Human Scale Architecture

- Maintain and create human-scaled building frontages with a “fine-grained” expression at the street level (ground floor) and upper storeys along streets and adjacent to public spaces. This means ground floors should be characterized by frequent smaller storefronts which create pedestrian interest; frequent entries; generous areas of windows; and generous floor-to-ceiling heights.
- For medium-format ground floor retail uses (e.g., a medium-sized grocery store), ensure the use activates the street front and creates visual interest, including through frequent entries, shop windows, and of the inclusion of smaller retail units in larger buildings.
- Where the ground floor use is private residential use in new development, provide a semi-private transition such as a patio or a stoop.

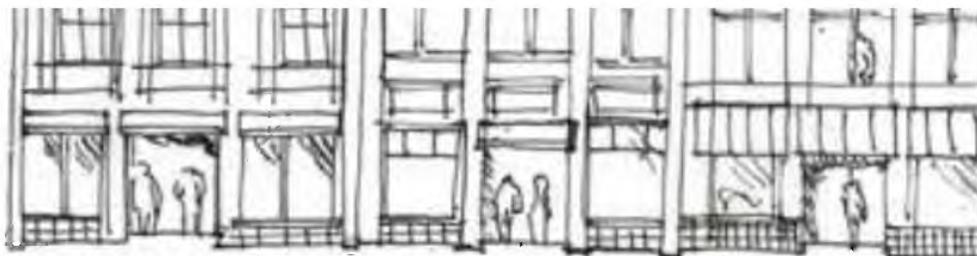


Figure 2. An example of a fine-grained pattern of smaller storefronts with frequent entries.

Diverse and Incremental Change

- Encourage the maintenance of existing patterns of smaller lots (approximately 15.2-30.5m in width) and smaller-footprint buildings, allowing for varied change over time while maintaining diverse commercial spaces conducive to smaller businesses. This may be accomplished by removing parking requirements for smaller buildings (as parking requirements tend to encourage the assembly of larger sites that can provide underground parking).

- Encourage a mix of commercial unit sizes within new development to support new, emerging and expanding businesses. Consider including “micro-spaces” (as small as 150-300 sq. ft.) to nurture eclectic start-up businesses, single proprietors, and creative uses.
- If a larger site is proposed for redevelopment, seek a mix of commercial unit sizes that create activity adjacent to streets and public spaces while maintaining a full-service grocery store in the village and providing spaces for mid-sized businesses and services such as drugstore/pharmacy, hardware store, or medical offices.

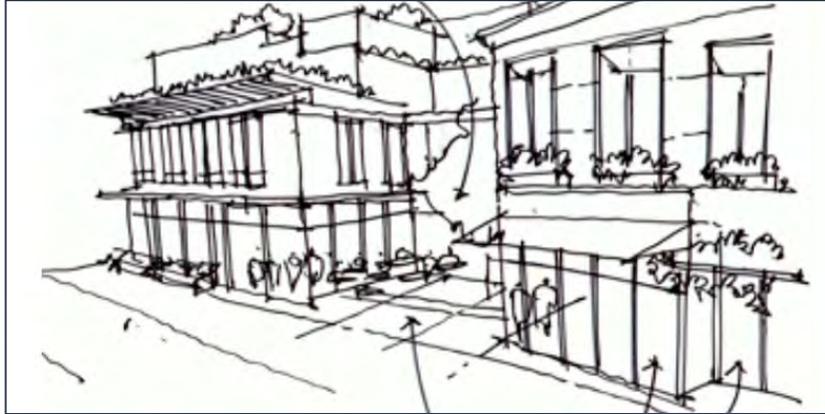


Figure 3. Diverse setback conditions and building design.

Identity, Context and Character

- In established villages, encourage new building form and design that relates to positive, established aspects of surrounding built form, considering the rhythm and pattern of existing building façades and architectural elements such as building articulation, roof-lines, window placement, entryways, canopies and cornice lines, while creating a diversity of design to enhance the eclectic look and feel of the village.
- Fernwood Village displays a strong heritage character. New design guidelines should reflect that heritage character:
 - Ensure the design of new buildings complements without mimicking, the established heritage character of Fernwood Village by reflecting the spatial organization, rhythm, ratios and composition of nearby historic structures and their character defining elements.
 - Contribute to a cohesive urban fabric with unique visual interest and character.
 - Ensure the spire of the current Belfry Theatre building remains a prominent feature of the village, including through design of new development and public spaces to respond to and preserve public views of the Belfry spire.
- Quadra Village and North Park Village, in contrast, display eclectic design that has evolved over the years. In these areas, a diversity of building forms and designs are encouraged to celebrate and enhance the eclectic look and feel of the street and create a diverse expression and visual interest along the street, avoiding uniformity while supporting human-scale architecture.
- Orient buildings towards corners with features such as corner plazas, public spaces, or patios of varied sizes (drawing direction from Local Area Plans) and/or building forms and architectural features such as corner entries, chamfered corners, rooflines, and architectural expression. Ground-floor glazing (shop front windows) should “turn the corner” and secondary shopfronts may be considered along side streets, drawing interest down these streets especially in places where its desired a village “turns the corner”

(e.g., along Mason Street towards Franklin green Park; at Bay and Fernwood Street to draw pedestrians towards Fernwood Village).

- For buildings located at T-Intersections (as are common on Bay Street), building design should emphasize and positively respond to terminating vistas by incorporating pedestrian oriented features and architectural expressions.

Material

- Consistent with existing policies in city-wide and *Corridors and Villages* guidelines, use exterior materials that are high quality, durable, and capable of withstanding a range of environmental conditions throughout the year, particularly on lower portions of buildings that are more closely experienced by pedestrians.

Public Spaces and Pedestrian Circulation

- To support spaces for pedestrians and healthy mature boulevard trees, seek rights-of-way that expand the sidewalk and tree planting space as well as seeking setbacks for patio and display areas (excepting on sites with heritage buildings).
 - Larger setbacks may be required on larger sites to support future directions for public transit along Quadra Street and Hillside Avenue.
 - In areas where lot depth constrains development (such as some parts of Bay Street and North Park Village), patios and smaller publicly-accessible open spaces may be focussed on corners rather than along the main fronting street, to accommodate landscape, seating, and/or pedestrian spaces. Ground floors may also be inset to accommodate patio seating and display zones.
 - At the corners of Bay and Fernwood Roads, patio seating is encouraged to be oriented towards Fernwood Road as a “high street”, to take advantage of the locations along a quieter street and draw pedestrians towards Fernwood Village.
- Improve pedestrian accessibility through widened unobstructed sidewalks.
- In areas where sidewalk width is likely to remain constrained, consider smaller public spaces oriented towards corner sites.
- If redevelopment is proposed adjacent to one of the sites identified for a potential future plaza, the design of that development should support and respond to plaza opportunities, considering human-scaled building facades, setbacks, design of frontages, access to sunlight on public spaces, and other aspects of a future public space.
- In Quadra Village:
 - Support the evolution of the lane directly west of Quadra Street and north of Kings Road into a multi-use, pedestrian-friendly “mews” space through the creation of patio seating, display areas, landscape and new storefronts facing the lane, as envisioned in the “Quadra West” section.
 - Encourage east-west connectivity from the Quadra Mews laneway to Fifth Street, by formalizing and enhancing pedestrian pass-throughs east and west of Quadra Street, and a mid-block crossing of Quadra Street. Locate patio seating areas at the corners along Quadra Street and the laneway created by the pass-through.



Figure 4. Example of eclectic building forms fronting a Quadra Mews laneway (left) and a mid-block pedestrian passthrough from Quadra Street (right).

- In North Park Village:
 - Establish a north-south laneway, parallel to and east of Cook Street, over time through the acquisition of rights-of-way and design of new buildings to incorporate parking access from the laneway.

New Public Spaces on Private Lands - Quadra Village

- If redevelopment of the eastern block (shopping centre) site is proposed, seek a public space within that site, containing both hardscape (plaza) and landscape, as well as pedestrian connections through the block, with a preferred plaza location along the Quadra Street frontage, either to the centre of the block or on the corner of Quadra Street and Kings Road to take advantage of solar orientation and adjacency to the Kings Street greenway.
- If a larger redevelopment is proposed near the Quadra and Hillside intersection, seek to create a smaller public plaza that provides space for pedestrians and transit users, along with public seating and other features.
- If redevelopment of the 950 Kings Site is proposed, seek improvements that enable the Quadra Mews laneway concept and that create a public space (“village green”).
- Encourage buildings to respond to corner sites, considering small seating or plaza areas at the corners of Quadra-Kings and Quadra-Hillside.
- Public plaza spaces should encourage rest, play and social activity and encourage 3-4 season use with features like publicly-accessible seating, large canopy trees, a combination of hard and soft landscaping, and attention to shade in summer and access to sunlight, especially during colder months.



Figure 5. Example of a public plaza space.

Sustainable mobility

- When new development occurs adjacent to transit stops, integrate transit stops and waiting areas (with weather protection) into building design or street frontage.
- In addition to the current requirements and guidelines for bicycle parking and electric vehicle charging, consider bold and innovative solutions to design to manage parking and incorporate transportation demand management measures (see Mobility section for more details).

Light Industrial and Light Industrial Mixed-Use Buildings

These guidelines apply to areas, such as North Park Street between Quadra Street and Cook Street, where continued light industrial, artisan and maker spaces are envisioned and where they may be mixed with residential units on the same site or in the same building.

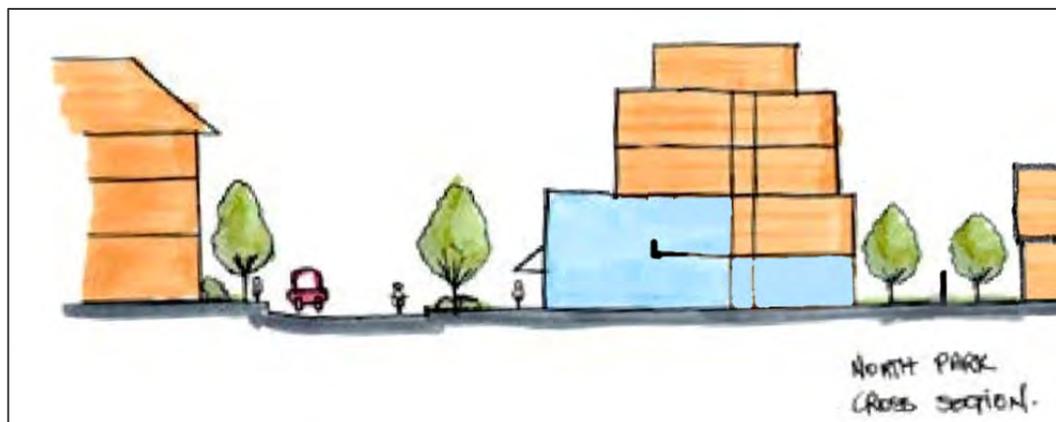


Figure 6. Diagram of how a light-industrial mixed-use building might be arranged,

- Buildings should include the necessary qualities to support diverse productive and arts activities, including extra-height ground floors and access for smaller trucks.
- Building forms should create sensitive transitions between employment uses and residential uses, whether on the same site or adjacent areas, subject to design guidelines for industrial-residential buildings. This may be informed by existing design guidelines that address light industrial and light

industrial-residential mixed-use buildings in the *Revitalization Guidelines for Corridors, Villages and Town Centres*.

- Street-facing facades are encouraged to incorporate larger areas of windows that activate the street and allow for incidental retail, production and displays to be viewed by passers-by.

How We'll Get There

Implementation Steps for **Urban Design for Guidance in Urban Villages**

| |
|--|
| Update Neighbourhood Plans |
| Update neighbourhood plans as required to reflect the directions herein. |
| Update the Official Community Plan Development Permit Areas and Design Guidelines |
| Update Development Permit Areas and Design Guidelines to reflect the directions herein. |

Study Area Housing: Policy and Zoning

What We Heard

Community Engagement Themes for **Study Area Housing**

Summary Themes – City and Study Area

- Both owners and renters expressed desire for a diverse range of housing choices to maintain a diverse community, meet future needs, and support households of different incomes, family types, ages, and lifestyles.
- Many were also concerned about preventing displacement of current low- and moderate-income residents, although there were differing opinions on the best approach to prevent displacement.
- There was broad support for housing that provides opportunities to live and move more sustainably, including through parking management and recognizing the trade-off between parking, green space, and affordability.
- Specific concerns included:
 - Provision of amenities with new housing.
 - Providing multi-family housing choices in quieter neighbourhoods, not just transit corridors.
 - Inclusion of affordable housing options.
 - Distribution of new housing within the region.
 - High quality design, including form and character, accessibility, green space, and heritage retention.

Housing Choice and Affordability

Public input during early engagement in spring 2020 and the most recent round of engagement revealed a desire for diverse housing choice. Diversity is desired for tenures (rental, ownership, and other forms like cooperative housing), incomes (market and non-market across the continuum), and forms (multi-family and missing middle or ground-oriented housing). Different stakeholders emphasized different needs (e.g., non-market housing for renters with low incomes; options for moderate income households; opportunities for first time homebuyers; transitional housing for those facing homelessness). Prominent themes, in both the surveys and focus groups were the struggles to find family-appropriate housing and housing for those with low incomes.

Some expressed a desire to focus efforts on different forms, for example, house conversions, garden suites, or tiny homes, or smaller apartment buildings (some historic examples on local streets were specifically noted). Others felt the city should focus primarily or exclusively on needs as they relate to income or household make-up (e.g., only or primarily non-market, market-rate, rental housing, single-detached, suites/house conversions, or missing middle housing). Others focused on specific barriers, such as needing pet-friendly rentals or larger units in multi-family housing.

A small number believed that the creation of housing to meet needs was not desirable, should simply be done elsewhere, or that the neighbourhoods in question should only accommodate those who can afford increasing housing prices or single-detached homes.

On and Off Corridor Multi-family Housing Perspectives

Perhaps one of the most consistent themes throughout community meetings, workshops and the survey is a desire for multi-family housing options that are not limited to busy arterial road corridors. For some, it is seen as an equity issue: renters are concerned that the economics of development combined with land use policies that limit multi-family housing to busier streets will result in a lack of choices for living environment, or as one put it, limit renters (many of whom take transit) to living on busy streets while reserving more desirable locations for

those who can afford a single-detached house. The Equity Study commissioned by DBAC (Hillside-Quadra's community association) identified air pollution and noise as potential health impacts along busy streets. For the most part, comments did not oppose housing on corridors, seeing these choices as appropriate for some, but wanted to provide multi-family housing options in both off-corridor and on-corridor areas.

"One thing I will say is that the City seems tied to what Dr. Gordon Price calls "the Grand Bargain" - density along corridors without touching the sea of detached housing elsewhere. This proposal already notes an issue with that, by saying it would "encourage housing with bedrooms facing away from Bay Street" If that's the case, why put all of the housing on Bay? Why not allow it a block or two away? That would reduce the exposure to traffic related air pollution for a lot more people. Same for Fernwood. So my more tepid support for [housing on Bay Street] is because I believe there should be other places for mid-rise housing that isn't along corridors. I'm sharing an example of that in Vancouver - density right between Broadway and Fourth, between Cypress and Maple: <https://goo.gl/maps/6HGaiP9cKpoJSyAa6>"

"I fully support the described new housing along the Bay Street corridor, but only insofar as it isn't used as a politically-expedient alternative to building more desirable housing off-corridor (including off-corridor 3-5 story buildings 1-2 blocks off of Bay). I.e. my strong preference is for both and I'd be disappointed if the majority of new residents were concentrated along busy, noisy streets."

"I think it is unfair to locate multi-unit, 'affordable' housing only on major transit corridors, where air quality is worse and noise is higher. I strongly support locating higher densities within local and neighbourhood streets."

Support for More Urban Forms

There were several comments throughout engagement that illustrated support for more urban forms in residential areas. Often references to other cities, like Montreal were cited. For example, this comment from the North Park survey:

"Six story is good, but really if you want to control house prices much larger swaths of the greater Victoria area need to be six story. This is the case for places like Paris for example. I suspect that this will not provide enough supply to help control house prices. Villages are the nexus of growth and community in Victoria. Will the city provide a nucleus for new village centers in other locations throughout Victoria to provide a similar growth of density?"

Support for Missing Middle Housing

Though this process did not specifically address ground-oriented housing, feedback and some common themes on the subject emerged. These comments will feed into the Missing Middle Housing Initiative (a parallel process).

Equity Perspectives

Equity, as it relates to new housing, was a common topic in engagement, although it was brought up in different ways. As identified above, the potential for displacement of current renters emerged as a key concern. In other areas, however, there is some disagreement as to what equity means and how it can be achieved.

Many stakeholders, both owners and renters, see expanding the availability of non-market and affordable housing options as critical to achieving equity and maintaining the ability of diverse people to live in Victoria in the future. Focus groups brought up the intense need for affordably-priced housing options for singles and families of different sizes, including larger or multi-generational families. Many felt adding more housing choice of different types and tenures, both market-rate and below-market or non-market, especially while protecting existing rental housing, was a key step toward a more equitable city. On the other hand, some believed that their

neighbourhood had a concentration of affordable housing and that no more should be added. A few others felt that new market-rate housing should be discouraged because it is not affordable to the lowest-income earners.

Some view level of amenity and risk of neighbourhood change as equity issues. Many cited the need for amenities and open spaces in areas that have existing multi-family housing, especially housing serving those with lower incomes. Areas south of Hillside Avenue and in the North Park Neighbourhood were noted specifically as areas in need of amenity. Another perspective is that some neighbourhood improvements – such as plazas or streetscape improvements – or newer “trendy” shops might drive rent increases in existing apartments.

A common concern expressed by stakeholders was a perception that those in other neighbourhoods – particularly in southern Victoria (Fairfield/Gonzales) as well as in the Municipality of Oak Bay, had used planning processes to avoid accommodating a “fair share” of multi-family housing or affordable housing.

Other Approaches to the Housing Crisis

In comments, communications, or discussions, a few stakeholders suggested changes to broader frameworks that are beyond the scope of the current plans or suggest entirely different directions. While these comments were from a minority of respondents, they are noted here for transparency:

- Revising regional plans and/or expanding the Urban Containment Boundary so a greater share of housing need can be met outside of Victoria (note: regional plans currently call for 80% of net new housing in the region to be accommodated outside of Victoria, consistent with population projections);
- Seeking to reduce the number of Canadian and/or immigrant households locating in Victoria; or,
- Changing the system of housing to focus on a significantly more “de-commodified” system, where most new housing is public or cooperative.

Areas for New Multi-Family Housing

The survey asked respondents to indicate where they would support opportunities for more multi-family housing of varying scales as follows:

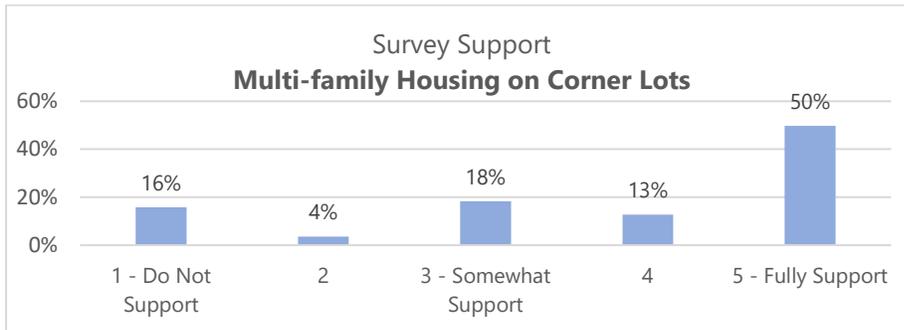
- Six areas were suggested for consideration of **On-Corridor Housing** (housing along Frequent Transit corridors), generally considering housing of 5 storeys in height (a scale at which both rental and strata is likely viable). One corridor that is currently identified for local transit service only, Finlayson Street, was proposed for a mix of scales, with the caveat that this would likely support only strata housing.
- Nine areas were suggested for consideration of **Off-Corridor Housing** (multi-family housing off of corridors, but generally proximate to urban villages and/or sustainable transportation options). The survey indicated that 3-4 storey housing may be viable in many areas, but that to support rental housing, buildings of 4-5 storeys may be necessary depending on location.
- Respondents were asked about their support for multi-family **Corner Lot Housing** of 3-5 storeys on corner lots off of corridors, either as an alternative to or in addition to other areas proposed. Notable benefits of this approach include better design outcomes (because of the availability of two street frontages) and a broader distribution of multi-family buildings.

Most survey respondents favoured considering multi-family housing in both on-corridor and off-corridor locations. Some minor variations in levels of support between renter and owner respondents were noted:

- Of the 6 on-corridor locations proposed, the average respondent supported considering multi-family housing in approximately 4 areas.
- Of the 9 off-corridor locations proposed, the average respondent supported considering multi-family housing in approximately 6 areas.
- Both renters and owners expressed similar preferences for location of new multi-family housing:

- On-corridor options were supported by renters and owners at similar rates.
- Off-corridor options were supported by renters in an average of 6.3 of 9 areas and by owners in an average of 5.7 of 9 areas.
- The corner sites option was rated an average of 3.5 (somewhat support) by owners, and 4.2 (support) by renters.
- There was limited variation in the level of support among geographic areas.
 - On-corridor areas received support from 62% to 71% of respondents, depending on location.
 - Off-corridor areas received support from 55% to 66% of respondents, depending on location.

| Proposed Areas for Consideration of Multi-Family Housing | Survey support |
|--|----------------|
| On-Corridor Housing Areas | |
| Quadra Street - Near Tolmie Village | 71% |
| Cook Street - Near North Park Village | 69% |
| Bay Street | 67% |
| Quadra Street - Near the parks | 66% |
| Cook Street - Near Blackwood Park | 63% |
| Finlayson Street – For consideration as a secondary corridor with lower scale 3-4 storey buildings (likely to support strata but not rental housing) | 62% |
| Off-Corridor Housing Areas | |
| In Between North Park and Fernwood Villages | 66% |
| Off of Bay Street – A) North and B) South | 61% |
| Off of Hillside - South (around the Bakery Mews laneway) | 60% |
| Along 5th Street - North of Quadra Village | 59% |
| Off of Hillside - North (along Vista Heights) | 59% |
| Along 5th Street - South of Kings Road | 59% |
| Along Tolmie - East of Quadra Street | 57% |
| Fernwood Road to George Jay School | 56% |
| Along Kings Road - East of Quadra Village | 55% |



In focus groups and community meetings, these options were also presented and discussed. Key themes that emerged are noted above and there was generally support for both on- and off- corridor opportunities (though desire for off-corridor multi-family housing came through more strongly among a few groups, including renters and those with children at home).

What We Learned

Policy and technical analysis for **Study Area Housing**

Guiding Policy and Objectives

Engagement findings largely reinforce several key policies and strategic directions established at the City of Victoria. Many of these existing policies and directions will be implemented through local area planning or otherwise inform the proposed policy and design directions of this process. Relevant policies are noted below.

The *Official Community Plan*, as well as guidance for Local Area Planning contained in the *City of Victoria Strategic Plan* (2019-2022), indicates that all Local Area Plans should create opportunities for a range of housing choices, including affordable housing, in all neighbourhoods.

The *Victoria Housing Strategy* includes the following related actions:

- Focus on Renters:
 - Explore policy opportunities to preserve existing rental housing stock.
 - Explore policy opportunities to incentivize the development of rental housing.
 - Continue to implement Residential Rental Tenure Zoning.
- Increase Supply:
 - Consider pre-zoning areas of the city for increased density with provisions for purpose-built rental and affordable housing (Bonus Density Zoning), and for increased density in low density zones.
 - Identify opportunities for affordable housing in all local area plans (also noted in the City's 2019-2022 Strategic Plan).
- Housing Choice
 - Explore policy opportunities to support the development of housing for families (also noted in the City's 2019-2022 Strategic Plan).
 - Explore how to facilitate, incent, and support collaborative housing forms including co-op housing (also noted in the City's 2019-2022 Strategic Plan).

City of Victoria Strategic Plan (2019-2022) includes the following targets and outcomes related to housing:

- Increase number of co-operative housing units.
- Increase rental apartment and housing vacancy rate.
- Increase percentage of Victoria residents who own their own homes.
- Victoria is seen as development friendly.
- Neighbourhoods are diverse, accessible, and affordable across all ages, incomes, and abilities.

Housing Across the Continuum

The city needs to make room for housing across the entire continuum. There is a strong need for affordable housing targeted to very low, low, and moderate-income households, however, there are also many earning above these income thresholds who are looking to rent or buy housing. Indeed, approximately half of new demand for housing will be among households earning above the City's moderate-income definition. Through this process the City heard from people in moderate and above moderate incomes struggling to find housing.



“Right Supply” in the “Right Places”

Current City objectives focus on creating a diverse range of housing types, sizes, bedroom configurations, and tenures, as well as housing to support different incomes (market-rate, below-market and non-market housing). These objectives to support current and future populations reflect the need for the “right supply” (distinguished from simply “supply” which may be illustrated in a simple count of housing units). Objectives further focus on accommodating housing in locations that have access to services and amenities, parks and open spaces, shopping, transit, and mobility options close to home (housing in the “right places”). The *Official Community Plan* and companion plans focusses on multi-family housing located within a short walk of the downtown, town centres or large urban villages, with access to transit, parks, and open spaces within a 400m walk.

Housing + Transportation Costs

Part of creating the “right supply” includes the design of buildings and how they promote and encourage the use of shared mobility and sustainable transportation options. The City’s bylaws require well-located and designed bicycle parking, as well as electric vehicle readiness, in new mixed-use buildings. Through *Go Victoria*, the City’s Sustainable Mobility Strategy, and through re-zonings, transportation demand management (TDM) methods are being integrated into new multi-family and mixed-use buildings. TDM includes things like providing transit passes and/or carshare memberships for residents, dedicating car share spaces (and in some cases vehicles) for residents and the surrounding community, and other ways such as enhanced bicycle parking to make sustainable transportation easier. Victoria already has a relatively good mode share (with over half of trips by non-auto means), but the *Climate Leadership Plan* recognizes that we need to do even better if we intend to meet our greenhouse gas reduction targets for transportation-related emissions.

Reducing the need to own a car has additional benefits: by linking TDM to reductions in bylaw-required parking spaces in new buildings, housing becomes more viable to build – increasing available homes as well as choices like rental housing (which can be a less viable development option). Providing practical options to live without a vehicle also benefits household budgets. While not everyone can or desires to live without their own car, providing the choice can allow people to reduce their total housing plus transportation (H+T) costs, noting that the typical Canadian car costs \$700 monthly, on average, to own and maintain. Providing choices recognizes that some people – because of the nature of their jobs, mobility limitations, lifestyle – will choose to own a car, while others may not.

Minimizing Displacement

Existing, older purpose-built rental housing provides an important source of stability for current residents, and a source of relatively affordable rentals for those seeking housing (especially if vacancy rates increase, giving renters more choices). The *Official Community Plan* contains a rental retention policy (13.23) that seeks to preserve the same number of rental units in any redevelopment (there are plans to update this policy in 2022 as part of implementing the *Victoria Housing Strategy*).

Land use planning can further support rental retention and reduce the pressure to redevelop these sites by considering new multi-family housing development in locations that do not already have purpose-built rental buildings. Local area housing and land use policies being proposed seek to minimize displacement by opening additional areas near villages and transit to consider multi-family housing development, including for rental housing.

Catching Up and Keeping Up: Needs and Capacity for New Housing

The *Victoria's Housing Future* report provides a summary of the City's diverse objectives, current and future housing needs, gaps in existing capacity, and what they collectively mean for planning for future growth.

The report estimates the number of housing units needed in the longer term (by 2040), beginning with an estimate of outstanding needs today, or what is sometimes referred to as latent demand. Latent demand is difficult to estimate given the nature of the housing market, but a few key indicators with reliable and consistent data sources illustrate a gap of between 4,500 and 6,300 housing units or more in Victoria's market as of 2016. This figure, while conservative, provides an indication of what is needed to "catch up" with housing needs today. Looking to the future, to "keep up" with anticipated housing needs, additional housing units in diverse forms will be required for the projected 11,300 households that will form between 2016 and 2041.

The report also describes an assessment of the city's existing capacity to accommodate housing based on the *Official Community Plan* (OCP) Urban Place Designations. The constrained capacity assessment considers recent trends and the likelihood of development on any given site based on several conditions (such as lot size, value of building improvements, value of land, and heritage status). Comparing latent demand estimates and future growth projections to assessed capacity in the OCP's Urban Place Designations reveals a potential gap of about 15-30% between 2020 and 2040 (depending on the latent demand indicators used).

The capacity assessment also illustrates potential locational trends based on existing policy. Only about 29% of future housing would be located within a 5-minute walk of town centres and villages. This falls well short of the OCP target of 40%, especially when considering that between 2012 and 2019 these areas saw a cumulative total of just 21% of the city's growth. This projected distribution results in a more diffused pattern of growth than envisioned in the OCP and impedes transportation and climate change objectives, as well as the development of complete, connected communities. It is also counter to many of the desires noted in community engagement.

Potential to Close the Gap

Local area planning is a key way in which we can make room for more housing in the right locations. The areas considered in this process could potentially help to fill some of the identified gaps in capacity and move the city towards being more sustainable, equitable, and inclusive.

The on-corridor and off-corridor areas proposed for multi-family housing were assessed to understand how much housing they might accommodate over 20 years, and how they might help to close the gap in capacity. If the proposed land use changes are implemented and, over time, achieve the average densities recently observed, they could help to close the city-wide capacity gap by roughly 25% in an area that is approximately

the same share of the city's land base. The remainder of the capacity gap could be closed through additional local area planning processes planned for other parts of the city.

Notes about potential growth and accommodating it well:

- Constrained capacity represents a projection of the potential to create housing over time, based on existing development and lot patterns, past trends, and land use policies. How much housing is realized, and of what types, depends on many factors, and a myriad of decisions by homeowners, housing providers, and developers who are influenced by economic and non-economic factors.
- Design guidelines help to ensure new development is neighbourly and allows all residents to live comfortably in their homes.
- New development contributes to Development Cost Charges (DCCs) that support expansions to infrastructure and parks, based on adopted master plans.

Paying for Growth: Development Cost Charges, Inclusionary Housing and Community Amenities

Like many areas in the city, infrastructure in these areas is aging and will need to be replaced in the next 10-25 years, regardless of development patterns. New development contributes Development Cost Charges (DCCs) to finance upgrades to infrastructure that are required because of increasing population or demand.

DCC rates are updated annually based on inflation, and periodically based on changes to plans and policies. Water, sewer, and stormwater master plans are updated every 5-7 years. DCCs also help to finance parks acquisition and development (in addition to financing from amenity contributions, general fund revenue, senior government grants, and other sources). The City of Victoria does not at this time have a DCC for schools.

The *Inclusionary Housing and Community Amenity Policy* guides considerations of community benefits considered from new development.

Economic Analysis: Rental Housing, Economic Viability, and Parking Provision

A 2020 land economics analysis helped to inform recommended policies. The analysis identified conditions under which redevelopment to a multi-family housing form may be viable, including for market rental homes. The provision of rental housing is a key objective of the *Victoria Housing Strategy*, given low vacancy rates, high demand, and rising rents. Many stakeholders also expressed a desire that new rental homes, not just strata housing options, be added.

The analysis found that in Hillside-Quadra, market rental housing could be viable to build at densities of 2.3:1 Floor Space Ratio (FSR) and above, depending on the location and assuming underground parking is provided at 0.5 spaces/unit on average. Alternatively, a building with "tuck-under" or surface parking may be viable for market rental housing at densities as low as 1.6 FSR and above, depending on the location.

Within Fernwood, market rental housing was found to be potentially viable at densities of 1.6 FSR and above in some locations, but other locations would likely require 2:1 FSR or more, assuming underground parking is provided at 0.5 spaces/unit on average. Alternatively, a building with "tuck-under" parking may be viable for market rental housing at densities as low as 1.5 FSR and above, depending on the location. North Park likely shares characteristics of both adjacent neighbourhoods.

The analysis represents market conditions as of 2020. It is meant to paint a broad picture as it cannot predict with accuracy what may be viable on any given site, or over time. It assumed that no government subsidies are provided, and profit margins are towards the lower end of the range of what is considered for private financing. Viability is also sensitive to factors such as lot size and pattern (as smaller lots tend to be more expensive per

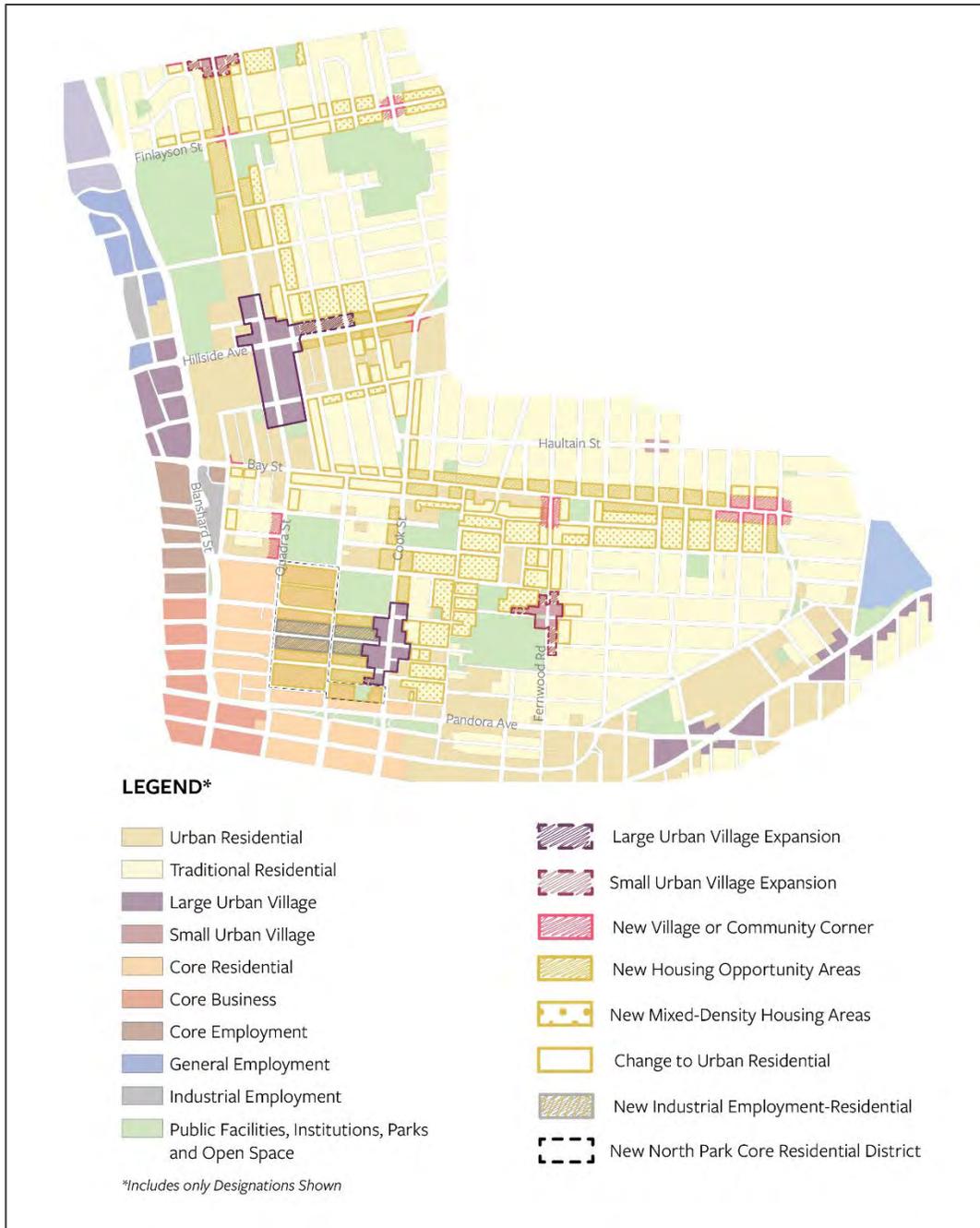
square metre of land area). The variability in viability between locations occurs mainly because of lot size and because land values and achievable rents vary between areas.

The above findings are focused on market rental viability. Generally, a strata development is viable at lower densities than a rental development. If a strata development were developed at the densities mentioned above, it would likely support contributions towards public amenities or housing benefits (affordable housing). These calculations cannot consider the economics of creating non-market housing for public or non-profit housing providers, who are generally looking for land that is viable for development but also require subsidies to provide housing at below-market rates.

Where We're Headed: Housing Policy

Draft Planning Directions for Study Area Housing

Areas Considered for Additional Multi-Family Housing



Map 1: Study Area Multi-family Housing Locations Considered

Note: For a discussion of specific areas considered for additional multi-family housing and their merits, please see the Planning Summary and Key Direction Reports for individual neighbourhoods.

Principles for Housing

Consider opportunities for additional multi-family housing that:

- Support multi-family, rental, and affordable housing in all of Victoria's neighbourhoods.
- Are proximate to the downtown, large urban villages, and public transportation corridors with access to shops, services, amenities, parks, and open spaces to enhance livability and support Victoria's climate leadership targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Support the creation of varied tenure options including rental housing.
- Support the inclusion of homes of various sizes for different household types.
- Support the creation of below-market and non-market housing.
- Support rental as well as strata housing in a variety of locations, not just on busy street corridors, but in quieter locations, to support varied needs, lifestyles, and preferences.
- Provide opportunities to meet Victoria's housing needs while minimizing displacement of existing purpose-built rental housing.
- Complement opportunities for lower-scale, ground-oriented housing including missing middle housing and house conversions.
- Meet the urban design principles and directions below.
- Provide diverse mobility options and allow people to choose "car-light" lifestyles, reducing negative environmental impacts, and reducing the "Housing + Transportation" costs to households who can make this choice.

Housing Directions: All Areas

- Encourage the retention and continued use of buildings of heritage merit in all areas considered, including through an adaptive reuse that adds housing.
- All relevant City policies and regulations, including policies for the retention and/or replacement of rental housing units, for inclusionary housing and community amenity contributions, for energy efficiency and green building, for urban forest, and for heritage, continue to apply in these areas.
- Consider further neighbourhood-based heritage surveys and consideration of Heritage Conservation Areas through the Citizen-Initiated Heritage Conservation Area program.
- Until the *Official Community Plan* policy regarding rental retention is updated through implementation of the *Victoria Housing Strategy* (expected in 2022), any proposed rezoning at the densities described herein that displaces existing purpose-built rental units is generally discouraged, unless the proposal includes significant housing benefit, including provisions for affordability.
- Rezoning, particularly along arterial streets, should establish sidewalks of proper width and landscaped boulevards that accommodate healthy mature canopy street trees.
- New housing, particularly rental housing, should allow for reduced parking requirements in tandem with Transportation Demand Management measures as required in the Zoning Bylaw or specified in the Sustainable Mobility Strategy (e.g., convenient bicycle parking; car share; transit passes).
- Along busier arterial corridors, building forms that maximize livability for individual units (by minimizing impacts of busy traffic corridors) are encouraged. Depending on lot sizes and depths, this may include forms like courtyard buildings that provide multiple frontages for individual units; "T-shaped", "L-shaped", or "C-shaped" buildings; corner buildings oriented to side streets; buildings with greater front yard setbacks; buildings with shared rear yard green spaces; and buildings with commercial-style ground floors.

Summary Table of Land Use Directions

| Urban Place Designation | Approximate Density* | Approximate Bonus Density** |
|---|---|-----------------------------|
| North Park Core Residential District | 1.2:1 FSR | 2.5:1 FSR |
| East side of Quadra Street, North Park Street to Caledonia Street | 1.2:1 FSR | 3:1 FSR |
| Industrial Employment-Residential | 2:1 FSR (1.5:1 of which residential) | n/a |
| Urban Residential | 1.2:1 FSR | 2:1 FSR |
| Urban Opportunity Overlay Areas | 1.2:1 FSR | 2.5:1 FSR |
| Traditional Residential | 1:1 FSR | n/a |
| Mixed Density Overlay Areas | 1:6 FSR | n/a |
| Large Urban Village | 1.5:1 FSR | 2.5:1 FSR |
| Small Urban Village | 1.5:1 FSR 2:1 in key locations | n/a |

*See the *Official Community Plan* and local area plans for details and guidance.

**Bonus density is intended to support the advancement of plan objectives, including in the *Official Community Plan* and local area plans and as guided by the City's *Inclusionary Housing and Community Amenity Policy*.

Housing Directions: Core Residential Areas

- Establish the North Park Core Residential District generally in the Core Residential Areas between Quadra and Vancouver Streets and Mason and Pembroke Streets.
- Consider new residential and mixed-use buildings in this area as follows:
 - Consider new buildings of generally 5 to 6 storeys depending on location, site size, site depth, and context.
 - Consider new residential buildings of approximately 1.2:1 Floor Space Ratio.
 - Consider new residential buildings of approximately 2.5:1 Floor Space Ratio, with consideration of community objectives including affordable housing and/or community amenities.
 - On the parcels along the east side of Quadra Street between North Park Street and Caledonia Street, consider additional bonus density of approximately 3:1 Floor Space Ratio, considering public benefits and amenities identified in City policies.
 - Retain and renew light industrial and artisan spaces along North Park Street between Quadra Street and Cook Street, by changing the OCP Urban Place Designation to Industrial Employment with Limited Residential per the directions in the *North Park Planning Summary and Draft Directions*.
 - All other areas of Core Residential in the Study Area follow existing guidance in the Downtown Core Area Plan.
 - Buildings sited near the heritage landmark structures along Quadra Street south of North Park Street should respond to these landmarks through siting, massing, and design that maintains the prominence of, and public views of, landmark buildings and steeples.
 - Along Quadra Street between Pandora Avenue and the north side of North Park Street, commercial, production, arts and culture, or other active uses are encouraged on the ground floor.
 - Maintain the designation of this area as a Development Permit Area and Heritage Conservation Area.

Housing Directions: Urban Residential and Housing Opportunity Areas

- Consider new, primarily residential buildings within Urban Residential areas as follows:
 - Consider new buildings of generally 4 to 6 storeys depending on location, site size, site depth, and context.
 - Consider new residential buildings of approximately 1.2:1 Floor Space Ratio.
 - Within Urban Residential areas with a “Housing Opportunity” overlay (along arterial roads and frequent transit corridors, adjacent to Large Urban Villages and near the Downtown Core) as shown in Map 1, consider additional density of approximately 2.5:1 Floor Space Ratio with consideration of public benefits including public amenity contributions, non-market or affordable housing, or heritage conservation consistent with City policies.
 - Elsewhere within Urban Residential areas, consider additional density of approximately 2:1 Floor Space Ratio with consideration of public benefits including public amenity contributions, non-market or affordable housing, or heritage conservation consistent with City policies. Actual achievable densities are dependent on factors including lot size and depth, context, heritage status, and ability to meet urban design criteria.
 - Achievable densities are dependent on factors including site size, site depth, context, heritage status, and ability to meet urban design criteria.

Housing Directions: Traditional Residential and Mixed Density Areas

- Consider new primarily residential buildings within Traditional Residential areas as follows:
 - Consider new residential buildings of approximately 1:1 Floor Space Ratio subject to adopted City policies, including anticipated Missing Middle Housing policies.
 - Within Traditional Residential areas with a “Mixed Density Housing” overlay as shown on Map 1, consider residential buildings of approximately 1.6 Floor Space Ratio in order to:
 - To provide multi-family housing options along quieter residential streets.
 - To accommodate an appropriate transition from higher density Urban Residential areas to lower density Traditional Residential ground-oriented areas with transitional forms that generally may range from 3 to 5 storeys in height depending on site conditions and the ability to sensitively transition to the surrounding context and mitigate impacts on adjacent properties.
 - To further support the development of rental, cooperative, or non-market rental or homeownership in these areas, consider flexibility in density and built form and/or mechanisms such as pre-zoning, parking reductions, or others.

General Urban Villages Directions

Urban Villages permit mixed-use development and will likely play an important role over time in providing housing options for Victorians. See individual neighbourhood Summary and Key Directions reports for proposed directions for specific villages.

Where We're Headed: Residential Rental Tenure Zoning

Consideration of Rental Tenure Zoning for **Housing in the Study Area**

Summary and Background

Residential Rental Tenure Zoning (RRTZ) was introduced by the Province of British Columbia in 2018 and gives municipalities new legislative authority to limit housing tenure to rental in multi-family residential zones. As part of implementation of the *Victoria Housing Strategy*, local area planning processes assess areas that may provide good opportunities to use RRTZ. This process considered the following factors to identify candidates for RRTZ:

- Falls within the areas that were identified through community engagement as appropriate locations for increased density and new development.
- Has a lot type and orientation (generally measured in lot depth) that can fit desired building types including setbacks, stepbacks, and transitions to adjacent development, while meeting densities that economic analysis indicates are likely to be viable for redevelopment as rental housing, thus advancing the City's rental housing objectives as identified in the *Victoria Housing Strategy*.
- Supports the *Official Community Plan's* 30-year Growth Management Framework and long-term capacity to meet housing needs.
- Supports other city-wide objectives including those related to sustainable mobility and climate action.
- Does not contain a building whose heritage merit has been recognized by heritage designation, listing on the heritage register, or inclusion in a neighbourhood heritage survey/tour.

Updating zoning regulations could be undertaken as part of a larger initiative of the *Victoria Housing Strategy*, or upon completion of Local Area Planning. However, supportive policies and bylaws need to be updated, developed, or clarified before a consistent zoning approach can be undertaken:

- Comprehensive transportation studies for corridors are required for Quadra Street, Hillside Avenue, and Bay Street to determine the desired right-of-way, frontage works, and sidewalk and boulevard conditions along these corridors (which may be identified in zoning).
- Updates are needed to the mechanisms, such as the Streets and Traffic Bylaw or Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw, by which the City indicates desired rights-of-way and frontage works along streets to accommodate desired mobility objectives. Objectives may include sufficiently wide sidewalks for the context, boulevards and street trees, and corridor-specific mobility needs such as transit-supportive enhancements or bicycle facilities. Some corridors do not currently have sufficient width to support their desired functions and character.
- A city-wide policy should determine if sites that are zoned for residential rental tenure would also consider rezoning to strata development. Such a rezoning would allow for the consideration of public amenities or affordable housing benefits as identified in the *Inclusionary Housing and Community Amenity Policy*.

General Directions for Zoning

- Zones should establish clear minimum lot sizes, setback requirements, lot coverage requirements, and soft landscape requirements that support building separation, sensitive transition to adjacent buildings, areas for landscape and trees, and mitigation of shading impacts. Desired setbacks are generally:
 - Approximately 4 to 6 metres for front setbacks, which may vary on busy streets by housing type (for example, a courtyard housing form may consider a smaller front setback to make the courtyard viable, while other buildings on busy streets may seek greater setbacks).
 - Approximately 7.5 metre rear setbacks for facades of 3 storeys, and approximately 9 metre rear setbacks for facades of 4 storeys.

- Setbacks contained in zoning are meant to be supplemented by design guidelines regarding livability and impacts to adjacent properties.
- Lot size and orientation may constrain the density that can be achieved.

Regardless of zoning, multi-family residential developments are still required to obtain a Development Permit which controls the form and character and other features of the development based on adopted design guidelines.

Potential Areas to Consider for RRTZ

The following areas may be considered for updated zoning to support rental housing.

Hillside-Quadra:

- Along Quadra Street north of Quadra Village to Finlayson Street.
- Along the east side of Quadra Street from Finlayson Street to Tolmie Village.
- Along the west side of Quadra Street from Finlayson Street to Tolmie Village.
- Along the east side of Fifth Street between Bay Street and Kings Road.
- In the area between Hillside Avenue, Prior Street, Kings Road, and Cook Street.
- Along Glasgow Street and the west side of Fifth Street north of Quadra Village to Summit Street.
- Along Finlayson Street from Glasgow Street to Blackwood Street.

North Park:

- Along Cook Street from North Park Village north to Bay Street.

Fernwood:

- Along Bay Street.
- In select parts of the "Mixed Density" area, considering lot size and orientation, heritage merit, proximity to urban villages, and other factors, in order to make the creation of rental housing more attractive at moderate heights and densities (generally 4 storeys and approximately 1.6:1 Floor Space Ratio).

Study Area Housing: Design Guidance for Multi-family Development

What We Heard

Community Engagement Themes for **Study Area Housing Design**

Open Space, Trees and Landscape

There was general support for useable open space on site, with the note that some felt front setbacks should be modest. Comments focused on space for trees and space which is usable for recreation by residents, including for families with children and food growing. Many participants indicated preference for limited and/or underground parking to support more green space on site or using rooftop spaces as on-site open space. One comment expressed that building courtyards, while desirable, should be balanced with public open spaces to encourage people to use their neighbourhood. A few comments focused on maximizing the viability of housing, especially affordable housing, or providing opportunities for those who do not desire private open space (or at least the need to maintain private open space). Some wanted to mandate food-growing spaces on multi-family housing sites.

Mobility and Parking

Several comments were made regarding mobility and parking. In general, there was support for a balanced approach to parking that supports more sustainable transportation goals while still providing choices including owning a car, cycling, walking, transit, and car share. Some expressed reservations or caveats, including that some need a car for work, daily routines, or because of accessibility needs. Others noted that strata owners are more likely to own a car and desire a parking space than renters or concern that residents may rely on street parking if sufficient parking is not provided in buildings. This reliance then in turn reduces support for modifications to streetscape to support more accessible sidewalks, new transit stop amenities or cycling infrastructure. Those expressing outright opposition to “car light” living opportunities often feared that this would require everyone to live without a car.

Setbacks

Many valued front and back setbacks and the notion of tree-lined streets and landscaped front yards for multi-family buildings was reinforced through workshops and early discussions. At the same time, several survey comments focused on keeping front setbacks relatively small. Reasons for a desired smaller setback included: making the development of housing/rental housing more viable; encouraging buildings to interact with the public realm; and focusing on rear setbacks with useable green space. Some were also concerned that setbacks become a place for grass with low biodiversity.

Building Mass and Height

There were varied opinions on the range of building mass and height that should be permitted. Some expressed that height should be determined based on non-quantitative metrics like access to natural light, avoiding shadowing of key open spaces, or relationship to adjacent buildings rather than a fixed height limit. Among those expressing a preference for certain heights of buildings, the preferences varied. Some felt that 4 storey buildings were most appropriate while others felt that 5 storeys or 6 storeys should be considered, mainly to provide housing at what they consider a neighbourhood scale (e.g., one that does not feel like downtown). Others felt mid-rise buildings over 6 storeys should be encouraged, with conservation of green spaces.

Some felt that housing outside of the Downtown Core or off arterial street corridors should be limited to either single-detached housing forms or “missing middle” forms like duplex, triplex, or fourplex, and thus did not comment on design guidance for multi-family housing.

Architectural Style and Design

Comments on design tended to emphasize a desire for design that was compatible with the existing neighbourhood, used more natural/warm materials or avoided overly "modern" designs. Some focussed on supporting passive design or simpler buildings for energy efficiency (e.g., fewer stepbacks below the 4th storey).

Heritage

Some comments focused on the concern that heritage-worthy buildings might be lost if redevelopment is supported or expressed preference for encouraging house conversions as a way to retain character homes. Some were concerned that new development be designed in a way that is sympathetic in style to existing character buildings and areas.

Other Prominent Themes with City-Wide Connections

Several common themes emerged in relation to housing design that are not locally specific or would not be addressed via unique design guidelines for one area, but rather through city-wide policies and initiatives. These are noted in the Stage Two Engagement Summary and briefly summarized here:

- **Accessible Housing:** Concern for accessibility and adaptability of housing for people with mobility limitations was expressed.
- **Family-friendly Buildings and Units:** A prominent theme for new multi-family housing was that there needs to be options for families, including larger units, units with more bedrooms or adaptable spaces, more storage and shared amenity / play spaces.
- **Process:** Some cautioned that design guidelines should not be too prescriptive and should enable flexible design that responds to context and incorporates different ideas and solutions. Others wanted to see easier process / less regulation for housing, including smaller-scale housing proposed by owners or less experienced developers.
- **Environmental Impact:** Many comments indicated support for directions towards development with fewer environmental impacts. Comments included support for existing directions (such as electric vehicle charging in multi-unit building parking), and promoting passive house, solar energy, green roof/walls, or other approaches.

What We Learned

Policy and technical analysis for **Study Area Housing Design**

There are several Design Guidelines already in place to govern the design of multi-family residential areas in the study area:

- The *Design Guidelines for Multi-Family Residential, Commercial and Industrial* (2012) apply to new development that is commercial, residential, or contains three or more residential units throughout most of the City, except for areas where more detailed design guidelines apply (note they do not apply to village and corridor areas in this study area as it was anticipated more detailed guidelines would be created through local area planning).
These guidelines cover several topics including context and transitions; streetscape, relationship to the street, and orientation; human scale, massing, height and architectural features; exterior finishes; open spaces and landscaping; lighting; universal accessible design and safety; parking; access and circulation; and, loading / service areas, ancillary mechanisms, and unenclosed storage.
The guidelines were most recently updated in 2019 to require that a portion of all landscapes include native, food-bearing, or pollinator species.
- Areas west of Vancouver Street and south of Pembroke Street in North Park are subject to the *Downtown Core Area Design Guidelines*, which are being updated in 2021.
- Quadra Village is subject to the *Quadra Village Design Guidelines* (1996), which contain specific direction for urban form, but, in other ways, are less comprehensive than the *Design Guidelines for Multi-Family Residential, Commercial and Industrial* (2012).
- Fernwood Square is subject to general guidelines that incorporate the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*.
- Most areas are subject to the supplementary *Guidelines for Fences, Gates and Shutters* and *Advisory Design Guidelines for Buildings, Signs and Awnings*.

There are also some Design Guidelines in place that have not yet been applied to the study area:

- None of the areas incorporate the newer *Revitalization Guidelines for Corridors, Villages and Town Centres* (2019). These guidelines have been applied to many areas designated as Urban Residential or Small or Large Urban Village in recently-planned neighbourhoods, including the Burnside, Vic West, and Fairfield Neighbourhoods. These guidelines work in tandem with the *Design Guidelines for Multi-Family Residential, Commercial and Industrial* (2012) to provide additional guidance on form, character, siting and landscape, and contain both general and place-specific guidelines.
- No areas within these neighbourhoods incorporate the *Design Guidelines for Attached Residential Development*, which are tailored to design review of townhouses and smaller “houseplexes”. Two versions of these guidelines have been adopted, one for Vic West and one for Fairfield. The Missing Middle Housing Initiative is anticipated to create a city-wide, context-sensitive set of guidelines to provide for additional design review of these housing types in 2021.

Where We're Headed

Draft Design Directions for **Study Area Housing Design**

Principles for New Multi-family Housing

- **Human Scale:** Design buildings and open spaces that create visual interest, diversity, and identity when approached by pedestrians.
- **Great Streets:** Design, locate, and shape buildings to create sunny, welcoming, walkable, green and leafy public streets.
- **Liveability:** Ensure homes of all types have sufficient access to sunlight, air, privacy, open spaces, and other amenities that support livability, with special consideration for buildings along busy arterial streets.
- **Neighbourliness:** Ensure new buildings are good neighbours within the street and transition sensitively to existing and future buildings next door.
- **Urban Forest, Landscape and Ecology:** Support a healthy, mature urban forest along streets and on private lands, and integrate sustainable landscapes and ecological services into sites (e.g., stormwater retention, climate resilience).
- **Making Room:** Make room for new multi-family housing for different incomes, household types, and lifestyles, in close walking distance to urban villages, downtown and Frequent Transit routes, considering a diversity of locations both on- and off- of busier corridors to provide choice.
- **Sustainable Mobility:** Integrate support for sustainable mobility options into building and public space design (including for walking, cycling, transit, shared mobility, electric vehicles, and reduced on-site parking).
- **Amenity and Diversity:** Support the ability of multi-family housing to deliver both rental and strata tenure homes and to provide public amenities, affordable housing, family-sized housing, accessibility, and other benefits identified in broader City policies to support living opportunities for a diverse community.
- **Energy Efficiency and Climate Change:** Support built forms that allow new development to meet increasing efficiency requirements and design strategies such as passive house design, while continuing to meet all principles.

Design Guidance for New Multi-Family Housing

This section contains key design principles and emerging design directions that are critical to the multi-family housing proposals in the three neighbourhoods. It is not an exhaustive list of design guidance that already exists in current City guidelines for multi-family housing, but rather meant to inform the creation of refined design guidelines, inform the public on key aspects of the proposal which reflect public consultation to date, and inform the creation of future zoning.

Much of the below is already contained in the City's existing design guidelines discussed in the previous section. However, some of this represents a refinement of these guidelines and/or represents design guidance that is unique to these areas.

Guidance For Zoning, Rezoning and Design Guidelines

The concepts in this section will guide the creation of zoning, consideration of rezoning, and development of design guidelines:

- Front setbacks of 4m – 6m to create a sense of "green leafy streets" and allow for transitional landscaped outdoor spaces while creating strong connections between buildings and streets.
- The dedication and creation of landscaped boulevards with street trees where these are not present.

- Rear setbacks of approximately 7.5 metres are generally desired for buildings of 3 storeys, and approximately 9 metres for buildings of four storeys, to provide for building separation, reduce shading and overlook, and provide space for outdoor amenity space, landscape, and healthy trees.
- Alternatively, where a building is sited with a primary façade facing a sideyard, an approximately 7.5 m sideyard setback is desired, while a reduced rear-yard setback of 6m may be considered.
- Stepping back of the topmost floor of a building above the fourth storey, is desired to reduce shadowing impacts and apparent building height and provide for more sensitive transitions to adjacent development.
- Additional setbacks may be desired to provide for sunlight access or reduce impacts on neighbouring development depending on lot orientation, topography, and other factors.
- Parking requirements should be reduced, for rental housing in particular, in tandem with delivery of comprehensive Transportation Demand Management measures (such as dedication of carshare spaces and memberships, provision of transit passes, or other means identified by the City's Transportation programs and parking modernization efforts).
- Design guidance should incorporate the *City's Design Guidelines for Multi-Unit Residential, Commercial, and Industrial (updated 2019)* and the *Revitalization Guidelines for Corridors, Villages and Town Centres (2019)*.
- Design guidance should incorporate emerging directions outlined below.

Relationship to Streets and Public Spaces

- Consistent with existing guidelines, create a friendly, human-scale relationship between building front and street, considering incorporation of front entries and patios or similar spaces for individual units, with direct visual and physical connections to the fronting public sidewalk.
- Consistent with existing guidelines, orient windows and balconies on upper storeys to create a sense of safety and "eyes on the street."
- Set buildings back from the sidewalk to incorporate a landscaped transition area between building and sidewalk, with greater setbacks considered for busy roadways.
- Along busy streets, buildings that are designed around a courtyard may have reduced front setbacks in order to accommodate space for courtyard designs. Alternatively, on some prominent transportation corridors, particularly near villages, a building may be built with a storefront-type ground floor located closer to the back of the sidewalk, especially where providing flexibility for different uses (e.g. a live-work unit or a unit that can switch from commercial or artisan use to residential use). To maintain a sense of openness and reduce apparent scale, incorporate step-backs of upper storeys, especially of the top floor above the fourth storey.
- Enhance guidelines to minimize the impacts of parking ramps and parkade entries on the public realm and ensure accessible grades are maintained on sidewalks.



Diagram showing incorporation of entries to individual ground floor units that are clearly visible from the fronting street.

Building Form and Massing

- Consistent with existing guidelines, design multi-unit buildings to provide a sensitive transition in scale to adjacent, smaller developments and to consider sufficient building separation from existing or potential future multi-family developments. This will be informed by proposed setbacks and stepbacks (above).

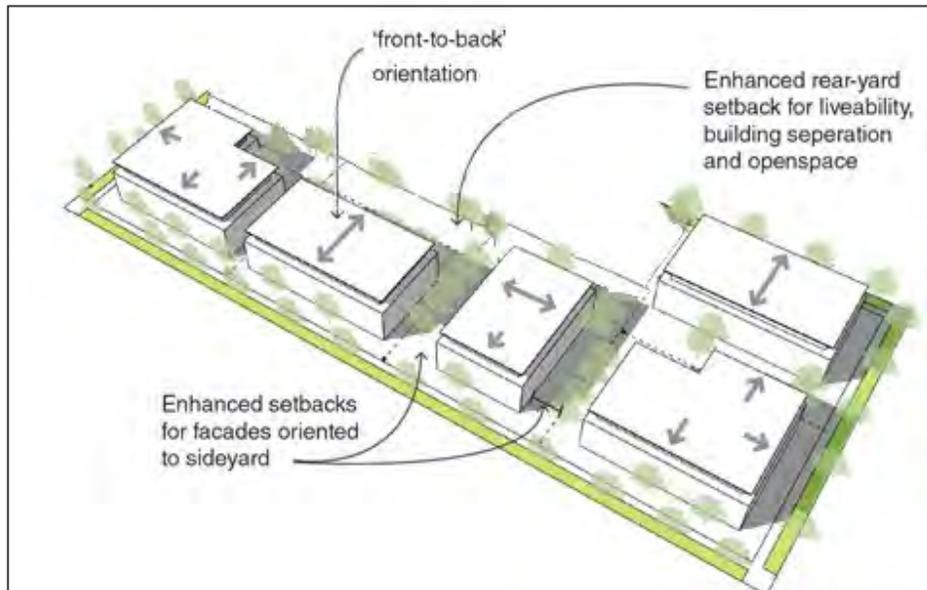


Figure 7. Examples of buildings oriented parallel to the street or oriented to a larger side yard.

- Generally, building massing should be oriented parallel to the street with primary facades facing front and rear yards.
- Where a building is oriented with a primary façade facing a sideyard, greater sideyard setbacks of approximately 7.5m are desired (see Guidance for Zoning, Rezoning and Design Guidelines, above)
- For taller buildings, a shadow study is desired to show impacts at the solstice and equinox.
- Buildings that extend along sloping sites should be designed to respond to the natural topography.

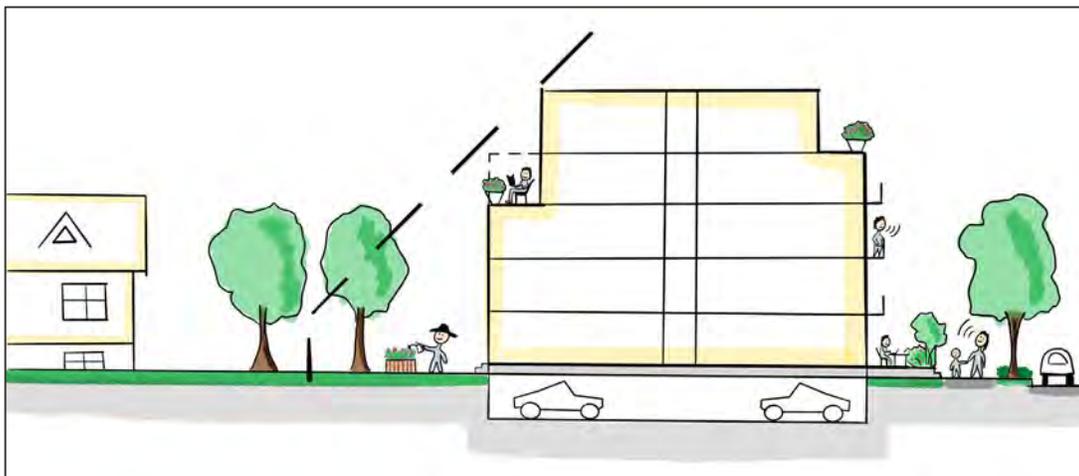


Figure 8. Example of setbacks and upper-floor stepbacks that result in a building envelope for a residential building.

Landscape, Stormwater, and Urban Forest

- Incorporate enhanced guidance for landscaped open spaces in front and rear yards, with sufficient space and soil volumes to accommodate healthy, mature tree planting in accordance with tree planting standards.
- Consistent with existing guidelines and city-wide bylaws, mitigate stormwater run-off on-site.
- Consistent with existing guidelines, incorporate common open spaces that encourage sociability among residents with features such as shared seating areas, play areas, rooftop patios, courtyards, community gardens, and others.
- Opportunities for urban food production (e.g., allotment gardens, food-bearing plants) are encouraged consistent with the City's voluntary guidelines for *Growing Food and Gardening in Mixed-Use, Multi-Family Residential Developments* (2019) and the existing design guidelines for native, food-bearing, and pollinator plants.

Materials

- Consistent with existing policies in city-wide and *Corridors and Villages* guidelines, use exterior materials that are high quality, durable, and capable of withstanding a range of environmental conditions throughout the year, particularly on lower portions of buildings that are more closely experienced by pedestrians.

Contextual Design

- Particularly for off-corridor and mixed-density housing, enhance guidelines to respond to the positive aspects of the surrounding context, including rhythm and pattern of existing building facades, materials, and architectural elements such as building articulation, rooflines, window placement, entryways, canopies, and cornice lines.
- In areas near prominent landmark buildings (such as Quadra Street south of North Park Street) the siting, design, and massing of new buildings should respond to and maintain the prominence and public views of these landmarks.
- The retention and reuse of buildings with heritage merit is encouraged, including through the addition of housing or incorporation of the heritage-merit building into a larger site that adds housing.

Livability and Sustainability

- Provide a comfortable separation space for residential units where they face another building or part of a building on the same or adjacent lots, considering existing or planned future buildings.
- Buildings that include residential units should include private open space and/or easily accessed shared open space such as courtyards, green spaces, terraces, yards, play areas, or rooftop gardens.
- Where possible, design residential or mixed-use buildings so that individual residential units can receive daylight and natural ventilation from at least two sides of the building, or from one side and a roof. Where possible, provide dwelling units with a choice of aspect: front and back, or on two sides (for corner units).
- Consistent with existing design guidelines for *Corridors and Villages*, residential buildings located along busy arterial streets should incorporate design features that minimize noise and pollution impacts.

A new guidelines section is proposed that will provide added direction for livability along busy Arterial streets, including for different built forms:

- Along busy arterial roads, street-facing units may be impacted by traffic noise and related impacts. Where there is sufficient lot depth, building forms should consider means to mitigate these impacts by

providing greater distances between traffic and dwelling units or creating dwelling units with more than one aspect (for example, street-facing and courtyard or side). Examples include:

- Additional front setbacks to provide more space between residential units and traffic.
- Courtyard forms that allow street-facing units to have two aspects: one fronting the street and one fronting a courtyard.
- Side-facing units with sufficient side yard setbacks (see above).
- Other building massing that provides a mix of unit aspects (e.g., "C", "L" or "T"-shaped buildings).

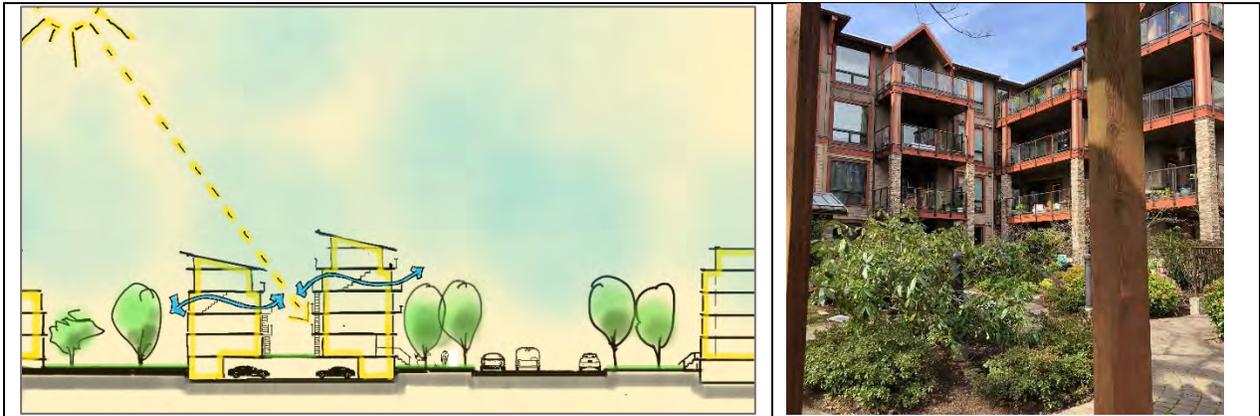


Figure 9. Examples of a courtyard building form on a busier street.

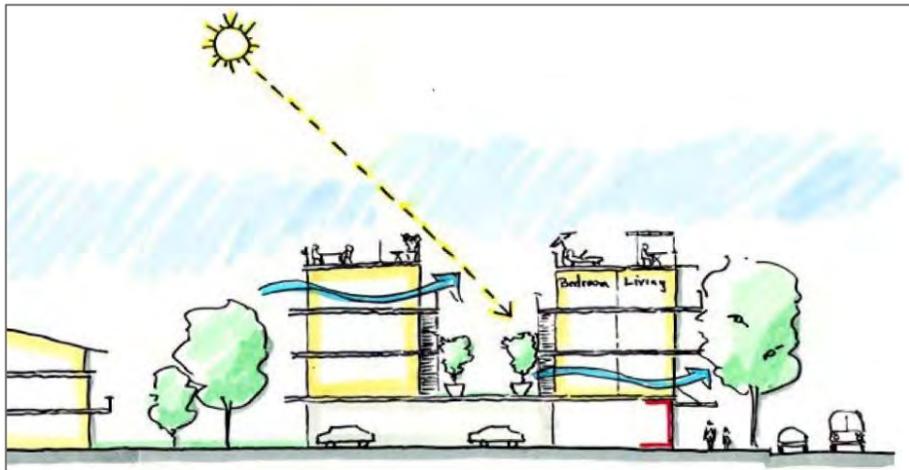


Figure 10. Example of a mixed-use courtyard building along a busier street with a reduced setback.

Parking and Sustainable Mobility

- Parking should be located underground to provide people-oriented pedestrian environments and support landscaped sites.
- Where surface parking is proposed, building designs and landscaping interventions should be employed so that parking is integrated into sites in a manner that results in an attractive and safe environment and is screened from adjacent properties.
- One option for building with limited parking is to include tuck-under parking oriented to the side of the building, to reserve the rear yard and opposite side yard for open spaces and reinforce a "perimeter

block” pattern where buildings are located near the street and green open spaces towards the centre of the block.

- New construction should meet the City’s requirements for accessible parking, bicycle parking and electric vehicle charging.



Figure 11. Massing study of a building with side-accessed "tuck under" parking, with landscaped open space in rear yard.

Design for Buildings with Family-Sized Housing

- Larger units (2- and 3-bedrooms) are encouraged to be sited with access to or overlooking outdoor open spaces to support family living opportunities.
- Buildings with a significant share of larger units are encouraged to incorporate spaces that support family living, including safe, common outdoor spaces and play areas.
- Additional guidance should be developed as part of creating the *Family Housing Policy* through implementation of the *Victoria Housing Strategy*.

Specific Conditions

- Lots that front on two streets are encouraged to be sited in a courtyard form with building elements fronting both streets and providing for transitions in scale where appropriate.

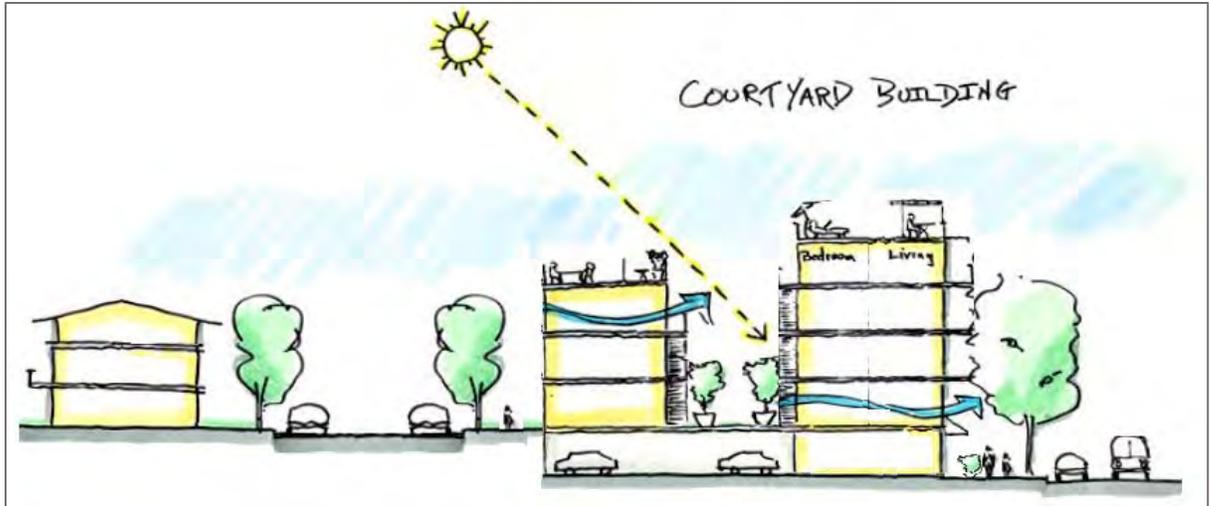


Figure 12. Example of a double-frontage lot with two people-oriented building frontages at street level. Changes in grade can be used to create positive interfaces with the street and transitions in scale and facilitate underground parking.

How We'll Get There

Implementation Steps for **Study Area Housing and Design**

| |
|--|
| <p>Update the Official Community Plan Update Urban Place Designations to reflect the land use directions herein.</p> |
| <p>Update Neighbourhood Plans Update neighbourhood plans as required to reflect the directions herein.</p> |
| <p>Update the Official Community Plan Development Permit Areas and Design Guidelines Update Development Permit Areas and Design Guidelines to reflect the directions herein.</p> |
| <p>Complete Comprehensive Studies for Planning Area Corridors The study would focus on integration of land use, urban design, and mobility, considering short-term strategies and long-term housing needs identified herein, as well as broader city transportation network connectivity, function, and design.</p> |
| <p>Updated the Zoning Bylaw Update the Zoning Bylaw as required to implement directions herein, including related to rental housing.</p> |