



**Committee of the Whole Report  
For the Meeting of September 23, 2021**

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**To:** Committee of the Whole **Date:** September 23, 2021  
**From:** Kerri Moore, Head of Business & Community Relations  
**Subject:** Proposed Neighbourhood Boundaries Adjustments

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**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receive this report as information pertaining to the results of the proposed neighbourhood boundaries Have Your Say engagement survey and correspondence from residents and neighbourhood associations.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In 2019, Council introduced an action to 'resolve anomalies in neighbourhood boundaries' in the Strong, Liveable Neighbourhoods section of the City's Strategic Plan. On February 11, 2021 Council held a workshop regarding the current neighbourhood boundaries and made several observations that supported the proposed changes including:

- Reconciling geographic anomalies that may fit better in adjacent neighbourhood
- There may be opportunities to better match boundaries with the neighbourhoods in which residents perceive themselves to be living (sense of place)
- Neighbourhood populations vary substantially and may present challenges for neighbourhood associations, e.g. too big for effective representation or too small to recruit volunteer support
- Some village centres are divided between neighbourhoods

With the above considerations, boundaries in Fernwood, Oaklands, Jubilee, North Park, Fairfield, Downtown and Burnside Gorge were discussed as possible areas for change. Residents were also asked to provide feedback on other proposed changes such as neighbourhood land use review committee structures for Rockland, Fairfield and Gonzales, neighbourhood merging for Downtown and Harris Green, and merging of the North and South Jubilee neighbourhood associations.

Opportunities for public participation via individual correspondence and the Have Your Say engagement survey were directly promoted through the City's engagement platform, flyer mailout (to specific areas that would be directly impacted by the proposed changes), the City's website and e-News edition, emails to all the neighbourhood associations which included survey information, and updates to process and timing, monthly neighbourhood updates, neighbourhood association meetings and social media posts including a media release.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to deliver the results of the *Have Your Say* online survey that took place from May 10 to August 3, 2021. This offered residents the opportunity to participate in seven neighbourhood proposed boundary change surveys, one survey regarding a land-use decision and one survey regarding a neighbourhood association merger. The survey results coupled with additional correspondence submitted by the Neighbourhood Associations and individual residents in the attached appendices will help inform Council to make their decisions regarding each proposed neighbourhood boundary adjustment.

## BACKGROUND

On February 11, 2021 Victoria City Council held a workshop regarding proposed changes to neighbourhood boundaries. The discussion resulted in the following motion:

1. *That Council direct staff to engage the North Jubilee Neighbourhood Association and the Oaklands Community Association regarding the potential recognition of the 2700- block to 3000-block of the east side of Shelbourne Street as part of the Oaklands neighbourhood, requesting comment from those associations by April 30, 2021.*
2. *That Council direct staff to engage the Fernwood Community Association and the Oaklands Community Association regarding the potential recognition of the 2500- blocks between Cook Street and Shelbourne Street, and Bay Street and Haultain Street, as part of the Oaklands neighbourhood, requesting comment from those associations by April 30, 2021.*
3. *That Council direct staff to engage the Fairfield-Gonzales Community Association, the Downtown Residents Association, and the Downtown Victoria Business Association regarding the potential recognition of the 800-blocks between Fort Street and Academy Close, and Blanshard Street and Quadra Street, as part of the Downtown neighbourhood, requesting comment from those associations by April 30, 2021.*
4. *That Council direct staff to engage the Burnside-Gorge Community Association, the Downtown Residents Association, and the Downtown Victoria Business Association regarding the potential adjustment of the boundary between Burnside-Gorge and Downtown from Chatham/Discovery/Caledonia to Bay Street, so that Bay Street would become the northern boundary of Downtown and the southern boundary of Burnside-Gorge, requesting comment from those associations by April 30, 2021.*
5. *That Council direct staff to engage the South Jubilee Neighbourhood Association and the North Jubilee Neighbourhood Association regarding the potential recognition of a unified Jubilee neighbourhood and their thoughts on how one CALUC could potentially be formed to service the one new unified neighbourhood, requesting comment from those associations by April 30, 2021.*
6. *That Council direct staff to engage the Downtown Residents Association and the Downtown Victoria Business Association regarding the potential recognition of Downtown and Harris Green as a unified Downtown neighbourhood, requesting comment from that association by April 30, 2021.*
7. *That Council direct staff to engage the Victoria Community Association Network regarding these proposed adjustments to neighbourhood boundaries, requesting comment from VCAN and any neighbourhood association that wishes to provide comment by April 30, 2021.*
8. *That Council direct staff to engage with North Park Neighbourhood Association and the Fernwood Community Association regarding the potential adjustment that would make Chambers Street the eastern boundary of North Park and the western boundary of Fernwood between Bay and Pandora.*

9. *That proposed neighbourhood boundary changes, that coincide with current local area planning (i.e. Village and Corridor Planning: Fernwood, North Park, Hillside- Quadra), be included in the local area planning engagement, taking into consideration the end date of engagement as suggested in the neighbourhood boundaries report.*
10. *That Council direct staff to engage the Fairfield-Gonzales Community Association, the Gonzales Neighbourhood Association and the Rockland Neighbourhood Association on options for CALUC representation in the Fairfield, Gonzales and Rockland neighbourhoods, including the possibility of:*
  - A. *recognition of the Gonzales Neighbourhood Association as the CALUC for the Gonzales neighbourhood; or*
  - B. *recognition of a unified Gonzales-Rockland Neighbourhood Association as the CALUC for a unified Gonzales-Rockland neighbourhood; or*
  - C. *the status quo, requesting comment from those associations by April 30, 2021.*
11. *That Council direct staff to engage with the Fernwood Community Association, the Downtown Residents Association, and the Downtown Victoria Business Association regarding the potential of the east side of Cook Street from Fort Street to Pandora Avenue as part of the downtown neighbourhood requesting comment from those associations by April 30, 2021, and*
12. *That Council request staff to work with neighbourhood associations and report back on options for supporting them in outreaching and serving parts of their neighbourhood that are currently under-represented by their current function and services. (Note: due to the differing subject matter in this directive, it is being pursued with neighbourhoods independently)*
13. *That Council direct staff to send the proposed adjustments to Destination Victoria for any comments with respect to downtown boundaries.*

## **ISSUES AND ANALYSIS**

**Please refer to Appendix A – Neighbourhood Boundaries Engagement Report for the complete details of results, tables and comments.**

A total of 1,053 people responded to the survey. Respondents could answer as many of the questions as they wished.

All neighbourhoods that would be affected by the referral questions provided submissions with the exception of the Jubilee neighbourhood associations. Questions did not relate to Vic West, James Bay and Hillside Quadra and no submissions were received from them.

The Victoria Community Association Network's (VCAN) submission (June 26) questioned the rationale for the proposed changes and believed there was insufficient data provided for appropriate consideration of the questions. They proposed postponement of the referral pending greater collaboration with neighbourhood associations in designing a consultation process.

## **What We Asked / Overall Results**

### **1. Should Bay Street be the new border between Fernwood and Oaklands?**

- A total of 475 people participated in the survey
- 43% of survey respondents live in Fernwood. 15% of survey respondents live in Oaklands (282 people).

### **From the residents in the impacted neighbourhoods:**

- We heard from 158 (55%) people who said they agree that Bay Street should be the border between Fernwood and Oaklands.
- We heard from 41 (14%) people who said they are neutral to the proposed Fernwood/Oaklands boundary change.
- We heard from 85 (30%) people who said they do not want Bay Street to be the new border between Fernwood and Oaklands.

Support for the proposed boundary change included:

- Residents feeling like they belong more to the Oaklands neighbourhood.
- Residents wanting to remain in Fernwood because they feel a sense of pride and strong connection as a member of the community.

**From the neighbourhood associations:**

- Fernwood Community Association (FCA) consulted with Oaklands and held public meetings. The FCA expressed an opinion that more time be dedicated to consideration of this boundary change
- The Oaklands Community Association OCA is generally supportive of the changes and has no opposition to the proposal as the changes are only beneficial to our neighbourhood

**2. Should 2700 block to 3000 block of the east side of Shelbourne Street (currently in Jubilee) be joined to Oaklands?**

- A total of 301 people participated in this survey.
- 19% of survey respondents live in Jubilee. 17% of survey respondents live in Oaklands (108 people)

**From the residents in the impacted neighbourhoods:**

- We heard from 70 (65%) people who said they agree that a portion of Jubilee should be joined to Oaklands.
- We heard from 20 (19%) people who said they are neutral to the proposed Oaklands/Jubilee boundary change.
- We heard from 17 (16%) people who said they do not want a portion of Jubilee to be joined to Oaklands.

**From the Neighbourhood Associations:**

- The Oaklands Community Association OCA is generally supportive of the changes and has no opposition to the proposal as the changes are only beneficial to our neighbourhood

Support for the proposed boundary change included Oaklands and Jubilee having similar interest in land use and traffic matters.

Specific concerns were noted, such as increased densification in the border area and the border change would decrease the size of North Jubilee, and ultimately reduce community participation and members.

**3. Should Bay Street to Chambers Street to Pandora Avenue (currently in Fernwood) be joined to North Park?**

- A total of 450 people participated in this survey.

- 46% of survey respondents live in Fernwood. 14% of survey respondents live in North Park (265 people).

**From the residents in the impacted neighbourhoods:**

- We heard from 170 (64%) people who said they do not want a portion of Fernwood to join North Park.
- We heard from 23 (9%) people who said they are neutral to the proposed North Park/Fernwood boundary change.
- We heard from 71 (27%) people who said they agree that a portion of Fernwood should be joined to North Park.

There was strong disagreement with this proposed boundary change. The following concerns were noted:

- The boundary change would create tension between the two neighbourhoods.
- Residents wanting their home to remain in Fernwood to maintain its property value.
- Residents wanting to remain in Fernwood because they feel a sense of pride and a strong connection as a member of the community.
- The boundary change would eradicate the history and reputation that Fernwood has built throughout time.
- Many believe the change is unnecessary e.g., “waste of money” and “makes no sense”.

Support for the proposed boundary change included:

- It would settle issues regarding the North Park/Fernwood boundary of the North Park Village.

**From the neighbourhood associations:**

- Fernwood Community Association considered there to be strong opposition to the proposed change and recommended it be rejected
- North Park Neighbourhood Association noted strong opposition to the change from affected residents and did not support a change in the face of such opposition. They expressed an interest in working collaboratively with Fernwood with regards to future development of both sides of the village centre on Cook Street.

**4. Should the portion of Fernwood from Pandora Avenue, Johnson Street, Yates Street, View Street to Fort Street be joined with the Downtown-Harris Green (proposed) neighbourhood?**

- A total of 357 people participated in this survey.
- 40% of survey respondents live in Fernwood. 7.4% of survey respondents live in Harris Green. 7% of survey respondents live in Downtown (188 people).

**From the residents in the impacted neighbourhoods:**

- We heard from 109 (58%) people who said they do not want a portion of Fernwood to join the proposed Downtown/Harris Green neighbourhood.
- We heard from 17 (9%) people who said they are neutral to the proposed Fernwood/Downtown/Harris Green boundary change.
- We heard from 62 (33%) people who said they agree that a portion of Fernwood should join the proposed Downtown/Harris Green neighbourhood.

**From the neighbourhood associations:**

- Fernwood Community Association commented that this would create an anomaly and recommended against this change
- Downtown Residents Association did not see any merit in the proposed change and did not support it

Note: the proposed change would align the boundary with that of the Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP)

**5. Should the 800 block between Fort Street and Academy Close, and Blanshard Street and Quadra Street (currently part of Fairfield) be joined to Downtown?**

- A total of 409 people participated in this survey.
- 38% of survey respondents live in Fairfield. 6% of survey respondents live in Downtown (176 people)

**From the residents in the impacted neighbourhoods:**

- We heard from 91 (52%) people who said they agree that a portion of Fairfield be joined to Downtown.
- We heard from 18 (10%) people who said they are neutral to the proposed Fairfield/Downtown boundary change.
- We heard from 67 (38%) people who said they do not want a portion of Fairfield to join Downtown.

A specific concern was noted, such as the increased densification in Fairfield.

**From the neighbourhood associations:**

- Fairfield Gonzales Community Association commented that this would create an anomaly and recommended against this change
- Downtown Residents Association believe that the proposed boundary change would be beneficial if it were adjusted slightly to align with the Downtown Core Area Plan boundary

**6. Should Bay Street be the new border between Burnside Gorge and Downtown?**

- A total of 304 people participated in this survey.
- 26% of survey respondents live in Burnside Gorge. 10% of survey respondents live in Downtown (108 people).

**From the residents in the impacted neighbourhoods:**

- We heard from 55 (51%) people who said they agree that Bay Street be the new border between Burnside Gorge and Downtown.
- We heard from 5 (7%) people who said they are neutral to the proposed Downtown/Burnside Gorge boundary change.
- We heard from 48 (44%) people who said they do not want Bay Street to be the new border between Burnside Gorge and Downtown.

While the survey indicated more residents agreed with the proposed change, a common concern was noted that there would be an increase of supportive housing in the Burnside Gorge neighborhood.

**From the neighbourhood associations:**

- Burnside Gorge Community Association opposed the proposed change citing the interests of a developing business improvement association in the neighbourhood and a general lack of understanding of a rationale for the change.
- Downtown Residents Association supported the proposed change as consistent with the Downtown Core Area Plan boundaries and the types of development that will occur in the affected area

**7. Regarding land use decisions in Fairfield, Gonzales and Rockland, should Council a) recognize the Gonzales Neighbourhood Association and its land use committee as representative of the Gonzales Neighbourhood, b) have Rockland represent Gonzales on land use issues under a unified Gonzales-Rockland neighbourhood association or c) remain as is, and have the Fairfield Gonzales Community Association continue to represent Gonzales for land issues?**

- A total of 348 people participated in this survey, 225 were from Fairfield, Gonzales and Rockland

**From the residents in the impacted neighbourhoods:**

- We heard from 107 (48%) people who said Council should recognize the Gonzales Neighbourhood Association and its land use committee as representative of the Gonzales neighbourhood.
- We heard from 35 (16%) people who said Council should have Rockland represent Gonzales on land use issues under a unified Gonzales Rockland Neighbourhood Association
- We heard from 80 (36%) people who said Council should have the Fairfield Gonzales Community Association continue to represent Gonzales for land use issues (status quo).

**From the neighbourhood associations:**

- Fairfield Gonzales Community Association supported Option C as serving the best interests of residents
- Gonzales Neighbourhood Association expressed support for Option A as the best option for residents within its area
- Rockland Neighbourhood Association did not feel it could provide an opinion in support of Option B, but indicated support for the independence of the Gonzales Neighbourhood Association

**8. Should Downtown and Harris Green be recognized as one neighbourhood?**

- A total of 244 people participated in this survey.
- 10% of survey respondents live in Harris Green. 5% of survey respondents live in Downtown (47 people).

**From the residents in the impacted neighbourhoods:**

- We heard from 34 (72%) people who said they agree that Downtown and Harris Green be recognized as one neighbourhood.
- We heard from 1 (2%) person who said they are neutral to the proposed Downtown and Harris Green neighbourhood merge.
- We heard from 12 (25%) people who said they do not want Downtown and Harris Green to be recognized as one neighbourhood.

Support for the proposed boundary change included:

- The need to increase the size of Downtown, to accommodate higher density.
- Harris Green is already viewed as being “Downtown.”

Specific concerns were noted, such as:

- Harris Green being primarily designated for core residential, according to the city’s Official Community Plan.
- Most of the visions and strategic directions for the Downtown in the Official Community Plan do not apply to Harris Green.

**From the neighbourhood association:**

- Downtown Residents Association supported the change, but believed that Harris Green should retain its identity as a locale within the Downtown neighbourhood, like Old Town and Chinatown.

**9. Should the North and South Jubilee Neighbourhood Associations merge to form one association?**

- A total of 220 people participated in this survey
- 24% of survey respondents live in Jubilee (51 people)

**From the residents in the impacted neighbourhoods:**

- We heard from 31 (61%) people who said they agree that the North and South Jubilee Neighbourhood Associations should merge to form one association.
- We heard from 6 (12%) people who said they are neutral to the North and South Jubilee Association merge.
- We heard from 14 (27%) people who said they do not want the North and South Jubilee Neighbourhood Associations merging to form one association.

While the survey indicated more residents agreed with the proposed changes, specific concerns were noted, such as:

- North and South Jubilee are different communities with different interests.
- Merging both North and South Jubilee associations would make the neighbourhood too big.
- Merging associations would not address the concerns that each neighbourhood has.

**Summary of Survey Comments**

Many of the survey comments wanted more clarity on the proposed boundary changes. Overall common survey feedback sentiments included:

- Not understanding how the changes would impact them (whether beneficial or not)
- Not understanding the purpose of these proposed boundary changes
- Not understanding what “help reconcile anomalies and improve residents’ sense of place” means

Overall common beliefs included:



- There is a hidden agenda/ulterior motive to these proposed boundary changes
- There are other issues in the city that are more important than boundary changes
- These proposed changes are a waste of time, money and resources
- Residents did not indicate that current neighbourhood boundaries are an issue
- Residents are happy with where they live, and do not want to change their neighbourhood

## **CONCLUSION**

The feedback received provided essential insight into the opinions of neighbourhood associations and residents. All feedback received was considered by the project team and helped create the staff report to help inform Council on the proposed neighbourhood boundary adjustments.

Respectfully submitted,

Kerri Moore	Gary Pemberton
Head of Business & Community Relations	Neighbourhood Liaison

Kimberley Stratford	Michael Hill
Neighbourhood Liaison	Community Development Coordinator

**Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager.**

## **List of Attachments**

Appendix A – Neighbourhood Boundaries Engagement Report  
 Appendix B – letter from Burnside Gorge Community Association  
 Appendix C – letters from Fairfield Gonzales Community Association  
 Appendix D – letter from Fernwood Neighbourhood Association  
 Appendix E – letters from Gonzales Neighbourhood Association  
 Appendix F – letter from North Park Neighbourhood Association  
 Appendix G – email from Oaklands Community Association  
 Appendix H – letter from Rockland Neighbourhood Association  
 Appendix I – letters from Victoria Community Centre Network  
 Appendix J – letter from Downtown Residents Association  
 Appendix K – letter from resident 1  
 Appendix L – letter from resident 2  
 Appendix M – redacted survey comments and emails