



Mayor and Council  
City of Victoria  
1 Centennial Square  
Victoria, BC  
V8W 1P6

May 20, 2021

Dear Mayor and Council,

**Re: Engagement on removing CALUC responsibility for the Gonzales neighbourhood from the Fairfield Gonzales Community Association**

The Board of Directors of Fairfield Gonzales Community Association (FGCA) were surprised to learn that Council has opened up a public engagement to determine the level of interest in removing the Community Association Land Use Committee (CALUC) for the neighbourhood of Gonzales from the purview of the FGCA alongside the neighbourhood boundary questions- which are two separate issues.

We request some additional information about this process to develop an adequately responsive submission.

Namely, we request to know:

- Why Council is contemplating this now? The FAQ states that the intention is to "reconcile geographic anomalies and improve resident's sense of place," which does not seem to apply to this particular issue.
- What can FGCA expect as the next steps in this process following the presentation by City officials at the end of September?

FGCA would also appreciate a commitment that, prior to moving forward with any changes, we will be provided an opportunity to respond should Council take into

consideration any submissions that make claims about our operations or cite specific incidents.

Thank you for your attention to these matters, and please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any information or clarification.

Sincerely,

Don Monsour

President, on behalf of the Board of Directors

[president@fairfieldcommunity.ca](mailto:president@fairfieldcommunity.ca)



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8 June 2021

Dear Mayor & Council,

We write to confirm that the Fairfield Gonzales Community Association (FGCA) wishes to retain the Community Association Land Use Committee (CALUC) for the Gonzales neighbourhood.

If the representation of CALUC were to leave the purview of the FGCA, there would be no benefit to the community, and a considerable risk for representation of community member views. FGCA has a strong and reliable capacity to perform the CALUC function, having done so for many years in person and throughout the COVID pandemic online. We have a solid track record of keeping our meetings open to all who wish to attend, and of maintaining a courteous and civil meeting tone, where all people are given fair opportunity to speak, and all issues and viewpoints are recorded and reported to the City in an unbiased manner.

A few people are circulating a narrative that the FGCA does not represent or work for Gonzales residents. However, the fact is that FGCA has strong representation of Gonzales residents (including in CALUC), provides advocacy and services to the Gonzales neighbourhood that sit outside of the CALUC work, and makes its processes and governance transparent and accessible to all residents.

Board/CALUC/member Representation:

- Gonzales residents are actually overrepresented within FGCA's CALUC, Board, Executive, and general membership
- - o Gonzales residents represent 26% of Fairfield Gonzales neighbourhood
  - o 57% of CALUC members are Gonzales residents
  - o 36% of Board members are Gonzales residents
  - o 60% of Executive members are Gonzales residents
  - o 29% members are Gonzales residents
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- Many people choose to connect with FGCA in a manner less formal than membership, and who do not provide addresses; we have over 1600 e-news subscribers and over 3600 social media followers, many of these people live in Gonzales.
- We use a matrix for Board and CALUC recruitment to maintain and improve representation of both neighbourhoods, as well as other factors -

  
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renters/homeowners, gender balance, and representation of diversity in age, ability, culture, ethnicity, etc.

Recent services and supports/advocacy:

- Provide childcare at École Margaret Jenkins Elementary School in Gonzales for 100-110 families
- Host an Annual Community Yard Sale which includes a site at St. Matthias (across the street from Gonzales) and numerous yard sales in Gonzales
- Supported Gonzales volunteers to work with campers in Gonzales Park and Hollywood Park
- Supported Gonzales volunteers leafletting the neighbourhood during first wave of pandemic
- Hosted extra (non-compulsory) community meetings for development proposals in Gonzales at 1811 Oak Bay Ave (2018), 331 St. Charles (2018), GNS school (2020)
- Collaborated with the City on providing opportunities for input: Gonzales Local Area Plan engagement, Richardson bikeway info session, engagement on Oak Bay Ave / Fort / Jubilee cycling infrastructure, and hosted a renters' forum during the Gonzales Local Area Plan process
- Provided facility space for residents to organize re: Gonzales Local Area Plan
- Advocacy in Gonzales:
  - o Traffic calming advocacy (Maddison Street and Hollywood Crescent)
  - o Letter of concern re Official Community Plan amendments (through VCAN)
  - o Letter to support Brighton People Priority Greenway
  - o Supported and sent a letter re: protecting Gonzales Hill Regional Park
  - o Cycling Task Force input on Richardson bikeway
  - o Letter advocating return to community meeting requirement for development proposals
- My Great Neighbourhood Grants in Gonzales since 2017:
  - o Pemberton Park Picnic Bench (2018)
  - o Celebrating Indigenous Stories (included 1 book reading and Little Free Library 'seeding' with books in Gonzales Neighbourhood) (2019)
  - o Maddison street block party (2018)
  - o Community Inspiration Project (asset mapping project including several locations in Gonzales)
  - o Provided volunteers who laboured on community planters projects with both the Brighton and Maddison People Priority Greenway neighbourhood groups.

Access and transparency:

- The application to sit on CALUC is up on our website year-round. We advertise more broadly (Observer newspaper and subscriber list) at least annually.
- We advertise for Board positions to our members and subscribers (several times annually), and in the TC, Volunteer Victoria, and our Observer Newspaper (5000 households, mailed out)



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- We advertise for membership 4x per year in our Observer (5000 households, mailed out), several times per year to our subscriber list, and at all of our events and outreach.
- Board and CALUC members' names are on our website at all times.
- We work to remove barriers to participation in our processes. We provide childminding at our meetings and provide accommodations for board members as needed.

We know that many residents of Gonzales self-identify as Fairfield residents. This is partly because of the services FGCA delivers in the area (e.g. École Margaret Jenkins Elementary). And, in terms of home ownership/real estate, the area is referred to as Fairfield East. The name "Fairfield" is simply in common usage among residents. Changing the CALUC to be identified as "Gonzales" or "Rockland-Gonzales" would create confusion and runs the risk of reducing participation and engagement of residents.

Thanks for all that you do to make Fairfield Gonzales, the ancestral, traditional, and unceded Aboriginal Territories of the Coast Salish People, and in particular the W̱SÁNEĆ and Lekwungen peoples, a great neighbourhood in which to live, work and play!

Yours truly

Don Monsour, Board President

Joanna Fox, Chair of FGCA CALUC  
Kristina Wilcox, Co-Executive Director  
Vanya McDonell, Co-Executive Director