

Victoria, B.C.

March 1st, 2021

Mayor Helps and Councillors,
City of Victoria.

Dear Members of City of Victoria Council,

Re: Neighborhood Boundaries

At the February 24th VCAN meeting, representatives from 11 of Victoria's neighbourhood associations had our first opportunity to discuss the proposed amendments to the neighbourhood boundaries.

While we agree a review of the boundaries is necessary from time to time, there is consensus that the process is happening before fulsome consultation with neighbourhood associations and engagement with residents and other stakeholders. Many associations have yet to discuss the proposals with residents.

The neighbourhood boundary changes will have significant implications for associations, including implications for the CALUC process, community funding, community building and events, community "feel" and may create issues for board structure and governance.

We understand that at the February 25th Council meeting, council approved an extension of the consultation period from April 30th to September 2021. We welcome this change and feel this timeline is more appropriate for our members.

We also request the opportunity to be involved with City staff in the days ahead to review any proposed consultation and engagement processes being designed to move this initiative forward. At that time, we would expect to identify or clarify information which will be needed to assist us in communications with our residents, businesses, and neighbourhood groups.

Each neighbourhood association will provide an update on the status of discussions on boundary changes in a few months. We look forward to working with staff and Councillor liaisons on this initiative.

Regards,

VCAN signatories:

**Burnside-Gorge
Hillside-Quadra
Oaklands**

**Fernwood
South Jubilee
Fairfield-Gonzales**

**VicWest
North Jubilee
Downtown (DRA)**

**Rockland
JBNA
North Park**

Victoria, B.C.
June 26th, 2021

Mayor Helps and Councillors,
City of Victoria.

Dear Members of City of Victoria Council,

Re: Proposed Neighbourhood Boundary Adjustments

At the February 17th, 2021 meeting, City Staff presented a report to Council to request “clarification and additional information regarding the neighbourhood boundaries workshop.” In that report, staff clearly stated that they did not understand the rational for amendments to the neighbourhood boundaries and expressed serious concerns about the process for neighbourhood consultations and the ability to report back in a timely fashion.

We are writing to inform Council and staff that the current plan to amend the neighbourhood boundaries has created widespread confusion and frustration across Victoria’s 12 neighbourhoods. As a result, we request this process be put on hold until such time that communities understand the rational for the changes and have the information required to make informed decisions.

The primary concern we have is “why?” Why is this happening now? Many residents throughout Victoria still do not understand the rational for these changes, nor do they understand why they are happening when there are more important issues for the City to address. Furthermore, there is a complete lack of understanding of the implications for neighbourhoods. For example: what do the changes mean for our Local Area Plans? What do they mean for the Village and Corridor planning? How will changes impact CALUCs and land use planning?

Another major concern is that the communities were not provided any data to help us make informed decisions on the proposed changes. For example, it would be helpful to know the population of each community, the percentage of owners and renters, the status of Local Area Planning, and the proximity to community centres or other amenities. Without adequate information, it becomes very difficult to seek community consensus and make a decision that will have long-term implications on communities. We need understand the pros and cons of each change, to ensure that all decisions are fair, equitable and justified.

The proposed engagement approach does not go far enough to resolve community concerns or allow residents to truly understand the impact of propose changes. We feel that staff have been given the difficult job of communicating changes with no strong rational. The online engagement process is overly simple and not sufficient.

We request this process be put on hold and that staff work with community associations directly to develop a plan that will allow for proper information sharing and engagement. This process should not be rushed. The Victoria Community Association Network would be happy to provide input on a more robust engagement plan that will meet the needs of communities

and the expectation of residents. Collectively, we believe the best path forward would be a face to face meeting with VCAN representatives (1-2 from each community), along with city staff and Council liaisons. We would be willing to arrange this for some time in the next month or this summer.

If you have any questions about our request, please contact Don Monsour, VCAN Chair, at president@fairfieldcommunity.ca

Regards,

VCAN signatories:

**Burnside-Gorge
Fairfield-Gonzales
North Park**

**Fernwood
Downtown (DRA)
Rockland**

**VicWest
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