



Mayor Helps and Council
City of Victoria
No.1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

January 24th, 2022

Re: Neighbourhood Boundary Adjustment – Fairfield/Downtown

Dear Mayor Helps and Council,

In addition to the letter of February 26th 2021 from the DRA Board, the DRA LUC has reviewed the proposed boundary amendment between the Fairfield and Downtown Harris Green neighbourhoods and has made the following observations.

Neighbourhood Boundaries generally share the same boundaries as the respective Local Area Plans. The Downtown Harris Green neighbourhood is governed by the Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP). DCAP is a complex plan for a high-density neighbourhood of exclusively multifamily and commercial uses. DCAP extends into some small areas of adjoining neighbourhoods (Burnside Gorge, James Bay, North Park and Fairfield Gonzales) where uses and densities consistent with Downtown are contemplated. This creates additional labour and complexity for neighbourhood associations who then must become conversant with a very complex local area planning document for what usually constitutes a small portion of their neighbourhood. For example, there are no single family homes, townhouses or other low density land uses in the current Downtown Harris Green neighbourhood and DCAP contains no policies for those uses. Whereas Fairfield Gonzales is dominated by these land uses.

Under the current conditions, The Cathedral Hill Precinct is an urban area included in DCAP but falls within the Fairfield neighbourhood boundaries. The Fairfield area included in DCAP is bounded by Fort Street to the north, Blanshard Street to the west, Quadra Street in the east and Rupert Terrace to the south. It has been recognized for many years that this small area is more consistent with the densities and land uses found in the Downtown. The boundary amendment proposed extends well beyond the DCAP boundary further south to Academy Close.

Approximately 50% of the land area in the proposed boundary adjustment will remain within the Fairfield Gonzales local area plan boundary. If approved, the DRA LUC will be tasked with administering land use for a small area falling under the Fairfield Local Area Plan in effect creating a similar problem to what currently exists, only in reverse.

While the inclusion of the urban Cathedral Hill precinct within the Downtown neighbourhood appears both practical and logical as it is already within DCAP, the DRA has never suggested or supported a boundary adjustment beyond Rupert Terrace and we are at a loss as to how this current proposal has been formulated.

The DRA LUC would be comfortable accepting a logical boundary adjustment that will include an area that follows the DCAP planning boundaries based on use and density. We feel there is no compelling rationale, capacity or interest in extending the existing Downtown boundaries beyond those of DCAP.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Sutherland', with a large loop at the start and a trailing flourish.

Ian Sutherland

Chair Land Use Committee - Downtown Residents Association