E.1.a.e Downtown Core Area Plan Update

Moved By Councillor Alto
Seconded By Councillor Andrew

That Council:

1. Approve the Downtown Core Area Plan (2022).
2. Receive for information feedback received as part of the consultation process on the proposed Official Community Plan amendments.
3. Give first and second readings of Official Community Bylaw, 2012, Amendment Bylaw No. 41 (No.22-008) prior to consideration at a public hearing.
4. Direct staff to prepare amendments to Zoning Bylaw 2018 to align building setback regulations with the updated Downtown Core Area Plan (2022) and bring forward for first and second readings prior to consideration at a public hearing.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

F.4 Downtown Core Area Plan Update

Councillor Thornton-Joe left the meeting at 10:02 a.m. to attend the opening of a new exhibit by the Chinese Canadian Museum.

Committee received a report dated February 3, 2022 from the Director of Sustainable Planning and Community Development regarding engagement, analysis, and recommendations for undertaking limited updates to the Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP).

Moved By Mayor Helps
Seconded By Councillor Young

That Council:

1. Approve the Downtown Core Area Plan (2022).
2. Receive for information feedback received as part of the consultation process on the proposed Official Community Plan amendments.
3. Give first and second readings of Official Community Bylaw, 2012, Amendment Bylaw No. 41 (No.22-008) prior to consideration at a public hearing.
4. Direct staff to prepare amendments to Zoning Bylaw 2018 to align building setback regulations with the updated Downtown Core Area Plan (2022) and bring forward for first and second readings prior to consideration at a public hearing.

Committee discussed:

- *The liveability of smaller sites*

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Mayor Helps left the meeting at 10:56 a.m.

Committee recessed at 10:56 and reconvened at 11:05 a.m.

Councillor Andrew assumed the role of Acting Mayor at 11:05 a.m.

Committee of the Whole Report
For the Meeting of February 17, 2022

To:	Committee of the Whole	**Date:**	February 3, 2022
From:	Karen Hoese, Director, Sustainable Planning and Community Development		
Subject:	**Updated Downtown Core Area Plan (2022) and related Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw**		

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Approve the Downtown Core Area Plan (2022).
2. Receive for information feedback received as part of the consultation process on the proposed Official Community Plan amendments.
3. Give first and second readings of Official Community Bylaw, 2012, Amendment Bylaw No. 41 (No.22-008) prior to consideration at a public hearing.
4. Direct staff to prepare amendments to Zoning Bylaw 2018 to align building setback regulations with the updated Downtown Core Area Plan (2022) and bring forward for first and second readings prior to consideration at a public hearing.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present Council with a summary of engagement, analysis, and recommendations for undertaking limited updates to the Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP).

As the DCAP has been implemented and put into practice since its adoption in 2011, it was determined that improvements to its building design guidelines were needed to better achieve plan objectives and ensure future growth and development results in high quality environments. The scope of this project was therefore, focused on enhancing liveability through improved design guidelines that will be applied to development applications. These include increased building separation distances, providing further guidance for challenging development sites that are undersized, including guidelines for high performance buildings, improving guidance for the Inner Harbour and heritage building adjacencies, housekeeping amendments to correct dated policies in line with more recent, existing City policies, and improved user-friendliness.

The DCAP was originally approved by Council in 2011 as a local area plan covering multiple neighbourhoods that make up the city's core area. It functions as a neighbourhood plan for the Downtown and Harris Green neighbourhoods. It also provides additional policy guidance in conjunction with other neighbourhood plans for portions of adjacent neighbourhoods including the Rock Bay District in Burnside, North Park, Fairfield, and James Bay. The original reason for establishing a more wide-ranging area plan beyond Downtown and Harris Green was to ensure that the core area could accommodate forecasted population and development growth over the

long term, and to acknowledge the important relationship and role these neighbourhoods play in the Downtown Core Area.

The process to update the DCAP included extensive engagement on the design guidelines with key stakeholders and a project working group. Public engagement efforts were supplemented with a virtual community survey during spring 2021. Refinements to the guidelines were completed in response to public feedback as well as findings from third-party architectural testing and peer review. The feedback received has indicated broad support for the updated design guidelines.

To implement the proposed DCAP (2022) design guidelines within the affected development permit areas (DPA) and heritage conservation areas (HCA), an OCP amendment bylaw has been prepared which is subject to a public hearing prior to Council's consideration. Consultation specific to the proposed OCP amendments was conducted in accordance with Council's earlier directions. Five letters were received through the consultation process, however the letters did not include any comments specific to the proposed OCP amendment bylaw. Staff are also seeking Council direction to prepare amendments to Zoning Bylaw 2018 for the purpose of updating existing side and rear setback regulations to align with the proposed new DCAP 2022.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present Council with a summary of engagement, analysis, and recommendations for undertaking limited updates to the Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP), to report on the consultation regarding associated amendments to the Official Community Plan (OCP) and to seek Council direction to advance the OCP amendments to a public hearing.

BACKGROUND

The DCAP was originally approved in September 2011 as a new type of policy plan with dual roles, both as a detailed neighbourhood level plan for the Downtown and Harris Green neighbourhoods as well as a broader policy overlay in conjunction with the respective neighbourhood plans for other surrounding areas that are included within the DCAP boundary. This includes the Rock Bay area of the Burnside neighbourhood and portions of the North Park, Fairfield, and James Bay neighbourhoods.

The DCAP was approved as a 30-year plan to guide growth and development through policies, guidelines and actions that strike a balance between what exists currently and new development, to ensure that the Downtown Core Area develops as a more accessible, attractive, resilient, and enjoyable place to visit, live, work and play. One of the key functions of the DCAP is to provide policies and guidelines to support the review and evaluation of development applications and improvements to the public realm.

At the time, this approach also provided the benefit of updated land use policies and guidelines for the surrounding neighbourhoods since most of the neighbourhood plans for these surrounding areas had not been updated since they were developed in the 1990s.

The DCAP serves to further the City of Victoria's commitment to the vision, objectives, policies, and targets for the downtown core area as defined within the Capital Regional District's Regional Growth Strategy and in the Regional Context Statement of the Official Community Plan which seek to maintain and enhance Victoria's downtown core area as the primary regional employment, business, and cultural centre. The DCAP also provides a vital link between the Official Community Plan and the more site-specific neighbourhood plans and Zoning Bylaw 2018.

One of the key goals outlined in the DCAP is to ensure its success by undertaking periodic monitoring, review and updating of the plan and to maintain alignment with other related City policies, plans and regulations.

While the DCAP has supported growth and development since 2011, emerging concerns over liveability impacts from urban development have been identified by staff, community associations, development industry and Council. Key concerns relate to overall building mass and bulk, setbacks and building separation and how they impact sunlight access, privacy and the interface between buildings and the public realm. As a result, on May 28, 2020 Council provided direction to undertake a focused update of the Downtown Core Area Plan and for staff to report back with the updated DCAP (Attachment 1) and related Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw (Attachment 3). Key project objectives endorsed by Council included:

- improving liveability for residents through tower separation, building setbacks and orientation
- providing well-designed and accessible outdoor amenity spaces
- updating floor plate size limits for residential and commercial buildings
- addressing design opportunities and challenges for smaller sized or residual lots
- encouraging more innovative use of materials and building designs
- providing design guidelines to address potential impacts on heritage buildings outside of Old Town
- establishing context-specific design guidelines for the Inner Harbour area, and
- improving user friendliness and interpretation.

Therefore, the project scope was limited to a review and update of the design guidelines that apply to new buildings, which was deemed most critical for this update given ongoing development activity in the core area.

Engagement

The review and update of the DCAP was largely guided by feedback received through a comprehensive engagement process that was structured to align with the City's Engagement Framework along with the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) principles. This entire process spanned from 'Inform' to 'Involve'. Early engagement included targeted workshops and multiple rounds of feedback (Inform to Involve), while latter engagement on the draft guidelines represented 'Consult' on the spectrum and included broader community engagement.

Project engagement also included consultation with a project working group composed of self-appointed representatives from community associations, development industry, design, and heritage professionals. Technical feedback was provided through a series of meetings, workshops, and a walking tour that occurred between January 2020 and September 2021.

The process to review and update the DCAP was further informed through direct consultation to discuss building and site design with key stakeholders including various City departments, the Advisory Design Panel, Heritage Advisory Panel, and the Accessibility Advisory Committee. Individual meetings were also held with each affected community association including the Downtown Residents Association, North Park Neighbourhood Association, Fairfield Gonzales Community Association, Burnside Gorge Community Association, and James Bay Community Association. The process also included use of the City's *Have Your Say* engagement web page and a digital survey to receive broad public feedback on the design guidelines and their effectiveness, which indicated a strong level of support.

A detailed summary of the engagement process and feedback received is contained in Attachment 2 and copies of stakeholder letters are included in Attachment 5 for reference.

OCP Consultation

Implementation of the proposed DCAP changes require amendments to the OCP. On May 28, 2020 Council considered the OCP consultation requirements from the Local Government Act and directed staff to undertake consultation with the project working group, downtown property owners, residents, businesses, development industry, and heritage community on the proposed amendments. This specific consultation on the OCP amendment bylaw was completed between December 14-23, 2021.

ISSUES & ANALYSIS

The following section provides a summary of the key improvements to the DCAP:

1. Improving Liveability in the Downtown Core Area

The updated DCAP design guidelines (primarily contained in Appendix 4 of the DCAP) describe a variety of strategies to ensure the design of new buildings support improved liveability conditions for residents, enhanced pedestrian activity, and the creation of welcoming and vibrant amenity spaces. Key guidelines address the design of building bases (podiums) to provide a comfortable and welcoming interface and scale with the public realm, improve sunlight access on public sidewalks, support the planting and maintenance of the urban forest, mitigate wind-tunnel impacts, increase separation distances between residential and commercial towers, limit maximum floor plate sizes for tall buildings, provide exterior universal accessible design, and ensure well-designed and functional outdoor (common) amenity spaces.

A third-party consultant (Dialog Consulting) was retained to undertake a peer review of the DCAP design guidelines including architectural testing with a specific focus on revised building forms, massing, ability to achieving DCAP density levels, providing human-scale building interface with the public realm, and mitigating shadow impacts on public sidewalks. Outcomes from the architectural testing were discussed with the working group and other stakeholders and were considered by staff for refining the draft guidelines.

2. Challenging Development Sites

The updated DCAP design guidelines identify minimum parcel size thresholds that are required to accommodate the design and development of tall buildings (over 23m in height) on corner and non-corner locations. These parcel sizes ensure adequate space to respond to the specialized tall building design guidelines and other applicable design guidelines. For smaller or undersized parcels that cannot accommodate a tall building, the guidelines support the development of buildings up to 23m (approximately six storeys) in a manner that maximizes development efficiency of the site while achieving other building design objectives outlined in the DCAP. This approach provides development opportunities for smaller or challenging development sites while providing improved clarity and expectations for property owners and developers who are considering a new building.

3. High Performance Buildings

The updated design guidelines provide a variety of measures to support a shift toward highly energy efficient residential and commercial buildings, resulting in reduced energy demand while still ensuring high-quality building designs with human scale, visual interest, and a pleasing architectural composition. High performance is generally achieved through simplified form and massing, reduction in glazing to reduce heat loss, orientation of buildings to maximize solar access and natural ventilation, use of sustainable building materials and appropriately designed natural landscaping to provide shading and reduce storm water runoff and greenhouse gas

emissions. The updated guidelines also include comprehensive bird-friendly building design guidelines with strategies to reduce or mitigate bird strikes with building windows and glazed surfaces.

4. Inner Harbour and Heritage

The updated design guidelines include specialized directions to ensure that the design of new buildings outside of the Old Town area complement the mass, scale, height, and street wall pattern of adjacent heritage buildings. The guidelines also ensure that additions to existing heritage buildings are designed appropriately to respect the heritage building.

The DCAP also contains comprehensive design guidelines to ensure the design of new buildings within the Inner Harbour area complement and reinforce the area's unique character and context. This includes direction to consider and respond appropriately to the original planning for the area while maintaining the visual dominance of the Parliament Building, Empress Hotel, and CPR Steamship Terminal. Additional guidelines address the use of high-quality materials, lighting, architectural expression, and interface with the harbour.

5. User Friendliness and Improved Clarity

The updated building design guidelines have been developed to improve user friendliness and interpretation through a revised format and structure. This includes providing a clear statement of design intent and related strategies for each topic area, along with supplemental photographs, diagrams, and images to illustrate how the design strategies can be implemented to achieve the broad design intent.

6. Amendments to Downtown Core Area Plan Chapters

The development and integration of updated design guidelines within the DCAP provided the opportunity to complete a limited range of housekeeping improvements including updated photographs, illustrations, and maps, updated references to current City policies, improved language, and consolidation of all design guidelines within the DCAP appendices. This approach resulted in the DCAP appendices being consolidated from eight into four appendices. The project did not include the development of new land use policies. All text that was revised following the release of the first draft during the public engagement process (April 2021) is indicated in red font for reference.

7. OCP Amendments

The implementation of the updated DCAP design guidelines requires an OCP amendment bylaw (Attachment 3) to update the reference from Downtown Core Area Plan (2011) to Downtown Core Area Plan (2022). The OCP amendment bylaw describes the updated design guideline references for each affected Development Permit Area and Heritage Conservation Area (Attachment 4). Since the proposed DCAP has been updated to consolidate all design guidelines into four appendices, the proposed OCP amendment seeks to replace the current references to multiple individual design guidelines with references to the applicable design guideline appendices. This approach will improve user-friendliness and better supports the ability to maintain the DCAP guidelines and the OCP.

Consultation specific to the proposed OCP amendment bylaw was undertaken from December 14 to 23, 2021 using the City's website, and notification emails were sent to project stakeholders including project working group members, affected Community Association Land Use Committees, the Urban Development Institute, and the Heritage Advisory Panel. Consultation efforts were in accordance with requirements of the *Local Government Act* and Council direction

from May 28, 2020. Implementation of the proposed DCAP design guidelines requires the OCP amendment bylaw to be approved by Council following a statutory public hearing.

8. Feedback on OCP Amendments

Five email submissions (Attachment 6) were received in response to the consultation process on the OCP amendment bylaw, however the feedback received did not contain specific comments on the proposed OCP amendment bylaw. Instead, many of the comments relate to the existing land use policies of the DCAP that were not revised through the process. This included a letter with concerns that the revised building forms and design guidelines will result in taller buildings. However, the review and update of the DCAP was focused on design guidelines and did not alter existing land use policies related to building height or density. The engagement process on the overall DCAP was completed in May 2021 while the current consultation process was focused on the OCP amendment bylaw as required through the Local Government Act.

9. Transition Provisions for Development Applications

Ongoing public communication of the proposed new guidelines has been occurring since the start of the project, resulting in strong awareness by community and development stakeholders. As a result, staff have noted that most new development permit applications have started to proactively reflect the new draft guidelines.

To facilitate transition, the proposed OCP amendment bylaw contains a provision to delay implementation of the new DCAP guidelines for three months after the date of adoption. This will allow for transitioning and processing of development permit applications that are currently being processed and will allow time for applicants to adjust any proposals currently under development to accommodate the proposed changes. The current DCAP design guidelines will continue to apply for three months after the proposed new DCAP and associated OCP amendment bylaw is adopted.

Staff completed a review and analysis of all current and active development permit (DP) and heritage alteration permit (HAP) applications within the Downtown Core Area and determined that a three-month effective date will allow sufficient time for staff to complete processing these applications with the current design guidelines, thereby avoiding potential conflicts with the new guidelines. For example, if a DP application was received by the City prior to the approval of the OCP amendment bylaw, staff would review and process the DP using the current design guidelines, avoiding the need for the applicant to redesign their project and resubmit revised drawings, which could further increase the processing time and project costs. It is expected that DP applications received after approval of the OCP amendment bylaw would be informed by the new directions and DPs would not be issued until after the new guidelines are in effect.

10. Amendments to Zoning Bylaw 2018

If Council approves the updated DCAP and related OCP amendment bylaw, staff will prepare amendments to Zoning Bylaw 2018 to provide development regulations that align with and implement the updated DCAP design guidelines. This will ensure that new development within the Downtown Core Area is subject to updated design guidelines and development regulations. It is anticipated that the zoning bylaw amendments will be primarily limited to the CBD-1, CBD-2, and MRD-1 zones for the purpose of revising the side and rear lot line setback regulations and rescinding the current front setback plane regulation. The proposed zoning bylaw amendments will be subject to a statutory public hearing prior to Council's consideration.

11. Delegated Development Permits

The Land Use Procedures Bylaw authorizes staff to review and approve the renewal of an existing valid development permit or heritage alteration permit if the permit is unlapsed at the time of application; unchanged from the original application; and not subject to any new policies or regulations. Therefore, the approval and implementation of the updated DCAP means that any DP or HAP renewals cannot be approved by staff and will require consideration by Council. Staff do not anticipate this will create significant impacts as the volume of renewal applications is low, for example five renewal applications were received in 2020 and three were received in 2021.

12. Alignment with Neighbourhood Plan Updates

The introduction section of the DCAP explains that the DCAP applies to the Downtown Core Area, a broader area that includes not only the Downtown neighbourhood but also the Harris Green neighbourhood, the Rock Bay portion of the Burnside neighbourhood, and parts of the North Park, Fairfield, and James Bay neighbourhoods. This means that the DCAP is the primary neighbourhood plan for Downtown and Harris Green and it provides additional policy guidance for portions of the other DCAP neighbourhoods in combination with their existing neighbourhood plans. This approach has been in place since the DCAP was approved in 2011.

The update to the DCAP (2022) with revised design guidelines did not include the development of new land use policies or changes to the DCAP boundaries. However, the City is currently in the process of updating other existing neighbourhood plans including the North Park (Local) Neighbourhood Plan that was originally approved in 1996. It is anticipated that the updated North Park neighbourhood plan will include more detailed land use policies and design guidelines. Therefore, the approval and implementation of the updated North Park neighbourhood plan may also include an amendment of the DCAP boundary to exclude North Park as the updated North Park neighborhood plan will provide comprehensive policy direction to guide growth and development within North Park. A similar approach may also be required for other DCAP neighbourhoods once their neighbourhood plans are updated.

Accessibility Impact Statement

Barrier-free access and universal design features for building interiors are primarily regulated through the BC Building Code, rather than development permit applications which focus on (exterior) building form and character as described in the Local Government Act. However, other documents such as the Master Municipal Construction Document (MMCD) Specifications, Accessible Design for the Built Environment Standards (CSA B651-19), along with the updated DCAP design guidelines collectively provide strategic direction to enhance the universal accessible design of outdoor and landscaped common areas, building exteriors, and the surrounding public realm, improving levels of accessibility for people with disabilities.

2019 – 2022 Strategic Plan

The approval and implementation of the updated DCAP along with the OCP amendment bylaw both support Objective 8: Strong, Liveable Neighbourhoods, as these policy and regulatory tools will help to create more liveable neighbourhoods in the Downtown Core Area.

Impacts to Financial Plan

The proposed updates to the Downtown Core Area Plan will not have any impacts to the *Financial Plan*.

Official Community Plan Consistency Statement

The updated Downtown Core Area Plan remains consistent with the *Official Community Plan* (2012) which encourages high quality architecture and urban design that enhances Victoria's unique character and sense of place. The proposed OCP amendments have been subject to a consultation process in accordance with the *Local Government Act*.

CONCLUSIONS

The proposed updates to the DCAP and related OCP amendments will ensure that the DCAP remains current and more effective in its ability to enhance liveability through improved guidance for the design of new buildings and additions to existing buildings within the Downtown Core Area.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Batallas
Senior Planner
Community Planning Division

Karen Hoese, Director
Sustainable Planning and Community
Development Department

Joaquin Karakas
Senior Urban Designer
Community Planning Division

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager.

List of Attachments

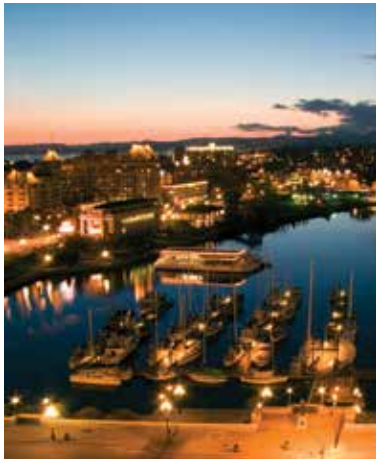
- Attachment 1 – Proposed Downtown Core Area Plan (2022)
- Attachment 2 – Downtown Core Area Plan Engagement Summary
- Attachment 3 – Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 22-008
- Attachment 4 – Map of Downtown Core Area Development Permit Areas and Heritage Conservation Areas
- Attachment 5 – Stakeholder Letters
- Attachment 6 – OCP Amendment Comments

Attachment 1

Downtown Core Area Plan

SEPTEMBER 2011
Updated: February 2022

CITY OF VICTORIA



Territorial Acknowledgement

The City of Victoria is located on the homelands of the Songhees and Esquimalt People.

vision

The Downtown Core Area will offer an array of vibrant urban neighbourhoods surrounding a thriving, pedestrian-friendly Downtown core. All people will benefit from a high quality public and private environment and a broad range of employment, housing, shopping, and recreational opportunities, all within a well-connected and attractive urban environment that embraces the Victoria Harbour, celebrates its heritage, Victoria's role as the Provincial Capital and provides a model for livable and sustainable urbanism.

PUBLISHING INFORMATION

Title: Downtown Core Area Plan
Author: Community Planning Division – Sustainable Planning and Community Development Department
Status: Council Approval – September 15, 2011
Printing Date: February 2022

Disclaimer: This Plan may be subject to periodic updates and amendments. Please contact the City of Victoria Sustainable Planning and Community Development Department for up to date information.

Additional Copies: The City of Victoria
Sustainable Planning and Community Development Department
Victoria City Hall, 2nd Floor
T 250.361.0382

Electronic versions (in PDF format) available on the City of Victoria website at victoria.ca/downtowncoreareaplan

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executive summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Plan is called the "Downtown Core Area Plan" – a new name to reflect Victoria's new reality and a new plan to envision and guide growth and development over the next 30 years. This Plan provides a benchmark for the Downtown Core Area's economic health, quality and character of buildings and space and overall livability for its residents, businesses and visitors. This Plan builds upon the success of previous planning initiatives and renews the vision for the Downtown as a special place through policy direction that provides strategic support and direction to foster an array of public, private and partnership-based actions to improve and maintain the Downtown Core Area as the Heart of the Region.

BACKGROUND

Since 1990, planning in Downtown Victoria has been primarily guided by the *Downtown Victoria Plan*, which was developed when Victoria's Downtown was experiencing low population and economic growth.

In 2011, the situation is very different. According to population forecasts from the Capital Regional District, the Capital Region's population will increase to 390,000 by 2016, and to 475,000 by 2038. This represents a 31 percent increase, or 111,000 new residents, in about 30 years. It is anticipated that the Downtown Core Area's share of that growth will be approximately 10,000 additional residents.

In addition, other growth forecasts prepared for the City indicate that, by 2026, the total amount of new additional combined floor space demand for residential, office, retail, service and hotel room uses in Downtown Victoria will be in the range of 853,800 m^2 to 1,174,300 m^2. If these forecasts are accurate, without increasing the development potential, the Downtown neighbourhood will experience a shortfall of between 110,600 m^2 and 616,900 m^2 within the next 10 to 15 years.

In recognition of these forecasts and the potential shortfall of land and development capacity within the Downtown neighbourhood, this Plan introduces an expanded plan area with related policies to accommodate population and development growth over the next 30 years.

This Plan therefore applies to the Downtown neighbourhood and the immediately surrounding areas, referred to as the Downtown Core Area, which includes not only the Downtown neighbourhood but also the Harris Green neighbourhood, the Rock Bay portion of the Burnside neighbourhood and parts of the North Park, Fairfield and James Bay neighbourhoods.

It replaces the *Downtown Victoria Plan* (1990), the *Harris Green Neighbourhood Plan* (1995) and the *Harris Green Charrette* (1997) as the principal guide for planning decisions made by the City of Victoria within the broader Downtown Core Area. It serves as a local area plan for the Downtown and Harris Green neighbourhoods, and provides additional guidance – in conjunction with their neighbourhood plans – for the portions of Rock Bay, North Park, Fairfield, and James Bay that are located within the boundary of the Downtown Core Area.

PURPOSE

The Downtown Core Area Plan provides land use, physical development, transportation and mobility, vitality and sustainability policies and actions for the neighbourhoods that fall within the Downtown Core Area. It is intended both to guide and influence the physical, social, environmental and economic conditions of the area, and to ensure a sustainable and balanced approach to growth over the next 30 years.

The City will use this Plan to evaluate the impact and suitability of public and private projects and initiatives related to land use, development, infrastructure and transportation, and will review all private and public projects and initiatives for their ability to help achieve the Plan's vision and goals.

KEY CHALLENGES

This Plan attempts to address a number of key challenges the Downtown Core Area will face over the next 30 years. These include:

- Ensuring the Downtown Core Area has enough residential and commercial space available to keep up with short- and long-term growth forecasts, without damage to the natural environment or the livability and quality of life in the Downtown Core Area.
- Remaining the primary centre for employment, tourism and culture within the Capital Region, and the preferred location for Provincial Government offices and services.
- Providing a mix of housing, services and facilities to encourage and support a socio-economically inclusive community.
- Maintaining the historic context of Old Town, Chinatown and the Harbour in balance with new development.
- Encouraging more owners of heritage buildings to rehabilitate and upgrade their properties.
- Fostering an urban core that is able to support a rapid transit system.
- Ensuring that new development complements both the existing architecture and natural environment of the Downtown Core Area.

KEY FEATURES

In response to these challenges, the Downtown Core Area Plan provides a framework for growth and development that balances urban design, transportation, community vitality and economic objectives. The key features that are contained in this Plan include:

1. DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

- Provides a new framework for land use, building height and density that supports a strategic balance between employment and residential development.
- Concentrates higher density development along the Douglas Street/ Blanshard Street corridor to relieve development pressure within the historic Old Town Area, Chinatown and Victoria Harbour.

2. STRENGTHENED CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

- Expand the Central Business District (CBD) as the primary location for offices and other forms of commercial development.
- Supports the retention of commercial land within the CBD.

3. DENSITY BONUS SYSTEM

- Establishes a density framework for the Downtown Core Area that balances the need for increased density in some areas with the need to maintain livable communities through the contribution and provision toward key public amenities.
- Restricts density in some areas to a pre-determined maximum density level, but allows developers the possibility of acquiring additional density in other strategic areas, up to a specified maximum, by contributing or providing toward key public amenities.

4. INCREASED HOUSING OPTIONS

- Accommodates and fosters a greater range of housing options throughout the Downtown Core Area by land use, urban design and transportation policies, including support for non-market housing.

5. PUBLIC AMENITIES

- Identifies strategies to acquire and develop specific key public amenities such as urban plazas, park spaces, Government Street Mall extension and the Harbour Pathway.

6. HERITAGE

- Introduces an additional financial incentive to support and encourage the seismic upgrading of heritage buildings within the Downtown.
- Explores the potential to expand the Heritage Tax Incentive Program within the Downtown Core Area and lengthen its term up to 15 years.

7. TRANSPORTATION

- Provides policies and action to support the integration of infrastructure and public realm improvements that support the use of alternate modes of travel including walking, cycling, transit and a future rapid transit system.
- Concentrates higher density and transit-supportive development within walking distance of the Douglas Street transit corridor
- Recognizes the importance of Downtown Victoria as a gateway for the movement of goods and people that support the local and regional economy.

8. ECONOMIC VITALITY

- Identifies the need to develop a local area plan for the Rock Bay District, with a focus on strengthening its function as a key employment centre, within an attractive urban setting.
- Supports the economic function and role of the working Harbour, while recognizing opportunities to improve public access to the waterfront.

9. LIVABILITY

- Identifies and supports the concept of improving vitality and livability within the Downtown Core Area through initiatives and strategies to create an attractive and functional public realm, well-designed and diverse built forms, a range of amenities to serve the daily needs of residents, businesses and visitors and an improved local economy.

IMPLEMENTATION

The *Downtown Core Area Plan* is a 30-year Plan that is premised on the concerted effort and collaboration by both the public and private sectors. This Plan identifies a range of specific actions and initiatives to transform the Downtown Core Area and make this Plan a reality. It is anticipated that a detailed implementation and monitoring strategy will be developed and maintained.

introduction 1

INTRODUCTION

Since it was first established in 1843 as a trading post for the Hudson's Bay Company, Victoria has evolved into a Provincial capital city that is recognized across Canada and around the world for its tourism, education, heritage conservation, recreation, arts and culture and high quality of life. It is also renowned for its ability to retain both its character and its charm even while it continues to experience significant growth and development.

Victoria is the core city of the broader metropolitan Capital Region and its 12 additional municipalities and three electoral areas. (SEE MAP 1: THE REGION) The Downtown Core Area is the city's (and the region's) urban centre. Approximately 188 hectares (465 acres) in size, it is a mixed-use community that provides a blend of institutional, commercial, industrial and residential activities throughout a series of neighbourhoods. (SEE MAP 2: CITY-WIDE CONTEXT) The Downtown Core Area makes up the heart of the region's Metropolitan Core as described in the Capital Regional District's Regional Growth Strategy. Building upon its function as the region's primary centre for business, employment, culture, entertainment and tourism, the Downtown Core Area Plan lays out a vision, goals, policies and actions that will ensure Victoria remains a truly remarkable place to live, work and play well into the 21st century.

Map 1: The Region

THIS PLAN

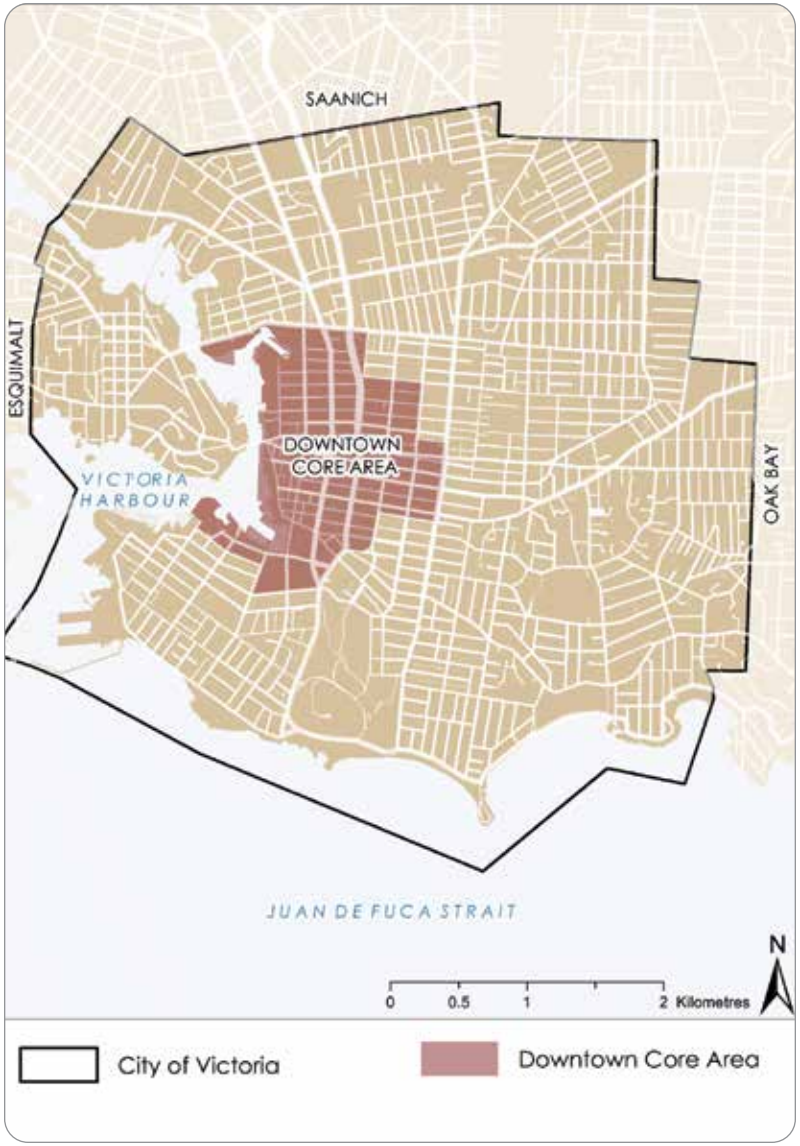
This Plan is called the "Downtown Core Area Plan" – a new name to reflect Victoria's new urban reality.

Since 1990, planning in Downtown Victoria has been primarily guided by the *Downtown Victoria Plan*, which provided a general framework to shape the physical, economic and social form and function of downtown Victoria. When that plan was first developed, however, Victoria's downtown was experiencing low population and economic growth. Today, in 2011, the situation is very different. Victoria has grown significantly in recent years, with steady growth expected to continue for at least the next two to three decades.

The Downtown neighbourhood alone will not be able to accommodate forecast population, employment and development. The inventory of vacant or under utilized land within the Downtown will continue to diminish over the next ten years to a level that will not be able to accommodate future demand. Challenges and opportunities that affect the Downtown neighbourhood also affect the broader Downtown Area and adjacent neighbourhoods as they too evolve to become more urban. Therefore, a more comprehensive approach to planning that considers the context, function, transitions and relationships among each neighbourhood is necessary.

This Plan applies to the Downtown Core Area, a broader area that includes not only the Downtown neighbourhood but also the Harris Green neighbourhood, the Rock Bay portion of the Burnside neighbourhood, and parts of the North Park, Fairfield and James Bay neighbourhoods. (SEE MAP 3: PLAN BOUNDARY AND NEIGHBOURHOODS)

This Plan replaces the *Downtown Victoria Plan* (1990), the *Harris Green Neighbourhood Plan* (1995) and the *Harris Green Charrette* (1997) as the principal guide for planning decisions made by the City of Victoria within the Downtown Core Area, and it will serve to implement the policy direction for portions of the Urban Core as described in the new *Official Community Plan*. It serves as a local area plan for the Downtown and Harris Green neighbourhoods, and provides additional guidance for the portions of Rock Bay, North Park, Fairfield, and James Bay that are located within the boundary of the Downtown Core Area in conjunction with their local area plans.



Map 2: City-Wide Context

PURPOSE

The Downtown Core Area Plan provides land use, physical development, transportation and mobility, vitality and sustainability policies and actions for the area that is located within the boundary of this Plan. (SEE MAP 3: PLAN BOUNDARY AND NEIGHBOURHOODS) These policies and actions are intended both to guide and influence the physical, social, environmental and economic conditions of the Area, and to ensure a sustainable and balanced approach to growth over the next 30 years.

The City will use this Plan in conjunction with other related policies, guidelines and regulations to evaluate the impact and suitability of public and private projects and initiatives related to land use, development, infrastructure and transportation, and will review all private and public projects and initiatives for their ability to help achieve the Plan's vision and goals.

The City will also use this Plan as a guide in preparing operating and capital budgets, defining department work programs and determining public improvements.

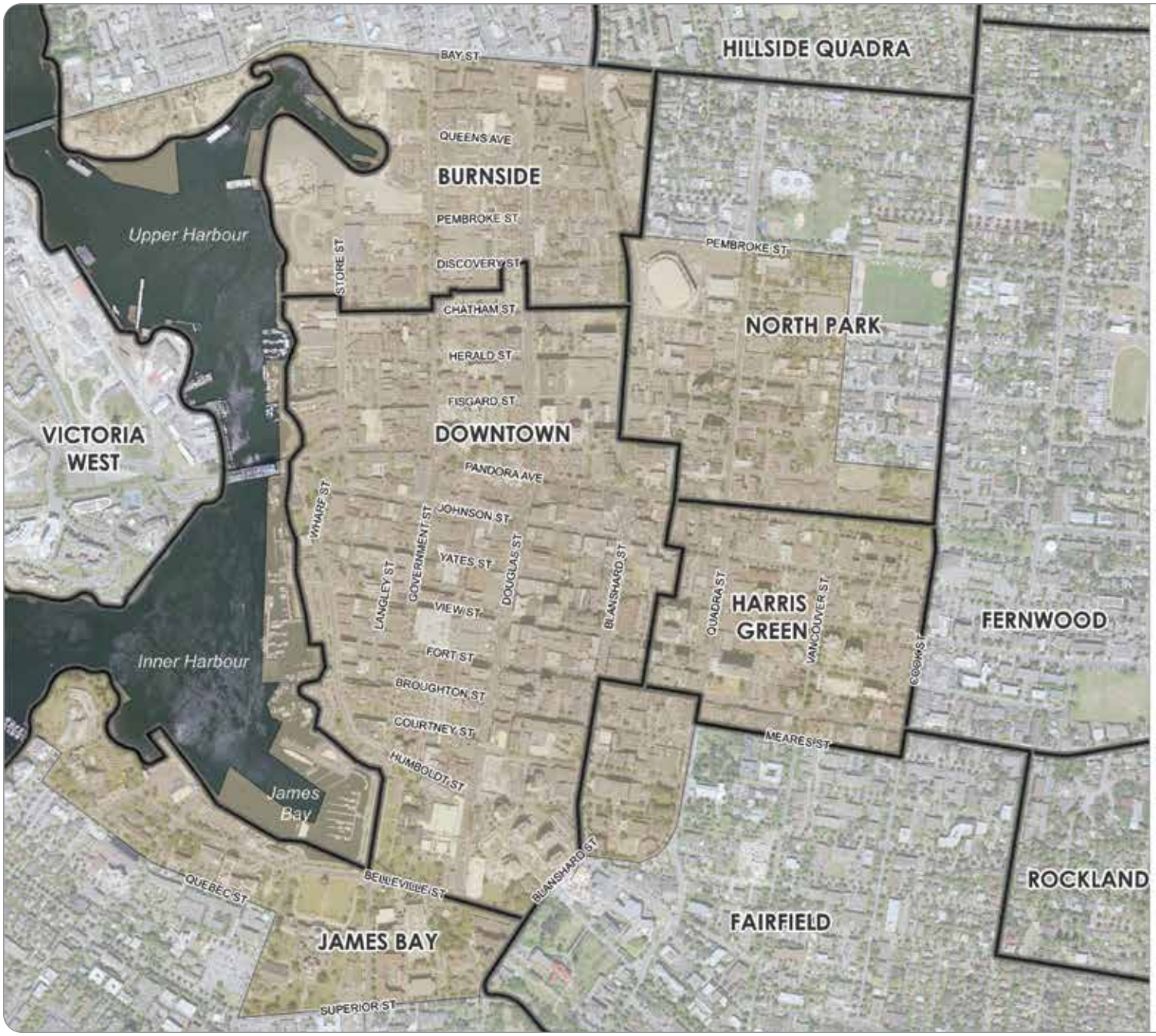
DISTRICTS

For the purposes of this Plan, the Downtown Core Area is divided into five districts:

- Central Business District
- Historic Commercial District
- Inner Harbour District
- Rock Bay District
- Residential Mixed-Use District.

(SEE MAP 4: DISTRICTS)

The new districts do not replace existing neighbourhoods and their names, boundaries or special character areas. Rather, they are a way to recognize that there are unique social, physical and environmental characteristics in certain parts of the Downtown Core Area that cut across neighbourhood boundaries and unite broader geographic areas.



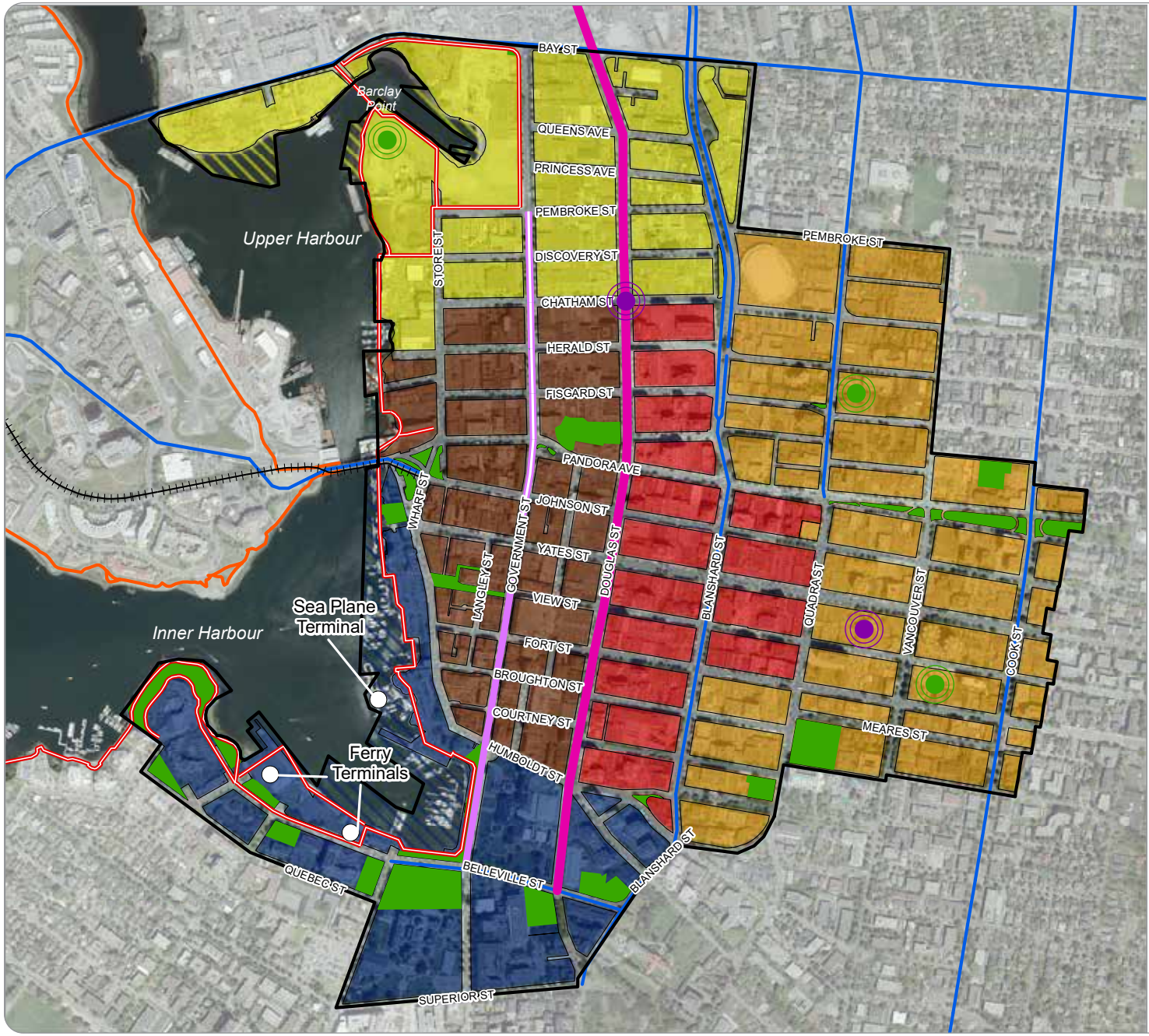
MAP 3
Plan Boundary and Neighbourhoods

Neighbourhood Boundary

Downtown Core Area

N

Metres
0 75 150 300



MAP 4
Districts

- Downtown Core Area
- Central Business District
- Historic Commercial District
- Inner Harbour District
- Residential Mixed-Use District
- Rock Bay District

Existing Urban Structure

- Parks and Open Space
- Transportation Terminal
- Arterial Road
- Government Street Mall
- Pathway
- Rail Corridor

Future Additions to Urban Structure

- Park or Public Open Space (location to be determined)
- Urban Plaza (location to be determined)
- Future Rapid Transit Corridor
- Government Street Mall Extension
- Pathway

N

Metres
0 75 150 300

FOUNDATION

The Downtown Core Area Plan is based on:

- Forecasts of significant population growth for this region and Victoria over the next 30 years, and the corresponding effect that growth will have on demand for office, residential and other space.
- A vision and a series of Goals for a Downtown Core Area that reflect what the City of Victoria heard clearly from the people who live and work here through a number of community workshops: that all future growth and development must strengthen the city's character, respect its scale, and support sustainability.
- A set of assumptions about the physical, social and economic conditions (existing and required) that will influence the achievement of the Downtown Core Area Plan's vision and goals.

FORECASTS

Recent forecasts related to demographics and growth provide the foundation for the range of topic areas and related policies and actions described in the Downtown Core Area Plan. Key findings for the Downtown Core Area include:

POPULATION GROWTH

- In 2008, the Capital Region as a whole had a population of about 364,000, while the City of Victoria had a population of approximately 80,000, and the Downtown Core Area had a population of about 6,050.
- According to population forecasts from the Capital Regional District (CRD), the Capital Region's population will increase to 390,000 by 2016, and to 475,000 by 2038. This represents a 31 percent increase, or 111,000 new residents, in the next 30 years. The CRD estimates that Victoria's share of that growth will be approximately an additional 20,000 residents, for a total population of just over 100,000 by 2041.
- According to Census information, the population in the Downtown neighbourhood increased by 17% between 2001 and 2006. The Harris Green neighbourhood population saw a 7% increase. Although more current Census information will not be available until 2012, the current population is assumed to be somewhat higher based on the various residential buildings that have been constructed since 2006 in these neighbourhoods.

EMPLOYEES AND VISITORS

- Based on 2008 statistics, on a typical workday in that year, the Downtown Core Area welcomed about 33,800 employees as well as thousands of additional shoppers and visitors.

DEVELOPMENT FLOOR SPACE

- Other more recent growth forecasts prepared for the City indicate that, by 2026, the total combined floor space demand for residential, office, retail, service and hotel room uses in the Downtown Core Area will increase by an additional 853,800 m^2 to 1,174,300 m^2.
- If these forecasts are accurate, without increasing the development potential in the Downtown Core Area, the area will experience a shortfall of between 110,600 m^2 and 616,900 m^2 of space within the next 10 to 15 years, undermining Victoria's ability to accommodate the full range of uses, retain the current balance between office and residential space, and remain the primary employment centre for the Capital Region.

VISION

The Downtown Core Area will offer an array of vibrant urban neighbourhoods surrounding a thriving, pedestrian-friendly Downtown core. All people will benefit from a high quality public and private environment and a broad range of employment, housing, shopping, and recreational opportunities, all within a well-connected and attractive urban environment that embraces the Victoria Harbour, celebrates its heritage, Victoria's role as the Provincial Capital and provides a model for livable and sustainable urbanism.

GOALS

1. To retain Victoria's prominence as the capital of British Columbia and the Downtown Core Area's position as the Heart of the Region where people love to work, live and play by:
    - 1.1. Ensuring the Downtown Core Area has enough residential and office space available to keep up with short- and long-term growth forecasts and remain the preferred location for Provincial Government offices, services and associated institutional buildings.
    - 1.2. Supporting the location of leisure, education, arts and cultural activities within the Downtown Core Area to both encourage greater local use and increase tourism and investment.
    - 1.3. Reinforcing the role of a transportation gateway and working Harbour as an essential part of Victoria's economic base.
    - 1.4. Developing a long-term retail strategy to confirm the economic importance of retail activity within the Downtown Core Area.
    - 1.5. Supporting the redevelopment of the Rock Bay District as a key employment centre.
    - 1.6. Providing a broad range of easy to access community services and public amenities, such as transit, pedestrian and cycle paths, retail, health and medical services, childcare facilities, playgrounds, schools and recreational facilities.
2. To contribute to the Downtown Core Area's rich sense of place by:
    - 2.1. Creating memorable streets and places that serve both to attract people and to benefit the community.
    - 2.2. Celebrating Victoria's architectural and cultural heritage at every opportunity.
    - 2.3. Ensuring that new development complements both the existing architecture and natural environment of the Downtown Core Area.
    - 2.4. Incorporating and linking public amenity spaces, such as open spaces, parks, plazas, pathways and the waterfront, throughout the Downtown Core Area.
3. To establish walking, cycling and public transit as the preferred modes of travel within the Downtown Core Area by:
    - 3.1. Establishing complementary land use and transportation policies, initiatives and infrastructure.
    - 3.2. Using Greenways to create attractive and safe transit/walking links throughout the Downtown Core Area.
    - 3.3. Providing safe and direct walking connections throughout the Downtown Core Area that also link public spaces, such as parks, plazas, open spaces and the waterfront.
    - 3.4. Concentrating higher density and transit-supportive new development within walking distance of the Douglas Street transit corridor.
4. To ensure excellence in building types and design within the Downtown Core Area by:
    - 4.1. Encouraging high quality architecture and diversity in the design of buildings and surrounding public areas.
    - 4.2. Recognizing historic buildings for their value and benefit to the Downtown Core Area, and encouraging their rehabilitation, seismic upgrading and integration with new development.
    - 4.3. Supporting context-sensitive developments that complement the existing Downtown Core Area through siting, orientation, massing, height, setbacks, materials and landscaping.
5. To offer a variety of housing options within the Downtown Core Area by:
    - 5.1. Developing diverse housing types and sizes to attract both individuals and families, including smaller units as well as rowhouses, townhouses and stacked townhouses.
    - 5.2. Continuing to encourage the conversion of upper storeys of Downtown heritage buildings to residential use with the financial incentives available through the City's Heritage Tax Incentive Program, and considering the idea of broadening the program's base within the Downtown Core Area.
    - 5.3. Supporting new residential development that integrates a blend of market and non-market housing.

6. To ensure the success of the Downtown Core Area Plan by:
   - 6.1. Monitoring, reviewing and updating the Downtown Core Area Plan and related policies and regulations in response to changing social, economic and physical conditions.
   - 6.2. Maintaining policy alignment between the Downtown Core Area Plan and all other related City policies, plans and regulations.
7. To exemplify environmental stewardship and ensure the Downtown Core Area evolves into an environmental showcase for the built, natural and social environments by:
   - 7.1. Encouraging new development and existing development to incorporate the use of green building technology, infrastructure and environmental design.
   - 7.2. Developing and integrating green building criteria and objectives into the approval process for both public and private development.
   - 7.3. Supporting public and private initiatives that result in the remediation of brownfield sites, especially along the Harbour.
   - 7.4. Wherever appropriate, encouraging the re-use and retrofit of existing buildings.

ASSUMPTIONS

The Downtown Core Area Plan assumes that:

1. Annual population growth within the Downtown Core Area will continue to support a projected increase of approximately 10,000 people over the next 30 years.
2. The Regional Growth Strategy will continue to support attaining a 40 per cent modal share of non-auto modes of transportation for trips to and within the Metropolitan Core by 2026.
3. The Downtown Core Area will continue to function as the largest employment centre in the region.
4. The City, BC Transit and the Province will continue to enhance and support transit services along Douglas Street through transit-supportive land use policies, activities and infrastructure.
5. The City will use the Plan to identify and prioritize capital projects within the Downtown Core Area as part of its financial planning, budgeting and departmental work programs.
6. The City will initiate amendments to development standards, policies, processes and plans (including local area plans, the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw*, Special Policy Areas and Design Guidelines) if required to implement and further refine the policies of the Downtown Core Area Plan.
7. The City will maintain consistency between the Downtown Core Area Plan and other policies and regulations to reflect the vision and goals of the Downtown Core Area Plan.
8. The Downtown Core Area will serve as the bulk of the Metropolitan Core in both the *Regional Growth Strategy* and the *Official Community Plan.*
9. The City will develop an Implementation Strategy/Action Plan for the Downtown Core Area Plan. The strategy will include a review of local development standards as well as a formal process to monitor and amend the Plan. It will also be used to identify requirements for developing the City's capital budget and departmental work programs.
10. The City will consider public-private partnerships as well as financial and regulatory tools such as development cost charges, density bonusing and tax incentives to help realize the Downtown Core Area Plan's vision and goals.

The City will review and re-evaluate the Plan if these Assumptions change significantly over time.

ORGANIZATION

The Downtown Core Area Plan is divided into ten sections and appendices. Each section including this Introduction, deal with a different aspect of the Plan and each provide both area-wide and District-specific policies and actions where applicable.

URBAN STRUCTURE

Explains the key elements of urban structure (space, movement and building form) and establishes the importance of ensuring any future physical improvements to the urban structure serve to enhance and improve the Downtown Core Area's livability and quality of life.

DISTRICTS

Describes the five Districts of the Downtown Core Area and provides policies and actions to not only preserve each District's unique character, but also to provide opportunities for improvement.

DENSITY

Introduces a framework for guiding density throughout the Downtown Core Area that balances the need for increased density in some areas with the need to maintain livable communities. Also explains a new density bonus system, intended to support the provision of key public amenities, affordable housing, and provide financial support for the conservation of heritage properties.

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

Describes the need for sustainable transportation and mobility systems that give priority to pedestrians, cyclists and transit, and how those systems can be achieved.

URBAN DESIGN

Explains the principles of successful urban design and how they should be applied to the Downtown Core Area's skyline, built forms, parks and open space and public realm.

HERITAGE

Details the presence and reinforces the value and importance of heritage properties in the Downtown Core Area.

ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY

Provides a policy framework for addressing various components of sustainability, including the natural environment, green buildings and infrastructure, and the transformation of the Rock Bay District into a key employment centre that incorporates sustainable planning, development and infrastructure.

COMMUNITY VITALITY

Addresses the importance of economic vitality, housing, public amenities, arts and culture, recreation, entertainment, special events and social services in building truly complete communities.

IMPLEMENTATION

Describes how the City will implement the physical improvements and the heritage, cultural, transportation and environmental initiatives, policies and actions described in this Plan.

APPENDICES

Include detailed guidelines and supporting information for specific aspects of the Downtown Core Area – such as views, public realm improvements, and building design – that support the vision, goals, policies and actions contained in this Plan.

urban structure 2

INTRODUCTION

Urban structure is comprised of three elements:

1. **Space** is the underlying topography, the natural features and landscape of an area. Space influences the look and character of the districts and neighbourhoods, the parks and open spaces that exist upon the land base.
2. **Movement** is the system of roads, sidewalks, cycling lanes and pathways as well as the transportation infrastructure and services they accommodate.
3. **Building form** is the range of building types, as defined by their physical scale, mass, orientation and height, within an area. The interplay between building forms is what creates spaces, defines streets and influences a city's skyline. (SEE ILLUSTRATION 1 – URBAN STRUCTURE ELEMENTS)

The urban structure provides the foundation for the detailed design and planning of each element. Urban structure elements provide a framework to guide and influence the development of individual buildings, spaces or infrastructure. This Plan provides policies to ensure that the urban structure is well-planned and is able to provide the foundation for a livable urban community – a community that provides:

- A range of housing options;
- Services that meet people's daily needs;
- Transportation systems that connect neighbourhoods, parks and open spaces, other areas of the city and the broader region; and
- High quality and well-maintained public realm and private realm.

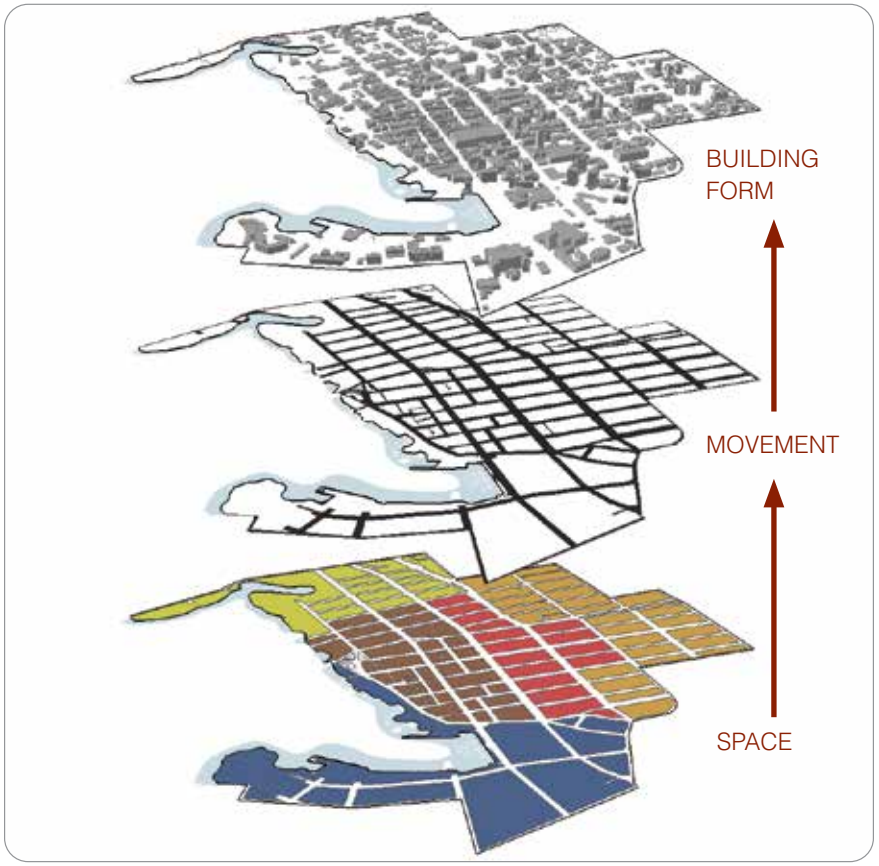


Illustration 1: Urban Structure Elements

SPACE

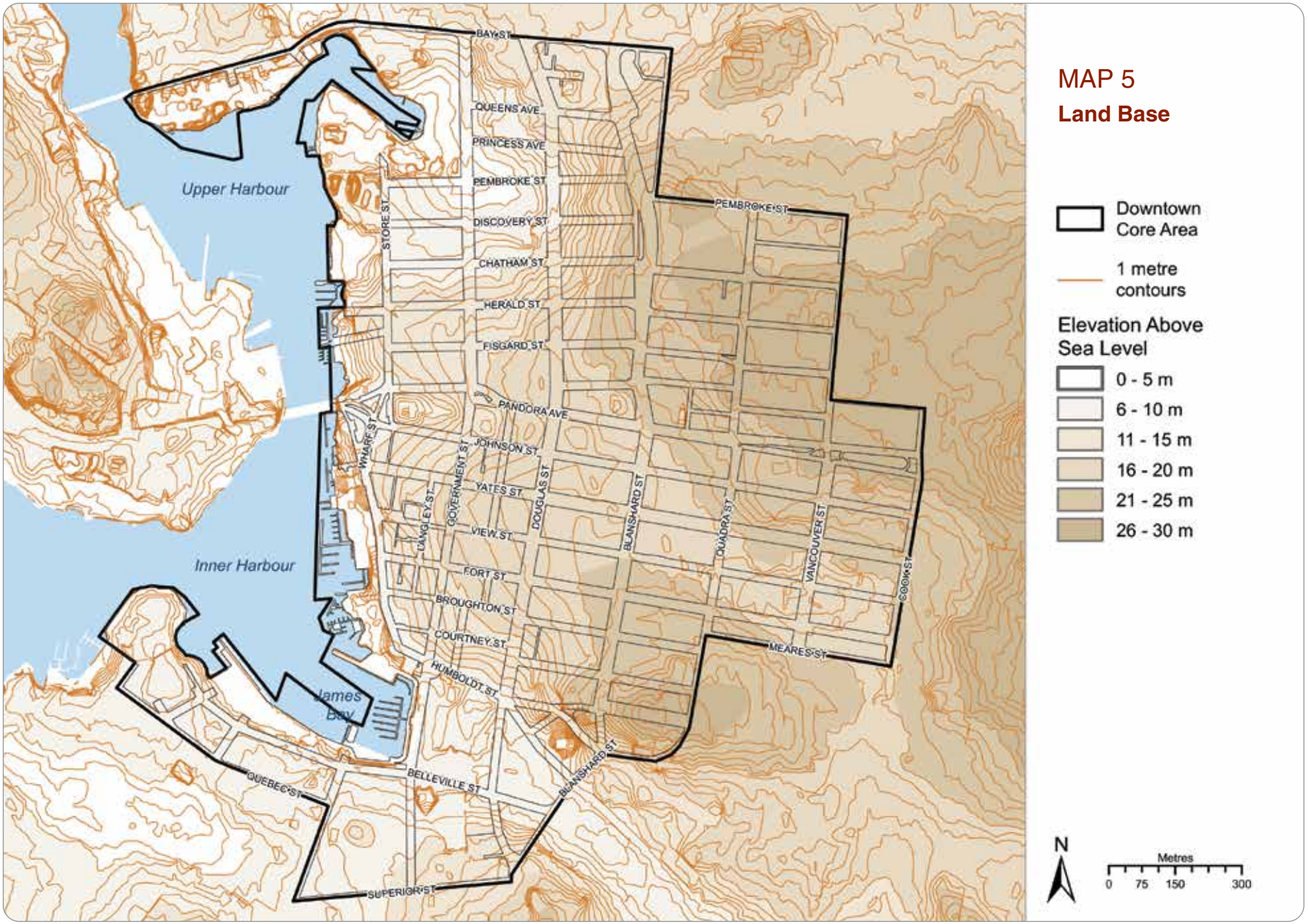
The Downtown Core Area is compact and walkable, covering approximately 188 hectares (465 acres). It gradually rises in elevation from the Inner Harbour towards Douglas Street and Blanshard Street; however, much of the central area is relatively level, with two lower basins around Rock Bay to the north and James Bay to the south. (SEE MAP 5: LAND BASE)

The neighbourhoods in the Downtown Core Area are predominantly mixed use, containing a range of commercial, institutional, residential, and industrial land uses and activities. Some neighbourhoods also contain special character areas that have design, architectural or historic significance. (SEE MAP 3: PLAN BOUNDARY AND NEIGHBOURHOODS)

The Downtown Core Area is also defined by a variety of unique public parks and open spaces ranging from the intimate scale of Bastion Square to the large scale openness of the front lawn of the Parliament Building which serves as both a public open space and a place-defining characteristic of the Inner Harbour District. The Harbour Pathway (once complete) will provide a linear form of open space connecting much of the land along the Harbour. (SEE MAP 6: EXISTING PARKS AND OPEN SPACE)

MOVEMENT

Primary downtown streets from a transportation perspective include Douglas Street, Blanshard Street, Bay Street, Cook Street and the portion of Quadra Street located north of Johnson Street. These streets provide key links between the Downtown Core Area and other surrounding areas of the city and the region. (SEE MAP 7: EXISTING MOVEMENT SYSTEMS)


MAP 5
Land Base
Downtown Core Area
1 metre contours
Elevation Above Sea Level
0 - 5 m
6 - 10 m
11 - 15 m
16 - 20 m
21 - 25 m
26 - 30 m
Upper Harbour
Inner Harbour
James Bay
BAY ST
QUEENS AVE
PRINCESS AVE
PEMBROKE ST
DISCOVERY ST
CHATHAM ST
HERALD ST
FISGARD ST
PANDORA AVE
JOHNSON ST
YATES ST
VIEW ST
FORT ST
BROUGHTON ST
COURTNEY ST
HUMBOLDT ST
BELLEVILLE ST
SUPERIOR ST
QUEBEC ST
STORE ST
WHARF ST
DANGLEY ST
GOVERNMENT ST
DOUGLAS ST
BLANSHARD ST
QUADRA ST
VANCOUVER ST
COOK ST
MEARES ST
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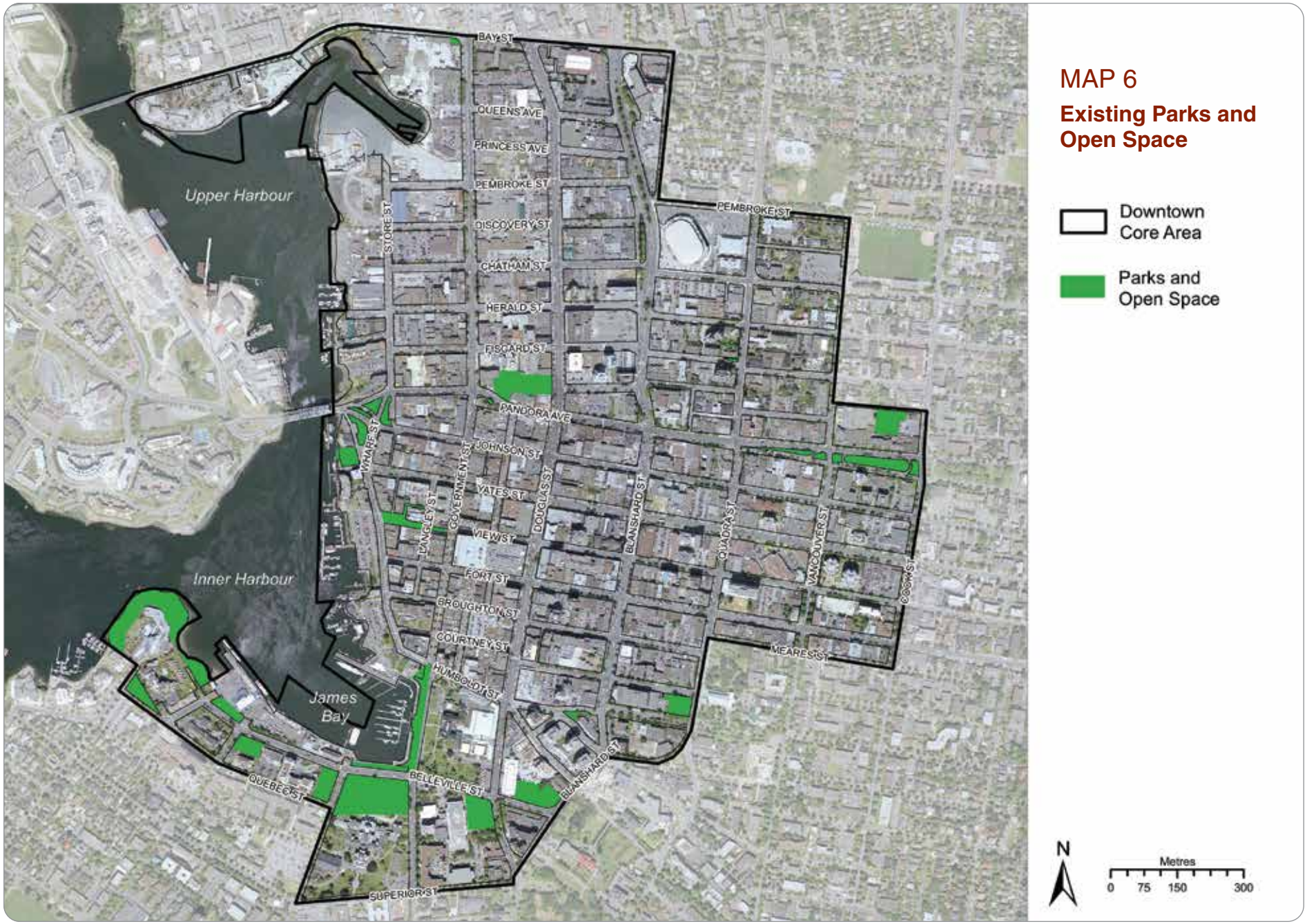
MAP 6
Existing Parks and Open Space
Downtown Core Area
Parks and Open Space
Upper Harbour
Inner Harbour
James Bay
BAY ST
QUEENS AVE
PRINCESS AVE
PEMBROKE ST
DISCOVERY ST
CHATHAM ST
HERALD ST
FISGARD ST
PANDORA AVE
JOHNSON ST
YATES ST
VIEW ST
FORT ST
BROUGHTON ST
COURTNEY ST
HUMBOLDT ST
BELLEVILLE ST
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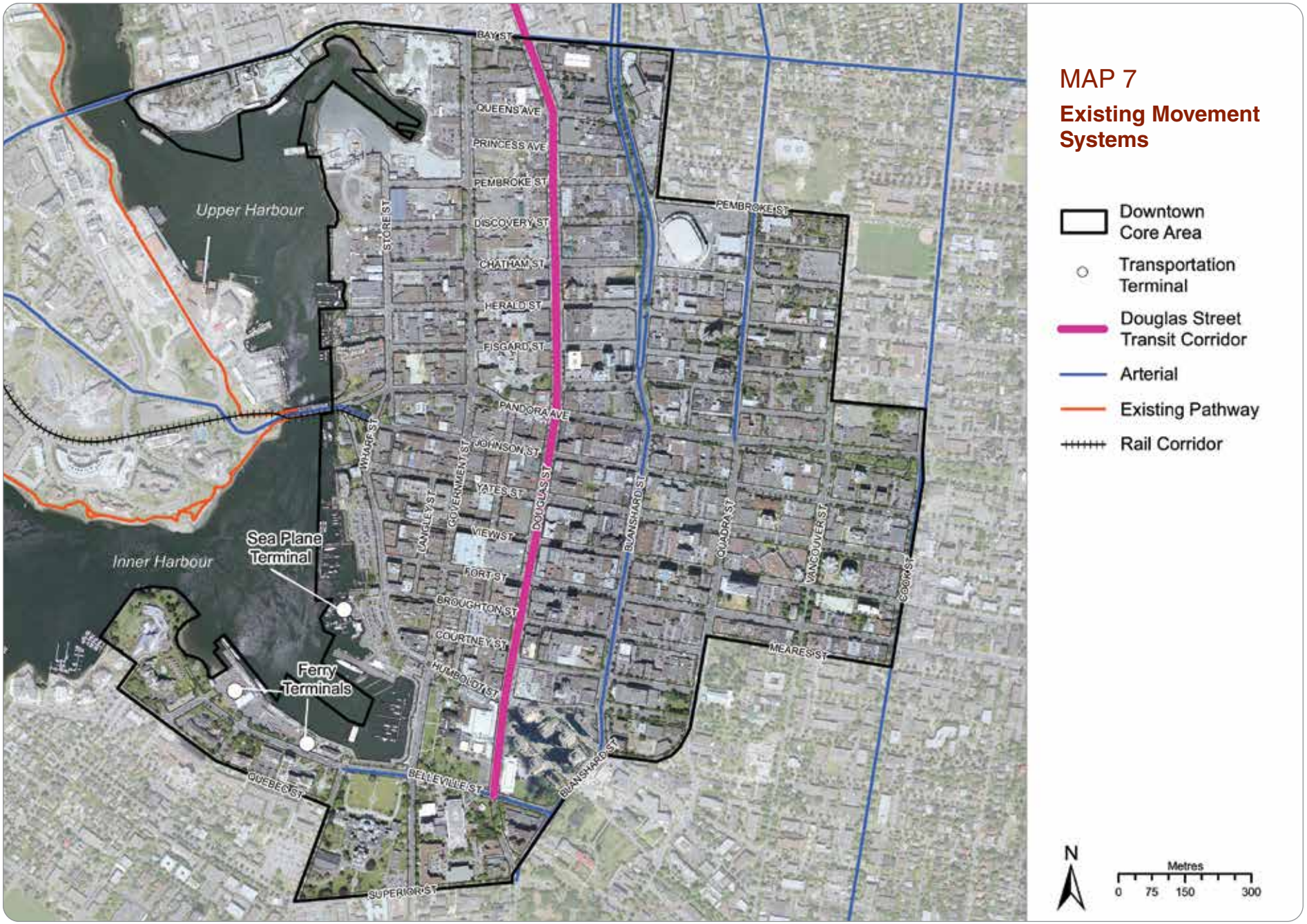

MAP 7
Existing Movement Systems
Downtown Core Area
Transportation Terminal
Douglas Street Transit Corridor
Arterial
Existing Pathway
Rail Corridor
N
Metres
0 75 150 300
Upper Harbour
Inner Harbour
Sea Plane Terminal
Ferry Terminals
BAY ST
QUEENS AVE
PRINCESS AVE
PEMBROKE ST
DISCOVERY ST
CHATHAM ST
HERALD ST
FISGARD ST
PANDORA AVE
JOHNSON ST
YATES ST
VIEW ST
FORT ST
BROUGHTON ST
COURTNEY ST
HUMBOLDT ST
BELLEVILLE ST
QUEBEC ST
SUPERIOR ST
STORE ST
WHARF ST
LANGLEY ST
GOVERNMENT ST
DOUGLAS ST
BLANSHARD ST
QUADRA ST
VANCOUVER ST
COOK ST
MEARES ST

BUILDING FORM

The Downtown Core Area's distinctive urban form rises steadily eastward from the Inner Harbour and the blend of low scale, historic streetscapes and rehabilitated heritage buildings to a concentration of newer, higher density commercial and residential buildings in the Central Business District and in the Residential Mixed-Use District. This gradual rise in building form helps to shape the city's undulating skyline. (SEE ILLUSTRATION 2: BUILDING FORM)

Illustration 2: Building Form

URBAN STRUCTURE – OBJECTIVES

To ensure the Downtown Core Area continues to be a livable urban community while it grows significantly over the next 30 years, the urban structure policies and actions seek to achieve the following objectives:

1. That the physical elements that define space, movement and building form serve to attract and retain residents, visitors and businesses.
2. That existing neighbourhoods and special character areas are recognized as intrinsic components of each District.
3. That support is provided to encourage the development of a range of building forms that respect and reflect the character of the Downtown Core Area and its neighbourhoods.
4. That the public realm of the Downtown Core Area is enhanced by the presence of active commercial uses, such as restaurants, retail stores and entertainment facilities.
5. That taller building forms are generally concentrated along the Douglas Street/Blanshard Street corridor and along the portion of Yates Street located between Douglas Street and Cook Street, as well as a blend of mid-rise and high-rise buildings in both the Rock Bay District and the Residential Mixed-Use District.
6. That the historic context of the Historical Commercial District is protected.
7. That new parks and open spaces are developed within the Rock Bay District and the Harris Green neighbourhoods.
8. That priority is given to pedestrians, cyclists and public transit in land use and transportation planning.
9. That transportation networks are integrated with neighbourhoods, provide optimal access and facilitate the delivery of goods and services. (SEE MAP 8: URBAN STRUCTURE CONCEPT)

URBAN STRUCTURE – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

DEVELOPMENT

2.1. Maintain lower scale buildings throughout the Historic Commercial District and along the waterfront to respect the lower scale context of the area, and gradually transition to taller buildings within the Central Business District.

2.2. Concentrate tall buildings between Douglas Street and Blanshard Street as well as along Yates Street east of Douglas Street.

2.3. Encourage the appropriate location of residential and commercial development to support the Downtown Core Area's current mixed-use character.

LAND USE

2.4. Ensure land use and related activities complement and enhance the form and function of each District.

CONNECTIVITY

2.5. Improve and enhance the physical public realm connections and transitions between Districts.

2.6. Improve connections for pedestrians and cyclists to public parks and open space through both design and maintenance.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

2.7. Support the development of additional public parks and open spaces to provide public amenity space within the Rock Bay District and the Residential Mixed-Use District (which includes the Harris Green neighbourhood).

HARBOUR PATHWAY

2.8. Complete the Harbour Pathway, including connections to the regional pathway network and the pedestrian network.

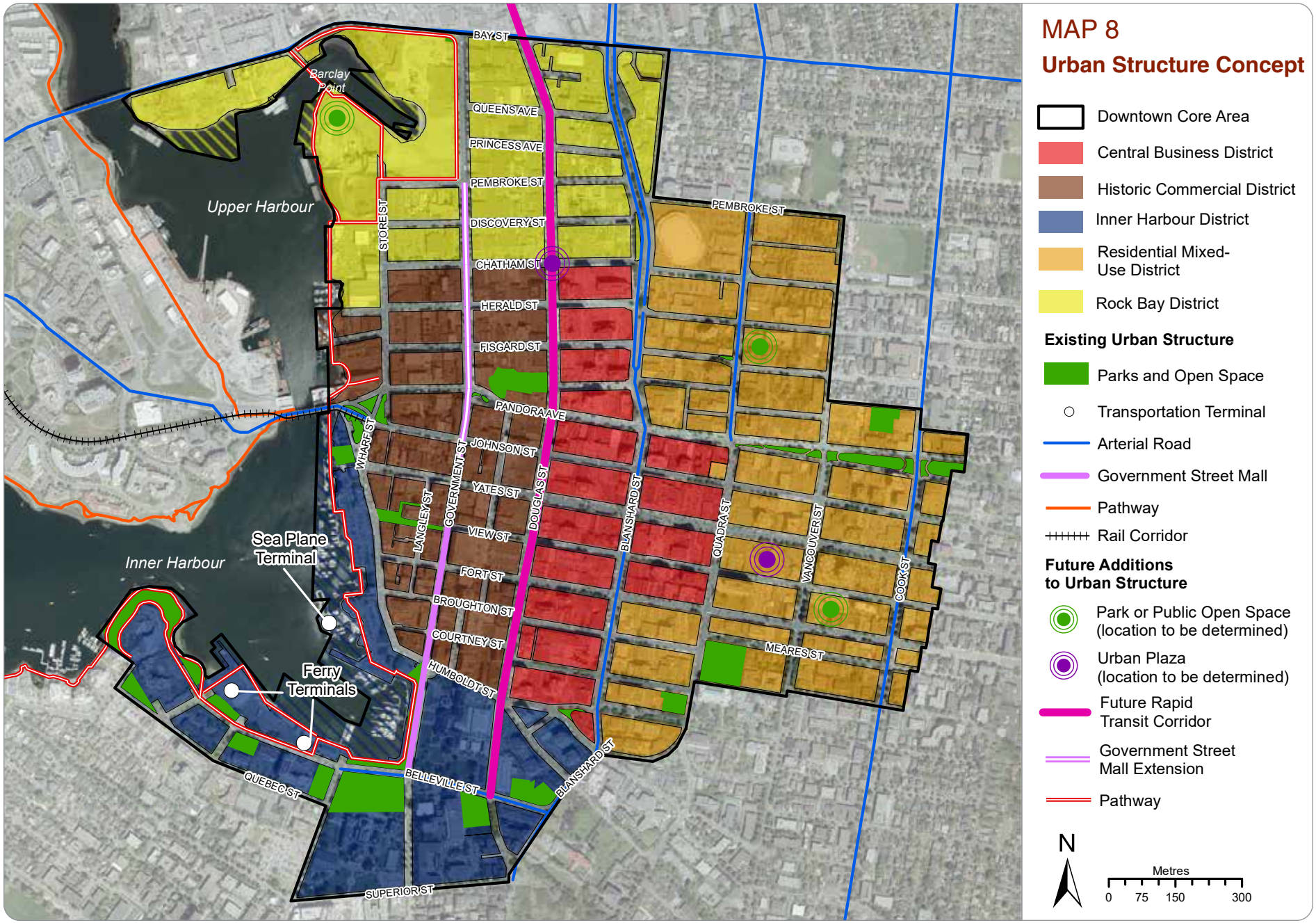
VACANT LANDS

2.9. Support the redevelopment of vacant and under-developed sites, including surface parking lots, with more intensive uses that support the economic function of the Downtown Core Area.

OFFICE DEVELOPMENT

2.10. Support the development and location of higher density commercial buildings within the Central Business District.

Conceptual illustration of the Downtown Core Area including new development as a backdrop to the Historic Commercial District and the integration of the Harbour Pathway.



The Urban Structure Concept provides a summary of how existing and future urban structure elements will be organized within the Downtown Core Area.

districts 3

INTRODUCTION

The Downtown Core Area Plan establishes five Downtown Core Area Districts. As stated in the Introduction, these new Districts do not replace existing neighbourhood names, boundaries or special character areas. Rather, they are a way to recognize that there are unique social, physical and environmental characteristics in certain parts of the Downtown Core Area that cut across neighbourhood boundaries and unite broader geographic areas.

The policies and actions contained in this Section are intended to support each District's current function and general character, while also improving each District's public realm, parks and open spaces, infrastructure, building forms and transportation networks.

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

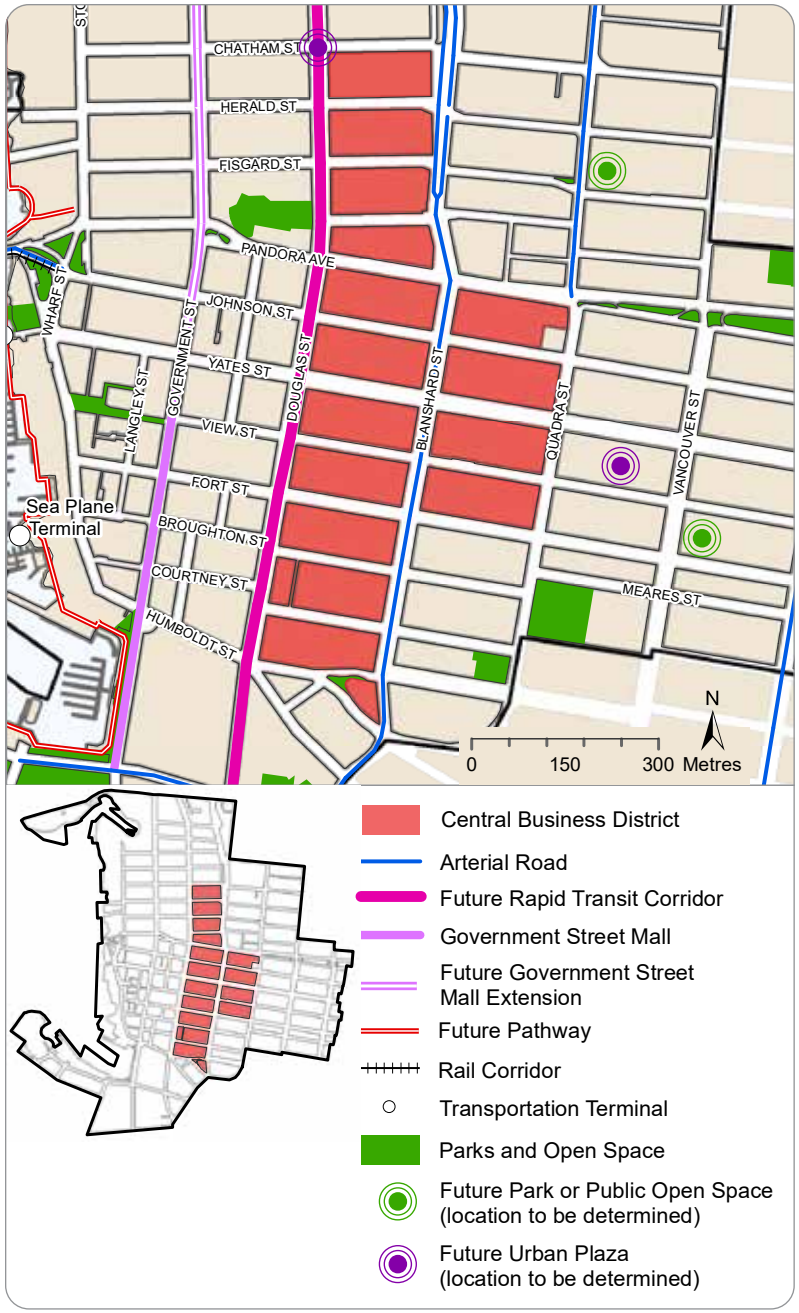
The Central Business District (CBD) is approximately 29.5 hectares (73.8 acres) in size and covers a 15-block area. Eleven blocks stretch northward from Burdett Avenue to Caledonia Avenue between Douglas Street and Blanshard Street; and four blocks are located between Blanshard Street and Quadra Street, bounded by Pandora Avenue to the north and Fort Street to the south. The CBD borders the Residential Mixed-Use District to the east, the Historic Commercial District to the west, the Rock Bay District to the north and the Inner Harbour District to the south. (SEE MAP 9: CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT)

The CBD is the main employment centre for Victoria and the Region as a whole. Its concentration of higher density office buildings helps to attract and retain a range of supporting commercial uses – such as restaurants, cafés, convenience stores, office supply stores, retail stores, hair salons and other personal service businesses, as well as major banks and other financial institutions – to provide the daily amenities and services required by the businesses, employees and residents within the CBD. Hotels also play a significant commercial role in the CBD, supported by the ferry, sea plane, bus and train terminals that are located within walking distance of the CBD.

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT – OBJECTIVES

The policies and actions for the Central Business District that are contained in this Plan collectively address the following objectives:

1. That the CBD remains economically healthy, is able to adapt to changing economic and market conditions and reinforces its long-term function as the primary employment centre for the city and the region.
2. That the CBD is able to provide a safe and welcoming environment, rich with amenities for workers, residents and visitors alike.
3. That the CBD is able to provide an adequate land base to primarily accommodate commercial and office development while it grows over the next 30 years.
4. That new development respects the scale, character and function of the CBD.



Map 9: Central Business District

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

LAND USE

3.1. Provide zoning within the CBD to accommodate a strong concentration of commercial employment uses, along with such complementary uses as multi-residential development, hotels, restaurants, public institutions, personal service businesses and retail stores.

ECONOMIC RESILIENCY

3.2. Support new development that clearly reinforces and enhances the position of the CBD as the primary employment, commercial and cultural centre for the city and the region.

3.3. Ensure that the City of Victoria Economic Development Strategy includes policies and strategies that are focused on improving the economic resiliency of the CBD.

HIGH-DENSITY DEVELOPMENT

3.4. Support high density commercial buildings within the CBD to make efficient use of infrastructure and to maintain compact building footprints.

3.5. Residential development should be restricted to a maximum density of 3:1 FSR (Floor Space Ratio) within the CBD to reinforce the CBD's function as an employment centre.

3.6. Focus higher density development along the Douglas Street/ Blanshard Street corridor and along Yates Street to support the density policies of this Plan.

PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED ENVIRONMENT

3.7. Support and encourage pedestrian activity within the CBD by encouraging the provision of active commercial street-level uses where appropriate, and well-designed public realm improvements.

3.8. Design new developments within the CBD to include ground floor space that is capable of accommodating commercial uses.

3.9. Refer to the *Downtown Public Realm Plan & Streetscape Standards* to guide future streetscape improvements.

3.10. Provide well-designed public realm services and amenities to support commercial and residential development.

CONNECTIVITY

3.11. Improve travel routes between the CBD and surrounding Districts by developing well-designed, clearly marked and safe pedestrian, cycling and transit networks.

3.12. Locate through-block walkways to provide strategic access through longer city blocks and meaningful connections with the Pedestrian Network as illustrated in Map 16. (SEE SECTION 5: TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY)

TRANSIT SUPPORT

3.13. Support the use of transit by encouraging the location of high density transit-supportive uses such as commercial and residential mixed-use development within the Douglas Street/Blanshard Street corridor and along Yates Street.

3.14. Support the use of transit by encouraging street-level retail, restaurants, cafés, grocery stores, convenience stores and personal service businesses in new development along Douglas Street and Yates Street.

NEW DEVELOPMENT

3.15. Amend the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* to provide development standards for new commercial, residential and office developments that reflect the scale, density and context of the CBD.

3.16. Ensure the sensitive integration of new development with existing heritage properties along the 700 block of Yates Street and the 700 and 800 blocks of Fort Street.

FORT STREET

3.17. Improve the physical condition of the public realm along Fort Street through public and private streetscape enhancements that encourage pedestrian activity and support retail.

EDGE CONDITION

3.18. Ensure that designs for new buildings located along the edges of the CBD consider scale, orientation, setbacks, mass and building height to provide sensitive transitions to surrounding Districts.

PARKING

3.19. Provide on-site parking for new developments as underground structured parking.

3.20. Consider opportunities to integrate publicly accessible short-term parking as part of new commercial developments where underground structured parking is provided on site.

3.21. Consider opportunities to increase the provision of publicly accessible short-term parking in order to meet the objectives of the City of Victoria *Parking Strategy.*

HISTORIC COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

The Historic Commercial District (HCD) is approximately 23 hectares (57 acres) in size, and is bounded by Wharf Street and the waterfront on the west, Douglas Street on the east, Chatham Street on the north and Humboldt Street on the south. (SEE MAP 10: HISTORIC COMMERCIAL DISTRICT)

The HCD forms the primary hub for retail, entertainment and tourism within the Downtown Core Area. The concentration of rehabilitated heritage buildings and attractive streetscapes also serves to attract other uses and activities including offices, hotels, personal service businesses and arts and culture. The HCD includes the Old Town Area, a portion of the waterfront north of the Johnson Street Bridge and Chinatown – which Parks Canada named as a National Historic Site in 2002 to commemorate its status as Canada's oldest intact and continuously active Chinatown. The HCD also contains a range of other character areas including Bastion Square, which is the oldest part of the city and original site of the Hudson's Bay Fort Victoria in 1858, as well as Trounce Alley, Broad Street, Market Square and Centennial Square. One of the most prominent features in the HCD is the Government Street Mall, which currently stretches northward from Belleville Street to Yates Street and connects the Inner Harbour with the Old Town Area. Government Street Mall is characterized by its wide sidewalks and attractive streetscaping that complements the surrounding historic buildings and encourages pedestrian and cycling activity, while also accommodating general purpose vehicular traffic and commercial vehicles that provide deliveries and services to the surrounding businesses. The pedestrian-oriented design of the Government Street Mall along with the grid pattern of the local street network serves to maintain reduced speed levels for vehicles.

The HCD is characterized by a "saw-tooth" streetscape that generally rises and falls in height between one and five storeys, with articulated brick and stone facades, buildings located up to the public sidewalk and continuous street-level storefronts.

Ongoing revitalization efforts in the HCD over the past two decades have resulted in the rehabilitation of approximately 85 heritage buildings, upgrades to historic commercial storefronts, and a number of improvements to the public realm through streetscaping, public art and special events programming. These upgrades and improvements have drawn boutique hotels, specialty retail stores, cafés and restaurants to the area and with the help of the Bay Centre, a regional-scale shopping centre on Douglas Street with over 39,000 m² (420,000 ft²) of retail space – cemented the HCD's place as a destination for tourism, shopping and entertainment.

Map 10: Historic Commercial District

HISTORIC COMMERCIAL DISTRICT – OBJECTIVES

The policies and actions for the Historic Commercial District that are contained in this Plan collectively address the following objectives:

1. That the placemaking character of the HCD is retained and continues to contribute to Victoria's competitive advantage as a destination for retail, entertainment and tourism.
2. That programs, strategies and public and private initiatives for the revitalization of the HCD are maintained and supported.
3. That the HCD becomes a model for sensitive integration of new infill development and public realm improvements into the historic environment.
4. That the HCD is able to attract and accommodate growth in the tourism, retail, entertainment sectors.
5. That the compact, diverse, low-scale and small-lot character of the HCD is retained.
6. That the local population base is increased through the integration of residential dwellings on the upper storeys of existing buildings.

HISTORIC COMMERCIAL DISTRICT – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

LAND USE

3.22. Provide zoning within the HCD that accommodates a diverse range of active commercial uses such as retail stores, cafés and restaurants, along with complementary uses such as multi-residential development, hotels, public institutions, tourist services and personal service businesses.

ECONOMIC RESILIENCY

3.23. Ensure that economic development initiatives undertaken by the City of Victoria reinforce the function and character of the HCD as a destination for retail shopping, entertainment and tourism.

COMMERCIAL AND RETAIL ACTIVITY

3.24. Locate active commercial uses such as retail stores, cafés, restaurants and other tourism and entertainment-related uses at the street level to encourage increased pedestrian activity and complement the public realm.

3.25. In addition to active commercial uses, consider the location of office use at the street level only where they are located directly adjacent to and have direct access to a lane, alley or through-block walkway.

CENTENNIAL SQUARE

3.26. Maintain Centennial Square as a hub for civic activity and special events.

3.27. Ensure that any design or redevelopment initiatives for Centennial Square result in a more inviting, active and functional civic gathering space.

3.28. Give priority to public realm improvements that enhance connectivity between Centennial Square and surrounding streets.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

3.29. Maintain design guidelines and development standards that support rehabilitation of existing heritage buildings and public realm improvements, and that ensure new development is integrated sensitively into the historic context of the HCD.

3.30. Continue to support policies, regulations and programs to protect heritage buildings and encourage their rehabilitation, seismic upgrade and re-use.

3.31. Retain the HCD's current compact, diverse, low-scale and small-lot character.

3.32. Explore the feasibility of extending the term length of the Heritage Tax Incentive Program up to 15 years to encourage the further rehabilitation and seismic upgrading of existing heritage buildings.

RESIDENTIAL USES

3.33. Locate residential dwellings on the upper storeys to retain and accommodate more active commercial uses at the street level, except where residential dwellings are located directly adjacent to, and have direct access to a lane, alley or through-block walkway.

PUBLIC REALM

3.34. Support and implement public realm improvements that are sensitive to the historic character of the HCD and which reflect the urban design guidelines of this Plan.

3.35. Improve public wayfinding in the HCD through streetscape improvements that have a cohesive and consistent design.

CONNECTIVITY

3.36. Establish strong Pedestrian and Cycling Networks through the area, with a priority on designated Greenways. (SEE SECTION 5: TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY)

GOVERNMENT STREET

3.37. Develop and maintain Government Street as a Pedestrian Priority Street as described in Appendix 3.

3.38. Extend the retail and pedestrian-oriented character of Government Street northward from Yates Street to Pembroke Street through streetscaping and public realm improvements and appropriate land use to provide an attractive and lively environment that connects the Inner Harbour District through the Historic Commercial District to the Rock Bay District.

PARKING

3.39. Continue to support the provision of short-term on-street parking to help maintain the HCD as a focus for active commercial uses including retailing and entertainment.

3.40. Ensure that the provision of long-term parking gives consideration to the economic function of the HCD, in balance with the Downtown Core Area Plan's transportation and mobility objectives and policies (SEE SECTION 5: TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY).

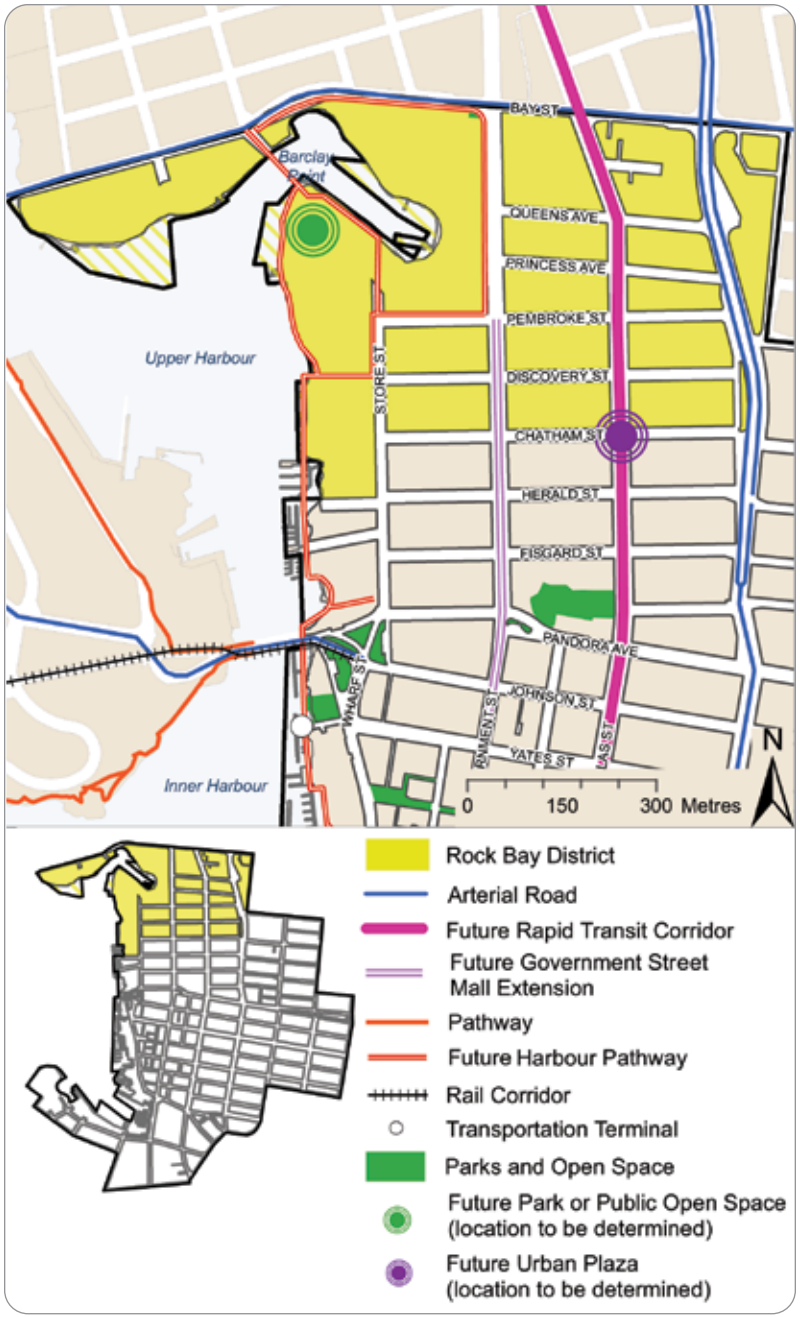
ROCK BAY DISTRICT

The Rock Bay District (RBD) is approximately 44 hectares (110 acres) in size and encompasses the northern part of the Downtown Core Area, including the waterfront area that runs from Herald Street to the Point Ellice (Bay Street) Bridge. It forms part of the Burnside neighbourhood, as far east as Dowler Place and Blanshard Street. (SEE MAP 11: ROCK BAY DISTRICT)

The RBD hosts both marine and non-marine related industrial and industrial-support activities along the waterfront and a blend of other industrial and commercial uses throughout the rest of the District in a mixture of older industrial and commercial buildings, including several heritage buildings. It has limited residential development located primarily between Douglas Street and Blanshard Street.

The District's history as an industrial area, in combination with limited redevelopment, has resulted in minimal upgrading to infrastructure and streetscaping which is evident through overhead utility wires and cables, discontinuous public sidewalks, minimal landscaping along building frontages and streets, limited on-street parking, undefined or informal parking areas between the street and private buildings, minimal pedestrian lighting and limited public park/open space.

The Rock Bay District, unlike the other Districts within the Downtown Core Area, has a significant amount of underdeveloped or vacant land that could accommodate future office, high-tech industries, and limited residential development in addition to its current industrial and commercial development. In combination, the future planning for this area will focus on transforming and strengthening the RBD as a key employment centre for Victoria.



Map 11: Rock Bay District

ROCK BAY DISTRICT – OBJECTIVES

The policies and actions for the Rock Bay District that are contained in this Plan collectively address the following objectives:

1. To guide the transformation of the RBD into a key employment centre.
2. To improve the environmental conditions of the RBD through the integration of green and innovative infrastructure, site planning, uses and building technology.
3. To attract and maintain a range of commercial and light industrial businesses to locate within the RBD in order to provide a more diversified and resilient employment base.
4. To develop an employment-based environment that attracts new and emergent employment sectors such as high-tech and other related businesses.
5. To accommodate high density residential and commercial development within the Douglas Street/Blanshard Street Corridor.
6. To integrate a strong public transit network that supports the location of employment uses and activities.
7. To provide new public parks or open spaces in and around RDB for the benefit of residents, workers and visitors alike.
8. To maintain and strengthen the economic function of the working Harbour within the Rock Bay District.

ROCK BAY DISTRICT – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

ROCK BAY LOCAL AREA PLAN

3.41. Develop a detailed local area plan for the Rock Bay District that provides greater detail and direction on land use distribution, employment composition, residential development, urban design, transportation mobility, density bonus and amenities, public realm improvements, economic development, green infrastructure, and zoning requirements.

3.42. Consider and evaluate new development and public realm improvements based on the policies described in this Plan until such time as a local area plan is completed for the Rock Bay District.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

3.43. Support the redevelopment of the RBD as an employment-focused area that provides a balance of industrial support services, light industrial, high-tech, with an accompanying balance of commercial and limited residential development.

3.44. Explore the use of financial tools and programs such as density bonusing in order to encourage and support the development of the Rock Bay District as an employment-focused area.

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA

3.45. Through the *Official Community Plan*, include portions of the Rock Bay District within a Development Permit Area to implement the policies and design guidelines of this Plan.

3.46. Ensure zoning for waterfront properties includes development standards and design guidelines to mitigate the impact of industrial operations on the local marine environment.

3.47. Continue to support the location of marine-dependent industrial uses and activities along the waterfront portion of the RBD.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

3.48. Locate residential and residential mixed-use development primarily between Douglas Street and Blanshard Street.

3.49. Ensure that residential development is located, designed and sited to mitigate any potentially negative effects on the general operation and function of adjacent employment activities.

MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

3.50. Provide active street-level commercial uses along Government Street and Douglas Street.

TRANSIT SUPPORT

3.51. Support the location of higher density residential and commercial buildings along Douglas Street to enhance Douglas Street as the primary transit corridor.

CONNECTIVITY

3.52. Ensure that all streets and sidewalks provide clear connections for pedestrians to travel between the RBD and the surrounding Districts.

3.53. Provide direct, safe, well-designed and strategically located pedestrian and cycling connections across Government Street and Douglas Street as well as to key destinations including parks, open spaces and recreational facilities.

INFRASTRUCTURE

3.54. Support upgrading of infrastructure services in the RBD as new development occurs to increase long-term capacity.

3.55. Ensure that infrastructure upgrades support the City of Victoria *Infrastructure Master Plan* and consider the integration of green infrastructure, where appropriate.

3.56. Support the use of best management practices to improve the quality and volume of stormwater discharge into the local marine environment.

EDGE CONDITIONS

3.57. Ensure that designs for new buildings located along the edges of the RBD consider scale, orientation, setbacks, massing and building height to provide sensitive transitions to surrounding neighbourhoods and Districts.

WATERFRONT

3.58. Support the development of a long-range detailed master plan for the redevelopment of the Transport Canada/BC Hydro site in conjunction with ongoing remediation efforts.

3.59. Incorporate direct public pedestrian access to the Harbour as part of the site design for new development or redevelopment along the waterfront, except where it may negatively impact the general operation and function of adjacent employment activities that are dependent on direct marine access.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

3.60. Support the development of a waterfront community park generally located near Barclay Point that provides direct pedestrian and cycling connections with the Harbour Pathway.

3.61. Ensure parks and open spaces are well-designed, attractive, functional and integrated with the pedestrian network.

3.62. Integrate new parks and open space with the completed Harbour Pathway and with Greenways as identified in the City of Victoria *Greenways Plan*.

3.63. Ensure all new public parks and open spaces meet the urban design objectives of this Plan.

3.64. Develop specific location and design details for new public parks and open spaces as part of the implementation of the Downtown Core Area Plan.

HERITAGE

3.65. Undertake an inventory and evaluation of remaining historic industrial properties in the RBD as potential additions to the Heritage Register.

3.66. Support the rehabilitation and re-use of the RBD's remaining heritage properties to celebrate the District's industrial heritage.

3.67. Consider extending the Heritage Tax Incentive Program (T.I.P.) throughout the RBD and extend its term up to 15 years to support the adaptive re-use of industrial heritage properties.

TRANSPORTATION

3.68. Continue to recognize Douglas Street as a primary transit corridor through transit-supportive land use and development.

3.69. Support higher densities along Douglas/Blanshard Street corridor to improve viability of future rapid transit.

3.70. Support the policies of the City's *Greenways Plan* to develop Chatham, Store, Pembroke, Government and Bay Streets as Shared Greenways, within the context of the RBD as an employment centre.

3.71. Ensure Greenways do not adversely affect the operation or function of industrial and other employment activities in the RBD.

INNER HARBOUR DISTRICT

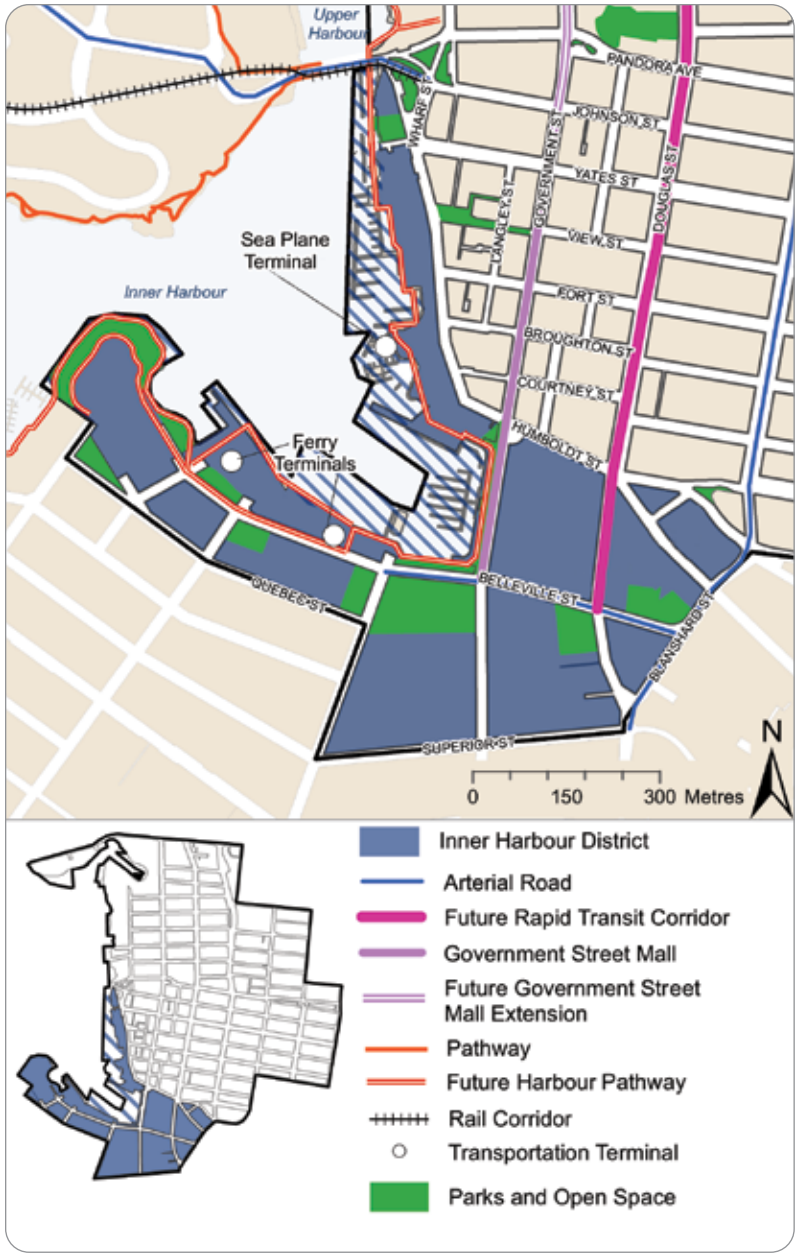
The Inner Harbour District (IHD) is approximately 37 hectares (93 acres) in size and encompasses the waterfront lands located between the Johnson Street Bridge and Laurel Point. The IHD also includes portions of the Legislative Precinct lands in recognition of their proximity to the waterfront and the Inner Harbour. (SEE MAP 12: INNER HARBOUR DISTRICT)

The IHD is recognized both locally and internationally for its picturesque quality, vitality and character. Its waterfront setting attracts tourists, visitors and residents year round, and is noted for its:

- World-class Gateway to Victoria;
- Home to the Provincial Legislature within the historic Parliament Buildings;
- Scenic views across the Harbour;
- Pedestrian-friendly environment and high-quality streetscaping along Government Street and Belleville Street;
- Concentration of historic and modern landmark buildings include the Royal British Columbia Museum, the Provincial Parliament Building and its grounds, the Empress Hotel and the Inner Causeway, which has been designated a Heritage Conservation Area in the City of Victoria's *Official Community Plan*; and
- Prominent public and open spaces where a variety of major public ceremonial, celebratory and special events are held every year.

The IHD is centered on the working Harbour which includes a number of marine-related businesses and activities, including ferry and float plane terminals and mooring for private boats. These marine transportation options, combined with a regional bus depot and a nearby regional railway terminal, make the IHD a major transportation hub and gateway for the city.

The District is also home to a large number of Provincial Government offices and to commercial businesses that serve tourists and Provincial Government workers, such as hotels, retail stores and restaurants, but has limited residential development.



Map 12: Inner Harbour District

INNER HARBOUR DISTRICT – OBJECTIVES

The policies and actions for the Inner Harbour District (IHD) that are contained in this Plan collectively address the following objectives:

1. To reinforce and support the location of Provincial Government offices.
2. To successfully maintain and strengthen the IHD as the focus for tourism, government, culture, heritage, and economic development.
3. To develop and maintain a cohesive, well-designed and vibrant waterfront area.
4. To create a more fluid and seamless extension of the public realm northward toward the Johnson Street bridge and beyond, toward the Rock Bay District.
5. To improve public access to the waterfront.
6. To maintain a working Harbour.

INNER HARBOUR DISTRICT – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

3.72. Support the location and operation of marine-dependent activities along the IHD waterfront.

3.73. Maintain the IHD as a focus for tourism-related activities as well as Provincial Government office and business activities.

3.74. Ensure that new development within the IHD accommodates uses that contribute to the vitality and economic health of the area.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

3.75. Support the protection and rehabilitation of heritage properties and ensure new infill development and improvements to the public realm are sensitively integrated into the historic environment.

3.76. Maintain key public views of the Inner Harbour to meet the urban design objectives of this Plan. (SEE SECTION 6: URBAN DESIGN)

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

3.77. Ensure residential dwellings are part of mixed-use development that includes active commercial uses at the street level.

PUBLIC REALM

3.78. Support public realm improvements that meet the urban design objectives of this Plan.

3.79. Support public realm improvements that enhance the IHD's role as a gateway to the city for people arriving by sea plane, ferry, bus or train.

3.80. Support public realm improvements that result in improved wayfinding and connectivity between the IHD and the rest of the Downtown Core Area.

3.81. Encourage the addition of more active street-level businesses fronting onto Belleville Street as part of the potential redevelopment or upgrading of the Belleville Ferry Terminal.

TRANSPORTATION

3.82. Establish well-defined, safe and efficient Pedestrian and Cycling Networks, with a priority on developing and enhancing designated Greenways.

3.83. Support the continued operation of transportation terminals for ferries, sea planes and bus.

CONNECTIVITY

3.84. Ensure that direct public pedestrian connections are available between the Harbour Pathway and Belleville Street and Wharf Street.

3.85. Support streetscape improvements that result in a more cohesive and uniform appearance along the length of Belleville Street and Government Street, and extending northward through the Historic Commercial District.

3.86. Consider opportunities for improving public access to the water that do not negatively affect the viability and functioning of the working Harbour.

TOURISM

3.87. Support the retention of existing and the development of new, tourist and visitor attractions and facilities in order to continue to support and increase the number of tourists and visitors to the IHD and surrounding area.

3.88. Support the development or establishment of new visitor attractions that serve to enhance the prominence of the IHD as a world-class destination.

3.89. Consider improvements to the wayfinding system to better inform visitors and tourists about key attractions and destinations throughout the Downtown Core Area, including those in the IHD.

SHIP POINT AND WHARF STREET PARKING LOT

3.90. Develop a master plan to guide the redevelopment of the Ship Point and the Wharf Street parking lots in partnership with affected land owners as well as public and private stakeholders.

3.91. Ensure that the terms of reference for the master plan consider the following elements:

- Project Stakeholders;
- Desired uses;
- Building designs;
- Public realm improvements;
- Pedestrian connectivity;
- Public views;
- Public access;
- Development standards;
- Public amenities;
- Economic development; and
- Implementation strategy.

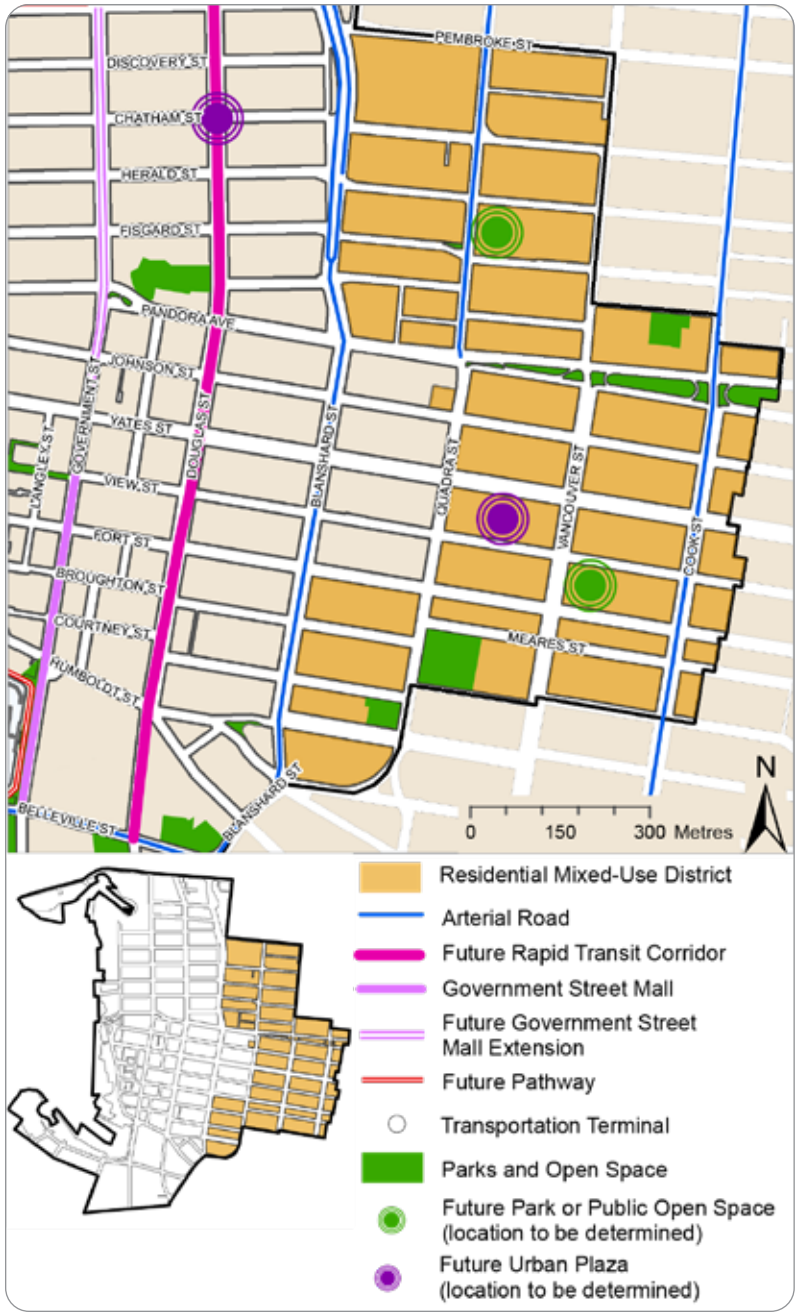
3.92. Ensure that the master plan and redevelopment of the Ship Point and the Wharf Street parking lots support the objectives and policies of this Plan.

RESIDENTIAL MIXED-USE DISTRICT

The Residential Mixed-Use District (RMD) encompasses 53.6 hectares (130 acres), and contains the entire Harris Green neighbourhood along with portions of the North Park neighbourhood and a small portion of the Fairfield neighbourhood. Its general boundaries are Pembroke Street to the north, Meares Street to the south and Cook Street to the east between Meares and Mason Streets, while the small Fairfield portion is bounded by Blanshard Street to the west, Fort Street to the north, Quadra Street to the east and Rupert Terrace to the south. (SEE MAP 13: RESIDENTIAL MIXED-USE DISTRICT)

The RMD is the largest of all the Downtown Core Area districts and includes the majority of the residential land base for the area, with some under-utilized or vacant parcels still available. Because of the RMD's close proximity and direct connections with the Central Business District, it is today a mixed-use urban community, with a concentration of compact mid to high-density residential, mixed-use and commercial development. The District also contains several institutional, cultural and recreational facilities, including the Provincial Law Courts, the Royal Theatre, the YMCA and several historic churches.

Fort Street is a special character area corridor within the RMD. It is designated as a Heritage Conservation Area through the Official Community Plan and is recognized for its concentration of heritage properties with smaller scale commercial uses at street level, such as retail stores, restaurants and cafés, creating a lively and active shopping area.



Map 13: Residential Mixed-Use District

RESIDENTIAL MIXED-USE DISTRICT OBJECTIVES

The policies and actions for the Residential Mixed-Use District (RMD) that are contained in this Plan collectively address the following objectives:

1. To encourage multi-residential development appropriate to the context and function of each neighbourhood and reflects the differences in allowable building heights and density throughout the RMD, along with other land uses, public amenities and services that help to develop complete communities.
2. To ensure new residential development includes active street-level businesses where appropriate, to provide commercial services and activities and increase pedestrian activity within the public realm.
3. To accommodate the development of higher density commercial buildings along Blanshard Street, Pandora Avenue, Yates Street and Fort Street only, in order to keep the Central Business District as the primary focus for higher density commercial development.
4. To support keeping existing commercial uses, such as restaurants, grocery stores, convenience stores, medical clinics and personal service businesses, within the District to provide necessary services for the local community, but does not support auto-oriented uses that require large outside storage/ display areas such as car lots.

RESIDENTIAL MIXED-USE DISTRICT – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER

3.93. Amend the City of Victoria *Zoning Regulation Bylaw*, as required, to reflect the design guidelines for residential development as described in this Plan.

MIXED USE

3.94. Encourage active commercial and retail uses at street level along Blanshard Street, Yates Street, Fort Street, Quadra Street and Pandora Avenue to encourage increased pedestrian activity and improved vitality.

TRANSIT SUPPORT

3.95. Support the location of higher density transit-supportive development along Yates Street.

DENSITY

3.96. Develop new zoning for the RMD that includes density levels to accommodate mid-rise to high-rise residential, commercial and office development as described in this Plan.

PUBLIC REALM

3.97. Ensure that all streets and sidewalks provide legible and well-designed public realm environments for pedestrians to travel between the RMD and surrounding Districts.

INFRASTRUCTURE

3.98. Support the upgrading of infrastructure and utility services as new development occurs to increase long-term capacity.

TRANSITIONS

3.99. Ensure that designs for new buildings and improvements to the public realm located along the edges of the RMD consider scale, orientation, setbacks, mass and building height to provide sensitive transitions to surrounding Districts.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

3.100. Support the development of a neighbourhood park within the North Park neighbourhood as well as within the Harris Green neighbourhood.

3.101. Consider the provision of additional density in exchange for the development of an urban plaza, as part of a private development within the Harris Green commercial centre.

3.102. Ensure parks, plazas and open spaces are well-designed, attractive, functional and integrated with both the Pedestrian Network and Greenways.

3.103. Ensure all new parks, plazas and open spaces reflect the design guidelines set out in this Plan for public realm improvements.

3.104. Identify specific locations and detailed designs for new parks, plazas and open space as part of the implementation of this Plan.

density framework 4

INTRODUCTION

The Downtown Core Area contains a broad range of building forms within its relatively compact area. These building forms generally range from low-scale historic buildings along the waterfront and in the Historic Commercial District, to a greater concentration of newer high-rise buildings in the Central Business District. The City has helped to guide this variation and transition in building forms through design criteria and development standards, regarding building height, building setbacks, parcel coverage, and building density.

DENSITY DEFINED

Building density, commonly referred to as Floor Space Ratio (FSR), is defined as the ratio between the total amount of gross floor area of a building and the area of the parcel upon which the building is located.

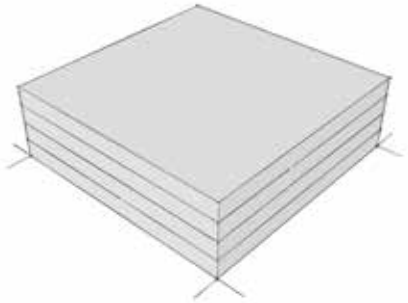
For example, if a new building is proposed on a 5,000 m^2 parcel of land zoned with a maximum density of 4:1 FSR, the maximum total combined floor area for the proposed building would be 20,000 m^2, because this amount of combined floor area is equivalent to four times the size of the parcel. The proposed building could also be theoretically configured in a variety of ways, so long as the combined floor area does not exceed the 4:1 FSR maximum density.

(SEE ILLUSTRATION 3)

ILLUSTRATION 3: DENSITY (4:1 FSR) EXPRESSED THROUGH BUILT FORM

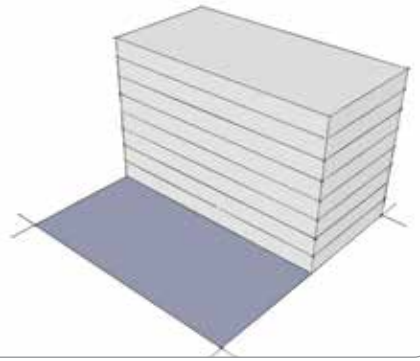
Example 1

- 5,000 m^2 parcel
- 4:1 FSR maximum density
- 4 storey building
- 5,000 m^2 on each storey
- 20,000 m^2 Total Floor Area



Example 2

- 5,000 m^2 parcel
- 4:1 FSR maximum density
- 8 storey building
- 2,500 m^2 on each storey
- 20,000 m^2 Total Floor Area



DENSITY FRAMEWORK

The Downtown Core Area Plan provides a framework for guiding the strategic distribution of density throughout the Downtown Core Area. This framework is applied in two distinct areas: Areas Exempt from Density Bonus System and Areas for Density Bonus System.

Areas Exempt from Density Bonus System refer to portions of the Downtown Core Area that are unlikely to see significant growth and development due to their location and sensitive context which is generally defined by lower scale buildings as well as the concentration of historic buildings in certain areas (SEE MAP 14: AREAS EXEMPT FROM DENSITY BONUS SYSTEM). Due to these factors, the density bonus system described in this Plan does not apply in these areas. Rather, the density framework provides policy direction for the application of maximum density levels within these areas that may only be considered through a rezoning process.

Areas for Density Bonus System refer to those portions of the Downtown Core Area where increased growth and development is anticipated (SEE MAP 15: AREAS FOR DENSITY BONUS SYSTEM). In consideration of the forecast growth and development over the next 30 years, this Plan recognizes the importance of providing an adequate supply of well-designed public amenities to serve both new and existing residents, businesses and visitors. The provision of additional public amenities is crucial to mitigate potential impacts on existing public amenities that may result from an increased number of users.

This Plan identifies that over the next 30 years additional public amenities will need to be provided to provide a balance with the forecast growth and development:

- Three new public parks
- Two new urban plazas
- Completion of the Harbour Pathway
- Various enhanced rapid transit stations along Douglas Street
- Public realm streetscape improvements along specific character streets and other public realm enhancements including minor open spaces and waterfront outlooks.

In addition to these public amenities, the retrofit, re-use and conservation of existing heritage buildings within the Downtown neighbourhood are also identified as integral components in retaining the attractive and unique historic streetscapes that are enjoyed by residents and visitors alike and that serve to enhance the public realm.

In order to encourage and accommodate new growth and development and to ensure a more balanced approach for the provision of key public amenities, the density framework introduces a structured density bonus system that provides new development with the ability to gain additional density in exchange for a monetary contribution that is specifically directed toward the acquisition and development of specific public amenities and in support for the conservation of heritage buildings. The system also supports the City of Victoria Inclusionary Housing and Community Amenity Policy (2019).

DENSITY FRAMEWORK OBJECTIVES

The policies and actions for the density framework contained in this Plan collectively address the following objectives:

1. That density levels respond to both existing and anticipated land uses, functions, building forms and the general physical context of each District.
2. That increased density is offset by the addition of key public amenities that benefit local residents, businesses, visitors and employees.
3. That heritage properties – so important to the character and economic strength of Victoria – are retained and rehabilitated, in balance with new development.
4. That higher density development is accommodated and focused along primary transit corridors and within areas that already have a concentration of higher density buildings.
5. That the maximum building height policies specified in this Plan are supported.

DENSITY FRAMEWORK POLICIES AND ACTIONS

FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION

4.1. Maintain a density framework that divides the overall Downtown Core Area into two general areas including Areas Exempt from Density Bonus System as illustrated in Map 14 and Areas for Density Bonus System as illustrated in Map 15.

4.2. Review and amend the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* to reflect the density policies and the density bonus system described in this Plan.

4.3. Review and amend all related neighbourhood plans to ensure that the density policies are consistent with those described in this Plan.

4.4. Consider the expansion of the density bonus system to include portions of the Rock Bay District through the development of a local area plan for the Rock Bay District.

4.5. Any increase to density through a rezoning application or through the provisions of the density bonus system described in this Plan are not supported for parcels where a building has been demolished without the prior approval of a Development Permit that demonstrates how the parcel or site is to be redeveloped.

4.6. Real property that is, or was subject to a heritage designation bylaw or that is listed on the City of Victoria Heritage Register is ineligible for the density bonus provisions in this Plan.

MAP 14

Areas Exempt from Density Bonus System

Downtown Core Area

Maximum Density (FSR)

- 2.0:1
- 3.0:1
- Special Density Area

See: Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan (2019) for details

N

Metres 0 75 150 300

AREAS EXEMPT FROM DENSITY BONUS SYSTEM

4.7. Changes to maximum density levels within the areas identified in Map 14 must be considered through a rezoning application and evaluated against the density policies described in this Plan and any other relevant plans, policies and design guidelines.

4.8. Changes to the maximum density on any individual parcel located within the area labeled as Special Density Area on Map 14 must be approved through a rezoning process that considers the policies of this Plan along with the local historic context, public realm context and other relevant plans, policies and design guidelines.

4.9. Increases to density either through a rezoning application or through the provisions of the density bonus system described in this Plan will not be supported for any parcel where a protected heritage property has been demolished or where the parcel contains a property that is subject to a legal covenant for the purpose of heritage conservation.

DENSITY BONUS SYSTEM

A density bonus system (allowed under s. 904 of the *Local Government Act*) is a voluntary system under which a municipality provides a developer the opportunity to acquire additional building floor area in exchange for conserving, providing or contributing towards specific public amenities. The developer benefits by being able to potentially increase the size of a development, while the municipality benefits through the developer's contribution toward, or provision of, needed public amenities that improve local vitality and provide direct and tangible benefits to the community, and that would otherwise be difficult for the municipality to provide.

DENSITY BONUS OBJECTIVES

The policies and actions for the density bonus system that are contained in this Plan collectively address the following objectives:

1. That the density bonus system is fair and transparent and increases certainty for all parties.
2. That the density bonus system helps to augment the provision of public amenities that cannot be fully achieved by other regulatory or financial mechanisms, such as development cost charges or development permits.
3. That the density bonus system should apply in areas where growth pressures are strong and land availability is limited.
4. That higher density development is balanced with public benefits and amenities.
5. That the amount of additional floor space gained as the result of density bonus is fairly commensurate with the monetary contribution toward, or actual cost of providing, the public amenity.
6. That residential and commercial development is encouraged and accommodated in strategic locations within those portions of the Downtown Core Area where increased growth and development is anticipated.
7. That the density bonus system encourages the rehabilitation and permanent protection of more heritage properties through seismic upgrading.

DENSITY BONUS POLICIES AND ACTIONS

DENSITY LEVELS

4.10. Amend the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* to reflect the base and maximum density levels and eligible uses described in Map 15.

4.11. Amend the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* to identify the base density as "as-of-right" density levels that eligible uses may achieve without providing a monetary contribution or public amenity through the density bonus system.

4.12. Ensure that any amendments to the density bonus system continue to provide base and maximum density levels that reflect: the existing or desired character of each area; the availability of land with development potential within each area; each area's ability to accommodate increased density and growth in different built forms; and the need for specific public amenities and benefits.

4.12.1. The Base and Maximum densities for eligible uses identified on Map 15 are non-cumulative regardless if more than one eligible use is provided on the same parcel or development site

MAP 15

Areas for Density Bonus System

Location	Eligible Uses	Base Density (Non-Cumulative)	Maximum Density (Non-Cumulative)
A-1	commercial	4:1	6:1
	residential*	3:1	3:1
	mixed use [1, 2,*]	4:1	6:1

1. The base density for mixed use development is 4:1 FSR, of which the residential portion shall not exceed 3:1 FSR
2. The maximum density for mixed use development is 6:1 FSR, of which the residential portion shall not exceed 3:1 FSR

A-2	commercial	3:1	5:1
	residential*	3:1	3:1
	mixed use [3, 4,*]	3:1	5:1

3. The base density for mixed use development is 3:1 FSR
4. The maximum density for mixed use development is 5:1 FSR, of which the residential portion shall not exceed 3:1 FSR

B-1	commercial	3:1	5:1
	residential*	3:1	5:1
	mixed use [5,6,*]	3:1	5:1

5. The base density for mixed use development is 3:1 FSR
6. The maximum density for mixed use development is 5:1 FSR

B-2	commercial	3:1	4.5:1
	residential*	3:1	4.5:1
	mixed use [7,8,*]	3:1	4.5:1

7. The base density for mixed use development is 3:1 FSR
8. The maximum density for mixed use development is 4.5:1 FSR

Location	Eligible Uses	Base Density (Non-Cumulative)	Maximum Density (Non-Cumulative)
C-1	commercial	3:1	5.5:1
	residential*	3:1	5.5:1
	mixed use [9,10,*]	3:1	5.5:1

9. The base density for mixed use development is 3:1 FSR
10. The maximum density for mixed use development is 5.5:1 FSR

C-2	commercial	1:1	3:1
	residential*	3:1	5.5:1
	mixed use[11,12,*]	3:1	5.5:1

11. The base density for mixed use development is 3:1 FSR, of which the commercial portion shall not exceed 1:1 FSR
12. The maximum density for mixed use development is 5.5:1 FSR, of which the commercial portion shall not exceed 3:1 FSR

C-3	commercial	1:1	1:1
	residential*	3:1	5.5:1
	mixed use[13,14,*]	3:1	5.5:1

13. The base density for mixed use development is 3:1 FSR, of which the commercial portion shall not exceed 1:1 FSR
14. The maximum density for mixed use development is 5.5:1 FSR, of which the commercial portion shall not exceed 1:1 FSR

MONETARY CONTRIBUTIONS

4.13. Require all developments that seek additional density over and above the specified base density through the density bonus system described in this Plan, to provide a contribution as described in this Plan. Monetary contributions should be directed to the Downtown Core Area Public Realm Improvement Fund (75%) and the Downtown Heritage Buildings Seismic Upgrade Fund (25%). Monetary contributions or other amenity contributions may also be directed at the discretion of Council in accordance with other City policies including the *Inclusionary Housing and Community Amenity Policy*, where applicable.

CALCULATING MONETARY CONTRIBUTIONS

4.14. All developments that seek additional density through the density bonus system described in this Plan must submit to the City of Victoria, a site-specific land lift analysis prepared by an independent third party consultant, agreed upon by the developer and the City of Victoria. The land lift analysis must calculate and identify the amount of increased land value over and above the current land value that is directly attributable to the increased density. The lift in land value is generally determined by multiplying the additional floor space that is being acquired by the buildable rate. Buildable rate is the current land value divided by the floor area that is allowed by the base density. The concept of land lift is expressed as a formula below:

Land Lift Value = Additional Floor Area x Buildable Rate
Buildable Rate = Land Value/Base Floor Area

4.15. The City of Victoria will recover 75% of the land lift value through amenity contributions.

4.16. The formula for calculating the monetary contribution is intended to result in a reasonable contribution toward the overall cost for providing the various key public amenities over the next 30 years, in combination with other potential financial sources including, but not limited to development cost charges, tax levies and grants.

HARRIS GREEN R-48 ZONE

4.17. The density bonus system and the proposed densities described in this Plan for area C-1, C-2 and C-3 do not apply to parcels that are zoned as R-48 Harris Green District or Mixed Use Residential – 1 Zone, unless the property owner seeks to rezone the property to a different zone.

DENSITY INCREASE THROUGH REZONING

4.18. Any rezoning application within the Downtown Core Area that is seeking an increase in density should result in the provision of public amenities or monetary contributions that support the policies and objectives of this Plan, and the *Inclusionary Housing and Community Amenity Policy*, where applicable.

DOWNTOWN CORE AREA PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT FUND

4.19. Establish and maintain the Downtown Core Area Public Realm Improvement Fund to assist in funding various improvements that tangibly and visibly improve the physical condition, appearance and function- of the public realm and provide a public benefit to the overall surrounding area, such as:

4.19.1. Redeveloping and enhancing streetscape designs within City rights-of-way along character streets identified in this Plan.

4.19.2. Enhancing landscaping and public amenities along City rights-of-way or within public parks and open spaces including the development of minor open spaces and waterfront outlooks.

4.19.3. Acquiring and developing three new public parks.

4.19.4. Developing and enhancing the Harbour Pathway.

4.19.5. Developing and enhancing rapid transit stations along Douglas Street.

4.19.6. Developing two new urban plazas.

4.20. The City will create a list of eligible public realm improvement projects as funding priorities that will also be identified as a component of the Downtown Core Area Plan Implementation Strategy/Action Plan.

4.21. The City will explore additional funding sources or delivery mechanisms to foster the provision of public amenities within the Downtown Core Area.

DOWNTOWN HERITAGE BUILDINGS SEISMIC UPGRADE FUND

4.22. Maintain the Downtown Heritage Buildings Seismic Upgrade Fund to assist in funding a portion of the cost of seismic upgrading as part of the re-use, retrofit and conservation of eligible heritage buildings within the Downtown Neighbourhood.

4.23. Eligible heritage buildings must adhere to the following conditions:

4.23.1. Be located within the Downtown Neighbourhood and identified on the City of Victoria Heritage Register.

4.23.2. Complete the physical rehabilitation and seismic upgrading as stipulated within a Heritage Revitalization Agreement.

4.23.3. Agree to be designated by a Municipal Heritage Designation Bylaw, if not already.

4.23.4. Demonstrate the full and complete use of all other City of Victoria heritage financial incentives and programs.

4.24. The Downtown Heritage Buildings Seismic Upgrade Fund must not be used to replace other existing financial incentive programs for heritage property. Rather, this Fund should function as a supplement to other existing financial incentives, which together serve to improve the financial viability of undertaking the physical rehabilitation and seismic upgrading of remaining heritage buildings.

DENSITY BONUS AREAS

AREA A (A-1 AND A-2)

Area A is generally the Central Business District (CBD) in addition to four blocks located between Douglas Street and Blanshard Street, north of Caledonia Avenue and south of Queens Street. Area A contains the highest densities of the Downtown Core Area, due to the concentration of high-rise commercial and residential developments within the CBD and along the Douglas Street Transit Corridor. For the purpose of the density bonus system, Area A is illustrated as two sub areas including A-1 and A-2.

Area A Vision: To primarily accommodate higher density commercial developments within the Central Business District (A-1) while also accommodating a blend of high density commercial and residential development directly north of the CBD (A-2).

AREA B (B-1 AND B-2)

Area B consists of four blocks located in the North Park neighbourhood bordered by Pandora Avenue to the south, Caledonia Avenue to the north, Blanshard Street on the west and Quadra Street on the east. This small area has several underdeveloped and vacant sites with opportunities for moderate increases in density levels. For the purpose of the density bonus system, Area B is illustrated as two sub areas including B-1 and B-2.

Area B Vision: To accommodate higher density commercial and residential development along Blanshard Street, with medium density development in the rest of the area – consistent with the area's current character. The specified density levels in Area B also provide a sensitive transition to the surrounding areas.

AREA C (C-1, C-2 AND C-3)

Area C consists of approximately 12 blocks located within the Residential Mixed-Use District, running from Mason Street on the north, to Meares Street on the south, Quadra Street on the west and Cook Street on the east. Area C is adjacent to the Central Business District and is situated around the Yates Street transportation corridor, which features a number of mid-rise and high-rise residential and commercial developments. The area includes most of the Harris Green neighbourhood and the two blocks located along Pandora Avenue between Cook Street and Quadra Street that are part of the North Park neighbourhood, and is home to a small number of isolated but significant heritage properties. For the purpose of the density bonus system, Area C is illustrated as three sub-areas including C-1, C-2 and C-3.

Area C Vision: To further intensify the area with multi-residential development in order to accommodate population growth, while focusing higher density commercial development along Yates and Fort Streets.

transportation and mobility 5

INTRODUCTION

In an urban centre such as Victoria, transportation and mobility include three primary networks:

- Pedestrian Network: The system of sidewalks, through-block walkways, street crossings and pathways that provide seamless and accessible connections for people to walk and roll around the city (the most basic form of movement).
- Cycling Network: The system of bicycle-friendly roads and pathways that provide safe and convenient connections for people to cycle to work, for recreation or for their daily needs.
- Transit Network: Includes both the local connections that help people move within the Downtown Core Area, as well as the connections into the larger regional transit network that help pedestrians and cyclists navigate longer distances around the city and into other parts of the region.

The Downtown Core Area today is distinguished for its walkability and array of pedestrian-friendly streets, alleys and unique through-block walkways. Being compact and relatively flat, the Downtown Core Area is also attractive to many cyclists for both commuting and recreation, and many thousands make daily use of the bus system provided by BC Transit.

Transportation and mobility within the Downtown Core Area is currently guided by *Victoria's Sustainable Mobility Strategy*, *GoVictoria* which outlines the City's vision for achieving clean, seamless, mobility options for everyone. Grounded in the City's mobility values, *GoVictoria* identifies five policy positions to support and shape land use in the Downtown Core Area, including:

- Integrating land use and transportation
- Aligning our mobility networks
- Supporting multi-modal level of service
- Valuing our right-of-way
- Operating and maintaining our transportation assets

Related plans, policies, and strategies realizing the vision in *GoVictoria* and transportation priorities identified in the *Official Community Plan*, include:

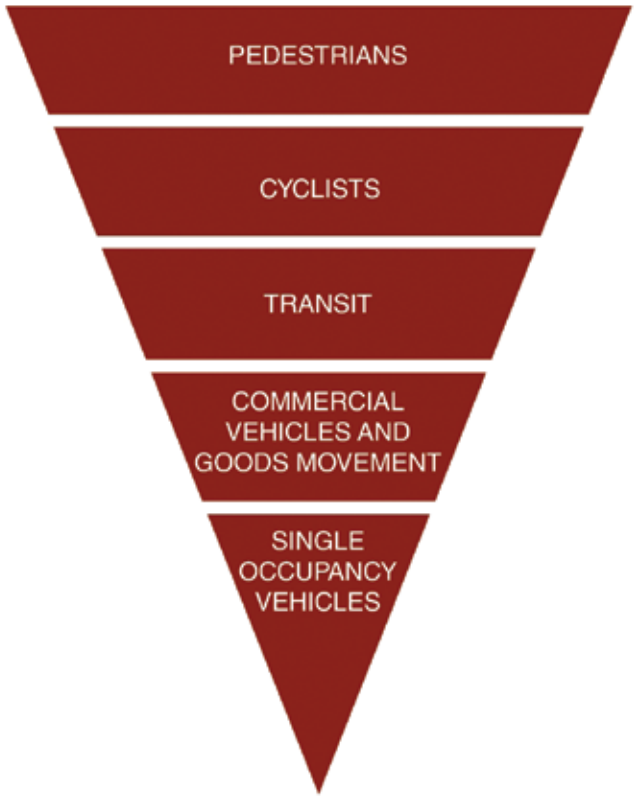
- The City of Victoria *Accessibility Framework*, which operationalizes accessibility to proactively remove and prevent barriers faced by individuals in our community.
- The *Climate Leadership Plan*, which includes strategies to reach an 80 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and transition to 100 per cent renewable energy by 2050.
- The City of Victoria has several other strategies to guide investments in transportation and mobility, including:
    - *Pedestrian Master Plan*
    - *Victoria Harbour Pathway Plan*
    - *City of Victoria Bicycle Master Plan*
    - *City of Victoria Parking Strategy*
    - *City of Victoria Bike Parking Strategy*

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY – OBJECTIVES

To ensure the Downtown Core Area establishes long-term sustainable transportation and mobility systems while it continues to grow significantly over the next 30 years, this Plan provides a range of policies and actions to collectively address the following objectives:

1. That the Travel Mode Priority Diagram described in Illustration 5 provides the basis for transportation planning and related development within the Downtown Core Area.
2. That priority for walking, cycling and transit are reflected in both private and public development.
3. That complete transportation and mobility networks feature an appropriate range of facilities, infrastructure, and services for each transportation mode.
4. That investment in transit serves as a mechanism for improving the livability, sustainability and vitality of the Downtown Core Area.
5. That sustainable transportation systems are developed and continue to provide a direct benefit to residents, businesses and visitors.
6. That Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures are reflected in both public and private development.
7. That decision-making and investment in transportation and mobility infrastructure serve to support and enhance the local economy.
8. That all transportation and mobility systems are well designed, clean, efficient and safe.
9. That economic vitality is supported by the movement of goods and consideration for commercial vehicles within the Downtown Core Area.

Illustration 5: Travel Mode Priorities



TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

To ensure the success of the three primary networks – Pedestrian, Cycling and Transit – this Plan also introduces a framework for Transportation Demand Management (TDM).

TDM is essentially the application of strategies that seek to change travel patterns or behaviour and reduce travel demand (primarily from single-occupancy vehicles), while giving priority or encouraging more sustainable modes of transport. The amount and type of available public and private parking is a key component of TDM and can determine the success or failure of TDM objectives.

The framework for TDM within the Downtown Core Area is intended to:

- Reduce vehicular demand on road infrastructure.
- Encourage commuter options through sustainable transportation infrastructure.
- Improve travel efficiency.
- Improve accessibility
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Improve air quality.
- Maintain on-street, short-term parking to support retail, restaurant and other local commercial uses.
- Manage public and private parking in balance with the overall vision for the Downtown Core Area.
- Support the other transportation and mobility priorities described in this Plan as well as those outlined by the CRD and other transportation agency partners.

This Plan recognizes the need to review existing public and private parking policies, regulations and standards to ensure they work with TDM objectives and the transportation and mobility priorities of this Plan, and to provide further guidance to the City of Victoria *Parking Strategy.*

TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS

5.1. Adopt the Travel Mode Priorities (SEE ILLUSTRATION 5) as a guiding principle for the design of transportation and mobility networks and their components within the Downtown Core Area.

5.2. Continue to pursue grant opportunities and maintain budgets within the Capital Budget for funding ongoing physical improvements to the transportation and mobility networks.

POLICY DIRECTION

5.3. Incorporate the Travel Mode Priorities (SEE ILLUSTRATION 5) as a guiding principle for developing any other policies or master plans that may affect the Downtown Core Area.

PEDESTRIAN NETWORK – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

5.4. Complete the pedestrian network connections as identified on Map 16 through well-designed streetscape improvements.

5.5. Coordinate public and private streetscape improvements that enhance the pedestrian environment and support the policies of this Plan and the *Downtown Public Realm Plan and Streetscape Standards.*

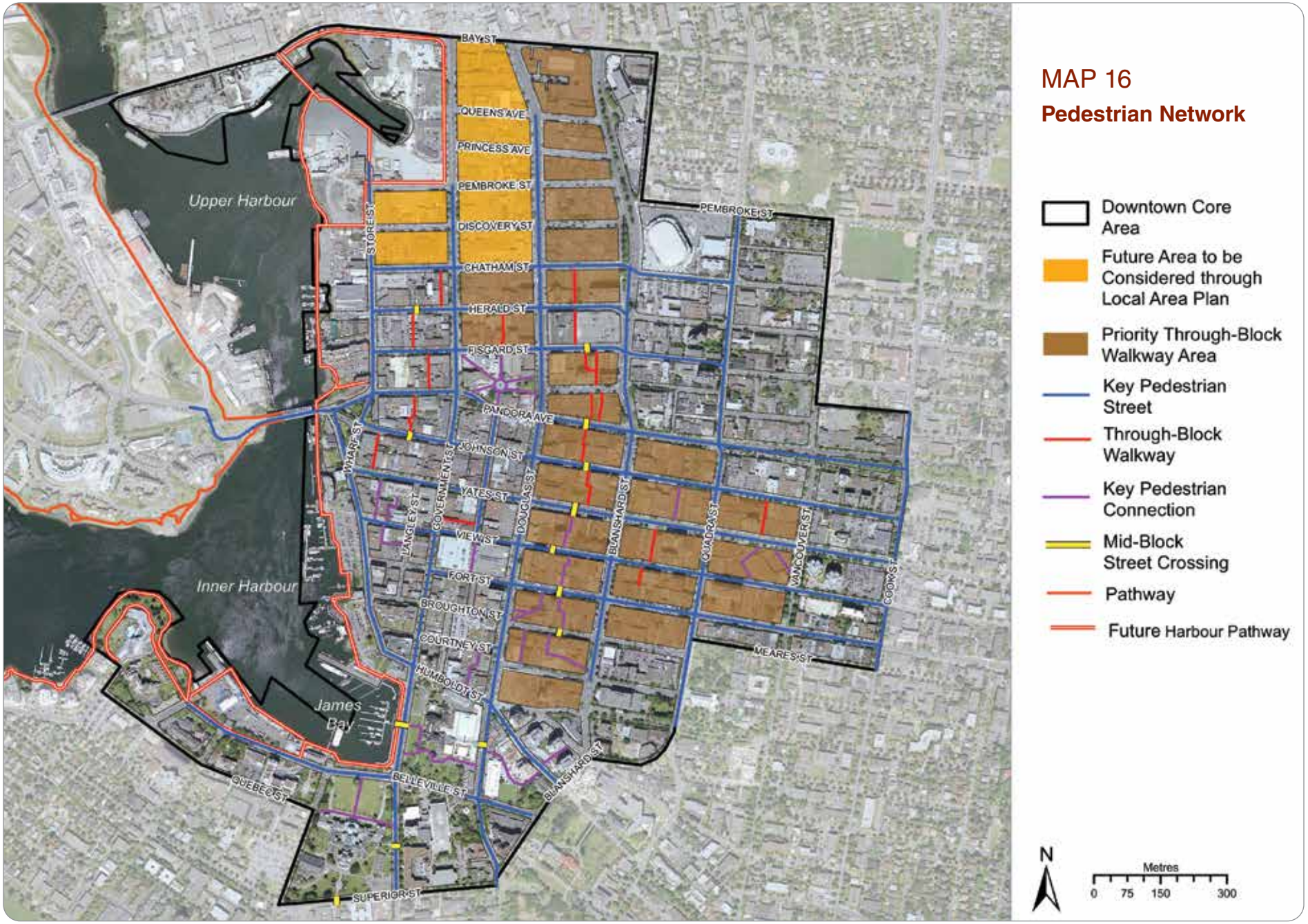
5.6. Integrate the pedestrian network with the Harbour Pathway to provide direct connections to parks, plazas, open spaces, public amenities and surrounding neighbourhoods.

5.7. Ensure that the redevelopment of the Wharf Street and Ship Point parking lots do not interrupt or impede the alignment of the Harbour Pathway.

5.8. Ensure that the design and improvement of the pedestrian network considers and integrates opportunities to improve access and movement for people with varying mobility needs.

5.9. Consider opportunities for providing safer pedestrian and cyclist crossings of major streets.

5.10. Identify key pedestrian streets and connections including through-block walkways within the Rock Bay District as a component of the subsequent process to develop a local area plan for the Rock Bay District.


MAP 16
Pedestrian Network
Downtown Core Area
Future Area to be Considered through Local Area Plan
Priority Through-Block Walkway Area
Key Pedestrian Street
Through-Block Walkway
Key Pedestrian Connection
Mid-Block Street Crossing
Pathway
Future Harbour Pathway
N
Metres
0 75 150 300
Upper Harbour
Inner Harbour
James Bay
BAY ST
QUEENS AVE
PRINCESS AVE
PEMBROKE ST
DISCOVERY ST
CHATHAM ST
HERALD ST
FISGARD ST
PANDORA AVE
JOHNSON ST
YATES ST
VIEW ST
FORT ST
BROUGHTON ST
COURTNEY ST
HUMBOLDT ST
BELLEVILLE ST
QUEBEC ST
SUPERIOR ST
MEARES ST
COOKS ST
STORE ST
WHARF ST
LANGLEY ST
GOVERNMENT ST
DOUGLAS ST
BLANSHARD ST
QUADRA ST
VANCOUVER ST

SIDEWALK AND PATHWAY CONDITIONS

5.11. Continue to improve public sidewalk conditions through partnerships with private developers as opportunities arise.

5.12. Support the objectives of the City of Victoria *Pedestrian Master Plan* for improving sidewalk conditions, safety and design.

5.13. Establish an ongoing public realm budget and expenditure provision in the 20-year Capital Plan to be used for pedestrian-oriented public realm improvements and extension of the pedestrian network within the Downtown Core Area.

LEGIBILITY AND WAYFINDING FOR PEDESTRIANS

5.14. Employ the *City of Victoria Wayfinding Strategy*. Improve wayfinding throughout the Downtown Core Area through public and private initiatives for further improving pedestrian orientation within the Downtown Core Area and to other surrounding locations and attractions.

5.15. Strengthen the visual character of the Downtown Core Area in accordance with the *Downtown Public Realm Plan and Streetscape Standards*.

GOVERNMENT STREET MALL

5.16. Extend the Government Street Mall from Yates Street northward to Pembroke Street, with links to the Rock Bay waterfront.

5.17. Develop a comprehensive streetscape plan for the extension of the Government Street Mall that focuses on improving the pedestrian and cycling environment and contains a consistent streetscape treatment throughout the entire length.

5.18. Support the location of active street-level commercial uses along Government Street to provide a dynamic and interesting environment between the Inner Harbour and the Rock Bay District.

HARBOUR PATHWAY

5.19. Develop the Harbour Pathway consistent with the Victoria *Harbour Pathway Plan*, with a focus on completing pedestrian missing links between the Inner Harbour Causeway and the Rock Bay District.

5.20. Encourage all new developments that are located directly adjacent to the Harbour Pathway to be designed to accommodate active commercial uses at the same grade level as the Harbour Pathway and have direct access from the Harbour Pathway.

5.21. Support the development of waterfront outlooks along the Harbour Pathway as illustrated in Map 27.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AND COMFORT

5.22. Continue to apply standards for streetscape designs and elements that improve the safety and comfort of pedestrians.

5.23. Ensure street furniture, utilities, outdoor seating and landscaping do not impede pedestrian flow on public sidewalks.

5.24. Consider the Sidewalk Width Guidelines contained in Appendix 3 of this Plan in the design of local streetscapes.

5.25. Improve the amount and design of pedestrian lighting, especially in areas that have higher concentrations of pedestrian activity.

5.26. Continue to incorporate universal access standards within the public realm to improve access for people with varying mobility needs.

5.27. Ensure that sidewalks are wide enough to support desired levels of activity and to maintain an adequate clear zone for pedestrian travel.

5.28. Provide improved street lighting throughout the pedestrian network that ensures adequate levels of night time illumination.

5.29. Provide enhanced pedestrian crossings near major transit stops and where the pedestrian network crosses major streets.

THROUGH-BLOCK WALKWAYS

PURPOSE

Through-block walkways are a unique feature of the Downtown Core Area, which includes the narrow historic alleys in Chinatown and Old Town to more modern examples which have been constructed in more recent years. Through-block walkways provide a variety of functions which range from providing pedestrian connections through longer city blocks and through interior courtyards, to functioning as unique shopping and tourism destinations with their concentration of retail stores, restaurants and cafés. This Plan recognizes the potential for through-block walkways to provide a new dimension to the pedestrian experience that encourages a sense of discovery through opportunities for pedestrians to explore these uniquely designed, attractive and vibrant spaces.

The Downtown Core Area Plan seeks to complete the pedestrian network with the provision of strategically located through-block walkways based on the following key principles:

1. Provide public access and direct connectivity with the pedestrian network.
2. Provide mid block north-south access through the longer city blocks.
3. Incorporate urban design that identifies and enhances the unique character of each walkway and contributes to placemaking.
4. Provide intimately scaled pedestrian spaces that offer an alternative to the larger scale and character of conventional city streets.
5. Provide opportunities to accommodate niche retail and other active commercial uses.
6. Consider design solutions that reflect Crime Prevention Through Urban Design (CPTED) principles.
7. Consider partnerships with the private sector to provide through-block walkways in strategic locations.

THROUGH-BLOCK WALKWAY POLICES AND ACTIONS

LOCATION

5.30. Consider opportunities to redesign and replace key pedestrian connections with new through-block walkways within the Priority Through-Block Walkway Areas identified in Map 16.

5.31. Locate through-block walkways as close as possible to mid-block locations to achieve smaller city blocks (similar to those found in the Old Town Area), approximately 60–90 metres (200–300 feet) long.

DESIGN

5.32. Ensure that the design of new through-block walkways consider and reflect the design criteria described in Appendix 4.

ACCESS

5.33. Ensure that access to new through-block walkways consider and reflect the design criteria described in Appendix 4.

5.34. Ensure maintenance agreements include detailed criteria for the operation and function of through-block walkways.

IMPLEMENTATION

5.35. The City of Victoria may consider providing additional density, up to the respective maximum density levels identified in this Plan, to new developments that enter into an agreement as part of a rezoning application to design and construct a through-block walkway within the Priority Through-Block Walkway Areas identified on Map 16 that reflects the design criteria described in Appendix 4.

5.36. Where a through-block walkway is not located on public land that is owned by the City of Victoria, a legal agreement is required to address the following criteria:

5.36.1. The provision of year-round public access.

5.36.2. A schedule of regular maintenance.

5.36.3. Maintaining direct access to the passageway from adjacent commercial use.

MID-BLOCK STREET CROSSINGS

5.37. Provide mid-block street crossings to offer safe pedestrian access and to support vitality on facing sidewalks.

5.38. Continue to close gaps in the pedestrian network with mid-block street crossings to connect through-block walkways, with priority for new mid-block street crossings in the Central Business District, the Historic Commercial District, the Inner Harbour District, and points of connection with the Harbour Pathway system.

5.39. Coordinate crossing design with provisions for parking, bicycle lanes and transit lanes to ensure pedestrian visibility and safety.

5.40. Establish a distinctive signage, street mapping and wayfinding system to increase recognition and use of the integrated mid-block street crossing and through-block walkway system.

CYCLING NETWORK – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

CYCLING NETWORK

5.41. Complete the cycling network as outlined in *GoVictoria* and illustrated in the *Official Community Plan*, through bicycle-friendly street design standards, streetscaping and appropriate wayfinding improvements.

5.42. Establish cycling network routes that provide direct and efficient connections to adjacent neighbourhoods, major public destinations, Greenways and the regional pathway system, and the Capital Regional District's regional cycling network.

5.43. Improve the safety of bicycle street crossings with street crossing lights, dedicated bicycle lanes and signage where applicable.

5.44. Use public and private development opportunities to improve cycling safety and access.

CYCLING SUPPORT

5.45. Encourage cycling through well-designed cycling-related amenities within new commercial and multi-residential developments.

5.46. Encourage Short-term and Long-term bicycle parking facilities in strategic public locations, such as parks, plazas, and parkades that serve as end of trip destinations or are used for special events.

5.47. Review and update the City of Victoria *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* to ensure that bicycle parking requirements and standards for multi-residential development, office buildings and other commercial uses serve to encourage and accommodate cycling as an alternate mode of transportation.

5.48. Integrate an appropriate blend of both Short-term and Long-term bicycle parking within new office buildings, institutions and multi-residential developments to provide safe and convenient short-term and long-term bicycle parking.

5.49. Encourage additional bicycle parking and other cycling amenities, such as showers, change rooms and lockers, when reviewing and evaluating development applications for new office, commercial, multi-residential and industrial development, as a Transportation Demand Management mechanism to reduce the number of vehicle parking stalls required.

5.50. Ensure bicycle parking facilities are provided in accordance with the City's zoning bylaws and *Bicycle Parking Strategy*

CYCLIST SAFETY AND COMFORT

5.51. Wherever possible, provide dedicated bike lanes that are identifiable through reflective street surface lane markings, coloured pavement or raised pavement markers.

5.52. Provide smooth road surfaces that are free of debris, potholes and other obstacles.

5.53. Provide improved street lighting throughout the mobility network that ensures adequate levels of night time illumination.

5.54. Continue to maintain the cycling network throughout the year with special attention to inspecting and repairing roadway and pathway surfaces, bikeway signs and amenities.

BICYCLE FRIENDLY DESIGN STANDARDS

5.55. Coordinate public and private streetscape improvements to improve cycling safety and access.

5.56. Update bicycle parking requirements and guidelines to address design criteria for Short-term and Long-term bicycle parking, including shower and locker facilities, location of bicycle parking, surveillance and safety measures and convenience within the public and private realm.

TRANSIT – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

TRANSIT CORRIDORS

5.57. Continue to require the location of transit-supportive land use and development along Douglas Street to support the establishment of BC Transit's Rapid Transit Network within the Downtown Core Area as illustrated the transit network map in the *Official Community Plan*.

5.58. Consider land uses and activities along the frequent transit corridors as illustrated in the transit network map in the *Official Community Plan* encourage high levels of pedestrian activity and transit use, both inside and outside of the am/pm peak periods. Examples of transit-supportive uses include:

- Offices
- Medium- to high-density multi-residential development
- Public and private schools and educational facilities
- Retail
- Restaurants
- Personal services
- Medical clinics
- Entertainment, recreational and cultural facilities
- Libraries

5.59. Increase density around major transit stops in association with high-quality transit shelters, stations, and associated amenities along primary transit corridors to accommodate higher density, transit-supportive development.

PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS TO TRANSIT

5.60. Ensure pedestrian connections to transit corridors and transit stops are direct, safe, convenient, barrier-free, easily identifiable and navigable.

5.61. Ensure pedestrian networks provide safe, convenient, and accessible connections to transit corridors and transit stops.

5.62. Consider public realm design improvements that improve pedestrian flow around major transit stops and along primary transit corridors.

DEVELOPMENT NEAR TRANSIT STOPS

5.63. Cluster buildings near major transit stops together to allow for convenient pedestrian access between buildings and to define the public realm.

5.64. Ensure buildings near major transit stops are designed to enhance the pedestrian environment by having doorways and windows oriented to the street.

ALL-WEATHER BUILDING DESIGN

5.65. Consider transit stops integrated with the building where sidewalk widths are limited that provide protection from the weather and climate, such as seating integrated under building awnings while also ensuring the stops are well-designed, and easily identifiable.

PARKING REQUIREMENTS NEAR TRANSIT

5.66. Consider reducing the number of required vehicle parking stalls for transit-supportive uses located adjacent to major transit stops and along the Douglas Street Rapid Transit network.

5.67. Locate vehicular parking at the rear of buildings or below grade where a development is positioned along a pedestrian network route that leads to a major transit stop or along a primary transit corridor.

TRANSIT CIRCULATION

5.68. Support the establishment of demand-based transit service models that supplement the frequent and rapid transit network to provide improved transit access between key locations within the Downtown Core Area.

PARKING REGULATIONS

5.69. Review and update parking requirements in the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* to reflect and implement the TDM objectives described in this Plan.

5.70. Consider amending the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* to incorporate maximum parking standards to restrict the number of on-site motor vehicle parking stalls that may be provided as part of new development in the Historic Commercial District and the Central Business District.

5.71. Consider opportunities for reducing the number of required motor vehicle parking stalls in high density, employment-intensive commercial uses, such as offices, in exchange for:

- 5.71.1. Dedicated on-site car share or carpooling parking stalls.
- 5.71.2. Additional and enhanced bicycle parking (e.g. electric and cargo bikes, maintenance facilities), shower and locker facilities for employees.
- 5.71.3. Annual transit passes for employees.
- 5.71.4. Locating transit-supportive uses within 400 metres of a major transit stops.
- 5.71.5. Public EV charging stations.
- 5.71.6. Other TDM programs/strategies that reduce on-site parking stalls and encourage alternate modes of transportation.

ALTERNATE MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

5.72. Prioritize and manage curbside space including on-street parking and loading according to the priorities outlined in *GoVictoria*.

5.73. Prohibit the development of new surface parking lots and single-purpose, above-grade parking structures.

5.74. Consider opportunities for integrating public short-term parking as a component of underground parking for high-density office buildings within the Central Business District.

PARKING REVENUE

5.75. Use public parking revenue to fund public TDM initiatives, such as the development of network enhancements, EV charging stations, and bicycle parking.

5.76. Explore the establishment of a cash-in-lieu of parking system within portions of the Downtown Core Area that could be used to support alternate modes of transportation.

urban design 6

INTRODUCTION

Urban design is the deliberate effort of guiding and affecting physical form, space and built characteristics of an urban place in order to create places for people. Urban design is concerned with both the function and aesthetics of spaces and buildings. It addresses the connections among people and places, movement, city form, the natural environment and the built fabric. This Plan seeks to provide guidance to ensure that the Downtown Core Area continues to develop and provides a balance between economic viability and successful placemaking. The urban design policies and guidelines in this plan identify the importance of urban design at varying scales, from the overall shape of the city and the look of its skyline, to the form and placement of individual buildings, to details such as streetscape designs.

URBAN DESIGN – DOWNTOWN CORE AREA

The Downtown Core Area has a well-defined identity as the heart of the Provincial Capital, focused on a beautiful Harbour, graced with a clustering of landmark historic and cultural buildings, and a network of streets that are walkable and built to a human scale.

Victoria is fortunate to have retained much of its 19th and early 20th century commercial core. Much of its picturesque quality stems from the variety, rich detailing, intimate scale and irregularity created by these historic buildings within its streetscape. The rich detailing of the Downtown Core is also complemented by its geographic setting and the surrounding landscape which includes its signature Inner Harbour, the Sooke hills and the Olympic Mountains.

URBAN DESIGN – OBJECTIVES

The urban design policies and actions that are contained in this Plan seek to ensure that the Downtown Core Area's character and strength as an attractive, livable urban place continue to be enhanced while it grows significantly over the next 30 years. Collectively these policies and actions address the following objectives:

1. The natural setting of the city is considered with development and urban design initiatives.
2. Development and urban design initiatives support economic viability, sustainability and placemaking.
3. The qualities of the Downtown Core Area are enriched including its neighbourhoods and character areas by providing development that is appropriate to the building scale and its local setting.
4. The Downtown Core Area contains meaningful destinations that are connected and integrated with well-designed travel networks to encourage pedestrian activity.
5. Development and urban design initiatives are designed to address and respond to future changes in use, lifestyle, economy and demography.
6. The Downtown Core Area contains a diverse mix of building forms and public spaces.
7. The Downtown Core Area provides a blend of new infill development and rehabilitated heritage resources.

URBAN DESIGN – STRATEGIES

In response to the urban design objectives for the Downtown Core Area, this Plan identifies a range of strategies to facilitate these objectives:

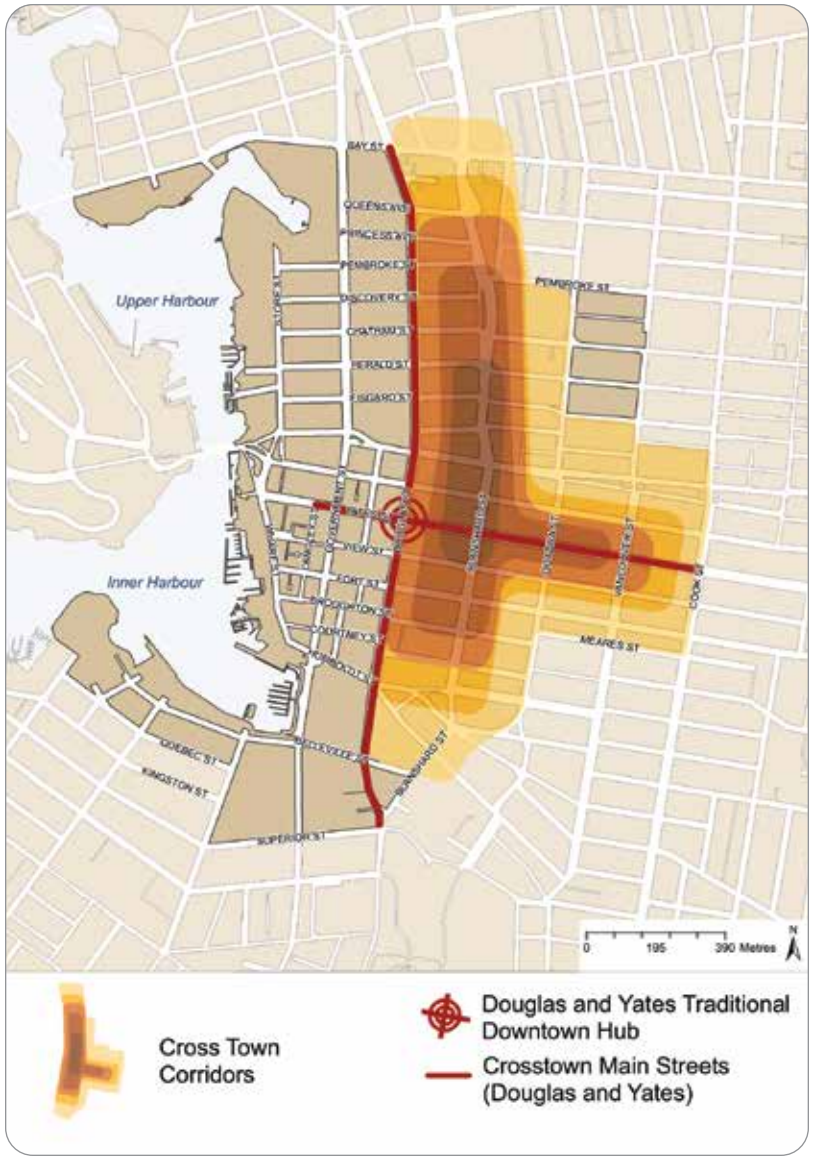
1. Enhancing the city's skyline through the concentration and careful design of taller buildings and increased density along the Douglas Street/Blanshard Street corridor and along Yates Street (Cross Town Concept).
2. Providing detailed urban design guidelines that are premised on reinforcing existing topography, city form and human scaled development, including recognition of the rise and transition of low-scale buildings that frame the historic waterfront to taller buildings within the Central Business District (Urban Amphitheatre Concept).
3. Protecting and enhancing key public views and vistas, including outward views from the Downtown Core Area and external views towards the Downtown Core Area that capture character-defining vistas, including views of prominent heritage landmarks.
4. Establishment of design guidelines and an implementation framework that identifies partnership and funding opportunities for the development of key public amenities including:
   - Completing the Harbour Pathway
   - Extending the Government Street Mall
   - Revitalizing Centennial Square
   - Developing new parks and urban plazas in Harris Green, North Park and Rock Bay.
   - Increasing the urban tree canopy and other landscape elements as a component of streetscape improvements.
5. Providing detailed urban design guidelines to address the importance of sensitive built forms through building height, scale, massing, setbacks, floor plate restrictions and street wall design.

Urban design strategies can be used to create welcoming spaces and context sensitive buildings.

CROSS TOWN CONCEPT

Under this Plan, new growth in the form of taller and denser buildings in the Downtown Core Area will be concentrated along the two intersecting corridors of Douglas Street/Blanshard Street and Yates Street (Cross Town Concept) in order to:

- Move pressure for new development away from the Historic Commercial District to areas that are able to accommodate increased development capacity.
- Better define Victoria's two traditional main streets as the axis of the Downtown Core Area and enhance the downtown skyline.
- Concentrate higher density, transit-supportive uses in close proximity to major transit corridors and in support of a rapid transit corridor along Douglas Street.
- Strengthen the Harris Green neighbourhood with a concentration of higher density residential and commercial uses centred on Yates Street.
- Support the provision of public amenities and public realm improvements along or near Douglas Street and Yates Street.
- Accommodate the expanding Central Business District within the two corridors. (SEE MAP 19: CROSS TOWN CONCEPT)



Map 19: Cross Town Concept

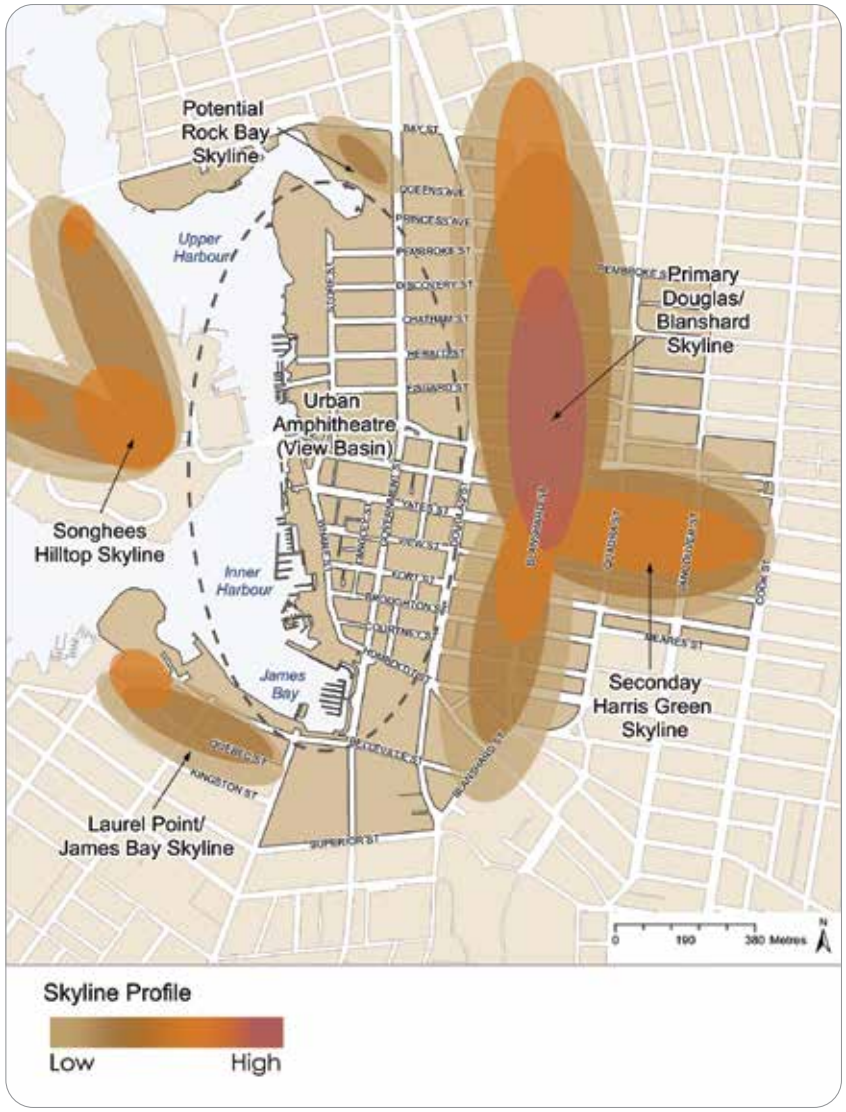
URBAN AMPHITHEATRE CONCEPT

To build on the Downtown Core Area's geographic and historic urban setting, this Plan promotes a general urban form in the shape of an amphitheatre, stepping up from Victoria's open Harbour basin, where building height remains low near the Harbour but gradually increases further inland, with tall buildings at a distance from the Harbour, concentrated along Douglas and Yates Streets.

(SEE MAP 20: URBAN AMPITHEATRE CONCEPT)

This Urban Amphitheatre shape:

- Builds on the pattern of historical development in the Downtown Core Area by having growth tier up away from the Harbour.
- Reflects and emphasizes the natural, underlying hilly landscape and the rise of natural grades in several directions away from the water.
- Creates a series of backdrops with buildings along the waterfront as well as along higher elevations that also help to frame the Harbour.
- Supports the concentration of taller buildings in strategic locations to create a series of unique and varied skylines that frame the Harbour.



Map 20: Urban Amphitheatre Concept

PUBLIC VIEW CORRIDORS – INTRODUCTION

Public view corridors play a significant role in defining the visual and aesthetic character of the Downtown Core Area by providing a blend of broad vistas and focused glimpses of the surrounding natural landscape, the overall city form, the skyline as well as landmark structures and buildings. In addition to functioning as character-defining features, view corridors also assist people to orient themselves within the Downtown Core Area to the surrounding area through visual cues.

The Downtown Core Area's immediacy to the Harbour is one of the most important and therefore common elements of its view corridors. Other key elements include the Olympic Mountains as well as some of the prominent historic landmark buildings such as the Parliament Building, the Empress Hotel and the City Hall (Clock Tower). It is anticipated that the general context of each view corridor will evolve over time as new development occurs throughout the Downtown Core Area as well as in distant locations.

The Downtown Core Area Plan identifies two distinct sets of key view corridors, both of which are based from specific public vantage points. The first set identifies views looking outwards from the Downtown Core Area (Public Outward Views), and the second set consists of distant panoramic views towards the Downtown Core Area (Public External Views). Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 describe each view corridor in greater detail including the specific location of the view corridor, a photograph of the view corridor and the identification of the portion of the view corridor or view elements that should be preserved or considered in relation to adjacent development.

VIEW CORRIDOR OBJECTIVES

The policies, actions and guidelines that are contained in this Plan for each view corridor collectively address the following objectives:

1. That significant character-defining view corridors are identified.
2. That design guidelines are provided for evaluating the placement, orientation, massing and overall design of new developments that are located along or within each view corridor and to ensure that new development is sensitive to the visual context of each view corridor and is designed and located to avoid obscuring views of key defining elements or detracting from the overall view.
3. That new developments serve to enhance and augment the visual and aesthetic character of each view corridor over time.

PUBLIC OUTWARD VIEW – POLICIES

6.1. Conserve views of the character-defining elements as seen from the respective public vantage locations described in Appendix 1.

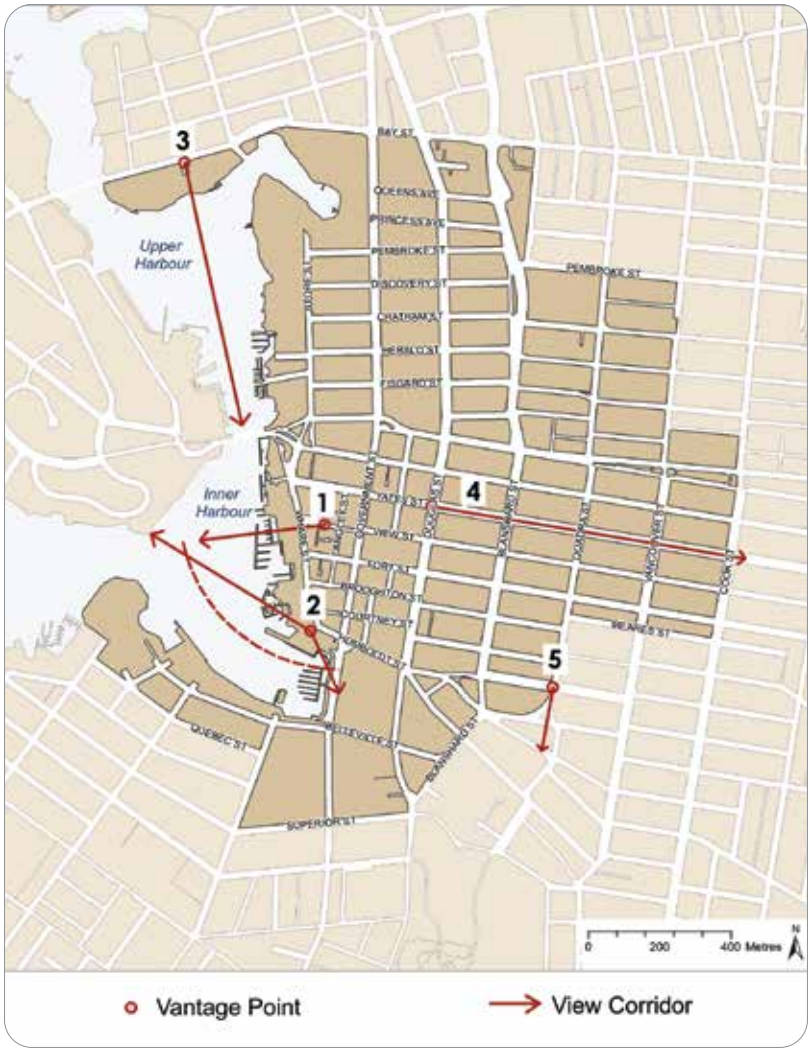
6.2. Evaluate development proposals that are located along or within the view corridors illustrated in Map 21 for consistency with the Outward View Guidelines contained in Appendix 1.

6.3. Encourage design and siting solutions with new developments that serve to frame and enhance view corridors.

6.4. Development proposals that are located along or within the view corridors illustrated in Map 21 may be required to submit 3-D digital form models and photographic renderings to further evaluate the potential impact of the proposed development within the context of the view corridor.

6.5. Review and update adjacent neighbourhood plans that are affected by Outward Views, to encourage the coordination of the Outward View policies and guidelines described in this Plan.

6.6. Consider the design and placement of streetscape improvements such as paving materials, street lighting, street furniture and landscaping in order to help enhance and frame view corridors.



Map 21: Outward Views

EXTERNAL VIEWS

The external views illustrated in Maps 22, 23 and 24 profile a range of iconic public views looking towards the Downtown Core Area from across the Harbour. These external views are panoramic vistas that capture the building forms, character areas and landmarks for three distinct areas around the Inner Harbour. These include the area between the Johnson Street Bridge and Ship Point, the Inner Harbour Causeway, and the area between the CPR Steamship Terminal and Laurel Point.

EXTERNAL VIEW – POLICIES

6.7. Evaluate development proposals that are located within the view corridors illustrated in Maps 22, 23 and 24 for consistency with the guidelines in Appendix 2.

6.8. Conserve views of the character-defining elements as seen from the respective public vantage locations described in Appendix 2.

6.9. Encourage design and siting of new developments that frame and enhance view corridors.

6.10. Ensure that new developments complement and respond to the surrounding context as defined by the topography, building spacing, building form, building height, roofline, massing, setbacks, orientation, facade rhythm, building materials and landscaping.

6.11. Ensure that additional design consideration is given to developments that are located directly adjacent to the waterfront to ensure that they complement and enhance the waterfront with sensitive and appropriate design solutions.

6.12. Encourage sensitive and appropriate illumination of building facades and architectural features in order to complement the night time views of the harbour without detracting from the lighting prominence of the Parliament Buildings and the Empress Hotel.

6.13. Consider the design and placement of streetscape improvements such as paving materials, street furniture, street lighting and landscaping in order to help enhance view corridors.

6.14. Protect views of the Empress Hotel, Parliament Buildings and CPR Steamship Terminal from the respective public vantage points as illustrated in Appendix 2.

Map 22: External View 1

Map 23: External View 2

Map 24: External View 3

SKYLINE EVOLUTION

Victoria's existing skyline has been formed over time through the development and location of taller buildings within the Downtown. The skyline is further defined by varying building heights, roof top shapes, building profiles, proportions, texture, materials and colour. Together, these elements not only add to the visual interest of the skyline, but also serve to identify unique visual landmarks such as church spires, the City Hall Clock Tower or the clustering of taller buildings within the Central Business District. The rise in topography from the waterfront towards Douglas Street also provides the ability to emphasize the rich detail and roof top patterns of the Old Town in contrast to those of more modern buildings along Douglas Street and Yates Street.

It is anticipated that the skyline will continue to evolve as the result of new development and the influence of urban design guidelines and policies contained in this Plan. This Plan supports the emergence of an undulating skyline that rises gradually from the north and south ends of the Downtown Core Area to an apex within the Central Business District reflecting the general hilly regional geographic setting of Victoria

The overall urban design and skyline policies and actions contained in this Plan collectively provide general guidance for the evaluation of tall buildings within the overall skyline and encourage sensitive building siting and design.

SKYLINE POLICIES AND ACTIONS

6.15. Evaluate the impact and influence of new development within the Downtown Core Area skyline from the public vantage point identified in Map 25.

6.16. Consider the location of buildings and related building heights that reinforce a skyline profile that rises gradually from the north and south ends of the Downtown Core Area to the area of tallest height within the Central Business District.

6.17. Consider the following criteria for tall buildings that are visible within the Downtown Core Area skyline:

- 6.17.1. Visual impact within the existing skyline;
- 6.17.2. Location and clustering in relation to other tall buildings;
- 6.17.3. Massing, orientation, and expression of the shape of the base, the body, and the top of the building; and
- 6.17.4. Use lighter colours including a palette of warm brick and soft pastel tones to lighten up the visual appearance of the skyline and complement the existing appearance.

Map 25: Downtown Skyline

TERMINATED VISTAS – INTRODUCTION

A terminated vista is generally defined as the location at the end of an important sightline along a street that is enhanced through a building or landmark. One of the key ingredients to creating walkable and memorable streets is the ability to emphasize significant shifts in the street pattern through the deliberate placement and design of buildings and landmarks at these locations as well as along the length of sightlines. The street pattern in the Downtown Core Area provides opportunities to enhance the public realm through the termination of vistas and through the framing of each vista through the placement of appropriately scaled buildings and streetscape elements that contribute to a sense of enclosure and intimacy for the pedestrian.

Because of the visual prominence that these shifts in the street pattern create, urban design principles traditionally tend to encourage the placement of civic and institutional buildings such as churches, city halls, libraries and museums at these locations, in order to emphasize civic pride and to help terminate vistas with iconic and well-designed buildings. This general principle is evident in downtown Victoria and is reflected through both historic and modern buildings and in the location of landmarks and prominent public spaces.

As the Downtown Core Area continues to evolve, these unique street conditions with terminated vistas should be emphasized where opportunities exist. The enhancement of terminated vistas must be considered on a case-by-case basis in conjunction with the surrounding context, and with the related Terminated Vista guidelines contained in Appendix 4 of this plan, which provide strategies and approaches for terminating and enhancing key vistas through buildings, landmarks or public realm improvements.

St. John the Divine Anglican Church in the background provides a terminated vista and landmark feature along Quadra Street.

HERITAGE LANDMARK BUILDINGS

The Downtown Core Area includes a selection of visually significant heritage buildings that are generally recognized through Statements of Significance for their heritage values, architectural design, detail, scale and appearance which collectively, contribute to placemaking. These heritage buildings are also noted for their prominence as visual landmarks within local streetscapes, their ability to be commonly recognized and memorable, and for their overall contribution to the public realm. (SEE MAP 26: HERITAGE LANDMARK BUILDINGS)

HERITAGE LANDMARK BUILDINGS POLICIES AND ACTIONS

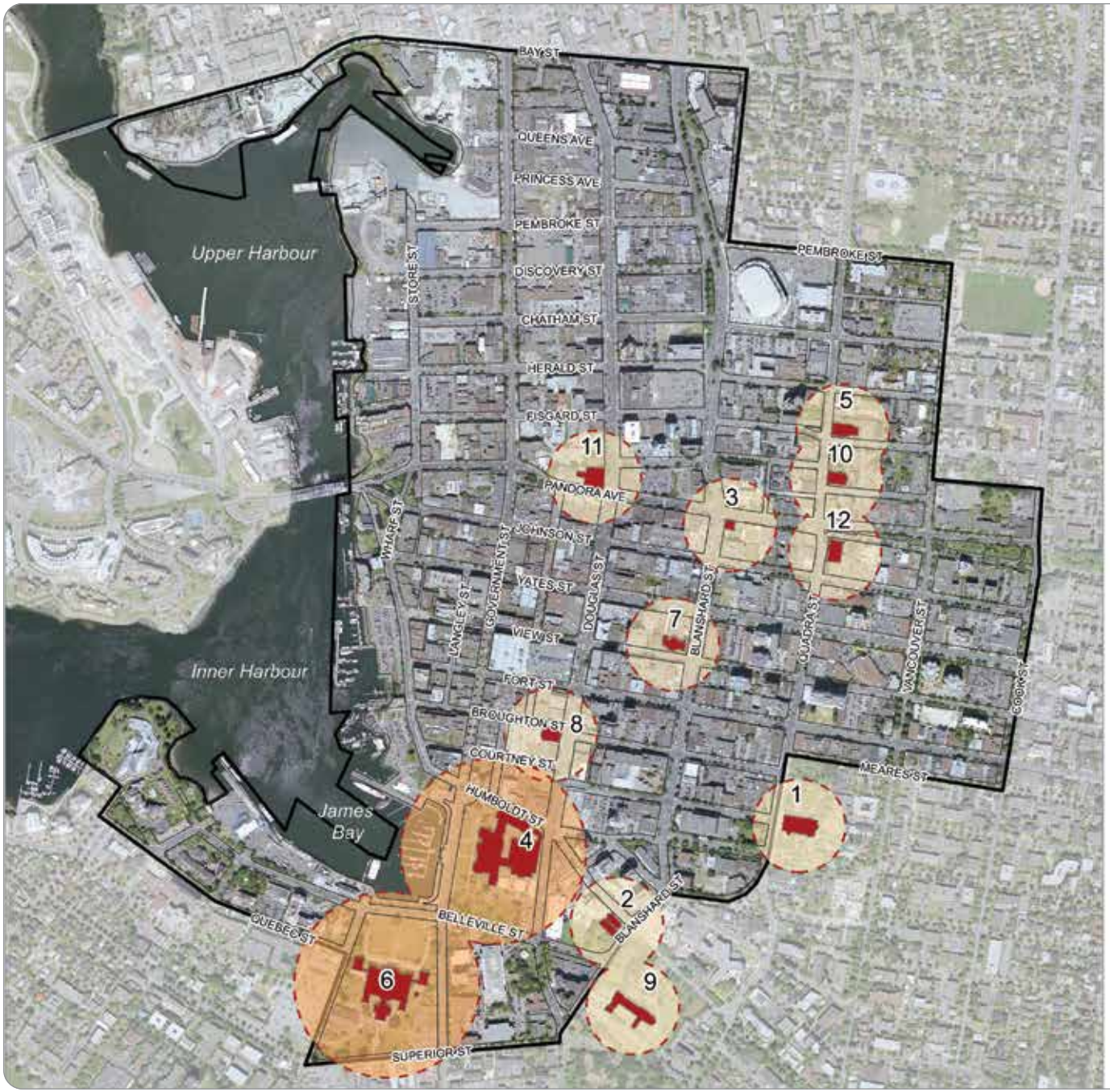
6.18. Give special design consideration to development applications located within a 90-metre radius of the heritage landmark buildings identified in Map 26, to ensure that the height, setbacks, siting and overall massing of proposed new buildings do not detract from or obscure the visual prominence and character-defining importance of these heritage landmark buildings.

6.19. Give special design consideration to development applications located within a 180-metre radius of the heritage landmark buildings identified in Map 26, to ensure that the height, setbacks, siting and overall massing of proposed new buildings do not detract from or obscure the visual prominence and character-defining importance of these heritage landmark buildings.

6.20. Development proposals that are located along or within the 90-metre and 180-metre heritage landmark building radii illustrated in Map 26 may be required to submit 3-D digital form models and photographic renderings in order to further evaluate the potential impact of the proposed development within the surrounding context and in relation to the prominent heritage landmark buildings.

6.21. Ensure that development proposals located within the 90-metre or 180-metre radii illustrated in Map 26, consider the character-defining elements and design guidelines described in the respective Statements of Significance and Development Permit Areas.

Example of how new development can be designed and sited to maintain public views and the visual prominence of heritage landmark buildings.



MAP 26

Heritage Landmark Buildings

- Downtown Core Area
- Heritage Landmark
- 90 m Landmark Radius
- 180 m Landmark Radius

Heritage Landmark

1. Christ Church Cathedral*
   911 Quadra Street
2. Church of Our Lord*
   626 Blanshard Street
3. Congregation Emanu-el Synagogue*
   1461 Blanshard Street
4. Empress Hotel*
   700 Douglas Street
5. First Metropolitan United Church*
   932 Balmoral Street
6. Parliament Buildings and Grounds
   501 Belleville Street
7. St. Andrew's Cathedral*
   1202 Blanshard Street
8. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church*
   924 Douglas Street
9. St. Ann's Academy
   830 Academy Close
10. St. John the Divine Anglican Church*
    930 Mason Street
11. Victoria City Hall*
    1 Centennial Square
12. Victoria Conservatory of Music*
    (Metropolitan United Church)
    907 Pandora Avenue

*protected heritage property

N

Metres
0 75 150 300

PUBLIC REALM STRATEGY

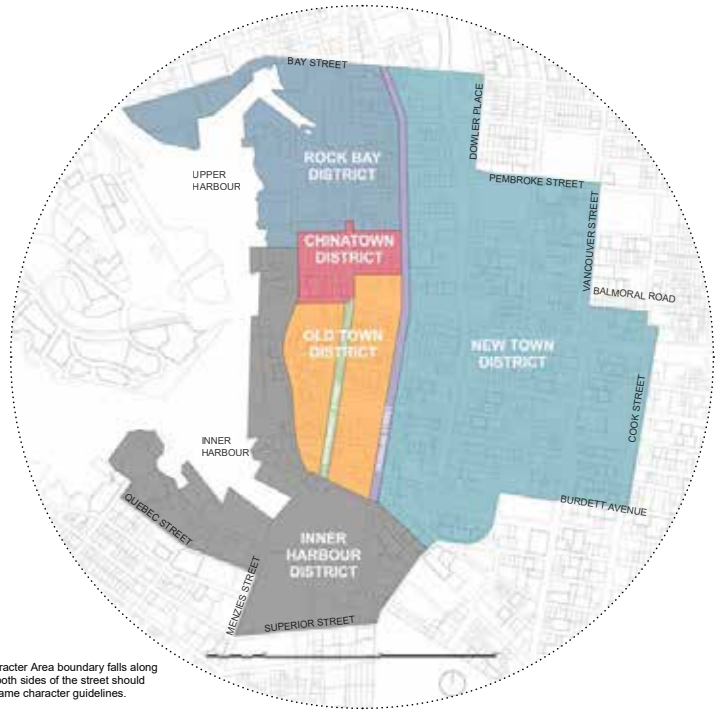
The public realm includes exterior spaces, linkages and the surrounding built form elements that are visually and physically accessible. Public realm components generally include parks and open spaces, plazas, streets, sidewalks, pathways, transportation hubs, gateways, waterfront areas, natural features, view corridors and the interface between these elements and surrounding buildings.

The overall quality, design and function of the public realm has a significant influence on the local quality of life within the urban environment. The public realm provides the places and spaces where people gather, meet, socialize, recreate, shop and work.

The public realm strategy described in this Plan provides a comprehensive and focused approach to build upon the Downtown Core Area's successful history of placemaking through public realm improvements that provide:

- Social and active spaces
- Versatile spaces that benefit all ages
- Meaningful and pedestrian-friendly connections
- Distinctive places that strengthen local identity
- High quality and attractive places
- Public amenities that are attractive and functional

The *Downtown Public Realm Plan* and *Streetscape Standards* provides a more detailed design framework based on the goals and objectives established in this section. The plan also includes guidelines, standards and specifications for Downtown Streetscapes, along with priority public realm improvements and a detailed catalogue of furnishings, materials and colours. In this way, the Downtown Public Realm Plan clarifies important requirements for public spaces, waterfront and street design to both public and private sector professionals engaged in the facilitation, design, approvals and implementation of public realm improvements and infrastructure.



Note:
Where Character Area boundary falls along the street, both sides of the street should follow the same character guidelines.

STREETSCAPE – OBJECTIVES

Collectively, the streets in the Downtown Core Area comprise the largest component of open space, and are one of the most important elements in shaping the public realm through their design and interface with adjacent buildings. The policies and actions for streetscapes contained in this Plan address the following objectives:

1. That the Downtown Core Area contains pedestrian-friendly streetscapes that are inviting and active.
2. That streetscapes are legible, attractive and strengthen local identity.
3. That streetscape improvements provide a physical environment that supports and benefits businesses.
4. That the urban tree canopy is enhanced with tree-lined streets.
5. That public amenities and streetscape improvements are appropriate for the function and character of each area.
6. That wider sidewalks are provided where possible.

STREETSCAPE – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

6.22. Ensure that any roadway improvements to the public right-of-way or any private development adjacent to public right-of-ways within the Downtown Core Area consider the Public Realm Street Typology illustrated in Map 31 and the Sidewalk Width Guidelines contained in Appendix 3.

6.23. Recognize that functional requirements, existing street dimensions and physical conditions may constrain achievement of the Sidewalk Width Guidelines in Appendix 3.

6.24. Review and update the City's *zoning bylaws* and other related technical design standards for compatibility with Sidewalk Width Guidelines contained in Appendix 3.

Carefully designed streetscapes are an important amenity for residents, visitors and businesses.

PARKS, PLAZAS AND OPEN SPACE

Parks, plazas and open spaces are important components of complete communities. These spaces exist in a variety of forms and offer a range of functions that respond to the surrounding context. Collectively, these spaces provide community identity, encourage social interaction and enhance community livability and health.

Forecasts for the Downtown Core Area anticipate approximately an additional 10,000 residents over the next 30 years, which will require the provision of additional parks and open spaces that are well designed, accommodate a range of passive and active activities, and contribute positively to the public realm. In response to this forecast growth, the Downtown Core Area Plan identifies the provision of a community park near Barclay Point in the Rock Bay District that will function as a city-wide public amenity due to its prominent waterfront location and connection to the Harbour Pathway. Smaller scale neighbourhood parks are also identified for the North Park and Harris Green neighbourhoods as well as two strategically located urban plazas to serve the north end of Downtown and Harris Green.

PARKS, PLAZAS AND OPEN SPACE – OBJECTIVES

The policies and actions for parks, plazas and open spaces collectively serve to address the following objectives:

1. That a network of parks, plazas and open spaces are located strategically to benefit residents, visitors and businesses within the Downtown Core Area.
2. That new parks, plazas and open space are provided in areas that are currently deficient and where increased growth is anticipated
3. That parks, plazas and open spaces are connected and integrated with the surrounding context.
4. That surrounding buildings give positive definition and frame parks, plazas and open spaces.
5 That parks, plazas and open spaces are provided through private development, public initiatives or through public/private partnerships.
6. That parks, plazas and open spaces are distributed within a five-minute (500 metres) walking time from each other.

PARKS, PLAZAS AND OPEN SPACE – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

NEW PARKS, PLAZAS AND OPEN SPACE

6.25. Enhance the Downtown Core Area with a system of parks, plazas and public open spaces as identified in Map 27, and described in this Plan.

6.26. Establish a new community park that is at least 2 hectares (5 acres) in size along the waterfront near Barclay Point that serves as a public amenity space for the various surrounding neighbourhoods and that includes a direct connection to the Harbour Pathway as identified in Map 27.

6.27. Establish two new neighbourhood parks, that are at least 0.5 hectares (1.2 acres) in size in the North Park neighbourhood and in the Harris Green neighbourhood as identified in Map 27.

6.28. Establish two new urban plazas as a component of private development that are generally 800 m^2 to 1200 m^2 in size to provide formal open space within the north end of Downtown along Douglas Street and within the Harris Green neighbourhood commercial centre as identified in Map 27.

LOCATION

6.29. Ensure that new parks, plazas and open space are located along prominent or active streets in order to contribute to street vitality and to improve their visibility.

6.30. Wherever possible, locate parks, plazas and open spaces on corner locations with a south to south/west exposure to maximize access to sunlight.

6.31. Consider locations for parks, plazas and open spaces that are within close proximity to major transit stations and interchanges, where possible.

6.32. Where possible, locate urban plazas within close proximity and with direct connections to key cultural, recreational or institutional facilities.

CONNECTIVITY

6.33. Ensure that parks, plazas and open spaces are directly adjacent to and provide direct access to the pedestrian network, cycling network or Greenways.

6.34. Where an urban plaza is not located on a corner site, consider a direct connection to a through-block walkway or a mid-block street crossing.

WEATHER PROTECTION

6.35. Incorporate weather protection elements such as canopies and awnings on building faces that are located directly adjacent to a park, plaza or open space.

6.36. Ensure that seating, play areas and other public amenities are located and designed to provide protection from the elements including wind and rain.

DESIGN QUALITY

6.37. Encourage the use of high quality finishing materials with detailed architectural quality.

6.38. Ensure that all new parks, plazas and open spaces are individually designed to reflect and complement the surrounding context and to provide a distinctive identity and character.

6.39. Ensure that the overall design, layout and materials result in attractive, identifiable and welcoming spaces.

VISIBILITY AND ACCESS

6.40. Plazas should be designed to provide a relatively flat central area with minimal grade change to encourage pedestrian flow and improve visual sightlines.

6.41. Where a plaza integrates terraced or stepped areas, locate these along the perimeter to provide views across the plaza.

6.42. Ensure that all parks, plazas and open spaces are designed to allow access and use by people with varying mobility needs.

SAFETY

6.43. Consider integrating the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles along with a range of other design elements to animate and improve the attractiveness, safety and usability all new parks, plazas and open spaces including:

6.43.1. Entrances that are easily identifiable from the street level.

6.43.2. Clear sightlines.

6.43.3. Pedestrian-scale lighting.

6.43.4. Adjacent active commercial uses.

6.43.5. Well-designed landscaping that serves to demarcate public and private areas and avoids obscuring sightlines.

6.43.6. Integration of signs and pedestrian network maps to provide orientation to key destinations for pedestrians.

ANIMATION

6.44. Consider designs that integrate public amenities that are appropriate for the surrounding context and function of the park, plaza or open space.

6.45. Community parks should include the provision of sports fields, washrooms, playgrounds, parking areas, bicycle racks, walkways, seating and viewing areas.

6.46. Neighbourhood parks may include the provision of play equipment, sport courts, pathways, open grass, bicycle racks and seating.

6.47. Consider the use and design of unique public amenities to enhance the identity and character of parks, plazas and open spaces. Examples of unique public amenities include water features, public art, architecturally designed play equipment, public memorials, wayfinding signage, ornamental landscaping and lighting features.

6.48. Ensure that parks, plazas and open spaces are designed to accommodate a range of both passive and active uses and functions that are appropriate for the location, type and scale of space.

6.49. Ensure that the design of parks, plazas and open spaces considers the ability to accommodate special events, entertainment and community activities that are appropriate for the location, type and scale of space.

6.50. Support the programming of year-round and seasonal special events and activities in parks, plazas and open spaces.

6.51. Consider the provision of temporary leasable space within City-owned urban plazas that can be used to accommodate uses and activities that provide a direct benefit to the vitality of the plazas such as seasonal patio seating, seasonal markets or special events.

URBAN PLAZA ACQUISITION

6.52. The City of Victoria may consider providing additional density, over and above the base level density, up to the maximum density level specified in this Plan, to new developments that enter into an agreement as a part of a rezoning application to construct an urban plaza within the strategic locations identified in Map 27 and that reflect the design criteria described in this Plan.

Example of a well designed urban plaza.

MINOR PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

Minor Public Open Spaces refer to uniquely designed compact areas that are located on public land. These spaces are generally compact in size in order to allow for their development in a multitude of public locations. Minor open spaces are smaller and less prominent than plazas or parks, and are generally located strategically to enhance the surrounding public realm and to complement the adjacent uses and activities.

LOCATION

6.53. Support the development of Minor Public Open Spaces, as a component of streetscape improvements where they are located on public land such as unused sections of road right-of-way, generally within the areas identified on Map 27.

6.54. Where possible, locate Minor Public Open Spaces adjacent to cultural, recreational or institutional facilities.

DESIGN

6.55. Consider distinctive identity features such as special paving, landscaping, public art and water features.

6.56. Consider overall designs that complement the surrounding buildings and streetscapes.

6.57. Limit fencing, windscreens or planters, so that spaces will be perceived as accessible public areas and are integrated well with the pedestrian network.

6.58. Include landscaping to enrich spaces, in balance with intended uses and context.

Example of a Minor Open Space integrated into the streetscape.

SAFETY

6.59. Consider Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to enhance safety and security.

6.60. Integrate strategically located and designed pedestrian scale lighting to enhance the visual appearance of the Minor Public Open Space and to improve security and safety.

ACTIVITY

6.61. Consider designs that accommodate active uses such as outdoor seating, temporary markets, or programmed entertainment.

WATERFRONT PUBLIC OUTLOOKS

Waterfront Public Outlooks include various compact spaces, located and designed for public vantage points along Victoria's Harbour and are generally linked by the Harbour Pathway.

WATERFRONT OUTLOOKS POLICIES AND ACTIONS

LOCATION

6.62. Incorporate publicly accessible Waterfront Public Outlooks, as components of redevelopment along the waterfront between Ship Point and Laurel Point as well as on the east and west side of the Johnson Street Bridge, and along the Harbour Pathway as illustrated in Map 27.

DESIGN

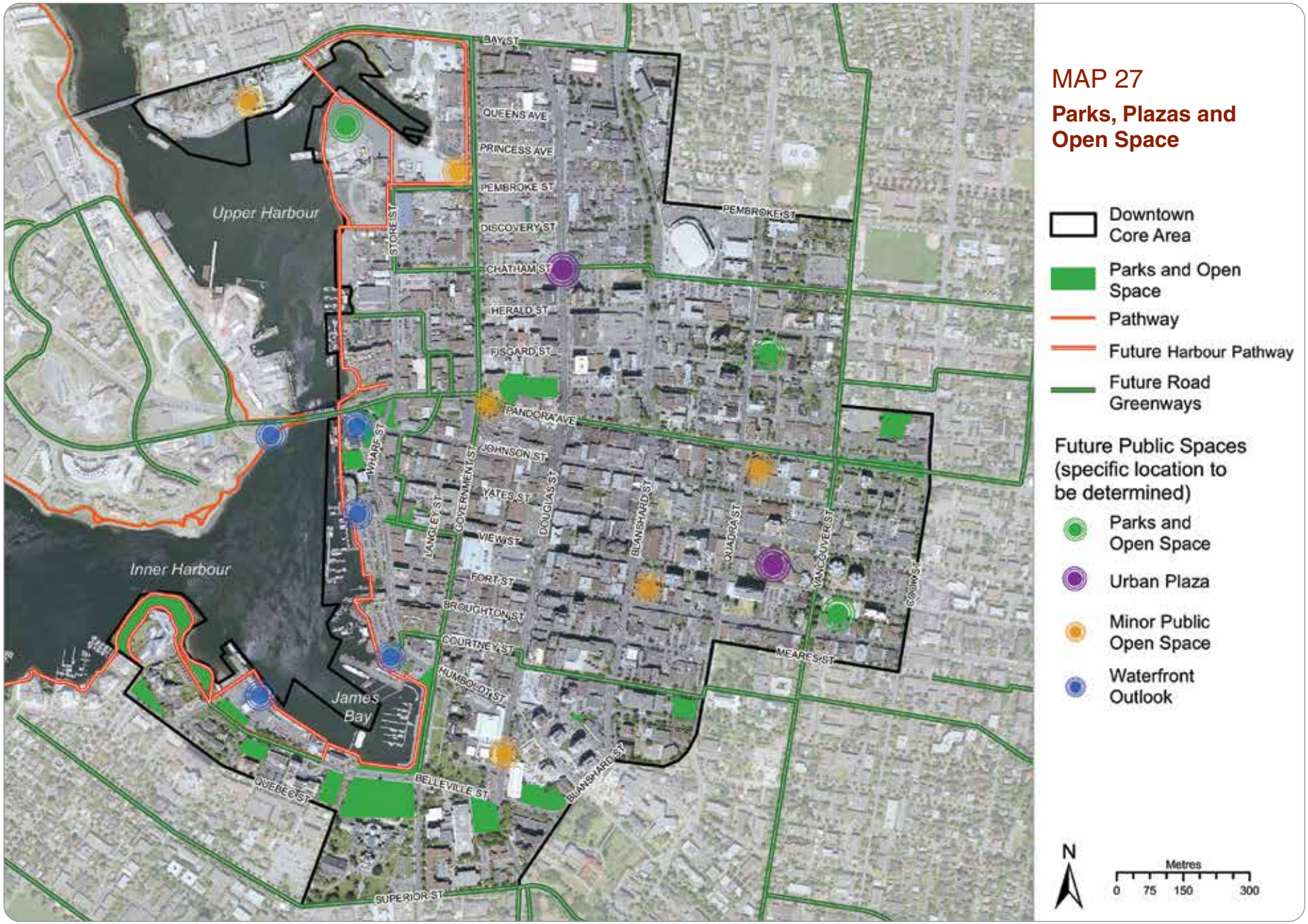
6.63. Consider designs that take advantage of the views across the Harbour.

6.64. Consider Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to enhance safety and security.

6.65. Integrate strategically located and designed pedestrian scale lighting to enhance the visual appearance of the waterfront outlook and to improve security and safety.

6.66. Consider the development of Waterfront Outlooks on docks and wharves where they have direct connections to the Harbour Pathway and are publicly accessible.

Examples above of publicly accessible waterfront outlooks.


MAP 27
Parks, Plazas and Open Space
Downtown Core Area
Parks and Open Space
Pathway
Future Harbour Pathway
Future Road Greenways
Future Public Spaces (specific location to be determined)
Parks and Open Space
Urban Plaza
Minor Public Open Space
Waterfront Outlook
N
Metres
0 75 150 300
Upper Harbour
Inner Harbour
James Bay
BAY ST
QUEENS AVE
PRINCESS AVE
PEMBROKE ST
DISCOVERY ST
CHATHAM ST
HERALD ST
FISGARD ST
PANDORA AVE
JOHNSON ST
YATES ST
VIEW ST
FORT ST
BROUGHTON ST
COURTNEY ST
HUMBOLDT ST
BELLEVILLE ST
QUEBEC ST
SUPERIOR ST
MEARES ST
STORE ST
WHARF ST
LANGLEY ST
GOVERNMENT ST
DOUGLAS ST
BLANSHARD ST
QUADRA ST
VANCOUVER ST
COOK ST

SPECIAL URBAN DESIGN AREAS

As part of achieving the objectives of the public realm strategy, several unique places are identified that present opportunities for physical improvements and design considerations to further enhance the public realm. These places vary in size and context from the formal setting of the Inner Harbour to the undeveloped lands around Rock Bay to the small scale design of the new pedestrian plaza space adjacent to the Victoria Conservatory of Music.

INNER HARBOUR CAUSEWAY AREA

Most Victorians and visitors to the city identify the Inner Harbour generally as the area between Ship Point and the Coho Ferry Terminal. This area is one of the most commonly recognized locations in Victoria, primarily due to the waterfront setting and concentration of prominent landmark buildings including the Empress Hotel, the Parliament Buildings, the CPR Steamship Terminal and the Royal BC Museum. These buildings, along with a host of other hotels, tourist attractions, open spaces and distinctive streetscaping serve to reinforce the area's role as a gateway to the city, a location for special events and the focus of tourism and cultural activities.

It is a responsibility for urban design initiatives to continue to recognize and respond appropriately to reinforce the unique character, built form, landmarks and primary functions of this area in an effort to maintain the Inner Harbour as Victoria's most iconic urban landscape.

Victoria's iconic Harbour Causeway attracts visitors and special events year-round.

INNER HARBOUR – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

6.67. New development should not detract from or have negative impacts on the visual or historic integrity of the Inner Harbour.

6.68. Develop a detailed public realm improvement plan for the Inner Harbour which identifies specific opportunities for improving the pedestrian environment through:

- Sidewalk widening and repaving;
- Distinctive paving materials and street improvements;
- Provision for temporary alternate uses of streets, to act as pedestrian areas for large scale events; and
- Human-scaled public amenities and improved public access to the water.

6.69. Support the location of major festivals, celebrations and special events within the Inner Harbour in order to provide them with a strong visual presence, an attractive and centralized location and the opportunity to support the local economy.

6.70. Support temporary street closures within the Inner Harbour where they are needed to accommodate major festivals or special events.

Aerial view of Inner Harbour area.

New developments should respond to the surrounding architectural context of the Inner Harbour as defined by street walls, facade rhythm and horizontal cornice lines.

Conceptual illustration of the original urban design principles (urban design geometries) for the Inner Harbour as they relate to the spatial placement of buildings focused on the prominence of the Parliament Building, Empress Hotel, and the CPR Steamship Terminal.

CENTENNIAL SQUARE

As Victoria's central civic public space and home to leading civic, institutional and cultural facilities, Centennial Square should continue to be revitalized with active, pedestrian-generating uses at grade and beautified with new buildings, landscaping and public art that frame and better define the Square and respecting the existing character-defining elements.

CENTENNIAL SQUARE – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

6.71. Continue to build upon revitalization policies and initiatives for Centennial Square that result in the following urban design objectives:

- 6.71.1. Emphasize the role and function of Centennial Square as a formal civic open space through appropriate design;
- 6.71.2. Integrate design elements and public amenities that provide a direct benefit to people of all ages;
- 6.71.3. Provide well-defined, prominent and direct pedestrian connections between the Square and the surrounding streets;
- 6.71.4. Enhance public safety, natural surveillance and visibility;
- 6.71.5. Accommodate a range of activities and special events;
- 6.71.6. Accommodate comfortable space to encourage social interaction and passive activities; and
- 6.71.7. Complement Spirit Square and the Spirit Stage behind the McPherson Theatre.

6.72. Integrate new civic uses such as a public library and the revitalization of City Hall into an overall design for the Square.

6.73. Provide a blend of hard and soft landscaping as well as a safe and well-designed children's play area.

6.74. Encourage surrounding buildings to include active commercial uses such as restaurants and cafés that have direct access from the Square as well as outdoor seating within the Square.

6.75. Replace the existing public washrooms with new public washrooms that are secure, easily identifiable and accessible during daytime and nighttime, when redevelopment occurs.

6.76. Promote and program a range of special events and public activities throughout the year.

6.77. Ensure that the physical design and amenities encourage use of the Square during the day and evening in all seasons.

6.78. Redevelopment of the Centennial Square Parkade should result in public parking being located below grade with more active commercial and cultural uses located above grade.

6.79. Provide clear visual connections between the Centennial Square and surrounding streets.

Centennial Square hosts year-round special events and festivals.

Conceptual illustration of potential improvements to Centennial Square.

BASTION SQUARE

Bastion Square, stretching between Wharf Street and Government Street, is the site of the original Fort Victoria, making it one of the most important heritage areas in Victoria. Through various revitalization efforts over the past few decades, Bastion Square has been designed and enhanced to function as a public square, surrounded by restaurants, retail stores, art galleries and offices. Bastion Square is also animated throughout the spring, summer and fall with special events including an artisans market. Although Bastion Square is well-recognized and offers an attractive setting, there remain several opportunities to further enhance the design of the Square including its integration with the surrounding context to improve vitality on the Square during daytime and night time.

BASTION SQUARE – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

6.80. Consider the integration of additional public seating to take advantage of the views across the Inner Harbour.

6.81. Ensure that the master planning and redevelopment of the waterfront lands along the Wharf Street parking lot include the provision for a well-designed exterior pedestrian connection between the waterfront and Bastion Square.

6.82. Encourage surrounding buildings to include active commercial uses such as restaurants and cafés that have direct access from Bastion Square as well as outdoor seating within the Square.

6.83. Ensure that any public realm improvements or development directly adjacent to Bastion Square serve to enhance public safety, natural surveillance and visibility within the Square.

6.84. Consider the provision of public amenities and public realm improvements that encourage social interaction and passive activities within the Square.

6.85. Consider the provision of public washrooms that are secure, easily identifiable and accessible during daytime and night time.

6.86. Promote and program a range of special events and public activities throughout the year.

6.87. Ensure that the physical design and amenities within Bastion Square encourage positive activity during the day and evening in all seasons.

6.88. Develop a comprehensive urban design plan to identify specific strategies to better integrate Chancery Lane, Court Alley, Commercial Alley and Helmcken Alley as extensions of Bastion Square through public realm improvements.

6.89. Ensure any future redevelopment of the City-owned Yates Street Parkade provides a direct mid-block pedestrian connection to Bastion Square.

Public realm improvements should support Bastion Square as a focus for special events and public activities throughout the year.

PANDORA GREEN

Pandora Green generally refers to the landscaped area located along the three blocks of Pandora Avenue between Quadra Street and Chambers Street. Greens are generally located within or adjacent to roadways and include medians, traffic islands, and major boulevards where the primary function is to provide character to the roadway and the adjacent area.

Pandora Green functions as a landscaped Gateway into the downtown and is anchored by the historic First Church of Christ Scientist on the east side and the Victoria Conservatory of Music on the west side. Although the entire Green is not located within the boundary of the Downtown Core Area, it is imperative that any urban design initiatives are evaluated in terms of their impact and benefit on the Green as a whole, regardless of its location between neighbourhood boundaries. The policies and actions described in this Plan seek to guide the transformation of this area into a memorable Green that is integrated with the surrounding buildings, provides opportunities for an attractive landscaped area and evolves into a well-used landscaped urban oasis for local residents and businesses.

PANDORA GREEN – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

6.90. Develop a master plan for the overall redesign and revitalization of Pandora Green that maintains its functionality as a median while enhancing the public realm and results in the following urban design objectives:

- 6.90.1. Emphasizes the role and function of the Green as a formal landscaped gateway or entry into the Downtown through comprehensive design;
- 6.90.2. Provides well-defined and direct pedestrian connections along the Green and across Pandora Avenue;
- 6.90.3. Enhances public safety, natural surveillance and visibility;
- 6.90.4. Accommodates openly visible space to encourage social interaction;
- 6.90.5. Incorporates design elements, landscaping and public amenities that encourage the public use of the Green;
- 6.90.6. Complements and encourages the growth of adjacent commercial and residential uses along Pandora Avenue; and
- 6.90.7. Identifies a program of specific long-term and short-term public realm improvements.

6.91. Public realm improvements within the Green should consider the overall relationship and benefit to the entire Green.

6.92. Public realm improvements such as paving, lighting, landscaping and street furniture should have a consistent appearance throughout the length of the Green.

6.93. Ensure that Pandora Green is integrated and connected with the pedestrian network through the addition of new crosswalks to cross Cook, Vancouver and Quadra Streets.

6.94. Ensure that mature and replacement trees are managed to ensure that the formal tree-planting pattern is retained.

6.95. Repair damaged sidewalks with updated paving and accessibility features.

6.96. Provide well-designed and dedicated bike lanes along Pandora Avenue.

6.97. Accent the Green with seasonal planting and improved landscaping.

6.98. Ensure that new developments along Pandora Avenue serve to frame the area and are oriented toward the Green to provide natural surveillance.

Looking west along Pandora Green.

GOVERNMENT STREET MALL

In its current form, the Government Street Mall is generally defined as the portion of Government Street between Humboldt Street and Yates Street. This Plan identifies its future extension northward to Pembroke Street. Its location through the Old Town Area serves as the primary focus for retail and tourism-related activities as well as special events. The human-scaled buildings along with the streetscape design help to attract businesses and visitors along this area. In order to build upon the existing character of the Government Street Mall, the policies and actions described in this Plan support the northward extension of the Mall to the Rock Bay District through streetscape design, new development and supportive land use.

GOVERNMENT STREET MALL – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

6.99. Implement the phased extension of the Government Street Mall northwards, first to Centennial Square and Chinatown, then to the Rock Bay District including a link with a future waterfront community park at Rock Bay.

6.100. Maintain and improve public pedestrian access between the Government Street Mall and the Harbour Pathway at multiple locations throughout the entire length as they are both developed and extended northward, allowing for a variety of pedestrian circuits.

6.101. Ensure that the design of streetscape improvements to Belleville Street, the Inner Harbour Causeway and Government Street encourage a seamless pedestrian flow between these areas.

6.102. Consider public realm design options to provide priority to pedestrians, with supporting cycling, transit, delivery, parking and general purpose traffic consistent with Appendix 3.

6.103. Coordinate the upgrading of underground services to support future surrounding new development with the Mall extension.

6.104. Encourage the location of active commercial uses at the street level with direct access to Government Street.

6.105. Avoid underground parkade entrances on Government Street where possible.

6.106. Provide infrastructure to support seasonal and special event closures.

6.107. Ensure street furnishings exhibit designs unique to the Mall.

6.108. Establish generous tree planting and green infrastructure features.

6.109. Work with partners to develop cost estimates, a staged implementation schedule, and funding mechanisms to undertake the Government Street Mall extension over time.

6.110. Develop, with partners, a program of active special uses and events with a seasonal orientation and tie in with commercial activities and public holidays.

6.111. Develop a partnership program to support building facade and storefront illumination to complement street lighting.

6.112. Undertake a refresh of streetscape furnishings and materials from Humboldt Street to Yates Street.

6.113. Develop a succession plan for replacing existing trees as required. Consider replacement tree species with canopies that have some transparency to allow opportunities to view adjacent heritage buildings or their character-defining elements.

6.114. Implement further pedestrian priority measures including consideration of temporary car-free zones, expanded patio spaces, wayfinding, additional seating and public art.

6.115. Collaborate with local Indigenous partners, to express Lekwungen culture, past, present, and future through streetscape design, tree and plant selections, cultural interpretation, and programming.

6.116. Explore opportunity to re-establish two-way vehicle and bicycle travel within a slow and shared street environment.

Looking south along Government Street.

ROCK BAY

Rock Bay is the formal name that refers to the water body along the Upper Harbour near Barclay Point. In its current state, the lands adjacent to Rock Bay are in the midst of undergoing one of the most complex remediation projects in British Columbia. Rock Bay is identified in this Plan as a special urban design area due to its waterfront location, its proximity to the Rock Bay District which is identified as a major employment centre, as well as its role as a destination for the Harbour Pathway through a future waterfront community park.

The policies and actions in this Plan are intended to support the transformation of Rock Bay into an attractive employment centre that also supports residential opportunities, recreation, leisure and arts and culture.

ROCK BAY – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

6.117. Continue to identify opportunities to acquire waterfront land and develop a community park within the Rock Bay District through the direct purchase of land and through negotiation with private land owners.

6.118. Ensure that the community park is located and designed to provide direct connection and integration with the Harbour Pathway.

6.119. Design the community park to function as a public amenity for the surrounding communities as well as a city-wide destination due to its unique waterfront location and connection to the Harbour Pathway.

6.120. Develop a detailed public realm improvement plan for the Rock Bay District as part of the Rock Bay local area plan which addresses opportunities for:

- Distinctive treatment of the waterfront area;
- Sidewalk widening;
- Distinctive paving materials; and
- Human-scale public amenities and improved public access to the water; and
- Integration of heritage industrial buildings as a component of enhancing the public realm and defining the local character.
- Water access by marine-dependent businesses.

6.121. Design streets, sidewalks, plazas, parks and marine facilities to support and reflect the area's identity as an employment area.

6.122. New building design should integrate night lighting effects to enrich the visual presence of the Harbour.

6.123. Consider opportunities for providing additional public access to the waterfront, where appropriate, as part of new development along the Rock Bay waterfront area.

Aerial view of Rock Bay area.

GATEWAYS – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

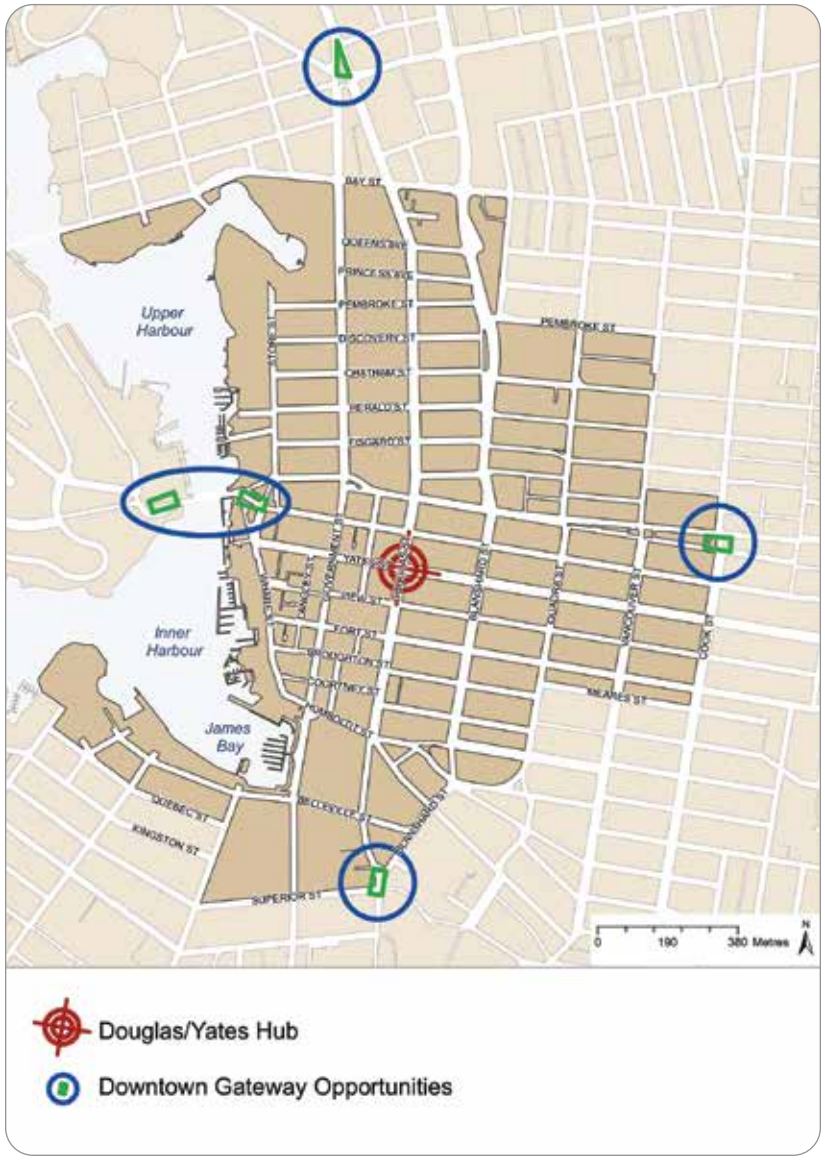
6.124. Design and develop urban gateways that signal and celebrate arrival to the Downtown Core Area, at the four general locations identified in Map 28.

6.125. Gateways should be located along primary roadways on City-owned land

6.126. Ensure gateways are individually designed to include landscaping, sculptural elements, fountains, lighting, or signage, or any combination of these elements.

6.127. Ensure gateways are designed to provide a visual reference for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.

Appropriately scaled public art can be used at gateway locations.



Map 28: Potential Gateway Locations

BUILT FORM

Built form refers to the physical shape, size, mass and design of individual buildings. It is important that the built form serves to complement the local context as well as provide a positive interface with the public realm and the space between individual buildings.

BUILDING HEIGHT – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

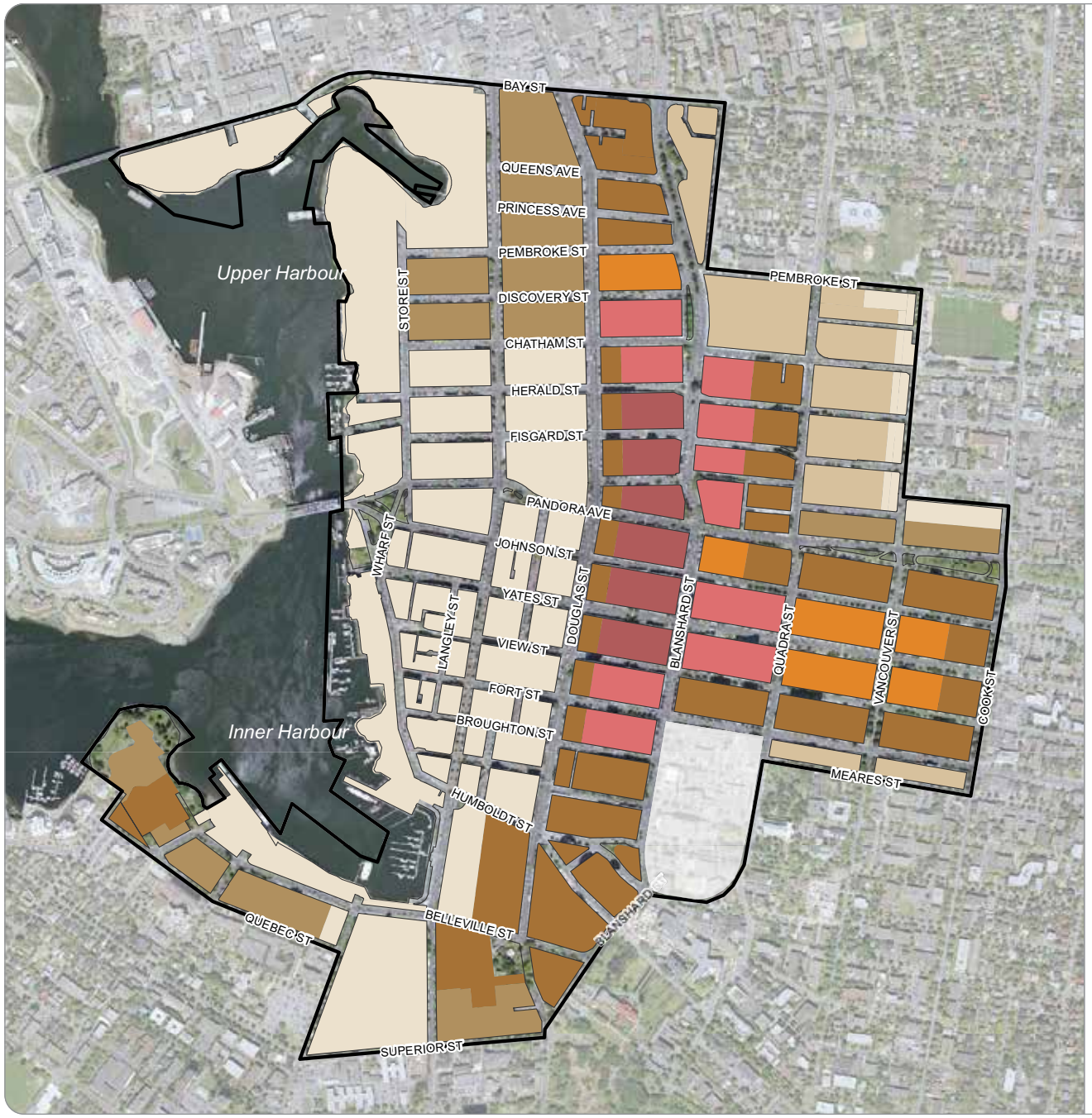
6.128. Review and amend the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* to reflect the maximum building heights consistent with the maximum building height limits described in Map 29.

6.129. Consider the maximum building heights described in Map 29 in the evaluation of rezoning applications.

6.130. Maintain lower building heights within the Historic Commercial District as well as along the waterfront in order to reflect the local topography.

6.131. Locate taller buildings primarily within the geographic setting of the Central Business District.

Building height and form should relate to the local context and advance the objectives of the Downtown Core Area Plan.



MAP 29

Maximum Building Heights

Maximum Building Height	Approximate Number of Commerical Storeys	Approximate Number of Residential Storeys
72m	19	24
60m	15	20
50m	13	17
45m	11	15
30m	8	10
20m	5	6
15m	4	5

See Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan (2019) for building height policies.

Note: Maximum building heights are subject to additional building design guidelines described in this Plan.

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UPDATED: MAY 9, 2012

heritage 7

INTRODUCTION

Heritage conservation is about retaining places that matter to the community for physical qualities, and in relation to both collective memory and contemporary uses. Its purpose is to retain, protect and improve real property with aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social or spiritual value, and heritage character, as a public benefit.

This Plan seeks to continue to strike a balance between heritage conservation and new development as the Downtown Core Area grows significantly over the next thirty years. Its heritage policies seek to provide guidance that builds on Victoria's achievements in heritage protection, sensitive infill and new additions. The Plan guides changes to the historic environment as a consideration in placemaking at varying scales, from Heritage Conservation Areas, to streetscapes and open spaces, to buildings and sites. Policies also identify incentives and community engagement to help conserve the heritage value of Downtown Core Area Districts.

HERITAGE – DOWNTOWN CORE AREA

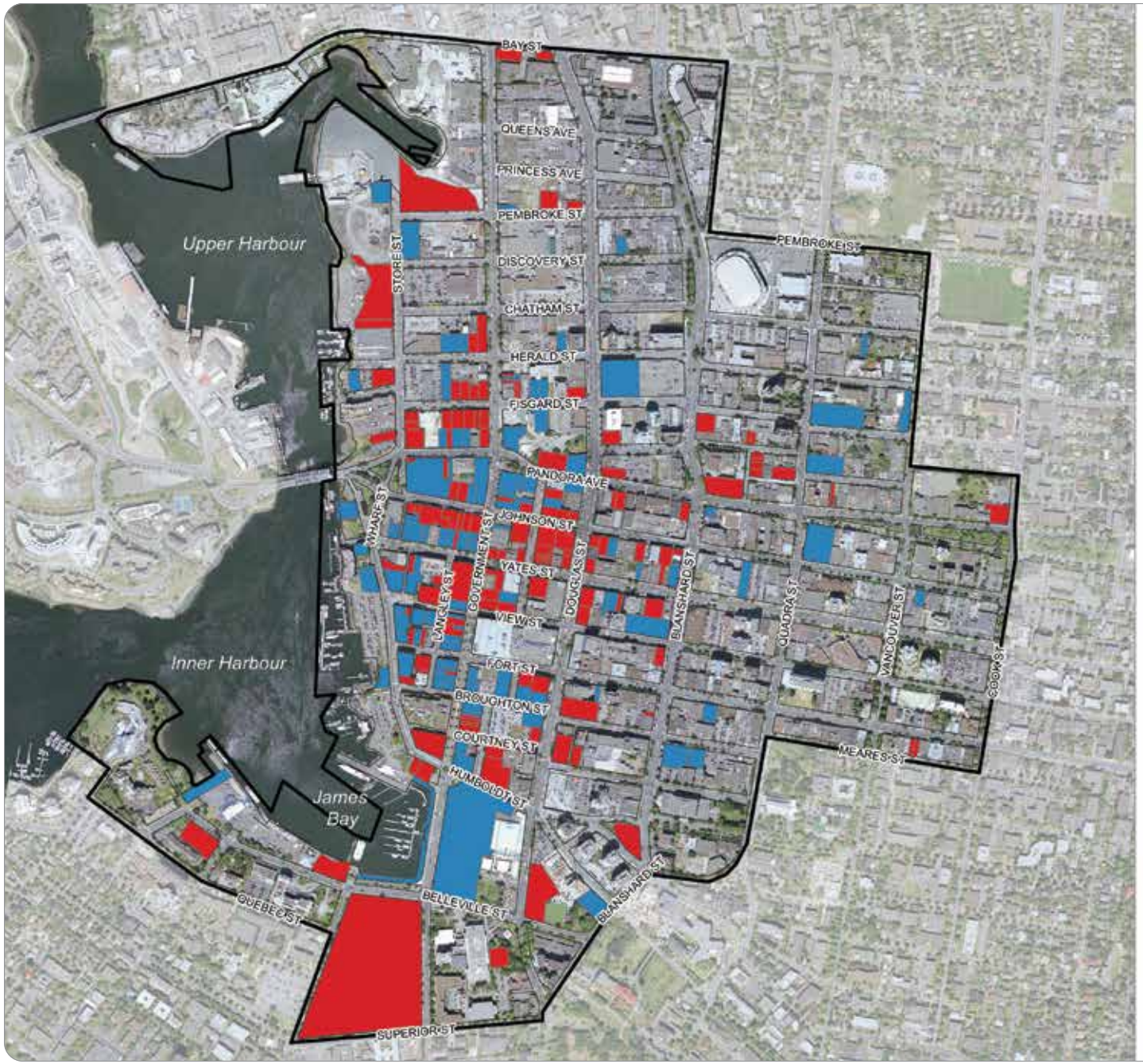
Much of the picturesque quality of Victoria is associated with its conservation areas and landmarks, some of which date from early colonial settlement. Since the 1970s, policies have encouraged new development in the Downtown Core Area through sensitive infill and new additions, while retaining and enhancing the heritage value and unique character of special places, such as Bastion Square, Centennial Square and Chinatown National Historic District.

The Downtown Core Area contains more than 200 heritage properties, including those identified as landmarks in this Plan such as the Provincial Parliament Buildings, Empress Hotel and Canadian Pacific Railway Steamship Terminal (SEE MAP 33). The Historic Commercial District is generally characterized by a "saw tooth" one-to-five storey skyline of Victorian and Edwardian architecture, which partially extends into the Inner Harbour District. Heritage is also a significant element of the character of the Central Business District and Residential Mixed-Use District, where there is a cluster of church spires on and near Quadra Street. The Rock Bay District contains the majority of the last remaining early industrial buildings.

HERITAGE – OBJECTIVES

The heritage policies that are contained in this Plan seek to retain and enhance the presence and heritage value, character of areas, districts, streetscapes, open spaces, buildings, sites and features in the Downtown Core Area. Collectively these policies address the following objectives:

1. Retain, protect and improve real property with aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social or spiritual value and heritage character as a benefit to the public.
2. Development and heritage conservation are balanced through sensitive new infill and property additions that respond to the heritage value and character of Downtown Core Area Districts.
3. Heritage conservation and urban design are integrated in streetscaping and open spaces in beautification, arts and cultural programming and public history initiatives.



MAP 30

Downtown Core Area Properties Listed on the City of Victoria Heritage Register

(Properties identified as of October 3, 2013. Map is subject to change)

- Downtown Core Area
- Registered Heritage Property
- Designated Heritage Property

Disclaimer: This map is intended for illustrative purposes only and is subject to change. Please contact the City of Victoria for up-to-date information related to the status and location of heritage property.

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4. Properties with heritage value are identified and selected for retention and protection through community engagement.
5. City of Victoria support for the conservation and celebration of properties with heritage value is maintained and enhanced.

AREAS AND DISTRICTS – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

7.1. Refer to the applicable design guidelines in rezoning and permit review processes in Development Permit Areas and Heritage Conservation Areas, where these are regulated and controlled within the Downtown Core Area.

7.2. Continue to balance the demand for new development and heritage conservation in the Downtown Core Area.

7.3. Conserve heritage values of the Downtown Core Area and its character-defining elements, such as individual buildings, collections of buildings, streetscapes, structures and features.

7.4. Maintain, develop and enhance urban design guidelines for exterior alterations, new additions and infill development within Heritage Conservation Areas and, where relevant, Development Permit Areas, in the Downtown Core Area.

7.5. Produce and update, as required, Statements of Significance for Heritage Conservation Areas within the Downtown Core Area.

7.6. Continue to support zoning in the Historic Commercial District and Inner Harbour District that contributes to conservation of heritage values in these areas.

7.7. Continue to support the conversion of the upper storeys of heritage-designated property from non-residential uses to residential uses in strategic locations within the Downtown Core Area that serve to support the policies of this Plan.

7.8. Continue to support the rehabilitation of heritage-designated property that is non-residential such as office and hotel, in strategic locations within the Downtown Core Area that serve to support the policies of this Plan.

7.9. Retain some capacity for small-scale office use in the upper storeys of properties in the Historic Commercial District.

7.10. Continue to identify, protect and conserve heritage property and areas in the Residential Mixed-Use District, particularly the landmarks on and near Quadra Street, as identified in this Plan.

7.11. Identify, protect and conserve industrial heritage property in the Rock Bay District.

STREETSCAPES AND OPEN SPACE – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

7.12. Maintain lower scale building forms along the waterfront adjacent to Store Street, Wharf Street, Government Street and Belleville Street, and in these locations support new development with form and character that enhances the heritage value of the Historic Commercial District.

7.13. Maintain and enhance the existing network of through-block walkways in the Historic Commercial District, with special consideration of the heritage value of public and public-private open spaces in the Chinatown National Historic District.

7.14. Enhance the place character of Downtown Core Area Districts by celebrating heritage through urban design features such as art, banners, street furniture, lighting and plantings.

7.15. Seek opportunities to acknowledge and integrate the culture, values and heritage of First Peoples in design and celebration of public space, particularly in the Historic Commercial District and the Inner Harbour District.

7.16. Work with diverse partners on public history projects through improvements on public lands, and private lands, such as plaques, banners, installations and interpretative displays.

7.17. Continue to support festivals, celebrations and special events at major open spaces in the Historic Commercial District and Inner Harbour District including Bastion Square, Centennial Square (Spirit Square) and along the waterfront.

BUILDINGS AND SITES – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

7.18. Support new development that conserves and enhances the form, character and features of heritage property and areas, where controlled and regulated in the Downtown Core Area.

7.19. Give consideration to tools available under legislation to conserve heritage property in the Downtown Core Area, including, but not limited to heritage designation bylaws, heritage register listings, temporary protection, heritage alteration permits, heritage revitalization agreements, design guidelines and protection of views of heritage landmarks from public vantage points as identified in this Plan.

7.20. Continue to work with the private sector to identify, protect and conserve property and areas with heritage value in the Downtown Core Area.

7.21. Require a Heritage Conservation Plan, as appropriate, and heritage impact assessment, if relevant, where heritage alteration permits, heritage revitalization agreements or rezonings that involve a protected heritage property in the Downtown Core Area.

7.22. Encourage new development to avoid the demolition of a protected heritage property, or one or more of its facades, where the exterior alterations are assessed to significantly damage the heritage value of the property or an area, and where facade retention is feasible in conjunction with other policies for Downtown Core Area Districts in this Plan.

7.23. Increases to density either through a rezoning application or through the provisions of the density bonus system described in this Plan should not be supported for any parcel or site where a heritage property has been demolished.

7.24. Real property that is, or was, subject to a heritage designation bylaw or that is listed on the City of Victoria Heritage Register is ineligible for the density bonus provisions in this Plan.

7.25. Accumulate information about seismic conditions of all property with heritage value or character in the Downtown Core Area, particularly the landmarks identified in this Plan, and property in the Historic Commercial District and Inner Harbour District.

7.26. Encourage owners of property with heritage value or character in the Downtown Core Area, particularly landmarks or those in the Historic Commercial District and Inner Harbour District, to upgrade the seismic conditions of buildings and structures.

7.27. Evaluate the heritage value of public and private property in the Downtown Core Area, and propose new additions to the Heritage Register based on their significance.

7.28. Produce and update, as required, Statements of Significance for properties listed on the Heritage Register in the Downtown Core Area.

HERITAGE INCENTIVES – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

7.29. Continue and enhance incentives for heritage conservation such as, tax incentives, parking variances and other zoning variances, where broadly consistent with the policies for each District of the Downtown Core Area that are provided in this Plan.

7.30. Maintain and develop financial incentives for building rehabilitation, particularly seismic upgrading, for eligible heritage-designated commercial, institutional, industrial and residential property in the Downtown Core Area.

7.31. Consider expanding the northern boundary of the eligibility area for heritage tax incentives to include the Rock Bay District, where the building rehabilitation does not involve the conversion of an existing use to a residential use.

7.32. Explore the financial impacts and overall feasibility of extending the duration of heritage tax incentives from a maximum of 10 years to a maximum of 15 years.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

7.33. Engage the public and private sectors including property owners, businesses, organizations, groups and citizens in the Downtown Core Area in local area plan studies to identify locations, buildings, structures and features with heritage value, and ways to conserve and celebrate them.

7.34. Continue to work with the public and private sectors, organizations, groups and citizens to celebrate Victoria's culture and heritage in public realm improvements and festivals and special events, particularly in the Historic Commercial District and Inner Harbour District.

7.35. Partner with the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations to acknowledge and integrate the culture, values and heritage of First Peoples in the Downtown Core Area, particularly in the Historic Commercial District and Inner Harbour District.

energy and environment 8

INTRODUCTION

A critical component of urban planning today is the management of growth and development in a manner that not only maintains and enhances the health of natural ecosystems, but also addresses key issues such as climate change and energy security, and contributes to the overall livability of the urban area. Planning efforts over the past decades have resulted in a Downtown Core Area that is compact, walkable and livable. However, the Downtown Core Area's ability to accommodate further urban intensification and population growth over the next 30 years is dependent on significant improvements to its infrastructure and overall livability, while at the same time ensuring that growth and development are managed carefully to mitigate any potential impact on the area's natural ecosystems and quality of life for residents, visitors and businesses.

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT – OBJECTIVES

The energy and environment policies and actions contained in this Plan collectively address the following objectives:

1. That natural systems are preserved and enhanced as the result of more environmentally sustainable land development and redevelopment, building design and transportation practices.
2. That the Rock Bay District is transformed into a key employment centre that serves as a local model for the integration of green infrastructure related to wastewater, storm water, energy generation and transmission, building design and technology.
3. That green spaces and the urban forest serve to improve the overall livability within the Downtown Core Area.

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

LAND DEVELOPMENT

8.1. Continue to encourage and support higher density development in locations that are within walking distance of frequent and rapid transit corridors within the Downtown Core Area's transit network.

8.2. Encourage the remediation of contaminated sites to accommodate new development and to improve on-site environmental conditions overall, where possible.

8.3. Encourage design and development practices that optimize energy and water efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

8.4. Incorporate low impact development standards such as permeable surfaces, in the design of open spaces and building setbacks to reduce storm water flow.

8.5. Support adaptation and re-use of existing buildings where they result in improved building performance and support the overall land use and development policies of this Plan.

8.6. Encourage building designs that optimize active and passive solar gain.

8.7. Encourage the provision and maintenance of on-site facilities for recyclables, organic materials and general waste in new multi residential, commercial and industrial developments.

TRANSPORTATION

8.8. Continue to support development and transportation systems that encourage alternate modes of transport.

8.9. Employ a range of Transportation Demand Management strategies in the Downtown Core Area.

GREEN SPACES AND URBAN FOREST

8.10. Incorporate storm water management and urban forest management considerations into street redesign projects.

8.11. Encourage on-site development to increase the provision of green spaces, natural surfaces, trees, plants and streetscaping.

8.12. Encourage private and public development to expand and enhance on-site open space and landscaping to address storm water run-off.

8.13. Ensure City zoning regulations and design guidelines include landscaping standards that reduce overall water consumption and encourage native plants and trees.

8.14. Increase the overall urban tree canopy cover where possible in accordance with the goals, objectives and actions of the City's Parks and Open Spaces Masterplan and the Tree Protection Bylaw.

8.15. Encourage projects to incorporate opportunities for urban agriculture.

ENERGY AND EMISSIONS

8.16. Explore methods to encourage and facilitate private and public development to include renewable district energy systems able to serve portions of the Downtown Core Area.

WATER

8.17. Explore methods to encourage and facilitate the retention and re-use of stormwater on site.

HARBOUR AREA

8.18. Explore opportunities in conjunction with waterfront public or private development to restore shoreline ecological conditions and enhance aquatic ecosystems.

ROCK BAY DISTRICT

8.19. Consider the use of development standards and other regulatory tools to improve the overall environmental conditions in the Rock Bay District as a component of the subsequent Rock Bay local area plan.

8.20. Explore the feasibility of establishing a special Development Permit Area in Rock Bay that requires a higher level of environmental performance.

community vitality 9

INTRODUCTION

Vitality in an urban setting is usually defined in three ways:

- Social vitality is a city's ability to make the people who live and work there feel like they belong to or are a part of a community or neighbourhood. This sense of belonging influences many aspects of urban life, including crime rates and community safety.
- Economic vitality is a city's ability to attract and retain businesses and the jobs they bring with them.
- Cultural vitality is a city's ability to provide a range of arts and cultural activities that people value and look for opportunities to become involved in, as active participants, viewers or supporters.
- The Downtown Core Area is the economic and cultural heart not just of the City of Victoria, but of the Capital Region as a whole.

It is the Provincial Capital and site of the Legislative Assembly. It houses the headquarters of many provincial ministries, agencies and Crown corporations. It has the region's largest concentration of employment and is a hub of transportation and commerce. It is home to major cultural institutions and entertainment facilities, and is the Region's primary tourist attraction. The Downtown Core Area also offers the greatest range of goods and services in the Region, with a local market of approximately 12,000 people living within one kilometre of City Hall. No other location in Greater Victoria provides more opportunity for face-to-face communication, interaction and exchange.

But despite these strengths, the Downtown Core Area faces a number of challenges. Homelessness, poverty and issues of social disorder have become entrenched in certain parts of the Downtown Core Area and have contributed to a growing sense of insecurity and despair. Affordable housing is limited. The Downtown Core Area's share of the regional office and retail market continues to decline as suburban communities offer more opportunity for their residents to shop and work closer to home. Established bus-based transit is nearing operational capacity in key high-volume corridors, including Douglas Street. Aging infrastructure and public facilities need to be upgraded or replaced to support future population growth, and the Downtown Core Area needs new attractions to enhance its place as a destination for visitors and tourism.

COMMUNITY VITALITY OBJECTIVES

To help ensure the social, economic and cultural vitality of the Downtown Core Area as it grows over the next 30 years, the community vitality policies contained in this Plan attempt to build on the Area's significant strengths and to realize the opportunities new growth and development can offer. Collectively these policies address the following objectives:

1. That a broader range of housing options are developed within the Downtown Core Area to support a more diverse mix of households.
2. That initiatives to decrease homelessness and increase community safety and civility continue to be supported by both public and private initiatives.

3. That ideas for making the Downtown Core Area more attractive for residents, workers and visitors alike are supported through new or improved public amenities and recreational facilities, as well as expanded arts, cultural and learning options.
4. That the Downtown Core Area continues to diversify and strengthen its employment base and its provision of suitable office space.
5. That improved transit options continue to emerge both within the Downtown Core Area and across the Region.

SOCIAL VITALITY POLICIES AND ACTIONS

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

9.1. Support the development of non-market housing as the Downtown Core Area grows, working with provincial, regional, non-profit and industry partners and with targeted investments from the Victoria Housing Trust Fund.

9.2. Explore development standards such as reduced parking requirements, to encourage and facilitate the provision of smaller residential dwelling units in the 30 to 40 m^2 range in multi-residential development.

HOMELESSNESS

9.3. Continue to support the work of the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness.

9.4. Continue to work with community partners to secure emergency shelter for homeless people through the Greater Victoria Extreme Weather Protocol.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

9.5. Review and amend the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* to establish requirements and standards for the provision of indoor and outdoor common areas and recreation space within multi-residential development in addition to the provision of ground-oriented housing such as townhouses at the base level of new higher density multi-residential developments.

9.6. Expand the use of heritage revitalization agreements and incentive programs to upgrade and revitalize heritage buildings for market and non-market housing.

SAFETY AND CIVILITY

9.7. Establish a coordinated Graffiti Management Program, in partnership with the Victoria Police Department and business and community partners.

9.8. Review, update and extend City and partner downtown street-cleaning programs as the Downtown Core Area grows.

9.9. Work with the Victoria Police Department and community partners to improve personal safety, security of property and public order within the Downtown Core Area.

PUBLIC SERVICES

9.10. Prepare and implement a strategy for the design, location, installation, maintenance and funding for the provision of new or upgraded full service public washrooms and drinking fountains within the Downtown Core Area.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

9.11. Work with regional partners and senior levels of government to explore establishing secure funding that will permit social service providers to provide 24-hour service, seven days a week to the street community as appropriate.

9.12. Review the need for new community services and facilities on an ongoing basis, as part of the monitoring strategy for the Downtown Core Area Plan.

9.13. Engage with community partners to identify methods to encourage and facilitate the provision of childcare facilities within the Downtown Core Area in response to increased demand from the local workforce.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

9.14. Update the City of Victoria Emergency Management Plan to prepare for the challenges of an expanded, higher density Downtown Core Area.

9.15. Continue to support the seismic upgrading and rehabilitation of heritage buildings through heritage revitalization incentive programs.

9.16. Review and update the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* to establish standards for providing on-site emergency preparedness facilities and equipment in new higher density commercial, residential and mixed use buildings.

URBAN ANIMATION

9.17. Ensure that the development of outdoor café and dining areas on sidewalks, squares and plazas, are evaluated against all relevant City of Victoria, policies and regulations.

9.18. Maintain, review and extend seasonal lighting and decoration programs as appropriate and with partners as opportunities arise.

9.19. Support and facilitate the development of a year-round farmers' market within the Downtown Core Area, to animate the public and private realm and support local growers and food processors.

9.20. Review and update public space management policies and programs with partners to ensure they are consistent with this Plan.

9.21. Review and update management programs and supports for major public open spaces, such as Centennial Square, to ensure appropriate and ongoing year round events and activities.

PUBLIC AMENITIES

9.22. New public amenities and public realm improvements within the Downtown Core Area should serve to meet the objectives and policies of this Plan.

RECREATION

9.23. Review and update plans for enhancing primary recreation facilities in the Downtown Core Area.

9.24. Consider opportunities for providing new recreation facilities and services in the new parks proposed for Rock Bay and Harris Green, including appropriately scaled indoor facilities and recreational water access as appropriate.

ENTERTAINMENT AND SPECIAL EVENTS

9.25. Establish a management strategy to support and enhance the downtown evening and late night economy that addresses:

- 9.25.1. Initiatives to maintain downtown as the primary entertainment district for Greater Victoria.
- 9.25.2. Initiatives to manage and mitigate issues of public disorder.
- 9.25.3. Locational criteria and development standards for new entertainment-related uses.
- 9.25.4. Strategies to encourage the provision of a broader range of entertainment venues for varying ages and interests.
- 9.25.5. Interface conditions and strategies to mitigate conflict between residential development and bars, nightclubs and restaurants.

9.26. Continue to support special events, celebrations and festivals at major public open spaces – including Centennial Square, along the Inner Harbour waterfront and in other existing and proposed public open spaces – through programming and by providing on-site infrastructure and equipment.

9.27. Work with community partners to investigate the feasibility and need for a permanent and dedicated location for major outdoor events and festivals within the Downtown Core Area.

ECONOMIC VITALITY POLICIES AND ACTIONS

PROVINCIAL CAPITAL

9.28. Work with the Province to meet the long-term office space needs of ministries, agencies and Crown corporations, within transit accessible locations, in the expanded Central Business District and in the Inner Harbour District.

9.29. Work with the Province, the Provincial Capital Commission and the Greater Victoria Harbour Authority to develop – with an appropriate mix of provincial, civic, community and private development – currently vacant and underdeveloped public lands along the Inner Harbour, in accordance with the policies contained in this Plan.

ACCESS

9.30. Work with BC Transit, the Ministry of Transportation, the Capital Regional District and other partners to establish regional rapid transit service between the Downtown Core Area, Saanich and the West Shore, with longer-term potential for rapid transit service to the Peninsula, Swartz Bay and the airport.

9.31. Work with BC Transit to implement the Rapid Transit Plan including the establishment of new routes, services, and related infrastructure.

9.32. Work with marine air companies and Transport Canada to ensure that efficient and convenient shore side air transport facilities continue to serve the Victoria Harbour Aerodrome, as lands along the Inner Harbour waterfront are redeveloped.

9.33. Support the development of a new and improved regional bus terminal in the Downtown Core Area.

9.34. Retain rail corridor access to the Downtown Core Area to ensure the long-term potential for commuter and regular inter-city passenger rail service that terminates Downtown.

9.35. Work with industry and community partners to develop a seamless network of wireless broadband service throughout the Downtown Core Area.

OFFICE SECTOR

9.36. Update the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* to expand the capacity of the Downtown Core Area, particularly the Central Business District, to accommodate new office development, consistent with the policies contained in this Plan.

RETAIL TRADE

9.37. Update the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* to accommodate new residential space – and increase the local consumer base – within the Downtown Core Area, consistent with the policies of this plan.

9.38. Work with partners to improve the frequency of public transit and level of service between the Downtown Core Area and potential customers in the rest of the Region.

9.39. Continue to work with public and private sector partners to provide a free circulating shuttle transit in the Downtown Core Area.

9.40. Participate with the Downtown Victoria Business Association, the Greater Victoria Development Agency and business and community partners to develop and implement a Downtown Retail Strategy.

TOURISM

9.41. Design and implement a comprehensive wayfinding system, that uses prominently displayed maps, clear and consistent signage and other mechanisms to make it easy for visitors to find attractions within and adjacent to Downtown.

9.42. Continue to update and expand the range of walking tours, including tours using wireless delivery mechanisms.

9.43. Work with business, community and agency partners to develop a broader range of attractions in the Downtown Core Area, including those that cater to families with children.

9.44. Continue to expand the capacity of the Victoria Conference Centre to attract convention business through ongoing marketing programs and facility improvements.

9.45. Ensure that new hotels are located at appropriate and strategic locations where they can serve to support tourism, convention business and retail activities within the Downtown Core Area.

INDUSTRY

9.46. Continue to support the working Harbour and marine industrial and transportation uses, consistent with the direction set out in the City of *Victoria Harbour Plan*.

9.47. Plan, develop and implement, as an immediate priority, a local area plan and related strategy to transform the Rock Bay District as a green employment centre.

CULTURAL VITALITY POLICIES AND ACTIONS

ARTS AND CULTURE

9.48. Work with community partners to retain and enhance existing cultural facilities, including the Victoria Conservatory of Music, the Greater Victoria Regional Library, the Maritime Museum, the Royal BC Museum and others.

9.49. Continue to provide support to community organizations that provide diverse cultural programming in private and institutional facilities, throughout the Downtown Core Area.

9.50. Continue to maintain and upgrade the Royal Theatre and the McPherson Playhouse as primary civic performance halls.

9.51. Work with the Royal BC Museum to ensure that future expansion plans contribute a signature, architecturally harmonious presence to the Inner Harbour precinct, as well as modernized facilities and enhanced public viewing galleries.

9.52. Work with community partners and senior levels of government to explore the feasibility of establishing and accommodating a prominent cultural facility in the Downtown Core Area.

EDUCATION AND LEARNING

9.53. Engage with community partners including post-secondary education providers to explore the feasibility of establishing new facilities and uses within the Downtown Core Area that provide a multitude of learning opportunities.

9.54. Work with School District 61 to retain existing school facilities and lands in areas immediately adjacent to the Downtown Core Area, and to monitor the need for a new elementary school as the residential population increases.

9.55. Work with existing private schools to maintain their presence in the Downtown Core Area.

9.56. Work with Greater Victoria Public Library partners to encourage and facilitate the relocation of the Central Library from Broughton Street to a more centralized downtown location.

implementation 10

The Downtown Core Area Plan is of great importance as it provides a framework for guiding growth and development over the next 30 years. The Downtown Core Area Plan therefore requires a detailed implementation and monitoring strategy to move forward on the Plan's vision and objectives.

Once the Plan is approved, the Implementation Strategy/Action Plan will be developed for Council's consideration. It would include components related to:

1. ROCK BAY LOCAL AREA PLAN

- Develop a local area plan for the Rock Bay District, focused on transforming the Rock Bay District into a key employment centre.

2. REGULATORY AND POLICY AMENDMENTS

- Review the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* to update or develop new comprehensive development regulations (zones) to align and facilitate the policies and development concepts described in this Plan.
- Review and amend the local area plans particularly for the affected areas of North Park, Burnside, Fairfield and James Bay to align with the vision, goals and policies of this Plan.

3. FINANCIAL STRATEGIES

- Develop financial strategies related to the capital planning and operational work programs.
- Identify potential funding sources, financial mechanisms and partnerships to support and implement the Plan's actions

4. COMMUNICATIONS

- Develop a comprehensive communications strategy for introducing the new *Downtown Core Area Plan* with the Implementation Strategy/Action Plan to the general public, communities, industry, the business community and other related groups.

5. MONITORING AND REPORTING

- Develop a strategy for tracking and analyzing the overall implementation and success of the Plan.
- Develop a reporting strategy for providing periodic reports to Council – and to the public and other Plan stakeholders – on achievements, progress, emerging issues and development activity.

6. ENGAGEMENT AND MOBILIZATION

- Identify roles and responsibilities for the implementation and advancement of the *Downtown Core Area Plan* including internal and external stakeholders.

appendices

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appendix 1 PUBLIC OUTWARD VIEW GUIDELINES

View 1: HARBOUR VIEW FROM BASTION SQUARE

VANTAGE POINT

East side of Wharf Street at the top of the stairs on Bastion Square.

VIEW ORIENTATION

West across the Harbour

VIEW CONTEXT

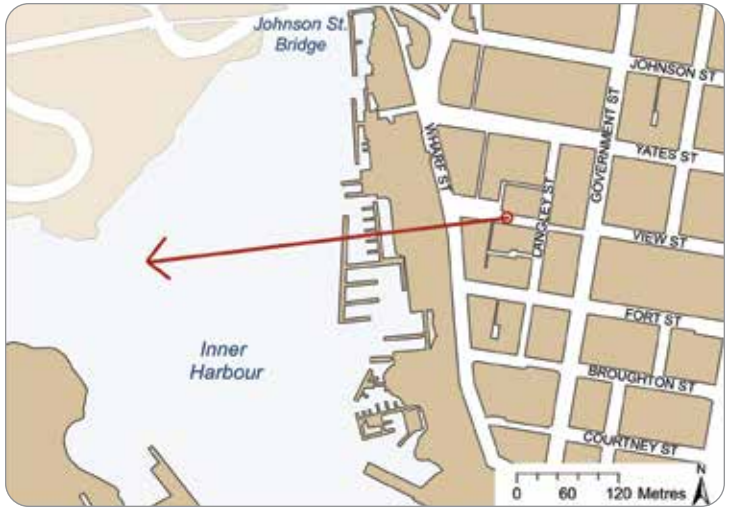
Broad view towards Harbour entrance, framed by Laurel Point on the south and Songhees Point on the north.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Consider the location, siting and design of new development within the specified view corridor to maintain views of the character-defining elements described in this section, as seen from the identified public vantage point.
2. Support development along the waterfront area west of Wharf Street that is designed to protect, frame and enhance this view corridor.

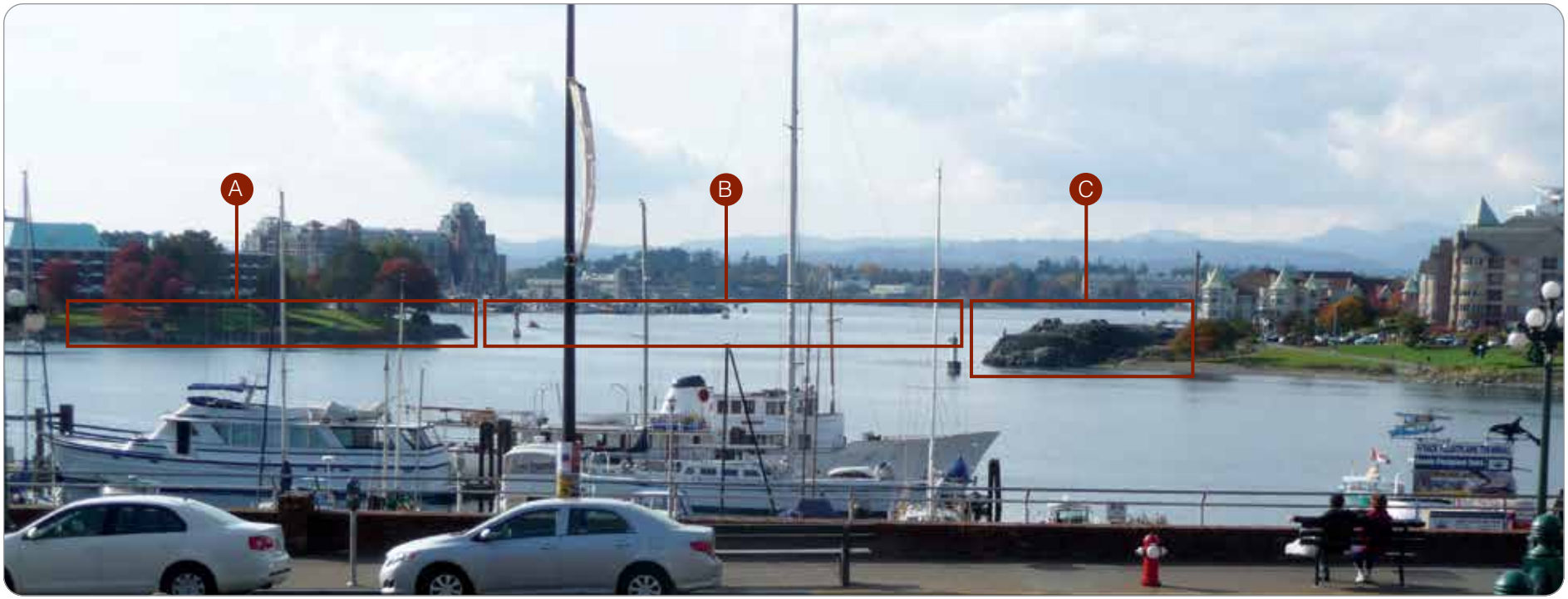
Character-Defining Elements	Attributes
A. Laurel Point	• Frames south side of view corridor with pathway and park space
B. Inner Harbour Entrance	• Distant views to Shoal Point • Background view of Sooke hills
C. Songhees Point	• Frames north side of view corridor • Rock outcrop provides geographic containment of the Harbour mouth

Vantage Point



View Corridor

View 1: HARBOUR VIEW FROM BASTION SQUARE



Looking west from Bastion Square

Character-Defining Elements:

A. Laurel Point

B. Inner Harbour Entrance

C. Songhees Point

View 2: SHIP POINT PANORAMA

VANTAGE POINT

Public plaza on the south side of the entrance to Ship Point (Wharf Street/ Humboldt Street)

VIEW ORIENTATION

West to Southeast panorama across the Inner Harbour

VIEW CONTEXT

Broad panoramic view framed by Songhees Point to the north and the Empress Hotel to the south. Includes view across the Harbour to the ensemble of historic buildings along the Inner Harbour Causeway.

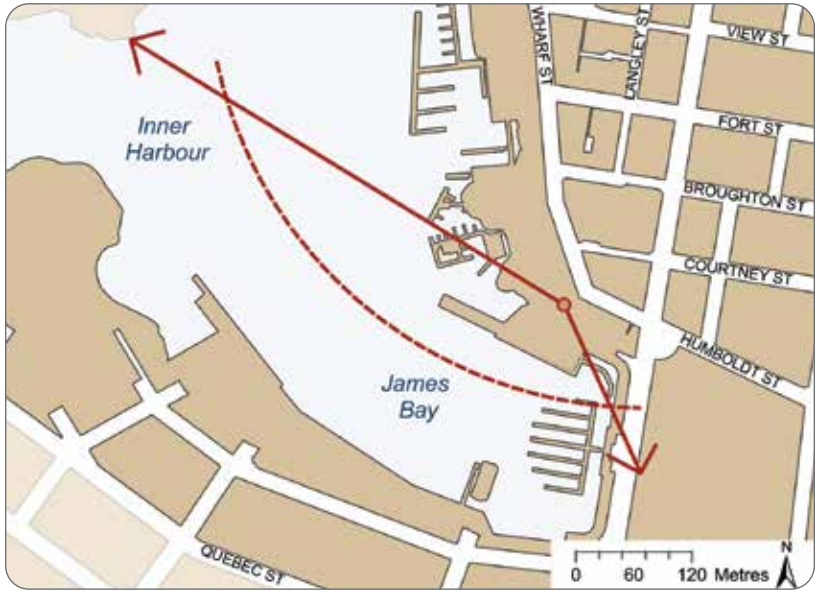
DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Consider the location, siting and design of new development within the specified view corridor to maintain views of the character-defining elements described in this section, as seen from the identified public vantage point.

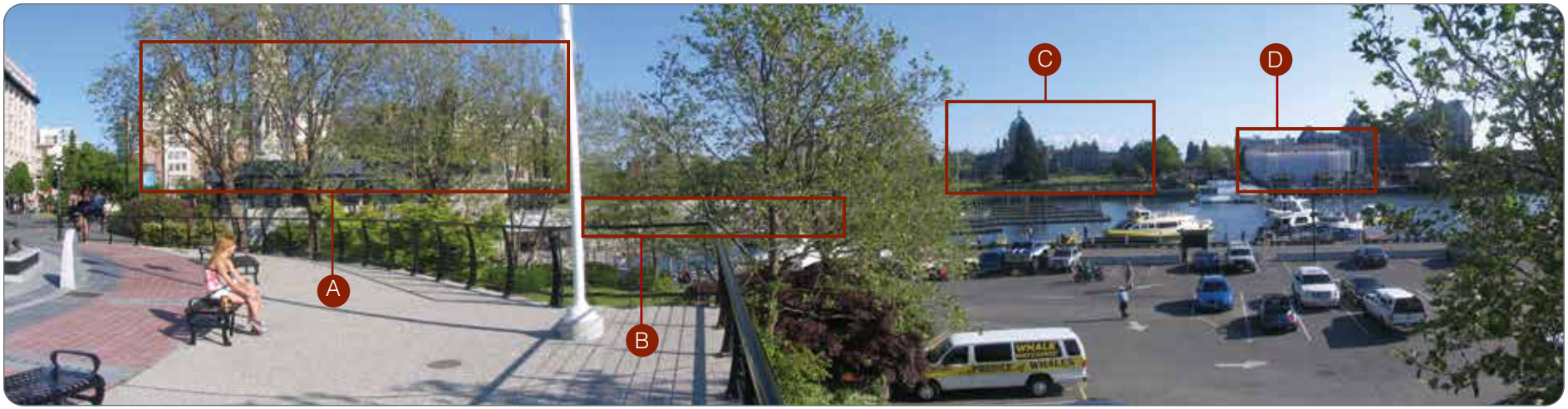
Character-Defining Elements	Attributes
A. Empress Hotel	• Historic landmark building • Key elements include roofline, front facade, front grounds and architectural night lighting
B. Parliament Buildings	• Historic landmark building • Key elements include copper roof, cupola, front facade, night lighting and front lawn
C. CPR Steamship Terminal	• Historic landmark building • Key elements include waterfront facade
D. Inner Harbour Causeway	• Key elements include portions of Upper and Lower Causeway
E. Inner Harbour Entrance	• Entrance to Inner Harbour for marine vessels and float planes • Flanked by Laurel Point and Songhees Point

Vantage Point

View Corridor



View 2: SHIP POINT PANORAMA



Ship Point Panorama – East

Ship Point Panorama – West

Character-Defining Elements

A. Empress Hotel

B. Inner Harbour Causeway

C. Parliament Building

D. CPR Steamship Terminal

E. Inner Harbour Entrance

View 3: UPPER HARBOUR VIEW FROM TURNER STREET

VANTAGE POINT

Turner Street south of Bay Street

VIEW ORIENTATION

South across the Upper Harbour

VIEW CONTEXT

View looking down the Upper Harbour towards the Parliament Building with the Olympic Mountains in the distant background.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

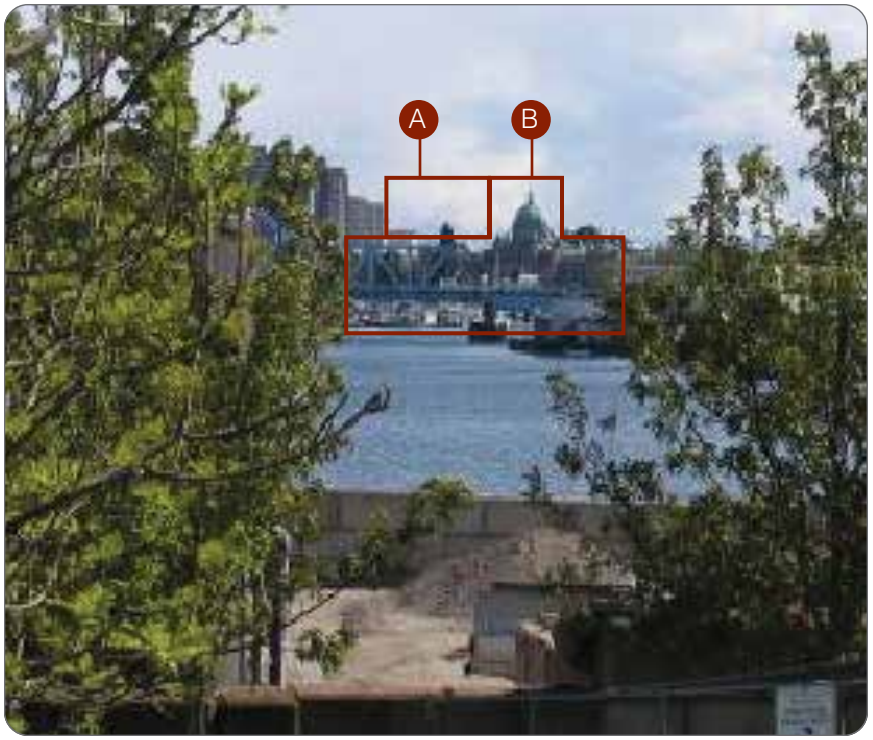
1. Consider the location, siting and design of new development within the specified view corridor to maintain views of the character-defining elements described in this section, as seen from the identified public vantage point.
2. Ensure that new development that is located adjacent to the view corridor is designed to help frame and enhance this view corridor.

Character-Defining Elements	Attributes
A. Ensemble of Harbour with Johnson Street Bridge and Parliament Building	• Unique compound Harbour view of the Johnson Street Bridge and the Parliament Building
B. Olympic Mountains	• Natural landscape feature in the distant background

Vantage Point

View Corridor

View 3: UPPER HARBOUR VIEW FROM TURNER STREET



Looking south from Turner Street

Character-Defining Elements

A. Olympic Mountains

B. Johnson Street Bridge and Parliament Building

View 4: ROCKLAND WATER TOWER FROM YATES STREET

VANTAGE POINT

Yates Street at Douglas Street

VIEW ORIENTATION

East to the Rockland and the Water Tower

VIEW CONTEXT

View looking east to Rockland Water Tower.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Consider the location, siting and design of new development within the specified view corridor to maintain views of the character-defining elements described in this section, as seen from the identified public vantage point.
2. Ensure that new development that is located adjacent to the view corridor is designed to help frame and enhance this view corridor.

Character-Defining Elements	Attributes
A. Rockland Water Tower	• Visually prominent landmark on a hill-top location

Vantage Point

View Corridor

View 4: ROCKLAND WATER TOWER FROM YATES STREET

Looking east along Yates Street to Rockland and Water Tower

Character-Defining Elements:

A. Rockland Water Tower

View 5: QUADRA STREET CORRIDOR

VANTAGE POINT

Quadra Street at Burdett Street

VIEW ORIENTATION

South towards the Olympic Mountains

VIEW CONTEXT

Distant view of Olympic Mountains visible above the tree tops of Beacon Hill Park

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Consider the location, siting and design of new development within the specified view corridor to maintain views of the character-defining elements described in this section, as seen from the identified public vantage point.
2. Ensure that new development that is located adjacent to the view corridor is designed to help frame and enhance this view corridor.
3. Encourage the removal of power poles and overhead wiring, where feasible, to enhance the view corridor.

Character-Defining Elements	Attributes
A. Olympic Mountains and Beacon Hill Park tree tops	• Natural landscape feature in distant background

Vantage Point

View Corridor

View 5: QUADRA STREET CORRIDOR

Looking south from Quadra Street at Burdett Street to Olympic Mountains above the Beacon Hill Park tree tops

Character-Defining Elements:

A. Olympic Mountains and Beacon Hill Park tree tops

appendix 2 PUBLIC EXTERNAL VIEW GUIDELINES

View 1: LAUREL POINT TO DOWNTOWN CORE AREA

VANTAGE POINT

Public pathway at Laurel Point

VIEW ORIENTATION

Northeast to Southeast across Inner Harbour

VIEW CONTEXT

Inner Harbour vista centered on Historic Commercial District (HCD) including waterfront areas and the skyline formed by the Central Business District (CBD).

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Ensure that new development within the specified view corridor is located, sited, and designed to maintain views of the character-defining elements described in this section, as seen from the identified public vantage point.
2. Ensure that new development within the specified view corridors consider the view elements and corresponding guidelines described in this section.

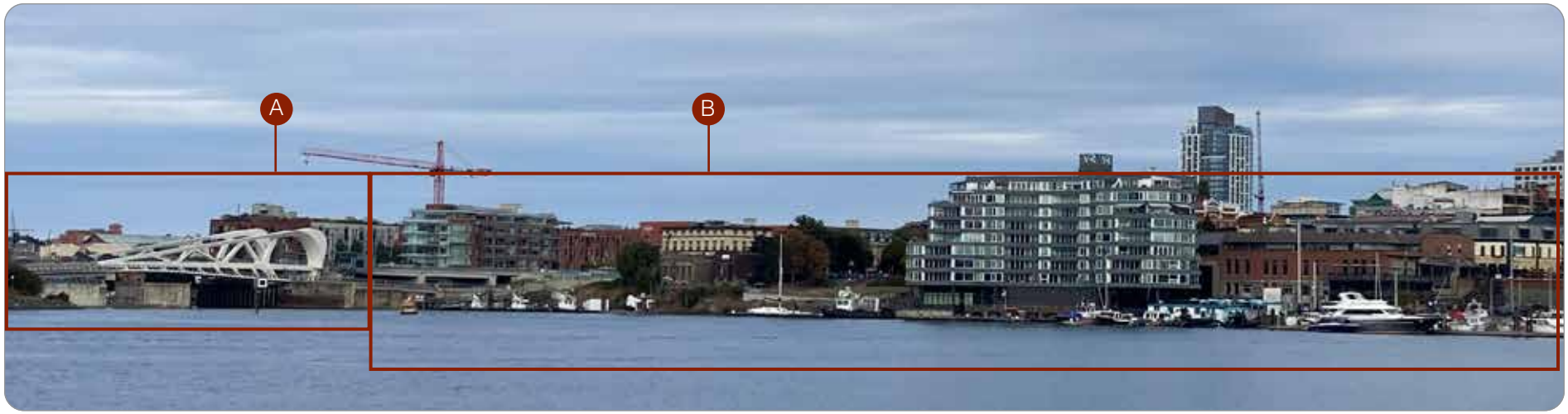
Character-Defining Elements	Attributes
A. Johnson Street Bridge	• Visually prominent structure
B. Historic Commercial District	• Concentration of historic buildings and streetscapes • Tiers up from the Harbour • Marine and pedestrian-oriented waterfront • Key elements include: modest scale buildings, richly detailed masonry facades, accentuated cornice lines, irregular rooflines, and feature lighting
C. Inner Harbour Causeway Area	• Causeway Area provides the south flank or termination of both the HCD and the CBD • Key framing element – the Empress Hotel

Vantage Point

View Corridor Guidelines

View Element	Guidelines
1. CBD Backdrop	• New development within the Central Business District should be designed and located to provide an attractive and elaborated urban profile and backdrop to this view.
2. Johnson Street Bridge	• Ensure that any design elements such as illumination, decorations, public art or banners, serve to enhance the visual presence of the bridge within the context of this view corridor
3. Waterfront	• Enliven waterfront areas with visually vital marine-oriented uses, wharves, docks, waterfront activity, boat access, public outlook spaces and marine-oriented landscaping and lighting
4. Massing, Proportion and Spacing	• Enrich the Historic Commercial District and its associated waterfront with compatible in-fill buildings that are complementary in massing, proportion, and spacing to the existing context
5. Street wall, Horizontal Roofline and Cornice Elements	• Relate new building design on the waterfront, and in the Historic Commercial District to the existing scale of street walls, articulated window rhythms, horizontal emphasis of roof crowns and cornices
6. Design Details, Materials, Colours	• Utilize sympathetic materials and colours for new buildings, with well-crafted detailing, to relate to adjacent historic buildings
7. Tiering up to Backdrop Buildings	• Continue the existing pattern of gradual tiering up, with detailed pedestrian-scale features along the waterfront, mid-scale buildings in the mid-ground, overlooked by larger buildings stepping up and receding to a background urban profile
8. Building Illumination	• Old and new buildings may be accented with architecturally designed lighting

View 1: LAUREL POINT TO DOWNTOWN CORE AREA



Laurel Point looking Northeast

Laurel Point looking Southeast

Character-Defining Elements:

A. Johnson Street Bridge

B. Historic Commercial District

C. Inner Harbour Causeway Area

View 2: INNER HARBOUR FROM SONGHEES POINT

VANTAGE POINT

Songhees Point public outlook along Westsong Walkway.

VIEW ORIENTATION

Southeast across Inner Harbour

VIEW CONTEXT

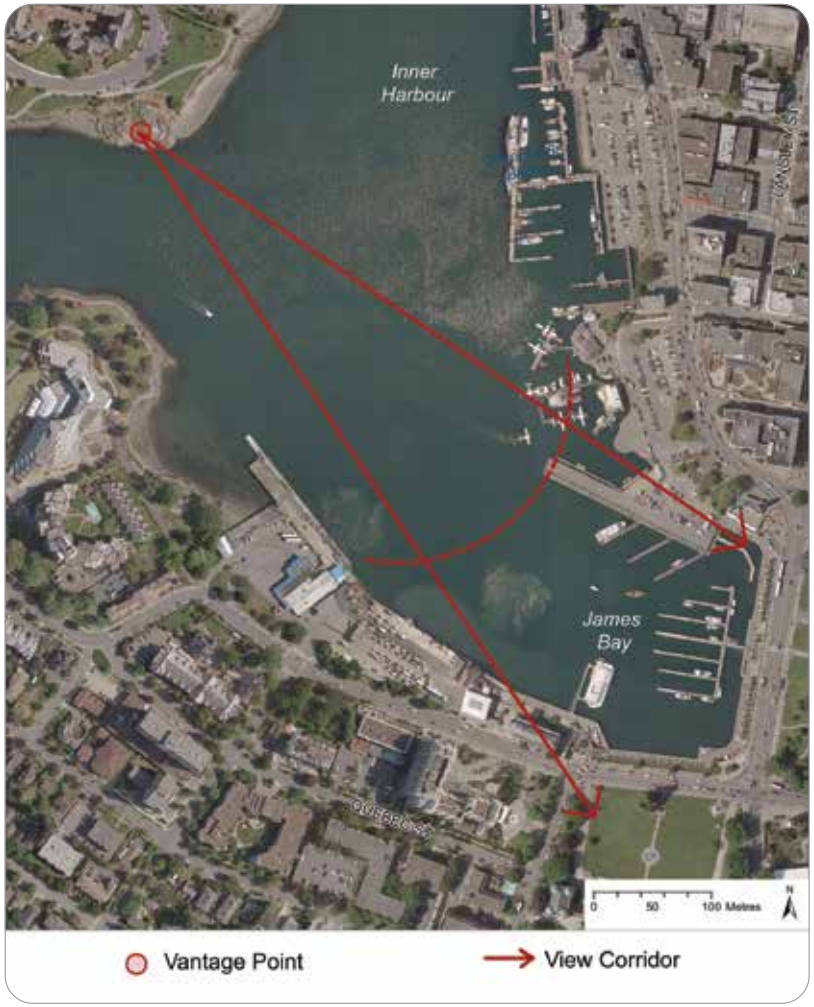
Wide vista looking southeast from Songhees Point across Inner Harbour toward towards the Inner Harbour Causeway including its clustering of prominent historic landmark buildings and various marine activities along the waterfront.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Ensure that new development within the specified view corridor is located, sited and designed to maintain views of the character-defining elements described in this section, as seen from the identified public vantage point.
2. Ensure that new development within the specified view corridor considers the view elements and corresponding guidelines described in this section.

Character-Defining Elements	Attributes
A. Empress Hotel	• Heritage landmark building • Anchors the east side of view, and frames the south end of the Downtown skyline • Key elements include roofline, front facade, front grounds, cornice lines and architectural night lighting
B. Royal BC Museum	• Prominent Provincial cultural institution
C. Parliament Building	• Historic landmark building • Key elements include copper roof, cupola, front facade, front lawn, unique night lighting
D. CPR Steamship Terminal	• Historic landmark building • Key elements include waterfront facade and connection to Lower Causeway
E. Inner Harbour Causeway	• Causeway wall and esplanade • Key elements include Upper and Lower Causeway

Vantage Point

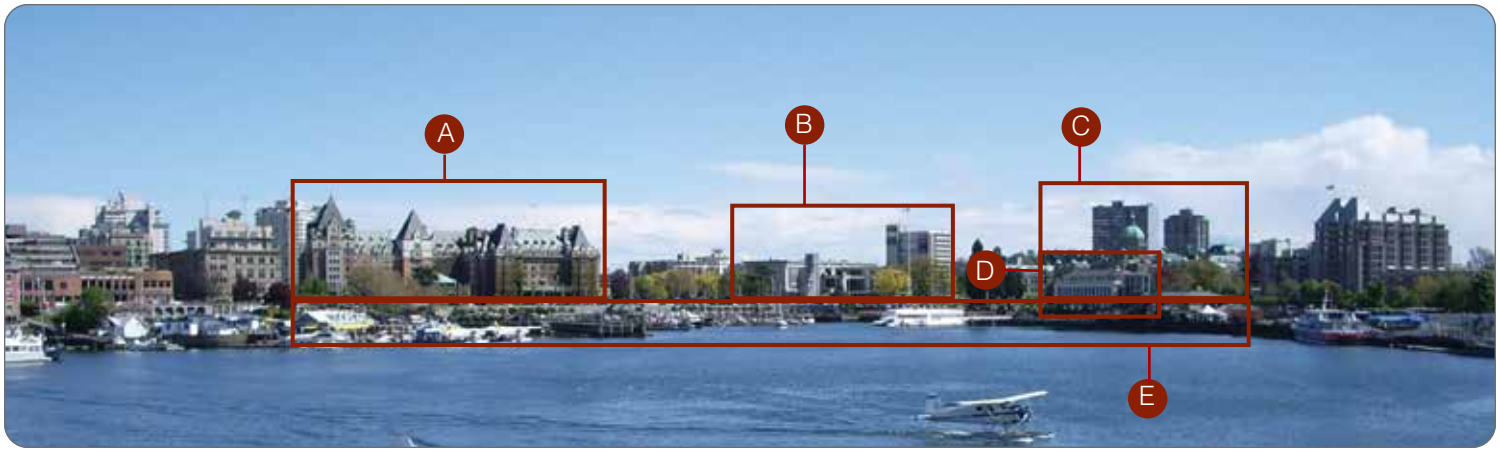


VIEW CORRIDOR GUIDELINES

View Element	Guidelines
1. Integrity of View	• Sustain the Inner Harbour Causeway Area as a pre-eminent image of Victoria, with high quality visual and architectural stature
2. Landmarks	• Maintain the Parliament Buildings, the Empress Hotel, the Royal British Columbia Museum, and the CPR Steamship Terminal as predominant landmarks
3. Supporting Buildings	• Retain the visual role of supporting buildings including the Belmont Building and Dominion Customs House
4. Building Scale, Massing and Spacing	• Maintain the general moderate scale of the built surrounds in this area, with massing and spacing in character with existing buildings
5. Tiers of Buildings	• Reinforce the general pattern of buildings rising in tiers from the Harbour
6. Tall Buildings as Backdrop	• Ensure that taller buildings in the distant background are designed, located and oriented to no overwhelm or detract from the visual presence of the character-defining elements described in this section.
7. Roofline Profile	• Express new roofline profiles as part of a unified ensemble. Maintain the visual dominance of the Parliament Building and the Empress Hotel rooflines
8. Architectural Excellence	• Ensure new buildings reflect high quality architectural design to complement the surrounding context
9. Building Materials and Colours	• Relate building materials and building colours to those of existing landmark buildings
10. Building Frontages	• Provide that the character and scale of articulation of building frontages surrounding the Inner Harbour be maintained and extended in adjacent new buildings – with richly detailed street walls, punctuated window rhythms and inviting entrances
11. Horizontal Crown Lines	• Crown street walls with horizontally emphasized architectural accents or cornice lines, within a varying and irregular height range similar to the existing variety of building cornices

View Element	Guidelines
12. Progressive Architectural Design	• Encourage new building design to be of a contemporary nature, expressing progressiveness and creativity for the city
13. Public Realm	• Provide for continuity and complementary quality for the treatments of the public realm waterfront areas and landscapes flanking the Inner Harbour Causeway
14. Building Illumination	• Coordinate illumination of new buildings with existing architectural lighting, taking care not to diminish the prominent lighting of the Parliament Buildings, the Empress Hotel, and the CPR Steamship Terminal
15. Promenade Lighting	• Coordinate illumination of new waterfront promenades with existing

View 2: INNER HARBOUR FROM SONGHEES POINT



Looking southeast from Songhees Point to the Inner Harbour Causeway Area.

Character-Defining Elements

A. Empress Hotel

B. Royal BC Museum

C. Parliament Building

D. CPR Steamship Terminal

E. Inner Harbour Causeway

View 3: JAMES BAY / BELLEVILLE STREET FROM JOHNSON STREET BRIDGE

VANTAGE POINT

Johnson Street Bridge – Pedestrian Walkway

VIEW ORIENTATION

South across Inner Harbour

VIEW CONTEXT

Inner Harbour vista looking south to Belleville Street Waterfront and James Bay Skyline.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Ensure that new development within the specified view corridor is located, sited, and designed to maintain views of the character-defining elements described in this section, as seen from the identified public vantage point.

2. Ensure that new development within the specified view corridor considers the view elements and corresponding guidelines described in this section.

Character-Defining Elements	Attributes
A. Inner Harbour Causeway Area	• Key framing elements include the CPR Steamship Terminal and Parliament Building
B. Laurel Point	• Public park space with elements of Harbour Pathway

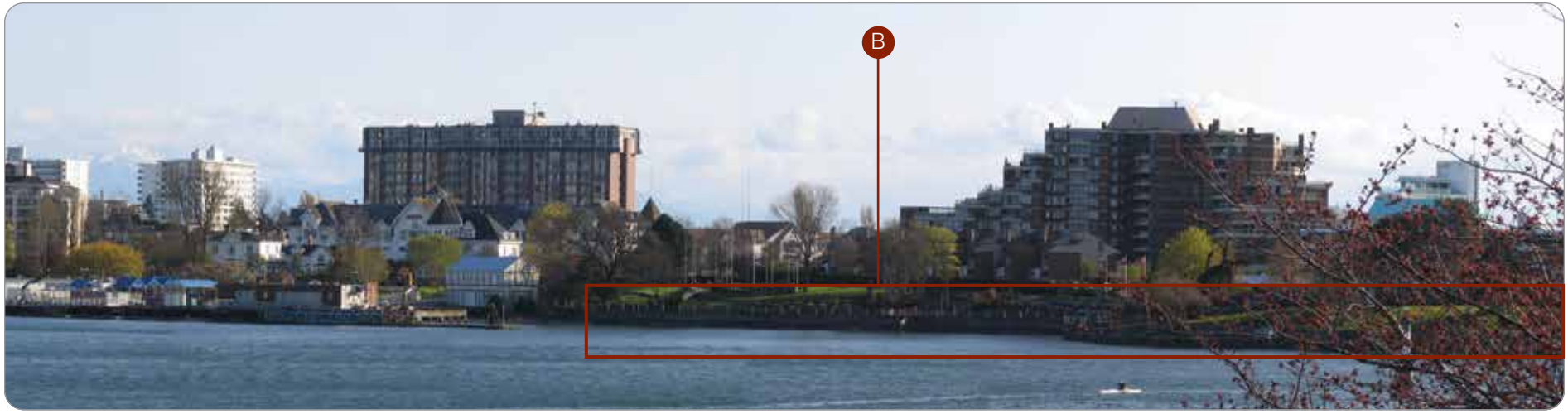
Vantage Point

VIEW CORRIDOR GUIDELINES

View Element	Guidelines
1. Integrity of View	• Ensure that the waterfront and the buildings along Belleville Street provide for an important visual south flank to the Inner Harbour
2. Building Scale	• Respect the scale and quality of design of the surrounding historic structures in the design of new buildings, with contemporary architectural expression
3. Building Profile	• Buildings along Belleville Street should create a modest scale, attractively articulated secondary skyline that will frame the south edge of the Inner Harbour
4. Scale and Character of Building Enclosure	• Relate new buildings to the scale of enclosure of the Inner Harbour and the architectural character of the street wall faces and horizontal crown lines of the older buildings surrounding the Inner Harbour basin, while expressing contemporary architectural design
5. Building Scale	• Retain the moderate and fine scale building context of the Inner Harbour Causeway and the Belleville Street waterfront area
6. Building Massing and Spacing	• Provide for in-fill buildings sympathetic in massing and spacing to contribute to an integrated, visually cohesive grouping of buildings
7. Building Character and Articulation	• Provide that the character and articulation of waterfront building frontages adjacent to the Inner Harbour Causeway Area be maintained and extended in adjacent new buildings – with richly detailed street-walls and punctuated window rhythms
8. Building Crowns or Cornices	• Crown street walls with horizontally emphasized architectural accentuations or cornice lines, within a varying and irregular height range similar to the existing variety of building cornices
9. Building Rooflines	• Encourage new buildings to contribute to an expanded picturesque profile of cornice lines and roof-lines surrounding the Inner Harbour, without upstaging the primary landmarks of the Empress Hotel and the Parliament Buildings

View Element	Guidelines
10. Laurel Point as a Visual Frame	• Relate new buildings in the vicinity of Laurel Point to the taller, terracing profile established in this location
11. Active Public Waterfront	• Encourage the visual expression of an active public interface with the water edge, and the Harbour itself
12. Fine Scale Design, Sympathetic Materials and Colours	• Enrich the Belleville Street area and its associated waterfront with finely-scaled new and in-fill buildings, with richly detailed materials and colours to complement existing colour and material palettes
13. Illumination of Roofline Profile	• Include architecturally integrated lighting effects along the developing roofline profile, to complement, and not upstage, the night lighting of the Parliament Buildings, Empress Hotel and CPR Steamship Terminal
14. Public Realm Waterfront	• Support public waterfront terraces and pathways that are visually rich and vital in usage, with pedestrian lighting and landscaping which is complementary to the existing Inner Harbour Causeway Area

VIEW 3: JAMES BAY / BELLEVILLE STREET FROM HARBOUR BRIDGE



From Harbour Bridge looking south to Belleville Street Waterfront / James Bay Skyline.

Character-Defining Elements

A. Inner Harbour Causeway Area with Parliament Building and CPR Steamship Terminal

B. Peter Pollen Waterfront Park

appendix 3 SIDEWALK WIDTH GUIDELINES

The following sidewalk width guidelines are based on accommodating frontage zones, pedestrian through zones, while also supporting a healthy urban forest through the provision of sufficient soil volumes and growing space within sidewalks appropriate to the different street types identified in Map 31. Desired dimensions for overall sidewalk widths and each zone are identified in Table A. Desired sidewalk widths will be achieved where opportunities allow through building siting and, in some cases, curb relocation and with opportunities evaluated and identified on a case-by-case basis.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. Ensure that any roadway improvements to the public right-of-way or any private development adjacent to public right-of-ways within the Downtown Core Area consider the Public Realm Street Typology illustrated in Map 31 and the related Sidewalk Width Criteria described below in Table A.
2. Recognize that functional requirements, existing street dimensions and physical conditions may constrain achievement of the Sidewalk Width Criteria described in Table A. Improvements should also support the increase, maintenance of a healthy urban forest.

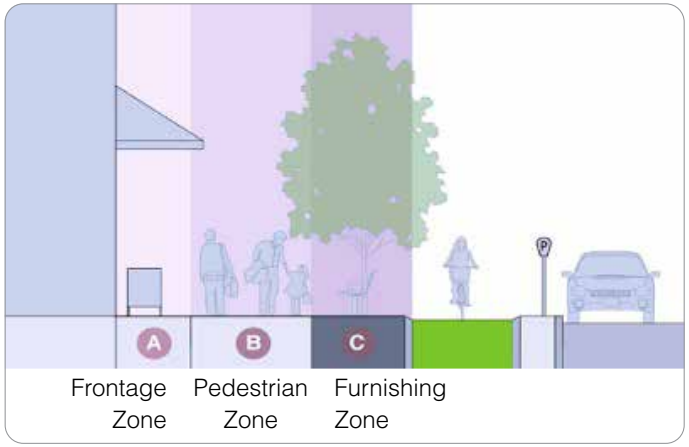
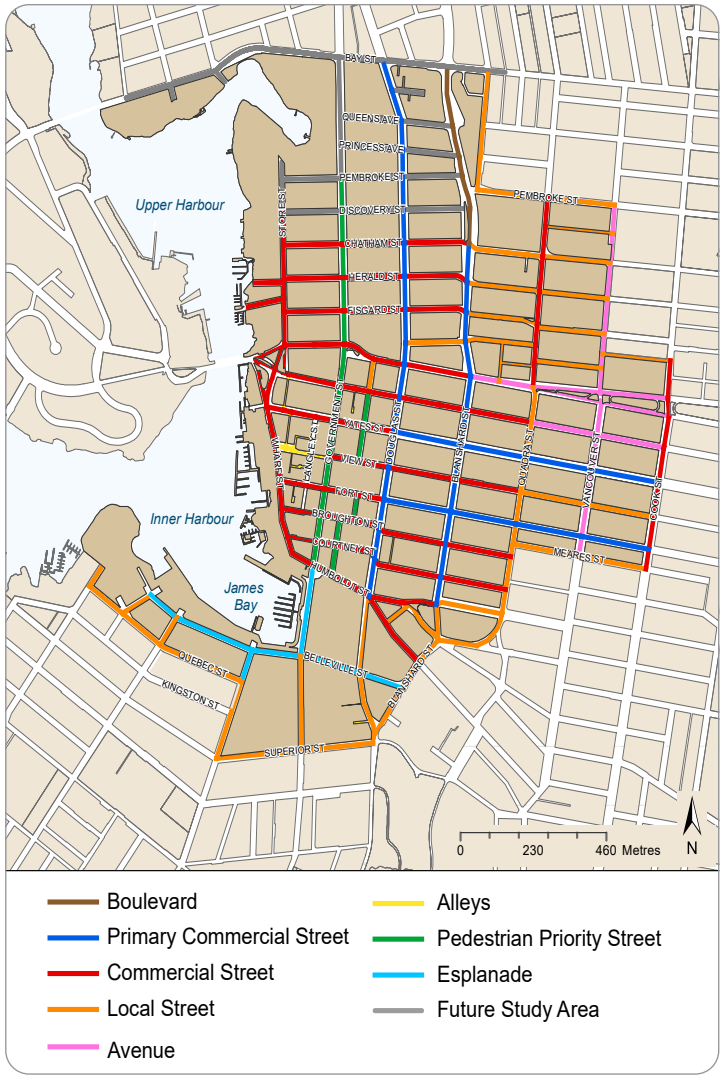


Illustration of sidewalk zones.

Diagram adapted from the British Columbia Active Transportation Design Guide.



Map 31: Public Realm Street Typology

Table A: Sidewalk Width Criteria

Street Type	Total Width[5]	A. Frontage Zone [3]	B. Pedestrian Zone [1]	C. Furnishing Zone [2]	
				Basic	Enhanced
		Desirable Width	Desirable Width	Desirable Width	
Primary Commercial Street	4.3 – 8.5m	0.5 – 1.5m	2.0 – 4.0m	1.8m	3.0m
Downtown Commerical Street	4.1 – 6.3m	0.5 – 1.5m	2.0 – 3.0m		
Pedestrian Priority Street[4]	4.8 – 9.0m	1.0 – 2.0m	2.0 – 4.0m		
Local Street	3.6 – 4.5m	up to 0.5m	1.8 – 2.2m		
Esplanade	3.8 – 7.0m	N/A	2.0 – 4.0m	1.8m	3.0 – 5.0m
Avenues	4.0 – 6.9m	0.5 – 1.5m	2.0 – 2.4m	1.8m	3.0m
Alleys	Minimum 6m mobility zone	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Future Study Area	TBD				

(1) A Pedestrian Zone meeting desired widths is the priority. The next priority is a Furnishing Zone to create space for street trees, a buffer between pedestrians and motor vehicles, and street furnishings.

(2) If space for the Furnishing Zone is limited due to existing and non-remediable site constraints, a minimum of 0.5m is to be added to the Pedestrian Zone if it is adjacent to the roadway. A constrained width for the Pedestrian Zone (1.8m for Multi-Family Residential; 2.0m for Commercial) should only be considered when a Furnishing Zone and Frontage Zone meeting objectives are provided.

(3) The desired Frontage Zone width responds to adjacent land use, available right-of-way, existing and desired streetwall (building fronts) condition; 1.2 – 1.5m provides space for landscaping and retail signage, whereas greater widths can accommodate outdoor patios. A minimum Frontage Zone width of 0.3m is recommended. Where possible, the Frontage Zone is to be on private property.

(4) Areas of high pedestrian activity (peak volumes of 400 pedestrians per 15-minute period) as per Table 6.3.1. in the TAC Geometric Design Guide for Canadian Roads.

(5) Additional space is required for transit shelters and waiting bus patrons along transit routes. A 2.0m offset between trees and the curb edge reduces conflict with busses pulling into passenger loading/unloading areas. On non-transit routes reduced offsets between the tree grate and curb can be considered if existing and non-remediable site constraints exists.

appendix 4 DESIGN GUIDELINES

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Overview and Intent

The Downtown Core Area Plan design guidelines provide clear direction for designers, architects and property owners who are actively planning or considering a new building, retrofit or addition to an existing building within the Downtown Core Area. The guidelines are also an important evaluation tool for City staff and municipal decision-makers when reviewing new development applications to ensure that a proposed development is a 'good fit' within the downtown, demonstrates an appropriate design response and enhances the surrounding context and public realm. The guidelines are intended to foster innovative, creative, and unique design responses to individual site conditions, opportunities, and constraints within the broader context of the design principles and goals established in the Downtown Core Area Plan.

Downtown Victoria's rich, varied and highly walkable streets and open spaces are a defining characteristic of the city and region. The downtown's traditional urban fabric is generally characterized by a development block pattern with buildings located, oriented, and designed to positively frame and activate public open spaces. This includes human scaled facades with active ground floors that together provide a sense of enclosure and support pedestrian activity.

The guidelines focus on how buildings interact with streets, open spaces, and the urban forest to create comfortable, human scaled, pedestrian oriented and memorable public spaces. To this end, these guidelines are premised on reinforcing the block pattern of development while accommodating the broad diversity of land uses, building types and open spaces set out in the Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP), along with increasing and protecting the urban forest. This includes the integration of taller, vertically proportioned buildings through a form of development that seamlessly integrates a defined base building, middle (tower) and top, expressed in a building form and design that is both contemporary and contextual.

Buildings should contribute to the creation of high quality and memorable public open spaces that support pedestrian activity and comfort.

The Downtown traditional block pattern is characterized by development blocks that frame the street, provide a sense of enclosure, and enhance the public realm.

1.2. How to Use The Guidelines

The Downtown Core Area Plan design guidelines are an important resource that provide clear direction for designers, architects and property owners who are actively planning or considering a new building, retrofit or addition to an existing building within the Downtown Core Area. The design guidelines only apply within those portions of the respective development permit areas and heritage conservation areas that are located within the boundary of the Downtown Core Area as illustrated in Map 1A. The specific applicable design guidelines are identified in the Official Community Plan for each development permit area and heritage conservation area.

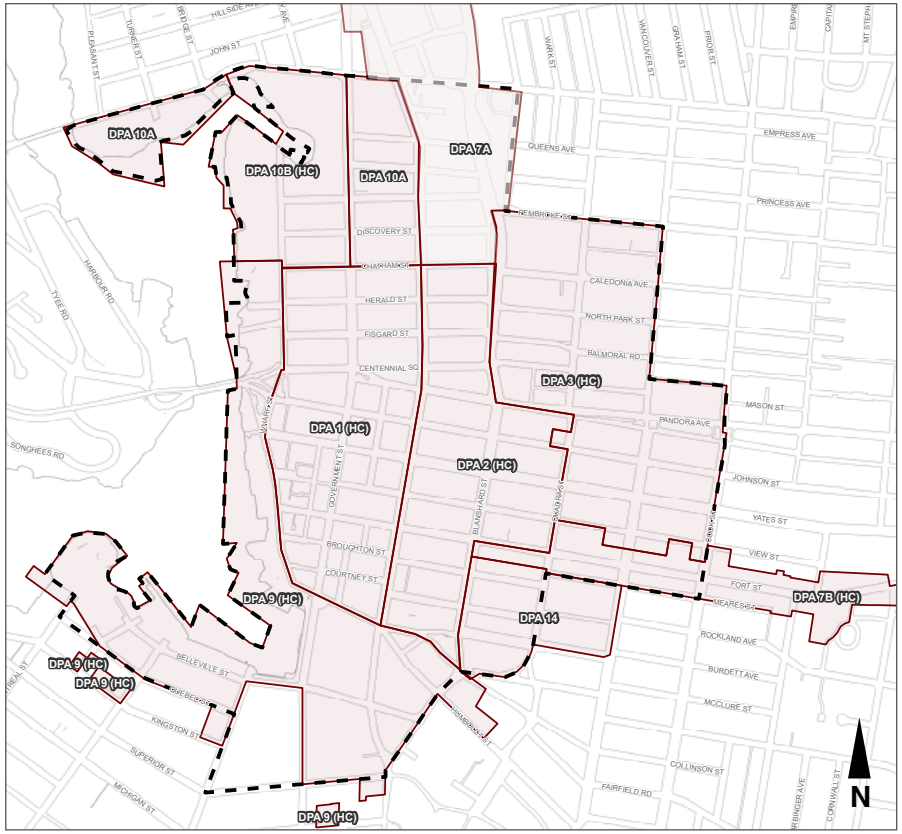
In addition, the Downtown Core Area contains two special sub areas, each with their own unique design guidelines. The design of new buildings and additions to existing buildings within the historic Old Town Area are guided by the Old Town Design Guidelines (2019) while the specialized guidelines for the Inner Harbour are contained within Appendix 4 of this plan.

Similarly, DPA 10B (HC) is an area intended to support light industrial uses and the emerging Arts and Innovation District. To support light industrial uses along with institutional and cultural uses and building forms in this DPA, greater discretion and a more broad interpretation of the design guidelines is envisioned.

Further, given the focus of these guidelines on commercial, office, mixed use and residential land uses and building forms, greater discretion and a more broad interpretation of the design guidelines is envisioned when reviewing institutional, civic and cultural buildings throughout the DCAP study area.

The guidelines are structured around a set of key urban design topics, with a clear statement of design intent articulated for each topic. A set of design strategies are included under each statement of intent to be considered in the application of the guidelines. Each design topic is also supplemented with photographs, diagrams, and images to illustrate how the design strategies can be implemented to achieve the broad design intent.

It is important to note that the design strategies included under each statement of intent are not an exhaustive list, and that additional design strategies may be considered in response to specific site conditions, constraints, and adjacencies and further, to advance emerging innovation with building design, energy efficiency and sustainability on a case-by-case basis. In this way, the design guidelines are not intended to be an absolute checklist for all developments.Rather they function as a benchmark and design framework to ensure that careful thought and consideration has been given to important design objectives while still supporting creativity, innovation, and design excellence. Where alternative design approaches are proposed by an applicant, they will be reviewed against the statements of design intent to ensure that key design objectives are still being achieved. Applicants may be required to provide additional diagrams and studies to support the proposed design solutions.



MAP 1A

DCAP Boundary

Development Permit Areas (DPA)

- DPA 1 (HC): Core Historic
- DPA 2 (HC): Core Business
- DPA 3 (HC): Core Mixed-Use Residential
- DPA 7A: Corridors
- DPA 7B (HC): Corridors Heritage
- DPA 9 (HC): Inner Harbour
- DPA 10A: Rock Bay
- DPA 10B (HC): Rock Bay Heritage
- DPA 14: Cathedral Hill Precinct

1.3. Sample Guideline Structure

DESIGN TOPIC

INTENT
Describes design objectives to be achieved

GUIDELINES
Strategies and approaches for achieving the design intent

6.2. Tower Composition

Intent: To ensure tall buildings provide visual interest and contribute to a cohesive urban fabric and varied skyline.

a. Provide visual interest through variation in the design and articulation of tower facades and respond to differing facing conditions within the adjacent context.

b. Incorporate a distinctive roof top to terminate towers, distinguish the building and contribute to an interesting and varied skyline. Strategies for achieving this include but are not limited to:

i. Stepping back the upper floors of buildings

ii. Incorporating a significant vertical element or finial iii. Incorporating a decorative roof 'top hat'

iii. Screening mechanical equipment creatively.

c. Stagger tower heights in developments where multiple towers are proposed, to create visual interest within the skyline, mitigate wind and improve access to sunlight and sky view.

d. Balance the use of decorative lighting with energy efficiency objectives, the protection of migratory birds, and the management of artificial sky glow.

e. Integrate a combination of indoor and outdoor, private and common amenity space, where appropriate, into the design and massing of the upper floors of tall buildings.

f. As an option within the step-back, consider extending straight down to the ground up to one third of a point tower frontage along a street or open space for corner sites. This is to provide improved building address, connectivity to the interior lobby from the fronting street, and to support the provision of an exterior plaza space. At these locations, provide permanent building features, such as canopies and overhangs, to help mitigate pedestrian-level wind.

Photos showing examples of tower composition and articulation.

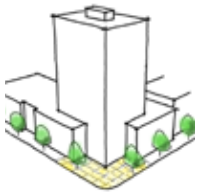


Diagram and photo illustrating a portion of a point tower frontage along a street or open space extending straight down to the ground.

ILLUSTRATIONS
Images, Diagrams and illustrations that provide visual examples of the design intent and related guidelines

2. RELATIONSHIP TO STREET: ACHIEVING A HUMAN SCALE

Overview

This section applies to all buildings, including Tall Buildings which have further design guideance in section 6. 'Human scale' refers to architectural features, details, and building design elements that are scaled and proportioned to support pedestrian activity. Buildings and the open spaces they define have a human scale if their details, elements and materials allow people to feel comfortable using and approaching them. This includes ensuring buildings positively frame and define public open spaces to support pedestrian comfort, safety, and vitality.

2.1. Form, Scale and Orientation

Intent: To positively frame and define open spaces, improve access to sunlight and support livability.

a. Locate and orient buildings to provide continuity and a sense of enclosure along the perimeter street frontage. Buildings should be placed such that primary facades are oriented toward streets and interior courtyards.

b. Buildings should be placed closer to the outside perimeter of the development block to increase open space within the centre of the development block, provide sunlight penetration and enhance privacy.

c. Consider utilizing interior spaces within development blocks for private amenity spaces for residents and building occupants such as, landscaped areas, courtyards, communal gardens, children's play space. Interior spaces within development blocks should also be considered for service yards, and access to parking and loading.

d. Through-block walkways, lanes and alleys, consistent with the Section 3.2.2 Through-Block Walkway Policies and Actions, and Map 16 – Pedestrian Network, are encouraged.

e. Scale and design the building and street wall to minimize shadowing impacts from buildings on public open spaces and sidewalks while providing comfortable street enclosure and definition.

f. Where unshaded by existing offsite conditions, provide a minimum of approximately 4 hours of sunlight between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm during the equinoxes on at least 60% of area of an impacted sidewalk or open space. The relevant sidewalk or open space impact area for a parcel is located directly to the north of the project's north parcel line. In addition, for a corner parcel, sidewalk areas at opposite corners shall also be included in the impact area calculations. Demonstrate compliance with a sun and shadow study. Alternate methods of analysis to meet guideline intent may be proposed for consideration.

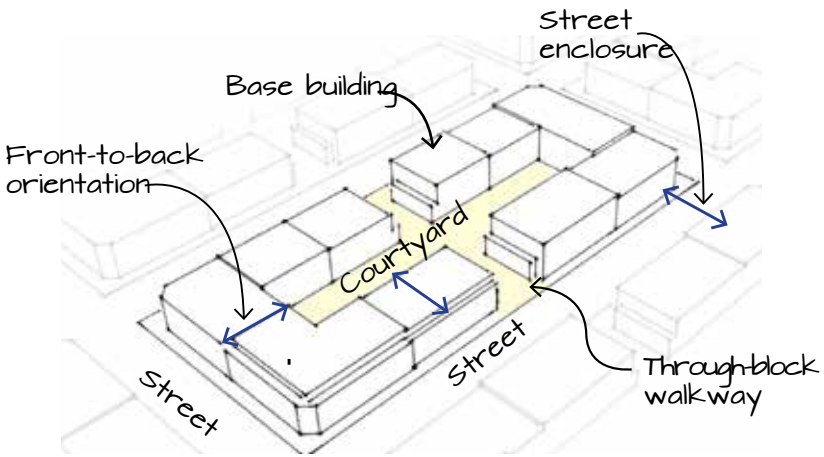
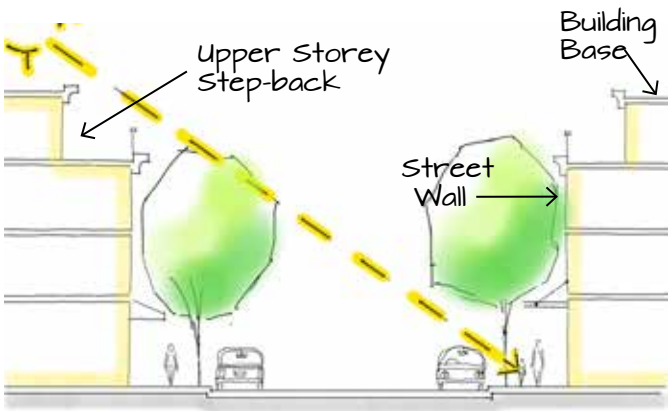


Illustration of a perimeter form of development.



Upper storey step-backs can be used to achieve sunlight access to the street and create comfortable street enclosure.

g. Incorporate upper storey step-backs on the north, east and west facing facades of the base building to minimize shadowing of adjacent streets and open spaces.

h. Where an exterior hallway or exterior staircase faces directly toward an adjacent residential building, mitigate any impacts from overlook, privacy, noise and light on the adjacent property through strategies such as architectural screening, trees or landscaping, light shielding, and the location and siting of these building elements.

i. Provide sound attenuation for rooftop mechanical units.

j. Incorporate balconies, terraces and other outdoor spaces at upper storey step-backs and roof tops, with adequate soil volumes to accommodate landscape, green roofs, or trees.

k. Refer to the tall building guidelines in Section 6 that apply to buildings greater than 23 m in height (approximately 6 storeys).

l. Incorporate a minimum 8 m rear yard setback for portions of the building located above the first storey that contain residential uses.

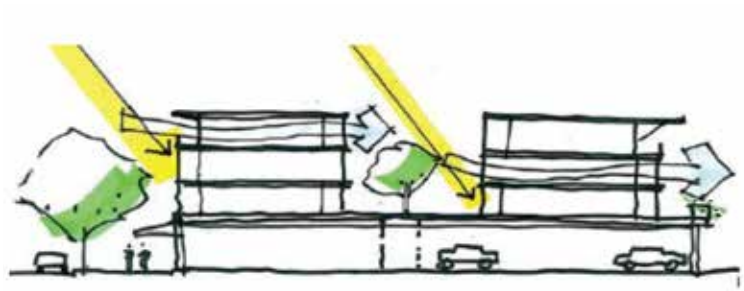
m. Buildings that are up to 23 m (approximately 6 storeys) in height may orient a portion of their residential units toward a side yard where:

   i. A minimum 5 m side yard setback is provided for 1/3 of the building depth measured from the front facade.

   ii. Residential units are primarily oriented to the fronting street or interior courtyard.

   iii. Windows and balconies facing the side yard are designed and located to mitigate overlook and enhance privacy.

n. Incorporate dual-aspect residential units into buildings to support the livability of individual units. This can be achieved through the provision of internal courtyards.



Courtyard buildings with dual aspect units provide oppoutunities for passive heating and cooling and improved liveability for residents.

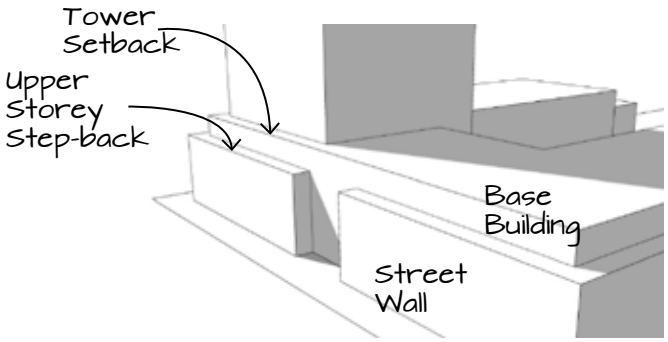


Diagram illustrating tower setback, upper storey step-back, base building, and street wall components.

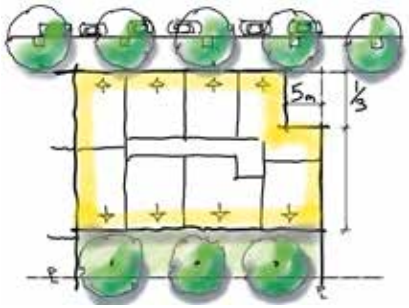


Illustration of residential unit orientation including a 5 m setback for units oriented to a single side yard.

Example of incorporating a vertical break in the building facade associated with a lobby entryway.

o. Where the existing setback pattern is consistent and not planned to change, align new base buildings with neighbouring building frontages.

p. When existing setbacks are well-established, but vary on either side of a site, locate and design the base building to provide a transition.

2.2. Building to Street Interface

Intent: To support street vitality and safety through the creation of active and interesting streets including an increased urban forest canopy.

a. Incorporate entrances along commercial frontages at a maximum spacing distance of 15 m to create visual interest and support pedestrian activity while avoiding impacts with adjacent street trees. Additional entrances are encouraged to activate the street. Ground floor commercial spaces are encouraged to be designed for multiple demising configurations for future tenanting flexibility.

b. Emphasize entrances to buildings with lighting, architectural detail or other design strategies so they are clearly visible and have direct access from public streets and sidewalks.

c. Recess building entrances slightly from the main building facade to enhance the building address and provide 'punctuation' along the street.

d. Incorporate a high proportion of transparent glazing at the street level to enhance the visual presence of ground floor uses. Incorporate bird friendly glass to minimize bird collisions as described in section 3. (Bird-Friendly Building Design).

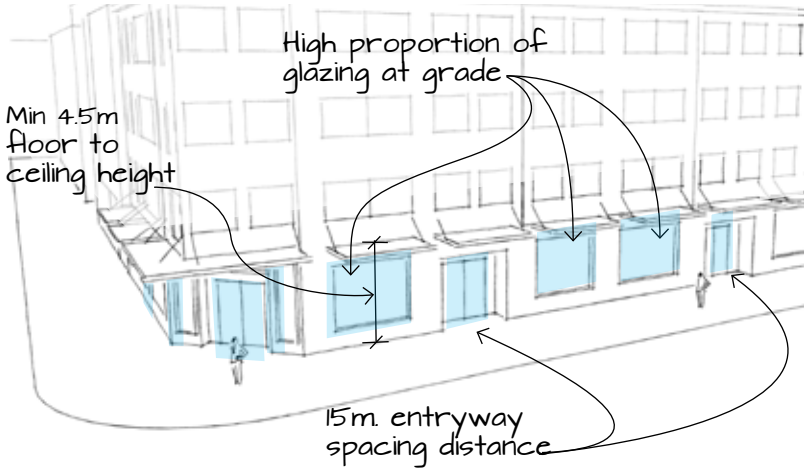
e. Avoid at grade blank walls over 5 m in length.

f. Mitigate blank walls where unavoidable, through screening, landscaping, public art, patios, special materials, or other solutions to make them more visually interesting.

g. Incorporate generous floor heights for ground floor commercial space with a minimum height of 4.5 m to allow for access to natural light spaciousness and greater flexibility for future changes of use.

h. Provide and maintain clear sight lines and accessibility from the public sidewalk to the primary building entrance.

i. Locate large format commercial uses on upper floors or below grade. Where at grade locations are necessary, locate large format uses toward the building interior and include frequent entries, shop windows and smaller retail units around the periphery. This is to activate streets, create visual interest and avoid large expanses of blank walls associated with large format commercial uses.



Example of a ground floor facade design that supports street vitality and pedestrian activity.

j. Locate and design common facilities such as bicycle storage rooms, lounges and other common rooms in a manner that does not result in 'non active' space along the street. Strategies to mitigate this include limiting the maximum length of the common area to 10 m along building elevations adjacent to a street and differentiate residential and commercial entrances where possible in mixed-use buildings.

k. Incorporate lobbies with multiple access points to enhance building access and connectivity with adjacent open spaces.

l. Incorporate entries to ground floor residential units, where permitted, that are clearly visible from the fronting street or open space.

m. Where ground floor residential units are permitted, locate ground floor residential units 3–5 m from the fronting property line adjacent to a street.

n. Consider slightly elevating ground floor residential units to incorporate a patio or stoop with sufficient space and soil volumes for landscaping to create a semi-private transition zone.

2.3. Facade Composition

a. Articulate building facades to provide visual interest for pedestrians. Strategies to achieve building articulation include, but are not limited to:

   i. Reflecting the patterning and proportions of adjacent heritage building facades including structural bays, fenestration (windows, balconies, entryways, weather protection), and rooflines along the street.

   ii. Incorporating a vertical break in the facade associated with a recessed lobby entryway or retail at ground level.

   iii. Incorporating a massing break in the upper storey facades to allow views and sunlight access to and from interior courtyards.

   iv. Provide vertical and/or horizontal articulation of facades such as step-backs, insets, projections, balconies, varying colours and texture.

   v. Variations in facade height along the street in response to the surrounding context and topography.

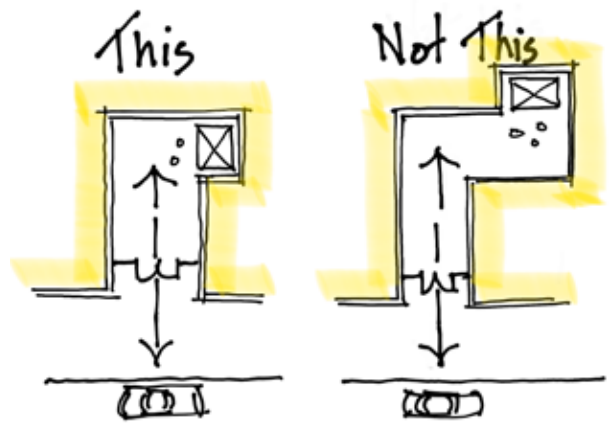
b. Use high-quality, durable materials to maintain the condition of facades.

c. Consider a variety of textures and details in exterior cladding materials to achieve visual interest.

d. Consider the use of durable natural materials for building features and accents to provide visual interest.

e. Provide useable balconies and other private outdoor spaces to be a minimum depth of 2 m and minimum width of 2.7 m. Balconies and spaces shall contribute to a cohesive facade composition.

f. Ensure that the design of the building base integrates materials, finishes and patterns to provide a cohesive and complementary design with the upper storey tower.



Direct visibility between a building entrance lobby and the adjacent street provides improved safety and security.

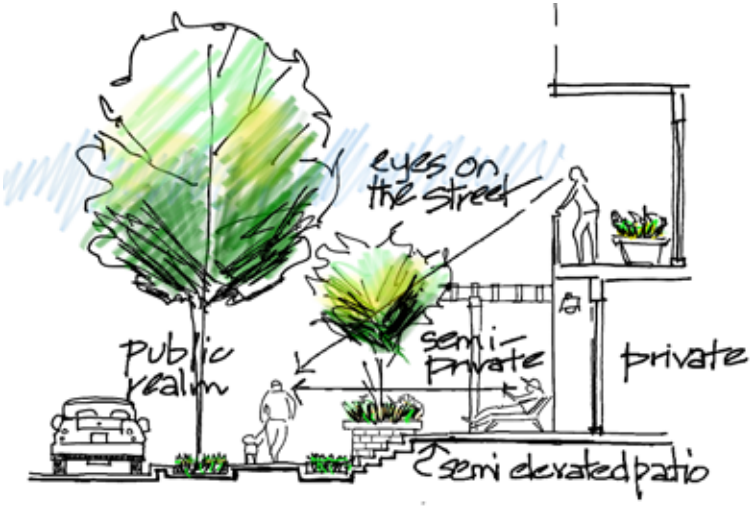
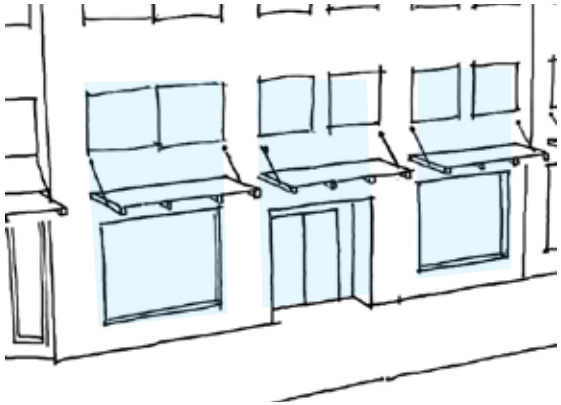


Diagram showing incorporation of entries to individual ground floor units that are accessible and clearly visible from the fronting street.

2.4. Weather Protection, Signage and Lighting

Intent: To integrate weather protection, signage and lighting into building designs in a cohesive manner.

a. Provide weather protection along all commercial streets and plazas.
b. Consider architecturally distinctive weather protection at the entrances of major buildings, adjacent to bus zones and street corners where people wait for traffic lights, over store fronts, display windows, and other areas where significant waiting or browsing by people occurs.
c. Integrate and design awnings, canopies, and overhangs as an extension of the building's architectural expression.
d. Consider locating canopies and awnings to correspond with the placement of windows in upper storeys of the facade.
e. Consider placement of awnings and canopies to balance weather protection with daylight penetration. Avoid continuous opaque (solid) canopies that run the full length of facades.
f. Place awnings to achieve a minimum vertical clearance of 2.5 m and minimum of 1.5 m extension out from the building. Canopies should have a minimum 2.8 m vertical clearance and extend a minimum of 2 m with a maximum extension distance not to exceed 50% of the sidewalk width. Canopies and awnings should also be located to avoid potential impacts with tree canopies at maturity and to accommodate periodic tree maintenance.



Locate weather protection to reflect placement and dimensions of ground floor windows and entryways.

Examples above of architecturally designed weather protection incorporated into building design.

g. Limit signage in number, location and size to reduce visual clutter and make individual signs easier to see.

h. Ensure signs on commercial buildings are located in a manner that is easily identified and scaled to pedestrians.

i. Locate exterior signs within the first floor of buildings at the street level to ensure clear visibility. Signs located on upper storey facades are discouraged and should be avoided.

j. Use lighting to highlight building features and illuminate the public realm while avoiding over illuminating the building, projecting light into the sky, and spillover on adjacent buildings. A photometric lighting analysis may be required to demonstrate mitigation of light spill over.

k. Utilize low energy lighting options that emit warm colour temperature light, where appropriate.

l. Consider lighting that is human-scaled (e.g. light standards of appropriate height for pedestrians) for nighttime visibility, comfort and security.

m. Use high quality light fixtures that are durable.

Examples above of lighting as a key element of design of the effect of building facades.

2.5. Site Servicing, Parking and Access

Intent: To accommodate servicing, vehicle parking, access and loading while minimizing adverse impacts on the public realm and maximizing tree planting locations with adequate soil volumes and space overhead.

a. Locate off-street parking and other 'back-of-house' uses (such as loading, garbage collection, utilities, pad mounted transformers, and parking access) away from public view, where possible.

b. Reduce negative impacts on the safety, comfort and quality of the public realm where it is not feasible to integrate 'back of house' uses underground or within the building mass. Use strategies like high-quality materials, and creative landscape design to screen service activities from public view.

c. Minimize the extent of site area dedicated to servicing and vehicular access through the use of shared infrastructure and efficient layouts.

d. Locate off-street parking (if provided) underground. If located at ground level, parking should be wrapped by active ground floor uses, and capped with an interior courtyard, roof top garden or other amenity space.

e. Provide clear sight lines at access points to parking to enable casual surveillance and safety.

f. Consolidate driveway access points to minimize curb cuts and impacts on the pedestrian realm or common open spaces.

g. Combine access to parking with commercial loading if feasible, with on-site branching of loading activities and parkade ramp. This is to minimize street frontage dedicated to vehicle access and to increase safety.

h. Minimize the size of service openings and garage doors visible from public streets and open spaces.

i. Minimize negative impacts of parking ramps by using strategies such as, but not limited to incorporating a slight recess from the main building facade and through treatments such as enclosure, screening, high quality doors and finishes, lighting strategies, and landscaping.

j. Provide pedestrian and cyclist access to and from parking areas that is clearly visible, well-lit, convenient, and easily accessible from the street.

k. Locate underground parking structures to avoid impacts on existing or future tree root health.

l. Provide soil cells underneath the sidewalk to provide structural support as well as ample growing medium for healthy street trees and landscaping.

Locate and screen back-of-house uses to minimize impacts on the public realm.

Examples of parking entrances and ramps to minimize impacts on the public realm and pedestrian activity.

m. Ensure that long-term viability of street trees and mobility objectives are not compromised by underground parking or above ground projections such as balconies, canopies, awnings, or utility boxes.

n. Avoid free-standing vehicle ramps, loading areas, garbage storage, and collection areas or enclosures.

o. Locate ventilation shafts, grates and other above-ground mechanical or site servicing equipment away from the public sidewalk and open spaces.

p. Ensure utility areas are clearly identified at the development permit stage and are located to minimize negative impacts on public or common open spaces.

q. Locate Pad Mounted Transformers (PMT) on private property within development projects. Where possible, place transformers within the building envelope and locate external transformer room doors along the service street facade' and ensure adequate space is provided on private property to service the utility.

r. Coordinate access to PMTs for BC Hydro maintenance with proposed driveway access to minimize impacts to streetscape and public infrastructure.

2.6. Universal Accessible Design

a. A high standard of accessibility in site, building and landscape design is encouraged to address the needs of all users, including people who have disabilities.

b. Disabled access should be appropriately designed and clearly visible from the main entrance, not relegated to a secondary building frontage for the sake of architectural convenience.

c. When provided, access ramps and related elements should be visually integrated with the overall building design and site plan so as to not appear disjointed from the building façade.

d. Smooth routes should be provided. Vertical disruptions along pedestrian routes should be avoided for ease of use by people with wheeled mobility devices, strollers, and bicycles.

e. Landscaping should be accessible for people with varying levels of ability and mobility.

f. Ensure accessible paths of travel between public sidewalks and pedestrian areas to common building entries.

Example of a highly visible access ramp integrated into overall building design.

g. Exterior accessible paths of travel should:
   i. have a minimum clear width of 1.5 m, to allow room for mobility devices and service animals going both ways along a path.
   ii. have a minimum head room clearances of 2.1 m, to ensure paths are free of obstacles overhead that white canes cannot detect.
   iii. have firm, stable, and slip-resistant surfaces that canes, crutches, or the wheels of mobility devices will not sink into.
   iv. be free of stairs or other barriers to mobility aids.
h. Smooth walking surfaces are preferred. Where interlocking pavers are used, they should be laid on a firm, well-compacted backing (e.g., concrete base) be level, and with joints no greater than 6 mm wide.
i. Gratings or grills should generally be located to one side of accessible paths of travel.
j. Any change in the level of a path should have a slope or ramp. Similarly, sidewalks with steep or depressed curbs should have curb ramps. Accessible paths of travel should have a minimum number of curb cuts to keep the accessible path of travel as level as possible.
k. Where steeply sloping landscaped areas are located adjacent to pedestrian routes and where slope exceeds 3:1 (horizontal to vertical), a clear boundary edge; such as an up-stand curb or retaining wall, (minimum 150 mm high) is desirable as a locational aid for persons who have visual limitations.
l. Common building entryways should be clearly light and be fully accessible.
m. Accessible paths of travel should have a minimum number of curb cuts to keep sidewalk as level as possible.
n. Benches, bike racks, bins and other furnishings should be located to one side of accessible entryways and pathways, and maintain a minimum pathway clear zone of 1.5 m.
o. Benches should be mounted on a firm and level base, with space made available beside the bench for at least one person using a wheelchair or scooter with a minimum hard surface clearance area of 1.0 m by 1.2 m.
p. Signage should generally be designed using highly visible and contrasting colours.
q. Gratings or grills should generally be located to one side of pedestrian walkways.
r. Accessible entrances should provide basic protection from the weather and include doors and vestibules that are useable autonomously by persons with varying disabilities.
s. Main entrance doors and other accessible entrance and exit doors should be a minimum of 915 mm wide to allow safe passage of persons who use mobility aids.
t. Entryways should be well light and clearly visible.
u. In buildings where there is a significant amount of glazing at grade, it is recommended that door frames be clearly colour differentiated to aid in locating the entrance.

2.7. BIRD-FRIENDLY BUILDING DESIGN

Overview

Windows are considered one of the largest sources of direct human-caused mortality for birds in North America. Birds collide with windows because they are trying to fly into the habitats they see beyond or reflected by the glass. Untreated glass is responsible for virtually all bird collisions with buildings. The relative threat posed by individual buildings depends significantly on the amount, location, type, and design treatment of exterior glass within a facade. At the same time, light emanating from urban areas obscures natural navigation cues, which disorients and confuses migrating birds.

Intent:

To reduce threats to birds in the urban built environment and reduce bird deaths caused by collisions with buildings. To reduce light pollution.

a. Design buildings with a low window to wall ratio. Less then 40% window surface area relative to entire façade is desired.

b. Avoid large areas of glazing and fly-through conditions such as glass bridges and walkways, outdoor railings, free-standing glass architectural elements and building corners where glass walls or windows are perpendicular or other conditions where birds can see through them to sky or habitat on the other side.

c. Use of mirrored glass and glass with high reflectivity is strongly discouraged and should be avoided.

d. Incorporate design treatments that increase the visibility of glass by integrating visual cues for birds to avoid, reduce and dampen glass reflection, and minimize light pollution. Strategies to achieve this include, but are not limited to:

   i. Apply visual markers with high contrast to the exterior of glass surfaces (markers on the interior surface of glass are less effective):

      - Examples of visual markers include etched glass, ceramic frit, sandblasted glass, and textured glass.
      - Incorporate patterns with high contrast into the exterior surface of glazing. Visual markers should be at least 5 mm in diameter. Gaps between markers should be no greater than 5 cm vertically or 10 cm horizontally.
      - A simple, repeating pattern such as dots or lines that are less obvious to the human eye, are encouraged.

Examples of glass treatments and designs that reduce the likelihood of bird strikes.

ii. Where applied visual markers are not an optimal solution, interrupt reflective glass by increasing the density of external visual markers including spandrel panels, mullions, screen shutters, or ornamental grills. Other strategies can include adapted fenestration patterns, external blinds, shutters, sunshades, grilles, louvers, or artwork.

iii. Design corner windows, glass walkways, glass railings, and other similar features to reduce the appearance of clear passage to sky or vegetation, including through incorporation of visible markers (see above).

iv. Application of visual markers should apply as follows:

- A minimum of 85 percent of all exterior glazing within the first 12 m of the building above grade or to the height of the surrounding tree canopy at maturity, whichever is greater.
- All glass balcony railings within the first 12 m of the building.
- Fly through or parallel glass conditions (see description above) at all heights.
- To the first 4 m of glazing above vegetation located on rooftops.

v. Reduce the dangers of attractants and landscape reflections by ensuring:

- Outdoor landscaping and features (e.g., trees, shrubs, fountains, ponds, storm water retention basins, wetlands swales) are located at appropriate distance from glass to reduce reflections.
- Measures should be taken to make glass visible (see strategies above).

vi. Avoid interior landscaping near windows.

e. Reduce unnecessary light-spill through shielding, targeted lighting, and reduction of vanity lighting.

f. Use Dark Sky compliant, full cut off exterior fixtures and targeted lighting to reduce unnecessary light-spill/light trespass.

g. Down lighting should be selected over up lighting and floodlighting should be avoided.

h. Ventilation grates and drains should have openings no larger than 2 cm x 2 cm or 1 cm x 4 cm to ensure that birds cannot be trapped within.

i. The ends of all open pipes should be capped so that birds do not become entrapped when investigating these openings for nesting opportunities.

3. OUTDOOR COMMON SPACES

Intent: To provide a range of shared outdoor amenity spaces that are available for all building residents and that encourage social interaction, play and urban food production.

3.1. Terraces and Roof Tops

a. Incorporate outdoor common spaces into upper storey terraces, roof tops and/or internal courtyards to support a variety of activities, social interaction and gathering for all ages.

b. Locate and design shared outdoor spaces to:

   i. Maximize access to sunlight while providing areas of shade in the summer.

   ii. Provide direct access from adjacent private balconies and terraces.

   iii. Provide clear access and visibility from circulation space to increase opportunities for social interaction and casual surveillance.

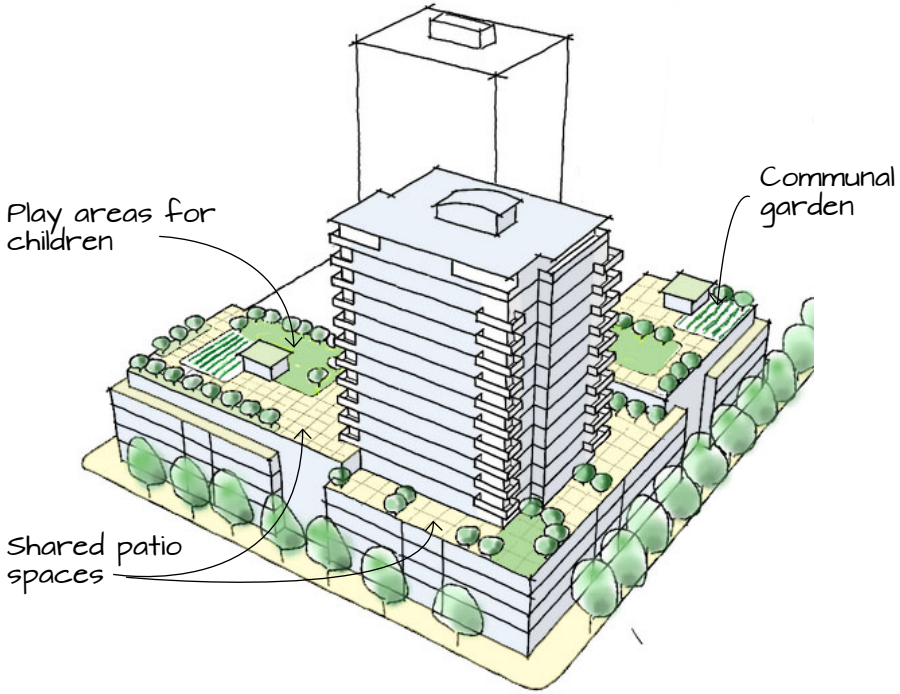
   iv. Minimize views into adjacent or nearby residential units by using fencing, landscaping or architectural screening while encouraging socializing and passive supervision.

   v. Incorporate soft landscaped areas including trees to reduce heat island effects.

   vi. Incorporate planted and green roof areas including trees with sufficient soil depths to filter stormwater.

   vii. Include appropriate soil volumes and infrastructure (e.g., hose bibs, planters, storage, greenhouses) to support planting of trees, landscaping and for different types of urban agriculture.

Example of a roof top garden and play area.



Conceptual illustration of outdoor common spaces incorporated into building terraces and roof tops.

Example of a roof top patio.

3.2. POPS (Privately Owned Public Spaces)

Overview

As development continues to occur in the Downtown Core Area there will be an increasing need and demand for parks, open space and public realm improvements. To help meet this demand the City may negotiate with private developers to include 'privately owned public spaces' (POPS) as part of a proposed development where feasible and appropriate. POPS are often compact forms of open space such as a patio, plaza, atrium, or green space that are privately owned and maintained but designed to allow for public access and to complement the adjacent public realm.

These guidelines are intended to be used where a small plaza, park, through-block pedestrian walkway or other publicly accessible open space is proposed as part of a development project, or as indicated in the policies of DCAP Chapter 6 and Map 27 for plazas and open spaces.

Intent: To incorporate POPS with a high quality of design and usability as an extension of the City's open space network.

General Guidelines

a. Ensure the usability of POPS by providing visibility and access from adjacent public streets, parks and other public spaces.
b. Provide appropriate signage to identify POPS as open to the public, and to indicate their location when not fully visible from the street.
c. Optimize the siting and design of open space in new developments to enhance views or visual corridors to public streets, open spaces, heritage sites and landmarks.
d. Design POPS to complement character defining elements of adjacent heritage buildings through use of materials and spatial proportions.
e. Incorporate universal age and ability accessibility.
f. Maintain public access where desired and appropriate through the use of legal mechanisms, such as the dedication of the through-block walkway as a right-of- way or through the use of an easement.
g. Ensure maintenance agreements include detailed criteria for the operation and function of through-block walkways.

Examples of POPS (Privately Owned Public Spaces).

Types of POPS

3.2.1. Small Plaza

A privately owned, publicly accessible plaza is an animated gathering place flanked by a public street with predominantly hard surfaced landscape features.

a. Locate and orient plazas to maximize sunlight access throughout the day and provide uses that take advantage of the sunny location (e.g. cafés and patios). Plazas should be of sufficient size to include seating areas and appropriately sized tree plantings that offer shading for plaza users.
b. Create an attractive and welcoming space using design elements such as landscaping, architectural lighting, seating, water features or public art.
c. Plazas should be located directly adjacent to and accessible from sidewalks and other public outdoor spaces.
d. Locate the plaza at the same grade level as the public sidewalk where possible. Where there are changes in topography and grading is a necessary component of the plaza, clear and direct access from the public sidewalk must accommodate universal access.
e. Line the edges of plazas with active uses at-grade, including building entrances, to animate and support the open space.
f. Encourage spill-out spaces, such as patios, seating, etc.
g. Provide continuous weather protection in the form of canopies or arcades at the perimeter of the space in large plazas, while avoiding potential conflicts with adjacent tree canopies at maturity.
h. Provide at least one primary building entrance facing the plaza where possible.
i. Define smaller sub-areas within the plaza for ample seating and gathering in the sun and shade.
j. Provide pedestrian-scale lighting at appropriate locations.
k. A minimum of at least 25% of the small plaza surface area should include soft landscaping through a combination of grass, trees and plants that are appropriate for site conditions and that do not interfere with sub surface infrastructure and utilities.
l. Provide adequate soil volume and/or soil cells to support healthy tree planting and growth.

3.2.2. Through-block Walkways

Where feasible and appropriate, a publicly accessible through-block walkway may be negotiated as part of the development approvals process as per DCAP policy 5.32. Though-block Walkways are an exterior publicly accessible pedestrian route at street level, usually providing a connection or short-cut through the block and secured through a legal agreement such as an SRW (Statutory Right of Way).

Examples of a publicly accessible plaza on private space.

a. Provide through-block walkways as indicated in Map 16 Pedestrian Network in DCAP.
b. Provide through-block walkways to provide direct visual and physical connections from adjacent public sidewalks and open spaces.
c. Consider additional walkways to improve connections to community uses such as parks, community centres, schools, etc.
d. Consider additional street crossings to connect walkways on either side of streets.
e. Design buildings facing through-block walkways to include ground floors with active edges oriented to the walkway, including entrances and windows facing the walkway.
f. Design through-block walkways to achieve a minimum width of 6 m between building faces and correspond to the open space width to facade height guidelines in section 6.1 (d).
g. Explore opportunities for temporary public art displays and interactive programming to animate through-block connections.
h. Provide direct access to public destinations, including sidewalks, buildings, parks, open spaces and natural areas.
i. Provide clear sight lines at all access points to increase public safety.
j. Introduce landscape elements that provide visual interest while ensuring Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.
k. Provide seating, which may be integrated into building facades or planted areas.
l. Use signage to identify connecting streets, adjacent buildings or open spaces.
m. Provide pedestrian scale lighting along through-block walkways and pedestrian pathways.
n. Ensure that if gates are provided at walkway entry and exit points, that they are attractive and designed in a manner to be fully opened and do not impede access during public use hours.

3.3. Open Space and Landscaping

Intent: To provide well designed and attractive open space and landscaped areas that complement the overall building design, increase tree canopy cover, mitigate heat island effects, reduce storm water runoff and greenhouse gas emissions, are welcoming and help to connect to or extend to the adjacent public realm.

a. Ensure open space is usable, attractive, and well-integrated with the design of the building.
b. Consider tree species in landscaped areas that contribute to the City's urban forest objectives. Strategies include:
   i. Inclusion of deciduous tree species to provide cooling and shading benefits in summer and allow sunlight access in winter.
   ii. Inclusion of coniferous species in landscape plantings to provide year-round interest through bird habitat, as well as provide storm-water runoff benefits.
   iii. Medium to large canopy trees, with adequate soil volumes are recommended to contribute to the downtown urban forest.
c. Ensure a minimum of 30% of the required common landscaped areas include a diverse combination of plants and vegetation that are native to southern Vancouver Island, food-bearing (capable of being harvested for food and medicine) or that provide pollinator habitats.
d. Design landscaped areas to avoid the location of plants and trees immediately adjacent to air intakes on mechanical equipment and also consider potential impacts from plant-based allergens within common outdoor gathering spaces.
e. Integrate design elements such as surface materials, furnishings, and pedestrian-scale lighting that are high quality, functional and universally accessible.
f. Integrate a green wall or green tower for visual interest where possible.

Examples above of publicly accessible seating areas and walkways integrating landscaping.

4. TERMINATED VISTAS

Intent: To contribute to a memorable and distinct public realm and support legibility and wayfinding through the termination and framing of street-end vistas.

a. Consider potential terminated vista locations determined by the surrounding context including the prominence of the street, its function as a key pedestrian route, surrounding building heights and the overall appropriateness and benefit of a terminated vista.

b. Consider the use of appropriate measures for terminating vistas, including but not limited to the placement of landmark elements, public plazas, public art, water features, accented architectural facades, tall buildings, special lighting or a combination of these.

c. Ensure that developments on terminated vistas consider design features that serve to enhance wayfinding, function as landmarks to emphasize the prominent location, augment the local skyline and provide a focal point to welcome pedestrians.

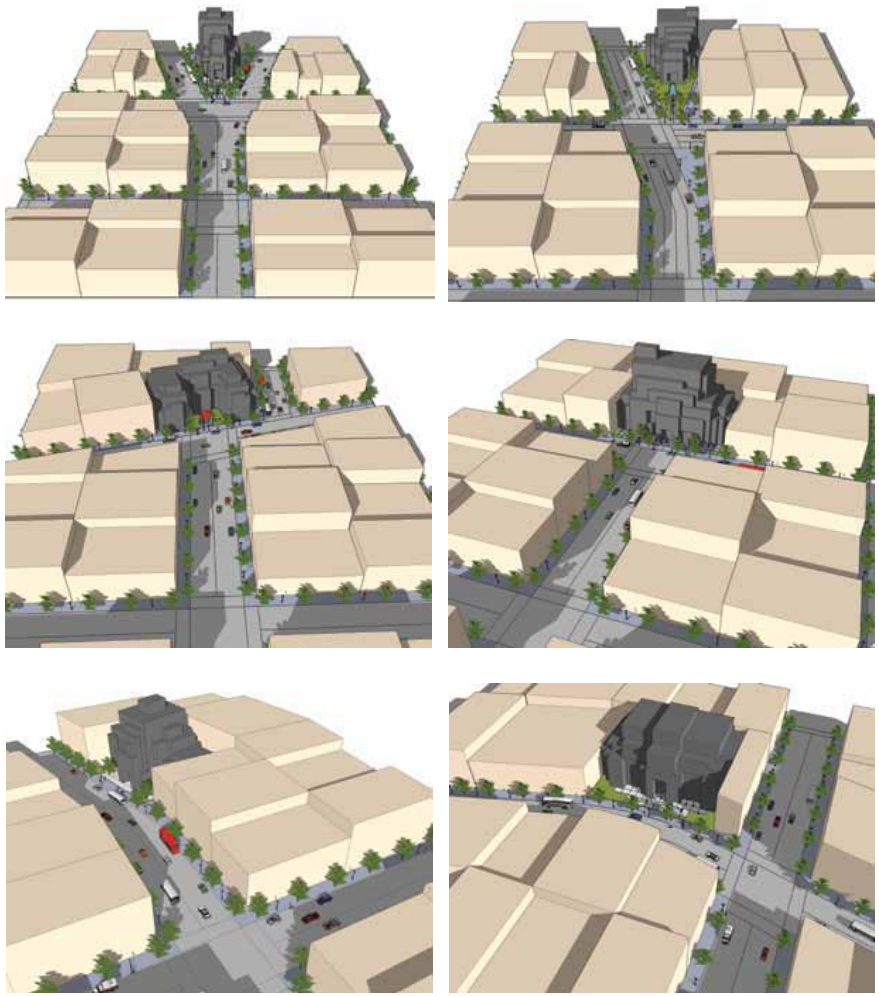
d. Provide appropriate spatial separation between new development and landmark buildings.

e. Consider including open space and landscaping that frames and enhances views of the water for terminated vista locations located along the waterfront.

Example of a building terminating a sightline along an open space through building placement, design and scale.

f. Consider opportunities to create a 'layering effect' by terminating vistas with lower scale buildings or landmarks, or large trees in the foreground and taller buildings in the background where they are all located along the same sight line.

g. Consider opportunities to frame and enhance sight lines toward the terminated vista. This can be achieved through the placement of adjacent buildings close to the public sidewalk, streetscape features and design.



Diagrams showing street conditions that provide opportunities for terminated vistas resulting from the block structure and shifts in the street pattern.

5. HERITAGE BUILDINGS – ADDITIONS AND ADJACENCIES

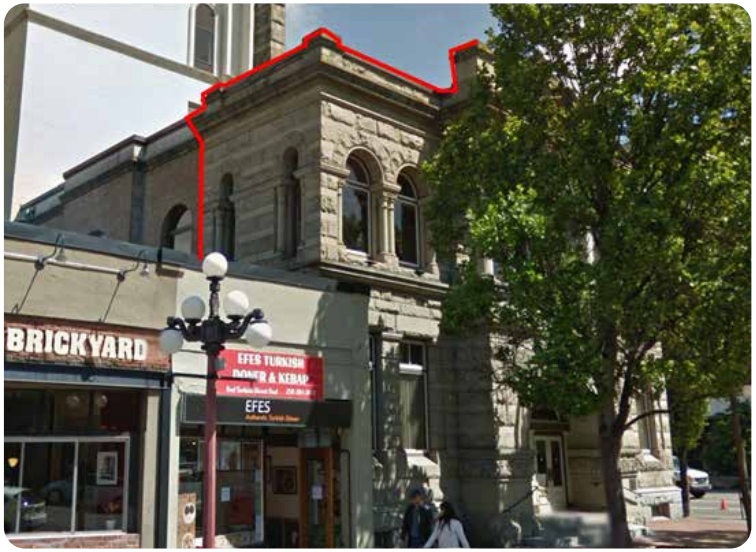
Intent: To ensure the design of new buildings and additions complement adjacent heritage buildings.

5.1. New Buildings Adjacent to Heritage Buildings

a. Ensure the design of new developments adjacent to a property on the Heritage Register complements the character-defining elements, and mitigates negative impacts, including obscuring them from public view.

b. Design new buildings or additions to reflect the spatial organization and elements of historic façades of adjacent heritage buildings, including general proportions, rhythm of structural bays, window-wall ratios, and composition.

Consider proportions, rhythm of structural bays, window-wall ratios, composition and spatial organization of the adjacent historic facade in the design of new infill buildings (in yellow).



Design new development to minimize impacts on adjacent heritage facade details such as the stone facade wrapping the building corner as shown in the example above.

Example of an infill development sensitive to its heritage context.

5.2. Additions to Heritage Buildings

a. Where a new rooftop addition is proposed as part of a heritage restoration and seismic upgrade project, ensure the rooftop addition is designed and integrated in a manner that is sensitive and compatible with the principle heritage building and that enables conservation of the whole building including its original structure to the greatest extent possible

b. Construct new additions in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the heritage building would still be legible.

c. Conserve and reuse original finishes, columns, or other elements within publicly accessible, ground floor interior spaces.

d. Restore missing facade features and preserve existing features when a new rooftop addition is proposed.

e. Design new rooftop additions with high quality, durable materials and finishes.

f. Rooftop additions should be stepped back no less than 3 m from the facade of the building that faces a street in order to reduce the impact of the additional building mass on the public street, improve sunlight access on the public street and better distinguish the form and scale of the original heritage building.

g. Design and locate balcony railings, plantings, mechanical equipment, furniture, or any other structures associated with a new addition so that they are minimally visible when viewed from the adjacent street.

5.3. Murals on Heritage Buildings

a. Avoid the application of murals on heritage building facades. Murals may be considered on secondary (not street fronting) facades provided they do not occupy the entire wall surface and where they do not detract from the heritage value or character defining elements of the property.

Examples of roof-top additions that are both compatible and contrasting (above).

6. TALL BUILDINGS

Overview

The tall building guidelines are premised on maintaining and expanding the development block form of development while accommodating densities and uses identified in the Downtown Core Area Plan. The guidelines are also premised on differentiating between tall commercial office buildings versus residential and mixed-use buildings, acknowledging specific design considerations and functional requirements specific to each building type and use. For example, commercial buildings typically require a larger floor plate than residential buildings to ensure that office space can be designed to address functional requirements and reduce the need to locate employees on different floors. Design guidelines for residential buildings are primarily focused on improving liveability conditions for residents through greater building separation distances and requirements for private amenity spaces.

The integration of taller, vertically proportioned buildings is achieved through a traditional form of development that seamlessly integrates a defined base building, middle (tower) and top. The role of the base building is to frame and activate the public realm as a series of comfortably proportioned and human scaled outdoor rooms. The middle (tower) portion of the building must be located, oriented and scaled to address sky view (the amount of sky seen between buildings), privacy, wind impacts, building energy performance, and the amount of sunlight and shadows that reach the public realm and neighbouring properties. The tops of buildings must contribute to an interesting and varied skyline.

Access to direct sunlight improves the usability and enjoyment of outdoor spaces and allows trees and vegetation to thrive. For tall buildings, protecting skyview and access to sunlight is generally achieved through balanced street width to building height proportions, overall massing, generous tower setbacks and separation distances.

For the purpose of these guidelines, a tall building is defined as any building over 23 m in height. As tall buildings will be interspersed with lower buildings within blocks, specific strategies are provided for:

- Mid-rise residential and mixed-use buildings (including hotels) (up to approximately 36 m in height).
- High-rise residential and mixed-use buildings (including hotels) (greater than 36 m in height).
- Tall commercial (office) buildings (excluding hotels) (greater than 23 m in height).

Blocks in the Downtown Central Business District are generally oriented in an east-west direction and with a typical dimension of approximately 180 m x 75 m. The varied shape and distribution of development blocks can have an influence on the pattern, type, scale and orientation of tall building developments.

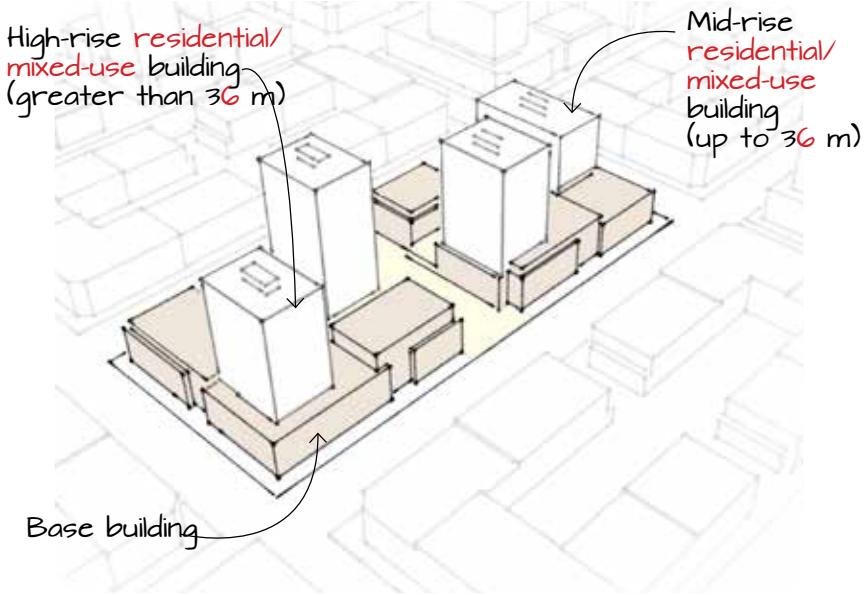
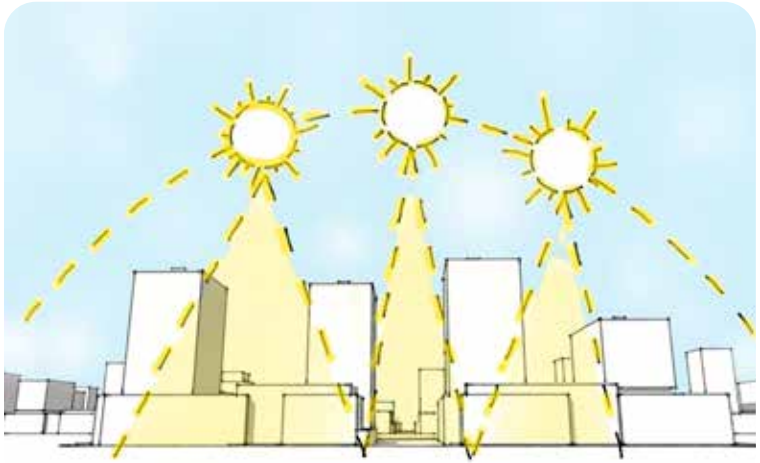


Diagram illustrating accommodation of mid and high rise buildings within a perimeter-block form of development.



Protecting skyview and access to sunlight are achieved through the placement, form and scale of tall buildings.

The recommended minimum tower setbacks and step-backs will determine the resultant floor plate size and whether a site can accommodate a tall building. Given the general pattern of parcel and block depths throughout Downtown, developments with tall buildings will generally require a minimum parcel size of 1400 sq m for a corner lot and 1600 sq m for an interior lot. In addition, consolidation across rear property lines may be required to achieve desired building separation distances for tall building projects.

6.1. Form, Scale and Orientation: Sunlight Access and Sky View

Intent: To ensure tall buildings maintain access to sunlight and sky view from public open spaces, and achieve livability and privacy for individual residential units.

a. Set tall buildings back from streets, parks, open space, and neighbouring properties to reduce visual and physical impacts of the tower or mid-rise building and allow the base building to be the primary defining element for the site and adjacent public realm.

b. Locate, orient, and design tall buildings to minimize adverse wind tunnel impacts on adjacent streets, parks and open space, at building entrances, and in public and private outdoor amenity areas. Strategies to achieve this include but are not necessarily limited to:

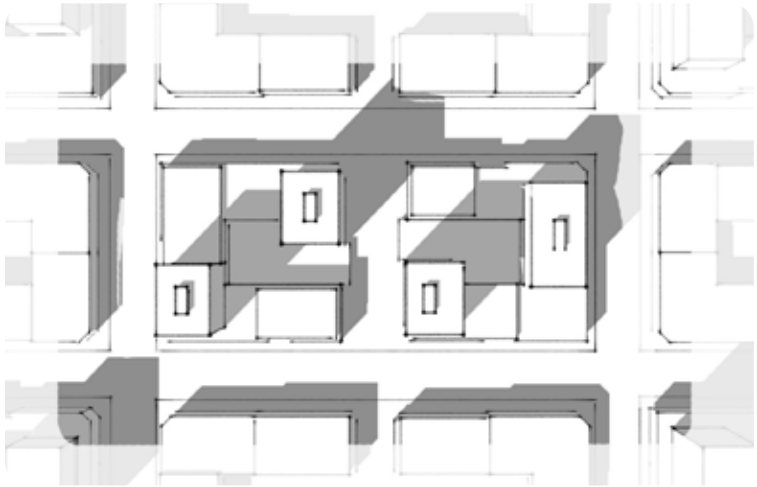
   i. Step back the tower from the base building to dissipate down drafts;

   ii. Incorporate landscaping into roof areas of base buildings and terraces to further reduce wind speeds

   iii. Incorporate architectural elements such as projecting cornices, screens, terraces, overhangs, permanent canopies, and colonnades to reduce effects of wind around the base building and within roof top areas;

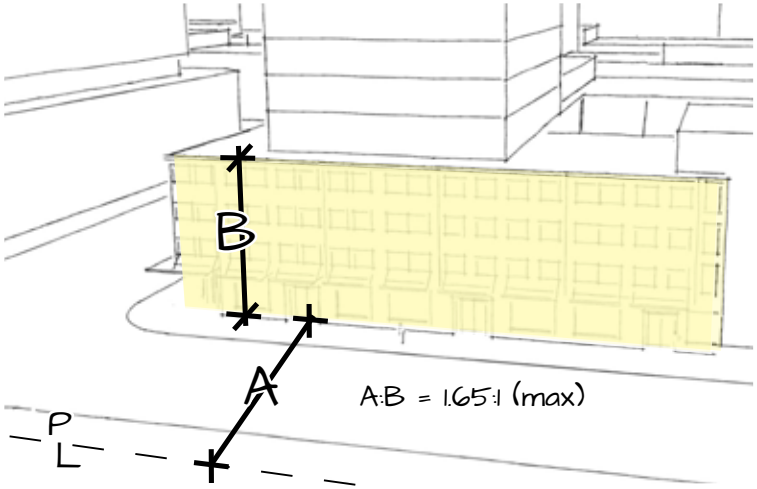
   iv. Integrate and locate permanent site features such as walls, landscaping, and where feasible, berming to help reduce wind speed or to create sheltered areas

c. Where a proposed development is likely to result in significant wind tunnel effects on the pedestrian realm, a wind tunnel study may be required at the discretion and to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning.



A sun-shade study can be used to evaluate shadow impacts on the public realm.

d. Demonstrate through a sun and shadow study how the proposed tall building maintains as much access to sunlight as possible and adequately limits shadowing of neighbouring streets and open spaces:
   i. Where unshaded by existing offsite conditions, a minimum of approximately 4 hours of cummulative sunlight provided on at least 60% of the length of the sidewalk located across the street from the development should be achieved between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. on the equinoxes.
e. To achieve comfortable street and open space enclosure, individual building projects should contribute to creating the following horizontal (open space width) to vertical (street-wall height) open space proportions should be achieved:
   i. Streets:
      » Minimum of 2.5:1
      » Maximum of 1.6:1
   ii. Plazas:
      » Maximum 2.5:1
      » Minimum 4:1
   iii. Lane ways or Mews:
      » Maximum 1:1
   iv. Internal Courtyards
      » Maximum of 1.5:1 (applies to any two sides)
f. A minimum street wall height of 10 m should be achieved.
g. Single development projects encompassing a full city block should have a maximum of four tall buildings.
h. For tall buildings (greater than 23 m in height) the base building should not exceed an overall height of 18 m (approximately 5 storeys) while also achieving the required horizontal to vertical open space proportions in guideline 6.1 d.



Example of calculating street width to street wall height ratio for a public street.

i. For mid-rise residential and mixed use buildings (up to 36 m in height):

i. Design and orient tall buildings to minimize overlook and other impacts to and from adjacent tall buildings.

ii. Locate the tower a minimum of 10 m from the adjacent rear and side property lines.

iii. Where a parcel contains more than one residential tower, provide a minimum 20 m separation distance between the closest points of the residential towers.

iv. Where a parcel contains a residential and commercial tower, provide a minimum 16 m separation distance between the closest points of the residential and commercial towers.

v. Incorporate a maximum tower floor plate size of 900 sq m., and a maximum floor plate width of 22 m.

vi. Maintain a minimum 3 m setback of the tower from all property lines fronting public streets.

vii. Differentiate the base building from the mid-rise tower to help articulate building m ass. Strategies for achieving this include but are not limited to:

» Incorporating a landscaped step-back between the base building and tower.

» Incorporating a reveal or recess in the first floor of the tower.

» Incorporate a change of materials and fenestration pattern between the base building and tower.

viii. Consider orienting building mass in a north-south direction for portions of buildings above the base building (tower), where possible. This is to minimize shadowing of public streets and open spaces and to provide ample daylight to units.

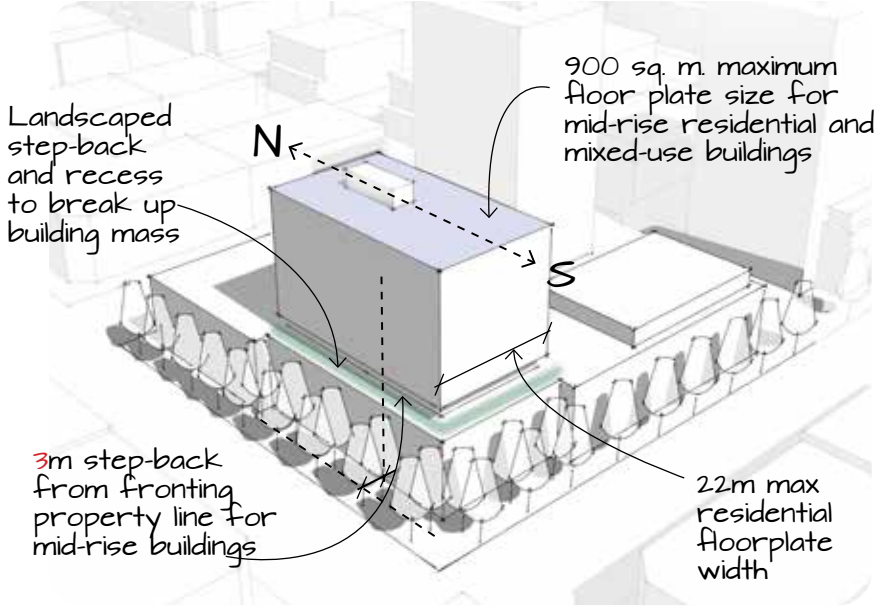


Diagram illustrating form, scale and orientation considerations for mid-rise buildings.

Example of a mid-rise building that articulates its building mass through a combination of vertical and horizontal stepbacks and changes in material.

j. For high-rise residential and mixed use buildings (greater than 36 m in height):

i. Provide slender point towers with generous separation distances.

ii. Locate the tower a minimum of 10 m from the adjacent rear and side property lines.

iii. Where a parcel contains more than one residential tower, provide a minimum 20 m separation distance between the closest points of the residential towers.

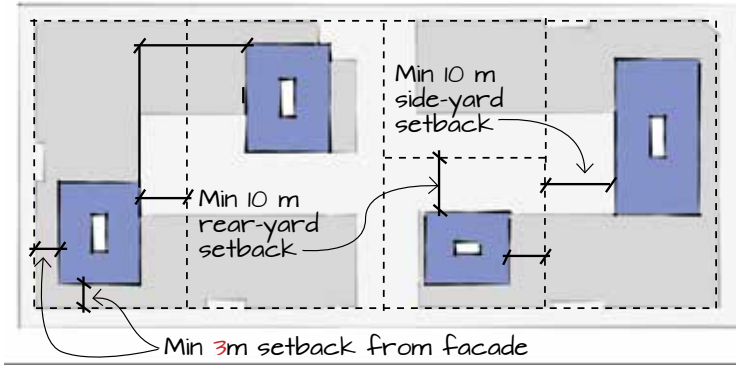
iv. Where a parcel contains a residential and commercial tower, provide a minimum 16 m separation distance between the closest points of the residential and commercial towers.

v. Incorporate a minimum tower step-back of 3 m from the street wall.

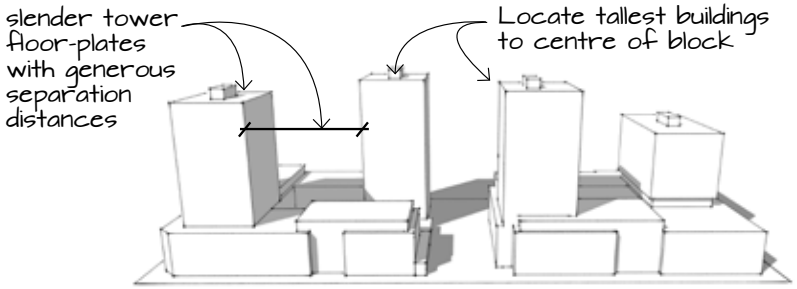
vi. Ensure tower floor plates do not exceed a maximum size of 650 sq. m.

vii. Consider a maximum floor plate width of 24 m and a north to south tower orientation.

viii. viii. Consider orienting building mass in a north-south direction for portions of buildings above the base building (tower), where possible. This is to minimize shadowing of public streets and open spaces and to provide ample daylight to units.



Diagrams illustrating setback considerations for mid and high-rise residential and mixed use buildings (above) tower spacing and location considerations (below).



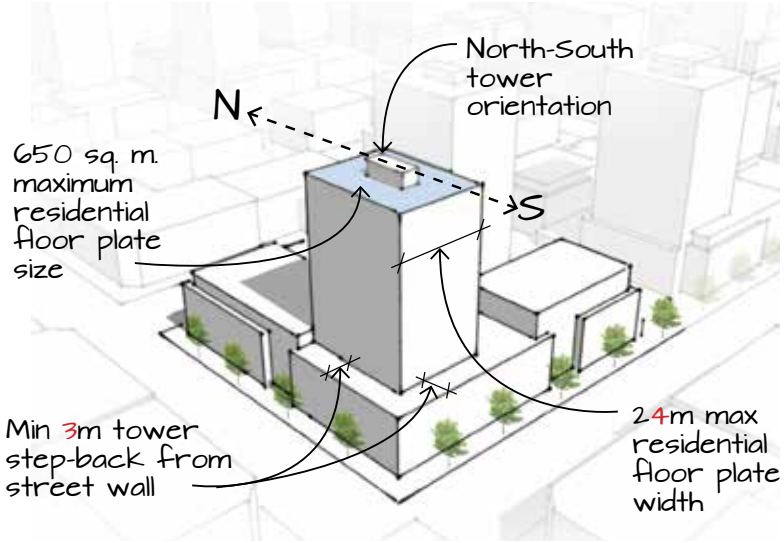


Diagram illustrating form, scale and orientation considerations for high-rise residential and mixed use buildings.

Example a of high-rise incorporating building separation and architecturally differentiated base buildings.

ix. Locate tall buildings in a manner that generally achieves a staggered formation within a block and in response to adjacent tall buildings on neighbouring blocks to achieve desired building separation, sunlight access and sky-view and mitigate wind.

k. **For tall commercial/office buildings (greater then 23 m):**

i. Ensure floor plates do not exceed a maximum size of 1500 sq m. for portions of the building above 23 m.

ii. Ensure floor plates do not exceed a maximum size of 1200 sq m. for portions of the building above 45 m.

iii. Ensure floor plates do not exceed a maximum 1000 sq m for portions of the building above 50 m.

iv. Incorporate a minimum 6 m side yard and rear yard setback from the adjacent rear and side property lines for portions of the building above 23 m.

v. Maintain a minimum 3 m setback of the tower from the fronting property line.

vi. Differentiate the base building from the mid-rise tower to help reduce perceived building mass from the street. Strategies for achieving this include but are not limited to:

- Incorporating a landscaped step-back between the base building and tower.
- Incorporating a reveal or recess above the established base building facade.
- Incorporating a change of materials and fenestration pattern between the base building and tower.
- Where a parcel contains more than one commercial tower, provide a minimum 12 m separation distance between the closest points of the commercial towers.

Example of a mid-rise building that architecturally distinguishes the base from the tower.

Example of a tall commercial/office building incorporating architecturally differentiated base building and change of materials.

Example of a tall commercial/office building incorporating a combination of upper storey recesses, projections and stepbacks to articulate building mass.

6.2. Tower Composition

Intent: To ensure tall buildings provide visual interest and contribute to a cohesive urban fabric and varied skyline.

a. Provide visual interest through variation in the design and articulation of tower facades and respond to differing facing conditions within the adjacent context.

b. Incorporate a distinctive roof top to terminate towers, distinguish the building and contribute to an interesting and varied skyline. Strategies for achieving this include but are not limited to:

   i. Stepping back the upper floors of buildings.

   ii. Incorporating a significant vertical element or finial.

   iii. Incorporating a decorative roof 'top hat'.

   iv. Screening mechanical equipment creatively.

   v. Incorporating roof top landscaping and green roof features.

c. Stagger tower heights in developments where multiple towers are proposed, to create visual interest within the skyline, mitigate wind and improve access to sunlight and sky view. A minimum 2 storey height difference is recommended.

d. Architecturally differentiate, if only subtly, towers in a single development project to allow for greater variety.

e. Balance the use of decorative lighting with energy efficiency objectives, the protection of migratory birds, and the management of artificial sky glow.

f. Integrate a combination of indoor and outdoor, private and common amenity space, where appropriate, into the design and massing of the upper floors of tall buildings.

g. As an option within the step-back, consider extending straight down to the ground up to one third of a point tower frontage along a street or open space for corner sites. This is to provide improved building address, connectivity to the interior lobby from the fronting street, and to support the provision of an exterior plaza space. At these locations, provide permanent building features, such as canopies and overhangs, to help mitigate pedestrian-level wind.

Examples of tower composition and articulation.

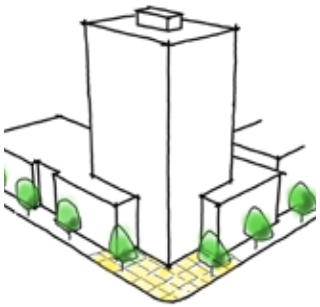


Diagram and photo illustrating a portion of a point tower frontage along a street or open space extending straight down to the ground.

6.3. Balconies

Intent: To encourage provision of useable balconies and other private outdoor spaces to contribute to liveability and support building energy performance.

a. The provision of balconies and private outdoor open spaces is strongly encouraged.

b. Design, place and pattern balconies to contribute to a cohesive tower composition and expression.

c. Design balconies to maximize usability, comfort, and building performance, while minimizing increases to perceived bulk and mass of buildings.

d. Avoid continuous horizontal balconies or wrap around balconies to minimize increase in the visual mass of buildings.

e. Consider inset or partially inset balconies, which also offer greater privacy, comfort and wind protection, particularly on upper floors.

f. Consider balcony projections up to a maximum of 2 m into required building setback areas and step-back areas, while avoiding potential impacts with adjacent tree canopies at maturity.

g. Consider a smaller tower floor plate and/or greater tower separation distances where large continuous horizontal balconies or wrap around balconies are used, to offset the impacts on shadowing, sky view, privacy, and daylighting.

h. Design balconies and other private outdoor common spaces to be a minimum depth of 2 m and a minimum width of 2.7 m.

i. Consider incorporating thermally separate floor slabs into balconies to minimize heat loss from thermal bridging.

j. Locate and design balconies to control sunlight penetration and passive heat gain.

k. Provide a gate for access to balconies or terraces that are located adjacent to common or shared outdoor spaces, where possible.

Examples of balconies as an integral part of building composition.

A combination of projecting and recessed balconies can help articulate building mass.

Examples of balconies located and designed to provide shade in summer and sunlight access in winter.

7. ALIGNMENT WITH HIGH PERFORMANCE BUILDINGS

Overview

The BC Energy Step Code establishes measurable energy efficiency requirements for new construction, up to net-zero energy ready performance by the year 2032. The City of Victoria intends to incrementally raise minimum energy performance to the highest levels of the Step Code by 2025. Victoria's climate is also anticipated to change, with increased need for space cooling expected. Within this context, these guidelines are intended to highlight alignment between high performance buildings, human scale design and liveability.

Intent: To design buildings that result in reduced energy demand while ensuring human scale, visual interest and a pleasing architectural composition.

a. Consider building design with a simplified form and massing and fewer complex junctions to minimize building envelope heat loss. Use simple shifts in massing, balcony placement and design, and changes in exterior colours and textures to articulate facades.
b. Consider a lower window-to-wall ratio on upper storeys to reduce heat gain and loss through the building envelope by increasing the area of insulated wall.
c. Consider the design and articulation of each tower facade to respond to changes in solar orientation and increase opportunities for natural ventilation.
d. Consider lower window-to-wall ratios on north facing facades than on south facing facades to account for lower solar gain potential.
e. Articulate tall building towers with high-quality, sustainable materials and finishes to promote design excellence, innovation and building longevity.
f. Include operable windows, where possible, to provide natural ventilation and help reduce mechanical heating and cooling requirements.
g. Consider passive heating, cooling, and lighting design principles in landscape and building designs, including, but not limited to:
    i. Orienting for maximum solar-gain potential to reduce heating demand in colder months; and
    ii. Using deciduous trees to provide natural shading to reduce over-heating in warmer months.

Example of a high performance building with human scale design that contributes to a high quality public realm, supports pedestrian activity and liveability for residents.

Example of fixed fins and other green building elements as part of the expression and articulation of the building facade.

8. INNER HARBOUR SPECIAL URBAN DESIGN AREA

Birds-eye view of the inner Harbour.

Intent: To ensure the design of new developments complement and reinforce the unique character of the Inner Harbour, Victoria's most iconic urban landscape.

a. Consider the architectural context of the surrounding buildings including vertical street walls, facade rhythm and horizontal cornice lines.

b. Design new buildings within the Inner Harbour to be contemporary in expression while still reflecting and complementing this traditional urban context.

c. New development in the vicinity of the Inner Harbour should consider and respond appropriately to the original planning for the area with a special attention to:

   i. Maintaining the established visual dominance, spatial configurations, and relationships (Axial geometries) of the Parliament Building, Empress Hotel, and CPR Steamship Terminal.

   ii. Ensuring that the location, scale, form, proportions, and orientation of new development complement the character defining elements of the Parliament Building, Empress Hotel, and CPR Steamship Terminal.

   iii. Avoiding any negative impacts on the organization and design of spaces used by the public such as the grounds of the Parliament Building and the Empress Hotel.

   iv. Providing a sense of appropriately scaled building enclosure around the Inner Harbour basin and adjacent sites.

d. Consider the use of high-quality finishing materials, with detailed architectural quality for new building and open space design surrounding the Inner Harbour basin. Use of masonry, brick, dressed stone and architectural finishing metal work is encouraged.

e. Design streets, plazas, marine facilities and landscaped open spaces to reflect the unique identity of the Inner Harbour.

f. Design roof lines for new buildings to complement the existing roof lines and not detract from or diminish the visual prominence of the Parliament Building and the Empress Hotel roof lines.

g. Design new institutional and cultural buildings to express their own individuality and prominence, without diminishing the visual prominence of the Parliament Building, the Empress Hotel and their surrounding open spaces.

h. Integrate night lighting effects into new building designs to enrich and maintain a balance with existing architectural illumination.

i. Provide opportunities for additional public access to the waterfront as part of new development along Belleville Street and Wharf Street.

j. Incorporate opportunities to enhance and improve the public realm through the provision of public docks, wharves and viewing areas along the shoreline.

k. Ensure that residential development is located, designed, and sited to mitigate any potentially negative effects on the general operation and function of adjacent employment activities.

l. Maintain a dual aspect and frontage for buildings located on the west side of Wharf Street, to provide attractive and active frontages along Wharf Street and along the waterfront.

m. Ensure that all new developments that are located directly adjacent to the Harbour Pathway consider building designs and detailing that serves to enhance the visual appearance and interaction of the building with the Harbour Pathway.

Early planning for the Inner Harbour by architect Francis Rattenbury was predicated on a proportional and spatial relationship between the Parliament Building, the Empress Hotel, and the CPR Steamship Terminal.

Attachment 2

2021

CITY OF VICTORIA | Sustainable Planning & Community Development

Downtown Core Area Plan - Updated Design Guidelines

Engagement Summary

DOWNTOWN CORE AREA: URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

DRAFT(April 2021)

CITY OF VICTORIA

The proposed Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP) – Design Guidelines have been developed and informed by varying levels of engagement throughout the project. This spring the City collected feedback on the Draft DCAP Design Guidelines through a community survey on the City's "Have Your Say" engagement platform. The following engagement summary outlines the general engagement approach for the project and includes a summary of emerging themes from the recent community survey.

Introduction

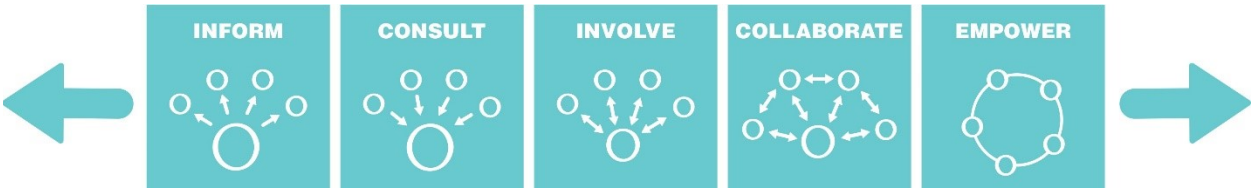
On May 28, 2020 Council approved direction to undertake an update of the Downtown Core Area Plan focused on enhancing liveability through improved building design. The update also supports Objective 8 of the Strategic Plan: Strong, Liveable Neighbourhoods, as this project is intended to result in more liveable neighbourhoods in the Downtown Core Area.

Engagement Purpose

The purpose of the engagement process was to raise awareness of and collect feedback on the Draft DCAP Design Guidelines with impacted communities, landowners, the development industry, design professionals and interested members of the public.

IAP2 Level of Engagement

The engagement process was guided by the City's Engagement Framework along with the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) principles. This entire process spanned from 'Inform' to 'Involve', as illustrated below. Early engagement included targeted workshops and multiple rounds of feedback (Inform to Involve), while latter engagement on the draft guidelines represented 'Consult' on the spectrum and included broader community engagement.



Timeline

Fall 2019

Initial Stakeholder meetings

Jan 2020 - Sept 2021

Working Group

Fall 2020

Walking Tour and Workshop

Spring 2021

Engagement on Draft DCAP Guidelines - Have Your Say survey

Covid 19

In-person engagement began with individual meetings in the fall of 2019. The Working Group began meeting in person in January 2020. A Downtown Walking tour and workshop was hosted in February 2020 also provided a significant amount of information for staff to begin developing draft guidelines. However, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 led to some adaptation of the engagement approach and timing. Engagement activities shifted to virtual meetings with the Working Group and individual stakeholder groups. A user-friendly Have Your Say project page was created, and additional outreach included the use of social media advertising and an online survey. These approaches were used to accommodate Provincial public health guidelines while still reaching a variety of different community members.

Engagement Activity Overview

Initial Meetings

Initial engagement for the DCAP occurred between October and December 2019 with individual meetings with key stakeholders including the following groups and organizations:

- Victoria Downtown Residents' Association (October 2019)
- North Park Neighborhood Association (November 2019)
- Urban Development Institute (November 2019)
- City of Victoria Advisory Design Panel (November 2019)
- City of Victoria Renters Advisory Committee (November 2019)
- City of Victoria Heritage Advisory Panel (December 2019)

These meetings were used to introduce the project, receive initial feedback, shape the overall project scope, and seek representatives for the project Working Group.

Working Group Meetings and Workshops

An 11-person project Working Group was established with representatives from the following organizations:

- Victoria Downtown Residents' Association (2)
- North Park Neighbourhood Association (2)
- Advisory Design Panel (2)
- Urban Development Institute (2)
- Heritage Advisory Panel (1)
- Renters Advisory Committee (1)
- Architectural Institute of British Columbia (1)

The Working Group met five times between January 2020 and September 2021 and played a highly valuable role in identifying initial areas for improvement, confirming the project scope, informing the proposed guidelines through feedback, sharing information, and reviewing the draft guidelines prior to broader public engagement. Working Group members were also responsible for communicating project information to and from their respective organizations.

Virtual Engagement Platform and Survey

From April 12 to May 7, 2021 a virtual community survey was hosted through the *Have Your Say* engagement platform. The survey was designed to collect detailed feedback on the design guideline topic areas, including perceived effectiveness of the new design guidelines.

Advisory Committee Meetings

Staff met with the Advisory Design Panel and the Heritage Advisory Panel prior to the start of the project to receive initial feedback, then during the engagement phase in April 2021 to present the draft guidelines, followed by respective meetings in October and November 2021 to present the proposed DCAP. The proposed DCAP and a covering memo were also submitted to the Accessibility Advisory Committee in October 2021 for their consideration.

Community Association Meetings

The proposed DCAP and updated design guidelines were presented to all community associations located within the Downtown Core Area including:

- Downtown Residents Association (October 2021)
- North Park Neighbourhood Association (November 2021)
- Fairfield Gonzales Community Association (November 2021)
- Burnside Gorge Community Association (November 2021)
- James Bay Community Association (December 2021).

Additional Requested Meetings

During the process of developing the updated design guidelines, City staff received requests to meet with individual organizations and businesses to present information and discuss a variety of development and design issues.

- Urban Development Institute (October 2020, April 2021 and October 2021)
- D'Ambrosio Architecture + Urbanism (September 2020)
- Colliers Victoria (October 2020)
- Jawl Properties (December 2020)
- Cascadia Architects/Fort Properties (May 2021)

What We Heard

This overview identifies high-level themes that emerged from initial stakeholder meetings, as well as from the Working Group meetings. These themes were subsequently used to inform the project scope and the draft design guidelines. Similar themes were also confirmed through the broader public engagement process.

- Emphasizing the importance of achieving and maintaining a skyline and building forms that reinforce the change in topography from the waterfront to the central business district (urban amphitheatre concept)
- Integrating clearly stated objectives for each guideline to improve interpretation
- Addressing design opportunities and challenges for smaller sized or residual lots
- Increasing building separation to improve liveability conditions for residents
- Better integrating useable outdoor amenity space on terraced setback areas of buildings
- Encouraging more innovative use of materials and building designs
- Avoiding homogenous building designs
- Clearly stating description of the role and function of view corridors
- Strengthening design guidelines to address the potential impact on adjacent heritage buildings outside of Old Town
- Creating context specific design guidelines for the inner harbour area
- Exploring the relationship between building height, density, and desired building forms for the context of the Downtown Core Area.

Input from Community Survey

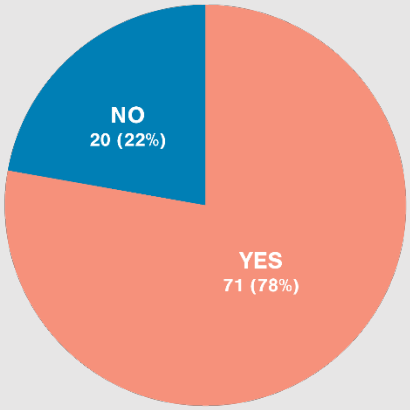
Between April 12 to May 7, 2021, 109 community members responded to an 11-question online survey about the Downtown Core Area Plan Design Guidelines project. The survey was advertised through local community neighbourhood associations, various stakeholder organizations represented on the project Working Group, by email using a City of Victoria stakeholder database, social media, and the Have Your Say web platform.

The survey included four questions about participant demographics and seven questions related to the DCAP Design Guideline topic areas. Respondents were asked to consider if the draft guidelines provide sufficient direction to achieve the objectives for each topic area. Respondents were able to provide personal comments for each question. There was also an open-ended question to gather any additional comments. Full results are available in the appendix.

Survey Results

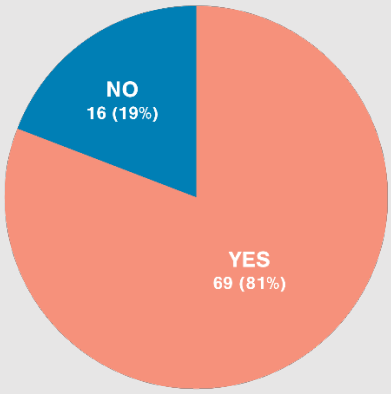
The following section provides a general overview of the support for the effectiveness of the design guidelines for the new topic areas.

Achieving a Human Scale - *Aim to ensure that the location, design, and scale of new buildings positively frame and define public spaces and support pedestrian comfort, safety and vitality.*

WHAT WE HEARD	
	78% of respondents agreed that the guidelines provide sufficient direction to achieve 'Human Scale'
	Good level of detail on the relationship between buildings and public sidewalks
	Good strategies to mitigate street-level impacts on pedestrians
	Downtown walkability needs to be preserved and less emphasis should be placed on automobiles
	Desire for improved access to sunlight on public sidewalks

Outdoor Common Spaces - *Aim to achieve the provision of shared or common outdoor amenity spaces such as roof top gardens, terraces, and small plazas within new development to encourage social interaction, play and urban food production.*

WHAT WE HEARD



81% of respondents agreed that the guidelines provide sufficient direction to achieve well designed and functional 'Outdoor Common Spaces'

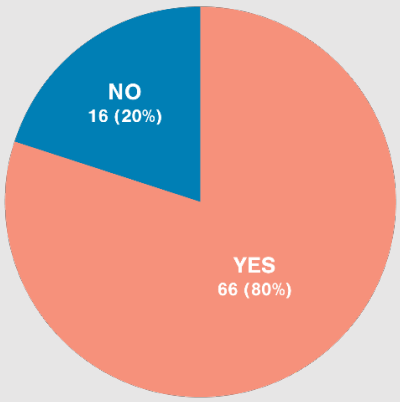
Guidelines help to balance public and private access to green spaces

Need for improved access and provision of outdoor common spaces has been more evident during the pandemic

Need more outdoor common space in balance with increasing downtown population

Heritage Buildings - *Ensure that new buildings are designed to complement adjacent heritage buildings, as well as to ensure that additions to heritage buildings are carefully integrated and sensitive to the heritage building.*

WHAT WE HEARD



80% of respondents agreed that the guidelines provide sufficient direction to create a positive relationship between new buildings and existing heritage buildings

Appreciate emphasis on having infill and additions "fit in"

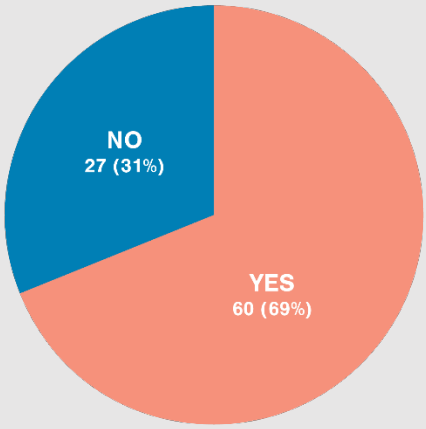
Guidelines need to be enforced

Need stricter guidelines to preserve Victoria's heritage

Avoid facadism

Tall Buildings - *Ensure that tall building forms minimize shadowing impacts on public spaces and have adequate distances between buildings to support livability for residents.*

WHAT WE HEARD



69% of respondents agreed that the guidelines provide sufficient direction to minimize shadowing and improve liveability

Guidelines should work if they are applied consistently without variances

Good level of prescriptiveness

Buildings are continuing to get taller with increased shadowing

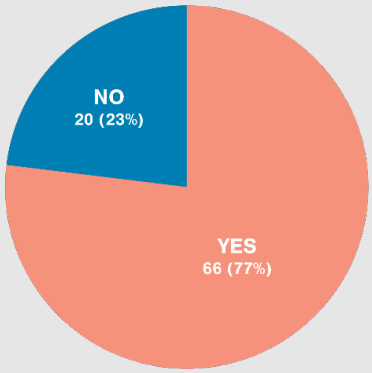
Increase focus on wind tunnel effects

Guidelines will limit density which may reduce provision of new housing

Building height continues to be a concern

High Performance Buildings - *Ensure that new buildings consider a variety of strategies to improve energy performance and efficiency.*

WHAT WE HEARD



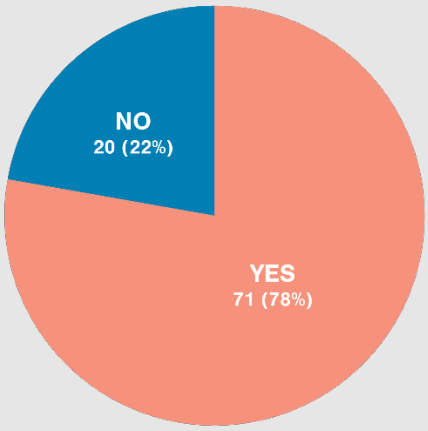
77% of respondents agreed that the guidelines provide sufficient direction to improve energy efficiency and performance in new buildings

May create conflict with achieving building articulation/aesthetics

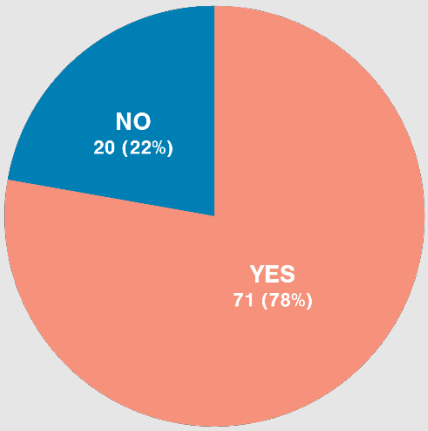
Smart environmental design is a good idea

Guidelines could go further but are a good start

Inner Harbour - *Ensure that new developments within the Inner Harbour area continue to complement and reinforce the area's unique character and context.*

WHAT WE HEARD	
	78% of respondents agreed that the guidelines provide sufficient direction to improve
	These are quite stringent, and need to be, even if it takes much longer for a new build to be approved
	The Inner Harbour is an extremely important aspect of the downtown. The current flavour must be preserved and enhanced.
	Restrict building height within the Inner Harbour
	Concern that guidelines will have 'work arounds'

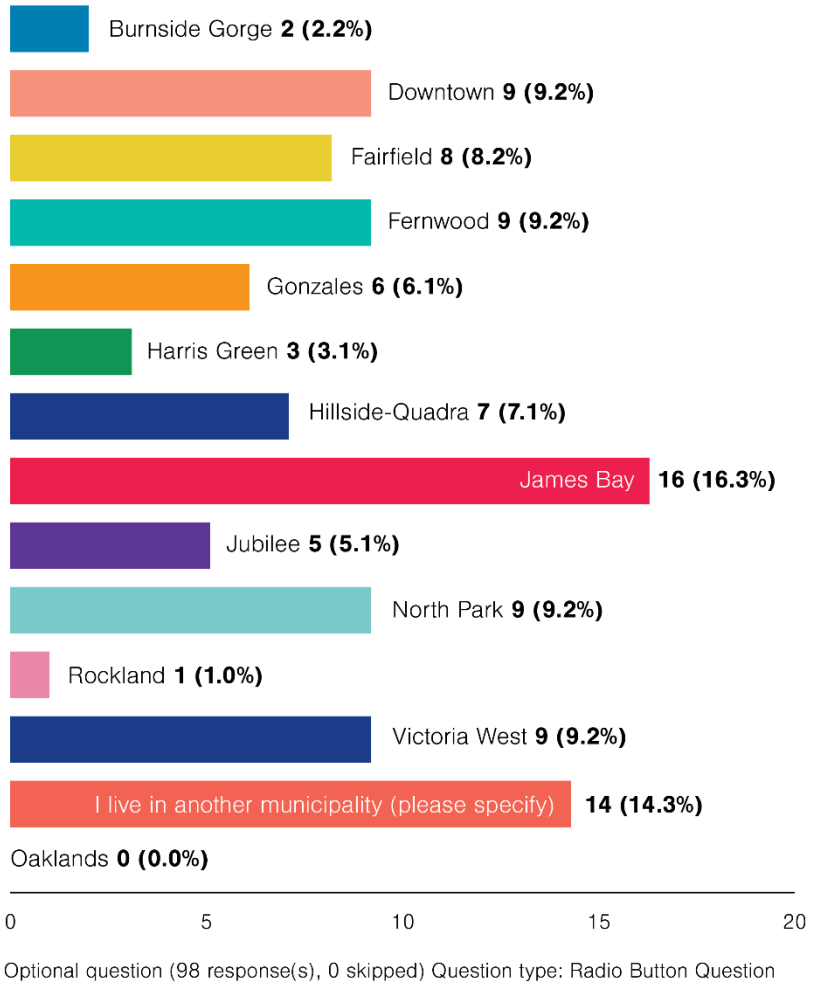
Clarity and Interpretation

WHAT WE HEARD	
	78% of respondents agreed that the updated design guidelines clearly explain the desired design objectives for new buildings in the Downtown Core Area
	Guidelines will only work if they are observed and enforced
	Guidelines are well written and clear
	Guidelines are easy to read and follow – appreciate the example images and diagrams

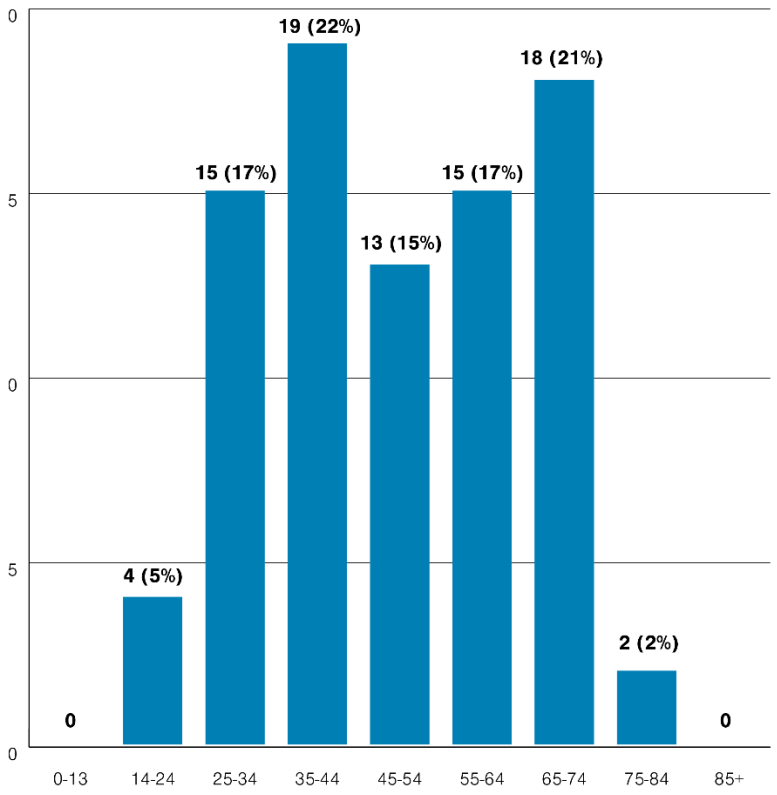
Survey Participation and Demographics

A total of 1153 people visited the engagement site to learn about the project, of which 109 participants completed the survey, and 16 asked questions.

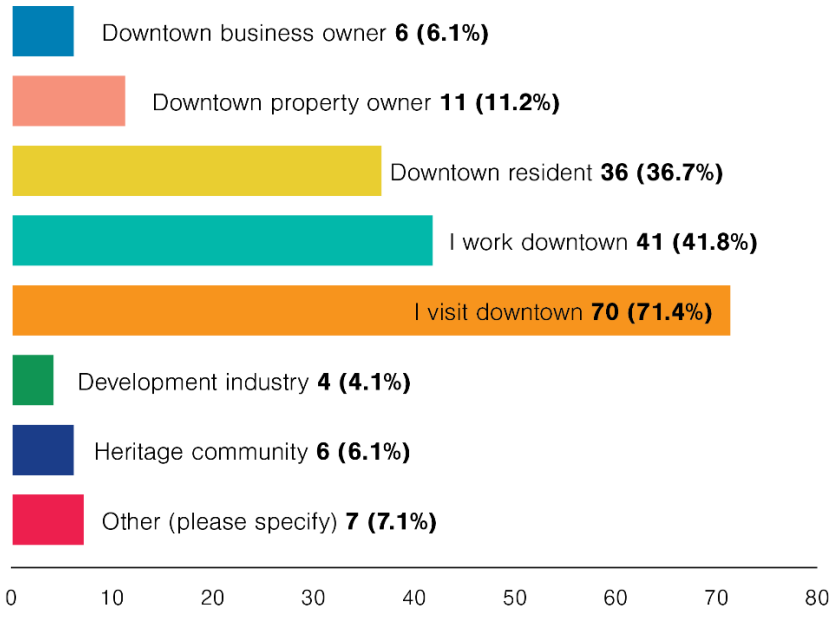
Most neighbourhoods had some representation and interest in this survey, including 9.2% from Downtown, 16% from James Bay and 3.1% from Harris Green, the areas most directly impacted from this work. Victoria West, North Park and Fernwood were also quite engaged at 9% each.



Respondents varied in age from 21 to 82 and represented a range of perspectives including those of downtown business owners, property owners, residents, employees, visitors, development industry and heritage advocates.



86 responses



Optional question (98 response(s), 0 skipped) Question type: Checkbox Question

Appendix

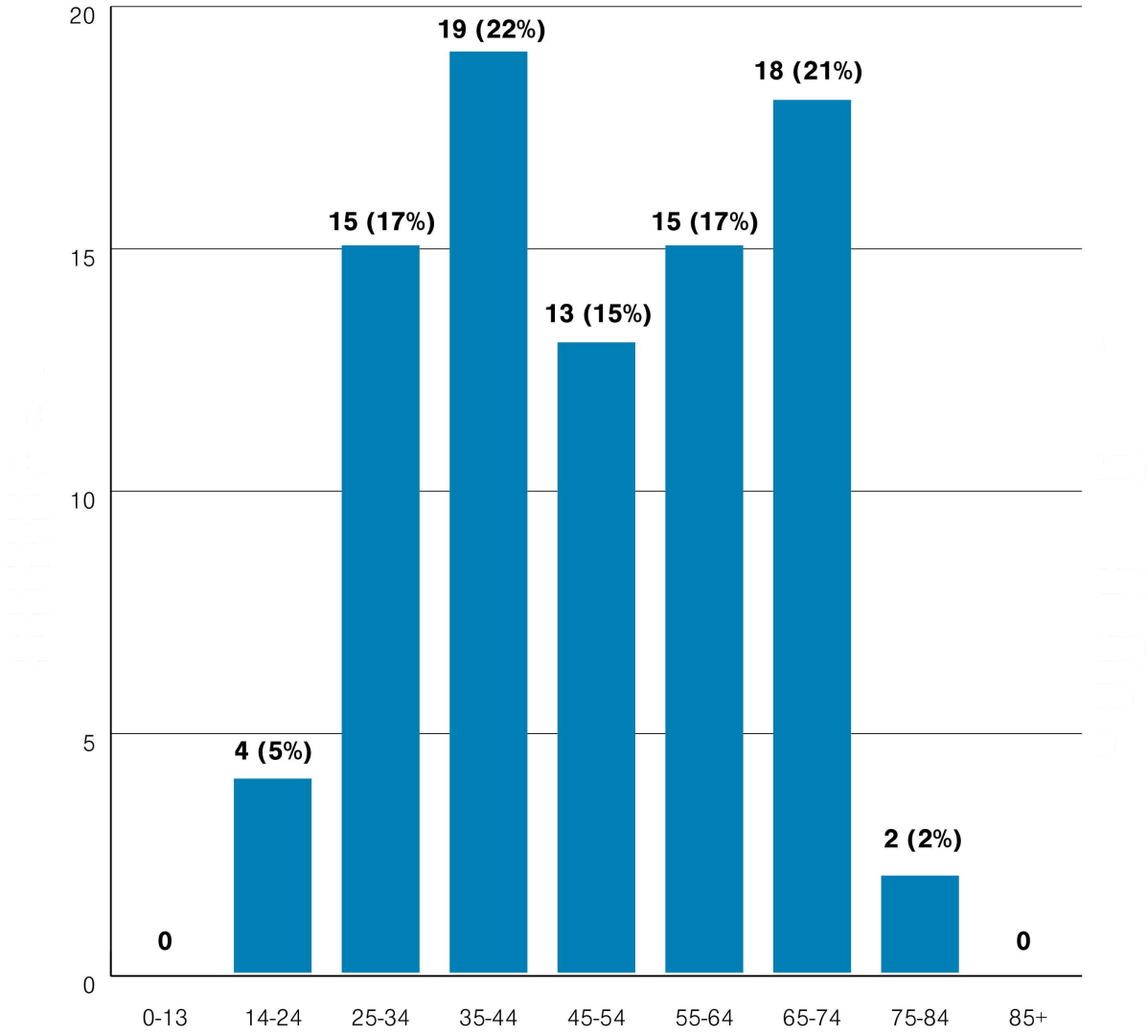
DCAP Design Guidelines Survey

SURVEY RESPONSE REPORT

PROJECT NAME:
Downtown Core Area Plan Design Guidelines

REGISTRATION QUESTIONS

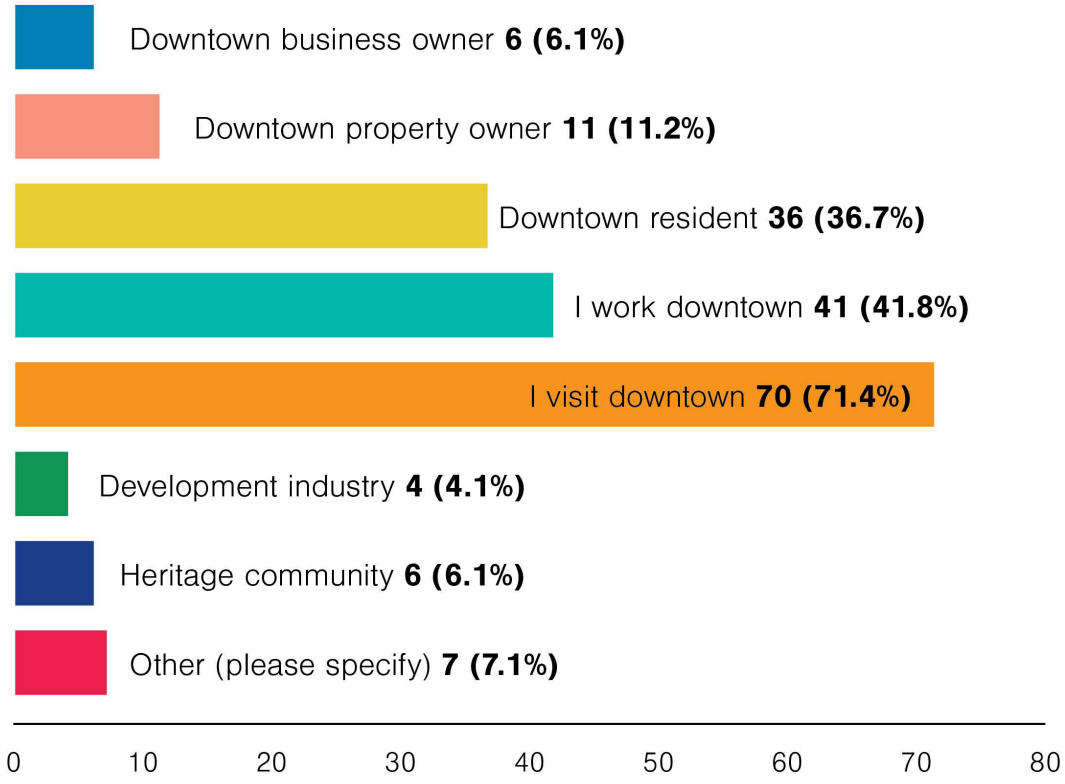
Respondent Age Ranges



86 responses

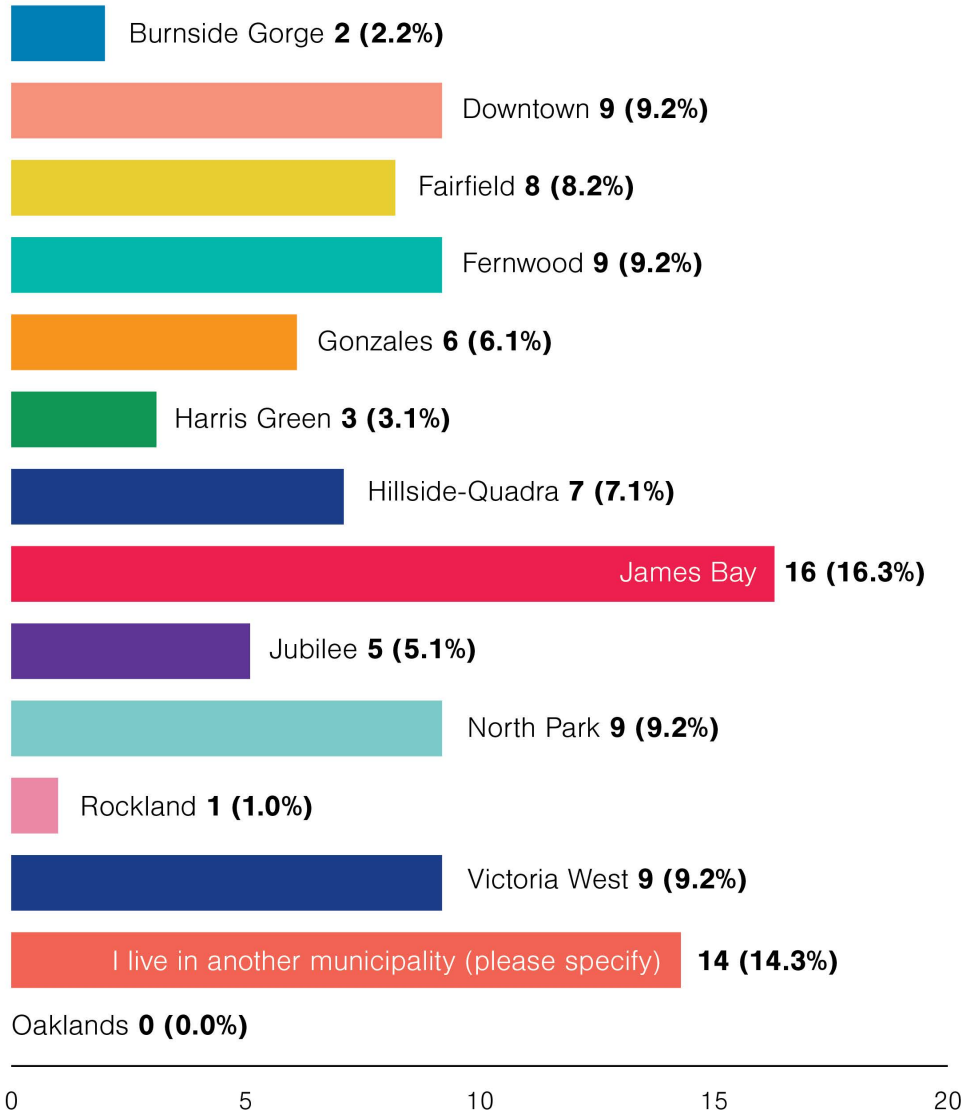
SURVEY QUESTIONS

Q1 Which group do you belong to? (Please select all that apply)



Optional question (98 response(s), 0 skipped) Question type: Checkbox Question

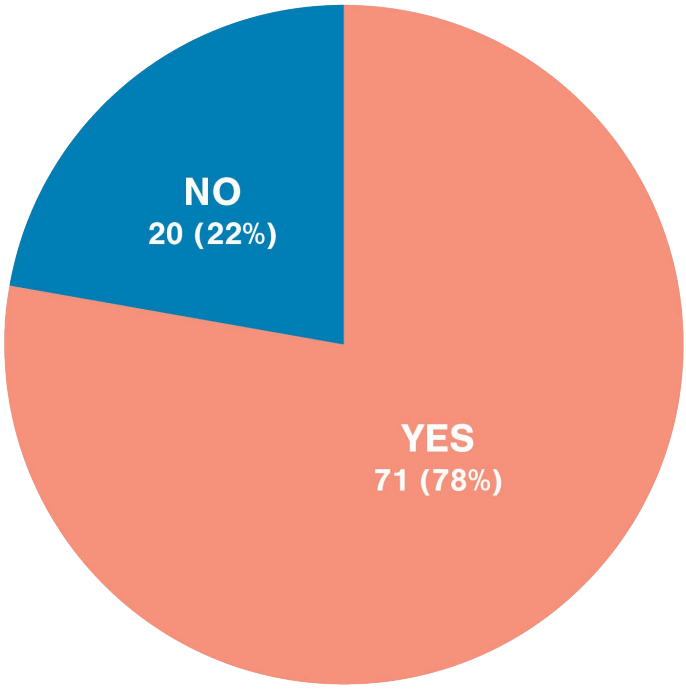
Q2 Please tell us which neighbourhood you live in:



Optional question (98 response(s), 0 skipped) Question type: Radio Button Question

Q3 **Achieving a Human Scale:** The updated guidelines aim to ensure that the location, design and scale of new buildings positively frame and define public spaces and support pedestrian comfort, safety and vitality.

Do you think the guidelines provide sufficient direction to help achieve this?



Yes, I think the guidelines provide sufficient direction to help achieve this. Please tell us more.

Screen Name Redacted
4/23/2021 04:39 PM

I like the guidelines in place that protect Old Town. I hqve noticed the City trying to demolish character buildings, going against the Heritage Conservation Area. This really concerns me.

Screen Name Redacted
4/23/2021 06:06 PM

They're only directive; all new developments will have unique issues to be addressed via these guidelines.

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 11:13 PM

As a pedestrian I don't feel safe when too close to vehicle traffic. Vibrant streets are good for quality of life and for business too.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 01:28 PM

Looks great to me. If it is easy and pleasant to walk on the sidewalk people will be more likely to do it. In addition to the guidelines for buildings, the same should be written for the street to buffer pedestrians from the noise and pollution of cars either by adding protected bike lanes, trees, flower pots or even traffic diversions / calming.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 04:42 PM

Some things I like: the emphasis on minimizing curb cuts for parking & servicing, the guidelines for weather protection, semi-elevated patios for ground floor residential, clearly distinguished and closely spaced entrances with good transparency for commercial space.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 05:23 PM

Most attributes are great, just couldn't find the referenced Map 16 of the pedestrian network as it relates to considering alleys. Could it be a requirements to add an alley or walkway if it is in the planned pedestrian network rather than just for consideration?

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 07:52 AM

I think that there should be more focus on making these directions and guidelines GREEN and ECO conscious

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 09:23 AM

The focus on facilitating pedestrian street life is great. I am impressed by the comprehensive approach. Victoria’s downtown walkability needs to be preserved and less emphasis should be placed on automobiles. I would like to see more emphasis on

closing as many areas as possible to cars.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 10:20 AM

I would add the need to restrict/prohibit sub street level entrances (Govt st) and increase the ability for grocery store penetration of the core to encourage /support true downtown living and not a tourist zone devoid of home owner/renter supportive services

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 10:52 AM

The guidelines are fine.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 11:48 AM

This is SO important. As Victoria grows, I fear it will lose its unique atmosphere of a small city, ideally situated on the ocean with a rich architectural heritage that provide a warm, approachable downtown. The scale and height of new buildings, if built without acknowledgement of this ambiende, will make it feel like any other over-built metropolis.

Screen Name Redacted
4/28/2021 11:22 AM

It appears that the planning has been thought through thoroughly

Screen Name Redacted
4/29/2021 02:30 PM

I'm impressed by the level of detail, however I hope developers will design projects around such considerations, by becoming familiar with them beforehand. More on this later

Screen Name Redacted
4/30/2021 11:58 AM

It is unacceptable that the Alan Lowe driven redevelopment of 257 Belleville (Admiral's Inn) can escape these guidelines a 2nd time; once in 2010/11 and now once again. This redevelopment should be referred back to Planning by Council for further consideration and public consultation. An equivalent to 11 story monster building of a luxury condos with zero green space does not fit nor meet the guidelines. Yes, the site should be redeveloped but with something that fits and complements the area. This is too big an opportunity to properly showcase a very visible site throughout the entire Inner Harbour.

Screen Name Redacted
5/02/2021 01:47 PM

The more emphasis on sustainable transportation (e.g. bike lockers/racks), the better. Increasing public space is good, the city needs way more places where you can just exist without the expectation of spending money. Minimize or altogether eliminate parking, downtown should be for people not cars. More greenspace is always good, but shouldn't come at the expense of

density; we can have both.

Screen Name Redacted
5/07/2021 09:08 AM

I'm pleased with the attention to detail throughout the plan and consideration of the feel and street-level impacts to pedestrians. The setbacks will be a major component of facilitating this balance

Optional question (16 response(s), 82 skipped)
Question type: Essay Question

> **No, I don't think the guidelines provide sufficient direction to help achieve this. Please tell us more.**

Screen Name Redacted
4/23/2021 10:12 PM

The proposed guidelines are overly prescriptive. 21m is not a "tall building" in any city, let alone a capital city. 8m rear and 5m side yards are impossible on many sites, and considerations should be made for smaller sites.

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 09:21 AM

I don't see enough details about variety in building height, which I think is integral to avoiding run-way type streets that feel as though they belong only to towers.

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 09:46 AM

There should be specific direction about green space, density should be tied to school spaces in the neighbourhood (unless you're trying to exclude families), and preference should be given to homes that walkout to the street (ie townhomes and detached homes rather than apartments).

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 01:53 PM

I appreciate the visual examples provided but do not see any text guiding building setbacks from the public realm areas. I am aware there are guidelines supported by by-laws governing building setbacks. However, going forward, it would be helpful to spell out in the new planning that the size of setbacks for buildings accommodate double wide sidewalks and vegetation planting areas equivalent to the sidewalk width, between a road and a building frontage.

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 04:20 PM

Human scale also needs to limit the width and size of buildings. Whole blocks should not be taken up by a single building. Building footprints should not be driven by underground parking

requirements.

Screen Name Redacted
4/25/2021 03:29 PM

Guidelines come close but the lack of room for trees, grass etc is concerning. Especially since suspect the guidelines will not be observed anyway.

Screen Name Redacted
4/25/2021 03:59 PM

Building heights are too high. Even with set backs, it feels like a concrete canyon.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 10:25 AM

Pedestrian safety and comfort is not possible until cars are eliminated from the downtown streets during daylight hours. City planners might look at Copenhagen (Denmark) as an example of how this works.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 10:33 AM

The sunlight / shade issues continue to be probelematic. Building setbacks, too.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 11:21 AM

restrict buildings to 10 storeys

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 08:10 AM

There is no language for people with mobility issues or disabilities, especially around parking. Trying to hide parkades with trees and putting them behind buildings makes it harder for people with limited walking ranges to get to their destination.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 01:09 PM

I am concerned that ground-level residences have sufficient set-back from the sidewalk, unlike some buildings in Vancouver. And that first-story residences in multi-use buildings are livable, given the usage beneath them.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 05:48 PM

I don't think the guidelines give enough direction for the material used on new buildings. There needs to be more warm and natural looking exterior material and not bland and artificial looking facades, that have a cold and unwelcoming appearance for the building. Those types of facades reflect that cold and unwelcoming appearance on the street and give the building an impermanent and cold appearance that doesn't lend itself to what the downtown should be aiming to create.

Screen Name Redacted 5/06/2021 11:20 AM	The following comments pertain to the above referenced section and do not necessarily claim that direction is insufficient, rather are provided here to align with the online survey format: 2.1 Form, Scale and Orientation: Item g – It would be helpful to know if the intent is to apply these stepbacks to the north façades only or to other façades as well. Item l – The 8m rear yard setback will impact smaller mid-block sites with a typical 18m width. Also note in some conditions the commercial use on the ground floor will not benefit from the setback. Item m (for buildings below 21m) – With an 8m rear yard and a 5m side yard requirement, smaller sites will not comply with the side yard requirement unless the rear yard requirement can be relaxed. Note that residential units are typically almost half the depth of the building floor plate depth so limiting side yard facing units to the front 1/3 of building depth is difficult. 2.2 Building to Street Interface: Item g – Recommend referencing floor to floor height versus floor to ceiling height as clear height will be determined by the commercial tenant at time of fit-out. Further, 4.5m may not be suitable for all building types/heights. 2.3 Façade Composition: Item c – Relying on the use of a variety of textures and details in exterior cladding to achieve visual interest may result in a 'decorated box', not achieving the intent of this section. Whereas a well-proportioned façade of high-quality material may better emphasize visual interest via the play of light and shadow, visible uses, and balanced proportion of intrinsic façade elements such as windows, decks, etc. Item d – Minimum balcony depths are reasonable and understandable but also impact rear yard setbacks for mid-block buildings.

Additional comments: (the following comments were provided in the survey by respondents that did not select a yes/no response, but simply provided a comment).

- Human scale is nice catchphrase, but it's rather meaningless. Also downtown has a lot of different sections and a one size fits all approach is not advisable. Context is everything.

- I think this should not be a yes or no question. I don't know who designs your surveys but yes/no is lazy and not a good way to engage! I think the design guidelines are, in theory, supportive of the principles of human scale but I think the question is more about how they will actually be implemented. An ugly awning that blocks the light and looks old and dated would theoretically check the box under weather protection. But it won't be inviting and pleasant and won't make the space feel welcoming to pedestrians. So there has to be consideration of the whole picture. Also some of these guidelines are more important than others. E.g. I would prioritize pedestrian walk-through spaces and setbacks to allow light over recessed building entrances, but the way the guidelines are laid out, it's as though every principle deserves the same weight. So when you have to choose between one or another, you have no way of determining how to prioritize. In that way I would say while each guideline provides sufficient direction, as a package there is not sufficient direction.

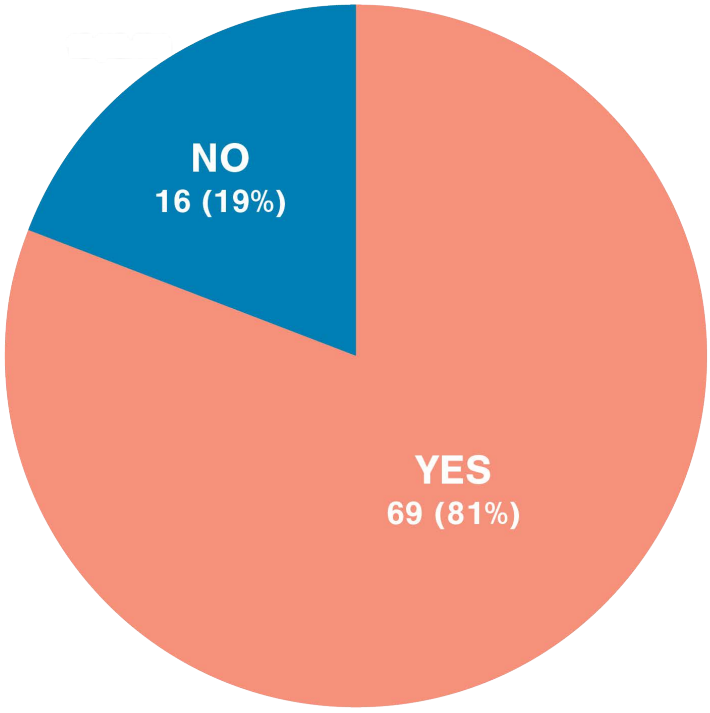
- There should be a plan to have a certain percentage of new builds going to sponsor local art for completed project

- No, Need wide sidewalks wherever possible . Lots of plaza and patio spaces (lack of which particularly notices during pandemic) Street level retail for street scape. Need street design guidelines. Need a different approach of current high-rises. We are a northern need light on the street. So build mid-rise four to five story max. buildings, and push them back from street to create urban spaces little most european countries. Current guidelines will just build a high-rise wasteland

- you let property builders get exemption after exemption so that they can make a better profit but make the situation functionally worse off than before.

Q4 **Outdoor Common Spaces:** The guidelines aim to achieve the provision of shared or common outdoor amenity spaces such as room top gardens, terrances, and small plazas within new development to encourage social interaction, play nad urban food production.

Do you think the guidelines provide sufficient direction to help achieve this?



Yes, I think the guidelines provide sufficient direction to help achieve this. Please tell us more.

Screen Name Redacted
4/23/2021 06:06 PM

Each new space needs to be designed so as to be harmonious with existing neighbours. There must be safe sight lines for the safety and security of users of the space.

Screen Name Redacted
4/23/2021 10:12 PM

Good intentions but green roofs add not insignificant complexity and cost to projects, as do roof gardens. They need thicker structure, which raises building height and increases costs.

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 01:53 PM

I think these guidelines are fairly helpful to balance public and private access to green spaces. Will there be an agreement between a developer and the city as to who is responsible to maintain (including costs) for (to a defined standard) the POPs that provide public access?

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 11:13 PM

More spaces like this are needed throughout victoria and for new buildings too.

Screen Name Redacted
4/25/2021 03:59 PM

...although I think we are basically privatizing outdoor space and letting the city off the hook for providing parks, greenspace and amenities

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 01:28 PM

Encourage developers to include common outdoor space, but also invest in placemaking for property managed by the City of Victoria. Perhaps permanently close some blocks and give the streets back to the people. Typically when I travel, these are the very streets that thrive and draw people into the heart of a community to both enjoy the space and shop.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 04:28 PM

Yes BUT please do not use Aryze as your consultant or developer.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 04:42 PM

I live in a ground floor home at Dockside Green, and the pandemic has only increased my appreciation of our excellent "Greenway". In addition, many of my neighbours love the rooftop gardens. These kind of features are critical to making urban living fun, relaxing, and family friendly. I did not see guidelines as to what percentage of

POPS should be landscaped, and I would like to see recommendations there if they are not specified elsewhere. A couple of things I disagree with: (1) The recommendation to include food bearing plant species seems incomplete. Berries, etc. are great as they are largely eaten by birds. But larger, fruit bearing, plants tend to be water intensive and, if the fruit is not harvested, will attract rats and yellow jackets. I know that food bearing trees are popular in Victoria, but we're talking downtown, not a farm. (2) I disagree that public art should be included as a key element of POPS. Most public art is uninspiring, and I would almost always rather see another tree.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 05:23 PM

yes, love that it addresses both social issues and heat island effect through greenery.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 10:52 AM

A priotity for people friendly spaces.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 11:48 AM

Again, very important and must be combined with appropriate height and density.

Screen Name Redacted
4/29/2021 02:30 PM

Use of a rooftop (green cover, patios, solar panels, farms) should be required in the zoning code. I like the detail about native, food-bearing or beneficial plants. This number could be increased!

Screen Name Redacted
4/30/2021 11:58 AM

See previous comments re. 257 Belleville

Screen Name Redacted
5/02/2021 01:47 PM

POP's seem good, but they should be guaranteed in some legal process to always be public. The more public space the better!

Screen Name Redacted
5/03/2021 04:28 PM

Some of the POPS seem like natural settings for small-scale concert/ performance activities (E.g. lunch time concert by a duo) Opportunities to blend live arts with some of this work exist.

Screen Name Redacted
5/07/2021 09:08 AM

While I think this section could be stronger, I do think it is fairly clear that there is a desire to create these accessible green spaces. I would like to see a greater emphasis on native species (I acknowledge that they are mentioned) and food plantings to make it clear that this is part of the intent of the guidelines and not simply

a possibility for the developers. I would also encourage additions of other incorporations of greenery, for example living exterior walls, in the guidelines.

Optional question (16 response(s), 82 skipped)
Question type: Essay Question

> **No, I don't think the guidelines provide sufficient direction to help achieve this. Please tell us more.**

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 09:21 AM

I think this can't be achieved unless POPS require universal accessibility.

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 09:46 AM

Even the photo you included here is a concrete pad with some patio furniture on it. That is not a sufficient public space. Victoria is way behind other cities in outdoor recreational opportunities. Add: water parks, natural green space, bicycle pump tracks, sports courts (basketball, pickle ball, volleyball, badminton). Victoria's idea of outdoor space seems to be either a concrete patio or a generic plastic kids playground.

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 04:20 PM

This idea proceeds from the idea that there will be towers on podiums. No to towers! No to podiums! Outdoor common spaces should occur at ground level or on the roof tops of 4-7 storey buildings

Screen Name Redacted
4/25/2021 03:29 PM

We were The Garden City. Now we are becoming the Concrete City, same as Vancouver. More trees, more green. At ground level.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 09:31 AM

I see nothing about mandating these 'guidelines'. Even the word guidelines implies flexibility and the idea that they do not have to be followed/implemented fully. With the amount of population growth in the urban center, there absolutely needs to be more space (recreational and natural and biologically diverse) for folks to interact and experience nature. As far as I'm concerned, every single building should have greenspace on roofs and space for their own tenants to enjoy. The issue of lack of greenspace in the city is a large concern and leading to a path of negative social impacts due to the complete insufficiency. Grass does NOT count as greenspace.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 11:21 AM

stricter tree conservation and greater emphasis on green space

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 09:23 AM

I am concerned that the statement, “the city MAY negotiate with private developers”, on POPS will result in too many exceptions to the principles of the guidelines. Developers should be required to adhere to the principles in order to be given building permits.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 01:09 PM

I am unsure. Who is the 'owner' of the Pops? Who manages it? Who deals with encampments on the areas? I support the idea, but worry about the execution and costs.

Screen Name Redacted
5/06/2021 11:20 AM

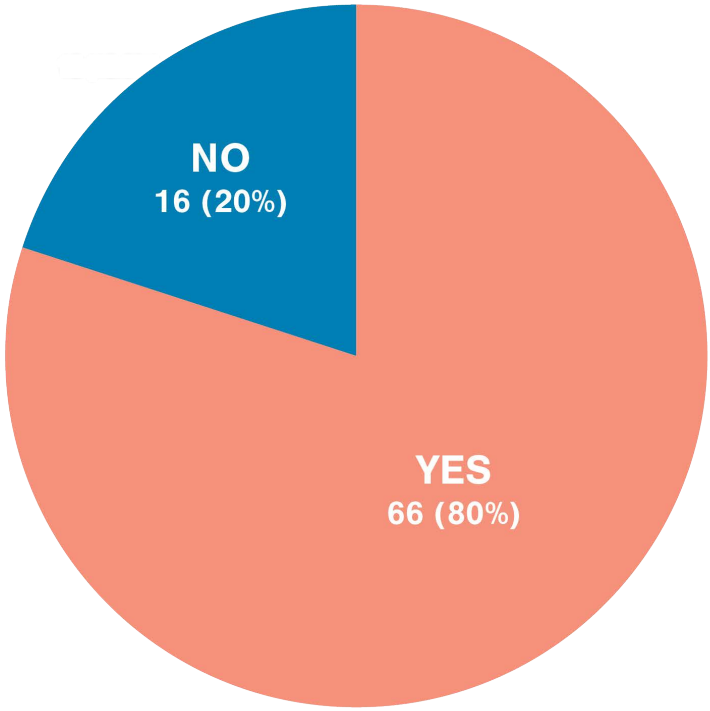
The following comments pertain to the above referenced section and do not necessarily claim that direction is insufficient, rather are provided here to align with the online survey format: 3.2 POPs (Privately Owned Public Spaces): Overview – It would be helpful to state the City’s position on the relationship between POPs and CACs and whether including a POP space may be considered as part of a development’s community amenity obligation. More information on how the space may be regulated is requested including defining the owner’s role in managing the use/function, design (material standards expectations), and operations/maintenance. 3.2.1 Item c (for small plazas) – The requirement for one edge of plazas to be open to the sidewalk will be difficult for certain sites; it would be helpful to permit visual connection to the sidewalk for an interior courtyard.

Additional comments: (the following comments were provided in the survey by respondents that did not select a yes/no response, but simply provided a comment).

- There is almost no green space downtown. We need opportunities to interact not just with the people who live in our building but the people who live in our neighbourhood. I don't see how a sense of social cohesion is supported in the design guidelines. With an additional 10,000 people moving in over the next 20 years and already 10,000 of us living here, we need recreational space.
- No, not if these amenities are to be accessible to everyone. A land use application for a large rooftop terrace came to the City that was accessible only by a tall set of stairs. If that is allowed, then the guidelines are lacking. Terraces have been built that aren't very accessible so standards must be lacking. Often only people with disabilities can know if something is accessible. There are no guidelines requiring accessibility of urban food production.
- again, yes or no are not good enough options. I think some of the ideas are great but how will you actually implement them?Developers resist POPS - they want semi-private, citing security. So they create spaces that are technically public but discourage public use through gates, hiding the space behind landscaping, putting up walls, making it feel like it's private property and you shouldn't go there. We already have space like that e.g. on Humboldt by the Premiere Suites building - but no one uses it because it feels like it's private. The guidelines are a good starting point but the nuances of what makes you feel welcome really have to be thought through. A great example is the public library - that's a space that isn't open to the street, but tucked away, and yet it feels open and welcoming to the public. There are bike racks, the elevator from the parkade stops there, and it just feels like you are allowed to be there. I don't think these guidelines capture what makes a difference between feeling like you are welcome and feeling like you are trespassing.

- Having public art made by locals should be central to these spaces and showcase and foster local arts community
- Universal Accessibility MUST be prioritized! It can't be 'where possible' or suggested.
- The guidelines are good but are they being enforced? I am noticing a trend in new condo buildings towards rooftops being used EXCLUSIVELY for private terraces for penthouse units. An example of this is the new Capital Park project.
- I do feel that improvements are warranted, however some areas of the city have become very difficult to navigate by car. Many families still need to use cars as methods of transport and every street seems to be under construction. Lanes being blocked off for private construction seems to be happening all over. Many people are frustrated and it seems "road rage" is very frequent as a result of all the changes happening at once. Accidents and violence aren't great ways for a city to be more "human". Perhaps we could mitigate somewhat with less happening all at once?
- We need more parks that are real public spaces not privately controlled.
- While the majority of bird collisions occur within the lowest 16m of a building, the vegetation commonly found on roof top gardens and terraces means that collisions must be considered in the surrounding area. The CSA bird-friendly design guidelines requires that bird-friendly elements be present to a height of 4m above green roofs/terraces, or the maximum height of the vegetation thereon, whichever is higher. While all glazing around these features must be considered, the popularity of transparent railing panels surrounding green roofs/terraces and the danger they present to birds deserve special note. The use of patterned glass instead would prevent collisions, while still allowing for light transmission and a view. Features like courtyards and atriums, or other spaces where vegetation is adjacent to multiple walls can be extremely dangerous to birds, as they are drawn to the area but have difficulty leaving safely, as there can be reflections or transparent glass on multiple sides. It is extremely important to consider bird-friendly design in these areas, and avoid creating “traps” which attract birds to a dangerous area
- too many hard surfaces, rigid right angles. we need more green infrastucture involving large canopy trees surrounded by shrubs and smaller perennials that provide more habitat and that give a sense of a space being dominated by green and growing things rather than just decorative accents in an otherwise concrete dominated landscape. also make use of large arbours planted with things like grapevines which when planted directly into the ground grow to be very low maintenance because they can find their own water.
- yes as long as the common areas are sufficiently policed and not left as a place where drug dealers and their customers set up shop and home making the city an ever widening eye sore. the average retired person is afraid to come down town even with amenities.
- I think each application needs to be considered in the larger context of neighbouring properties. More outdoor space is required as the population downtown increases.

Q5 **Heritage Buildings:**The guidelines provide direction to ensure that new buildings are designed to complement adjacent heritage buildings as well as to ensure that additions to heritage buildings are carefully integrated and sensitive to the heritage building.



Yes, I think the guidelines provide sufficient direction to help achieve this. Please tell us more.

Screen Name Redacted 4/23/2021 06:06 PM	Builders are required to inform their neighbours and relevant associations of their design plans.
Screen Name Redacted 4/24/2021 09:46 AM	I like how the facades are being maintained in DPA1
Screen Name Redacted 4/24/2021 01:53 PM	Please keep the guts of heritage buildings when incorporating them into new buildings. The inside of heritage buildings often contain design elements that enhance the living experience of those who live and/or work within them.
Screen Name Redacted 4/24/2021 04:20 PM	Yes I think the building in the photo is a good example but not the giant frame of huge boring condo tower going up behind. That is what Victoria does not need!! Do not turn Victoria into Vancouver!!!
Screen Name Redacted 4/25/2021 03:29 PM	If guidelines are observed and not "variance requested" to death.
Screen Name Redacted 4/26/2021 04:42 PM	I'm delighted to see the emphasis on having infill and additions "fit in". The older idea of having all infill and additions be highly distinct focuses too much on the architecture of individual buildings, while neglecting the overall feel of the area.
Screen Name Redacted 4/26/2021 05:23 PM	yes, I generally think considering proportions and window ratio is good but hope this doesn't prevent housing from being added to more heritage buildings as additions. Many heritage buildings are very underutilized as far as housing goes with not nearly enough having even a level or two above the street level shops for housing units.
Screen Name Redacted 4/27/2021 07:52 AM	It shouldn't allow homes to be relocated
Screen Name Redacted 4/27/2021 10:52 AM	There seems to be a tendency towards modern glass and steel buildings which do not intergrate with the heratige feel of Victoria. Also, too many condo highrises with retail on te ground level. We

are heading towards looking like Vancouver and eventually LA.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 11:48 AM

Guidelines are good, but, without proper building regulations, they remain only 'guidelines'. They must be backed up with proper by-laws and with a council that believes in them and acts on them.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 01:09 PM

I have no urban planning knowledge, but in most cases I worry that, without definitive regulation and sufficient penalties, developers will retain too much leverage.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 08:51 PM

Let’s work hard to keep our heritage buildings & revitalize them whenever possible instead of having new builds the priority.

Screen Name Redacted
4/29/2021 02:30 PM

The heritage designation needs to be overhauled. All heritage buildings need 100% immunity from demolition, which has not been the case! Newer, structurally sound buildings with heritage features (street frontage, small business spaces, brick) should be given a similar level of protection. I'm tired of seeing semi-heritage buildings disappearing, like the church on Pandora and Vancouver, or 100 year old houses being thrown into the landfill instead of moved.

Screen Name Redacted
4/30/2021 11:58 AM

See previous comments re. 257 Belleville

Screen Name Redacted
5/02/2021 01:47 PM

Victoria isn't that old, there isn't much that truly needs preservation, especially given how desperate the housing situation is. Heritage laws are often just used to stop any development, regardless of actual historical value.

Screen Name Redacted
5/03/2021 04:28 PM

What about a heritage mural on a heritage building? I miss that old 7UP mural that used to be downtown.

Screen Name Redacted
5/06/2021 11:20 AM

No comments on this section.

Screen Name Redacted
5/07/2021 09:08 AM

I think the plan does a great job of outlining the features to consider to facilitate this blend of new and old

Optional question (18 response(s), 80 skipped)
Question type: Essay Question

No, I don't think the guidelines provide sufficient direction to help achieve this. Please tell us more.

Screen Name Redacted
4/23/2021 04:39 PM

I think stricter guidelines to preserve Victoria's heritage should be in place.

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 10:03 AM

As in the picture the building facings have to blend in as well instead of drawing the eye to it at the expense of the older buildings.

Screen Name Redacted
4/25/2021 03:59 PM

Heritage preservation, in my mind, doesn't include adding stories. I am glad murals won't be allowed.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 11:21 AM

conserving heritage buildings must take priority and stop facadism

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 01:22 PM

This may come as a surprise but people don't come to visit Victoria to view what we think are "cutting edge" condos. Despite city council loathing our colonial past, tourists actually come here to see things like gardens, parks, heritage buildings/areas. Keeping this history is essential to keeping our appeal.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 04:28 PM

There is an inherent lack of homage to our heritage.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 09:23 AM

Generally the guidelines are excellent but they're should be a section about ensuring building signage/branding is modest and does not overpower the streetscape.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 05:48 PM

I think that the material on the facade of the infill building should much more closely resemble the heritage buildings beside it. Using material that is completely different and "modern" looking makes the the new building stick out like a "sore thumb" and ruins the overall look of that particular area. The picture, above, is a perfect example of how that new building ruined the look of that area. The

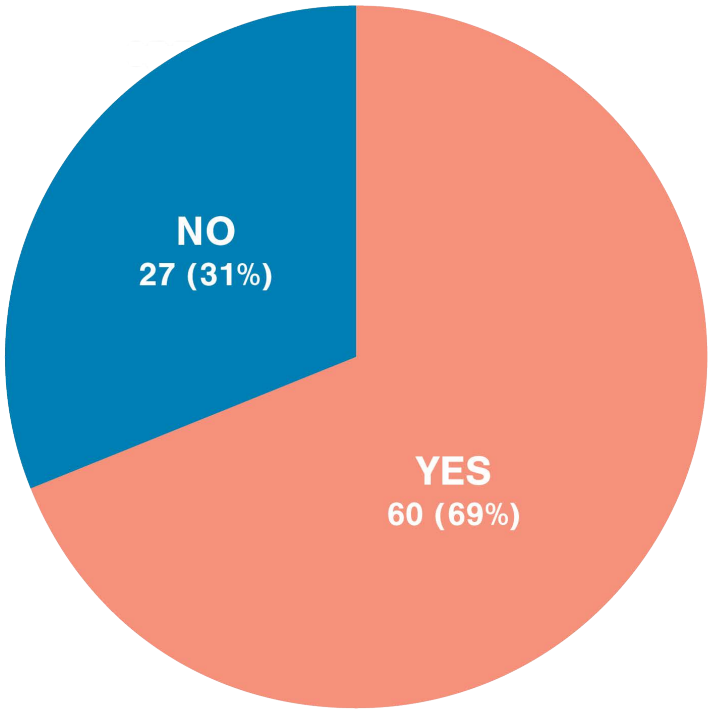
two heritage buildings have "warm" and inviting facades and the new infill building looks cold and out of place. The glass structure, on the fifth level is particularly bad. Large windows are wonderful but that glass structure is so out of place, within the context of the other two buildings.

Additional comments: (the following comments were provided in the survey by respondents that did not select a yes/no response, but simply provided a comment).

- Keep in mind that "complement" doesn't mean slavishly duplicating historical styles or creating Disneyland reproductions. Good contemporary architecture can and should have a place in heritage neighbourhoods.
- No, buildings can be changed without being updated for accessibility. And because they meet requirements, even though they don't provide accessibility, they are eligible for public funding.
- Upper floor add-ons too often dominate the lower facade.
- I think the guidelines are generally satisfactory but would argue that the example of "sensitive" infill is not a good one -sure, the windows line up, but it doesn't actually blend well at all (hint, look at the top floor and the roof line!). So my feeling is that if you can't even find one good example, then these guidelines are probably not going to be much help.
- No sure how the new Telus building fits into this. Building does not suit downtown Victoria, and if the Telus sign looms over the Empress roof, that will be a complete disaster.
- Heritage preservation has become such a sacred cow in this city that it's approaching some kind of fetish. Preserving heritage is an important goal but we should recognize that cities change and evolve. Just because something is (kind of) old doesn't automatically make it historically significant and worthy of preservation or emulation. European cities generally do an excellent job of preserving heritage by incorporating ancient buildings into their ever-evolving forms. This is often done by melding the modern with the ancient. By contrast, we are obsessed with either keeping things as unchanged as possible, or even worse, emulating old styles. This emulation seems to be at the heart of all of these disgusting beige brick facades that have sprung up everywhere. Your top example picture on page 16 is a terrible choice. The small building housing Brickyard Pizza is a gross insignificant edifice that actually distracts from the beauty of the heritage building next door. A much larger building would not necessarily take away from the old building. As I wrote earlier, look to Europe for inspiration of what is possible.
- No, again new high rise buildings are totally out of scale to existing heritage buildings. I would like to see building heights restricted to 4 to 5 stories max. and a set of detailed guidelines set in place to ensure new buildings compliment existing heritage buildings. If additional density is needed due to the population growth, expand mid-rise density increases into surrounding neighborhoods.
- While new developments next to heritage building should compliment the heritage building re proportions and window to wall ratios they shouldn't try and mimic heritage features thereby diminishing the real heritage building - we don't need Disney main street!
- You need to do more. Victoria is losing character with huge buildings that do not fit with the older ones. New construction tends to be ugly with few details or niceties.
- While subjective, there could be more discussion about a common design language for downtown buildings to co-exist with heritage buildings (e.g. shared materials, common architectural details or design elements). While the creativity of individual architects should be respected, there is an opportunity to support a more cohesive downtown visual design rather than an architectural hodgepodge.
- in the downtown core the city is doing a very good job overall. however in the burbs aka James Bay and Fairfield, you are allowing too much density without regards to parking, community services like the crystal pool to match the inflow
- The City has to decide whether to maintain the high standard of heritage preservation that exists or whether to continually approve exemptions. Heritage structures are why tourists and residents alike come downtown. No one comes into the downtown core to see a 12 storey (or greater) building.
- Yes, however, I strongly dislike the example shown. In my opinion, slapping a glass box that looks like a Cactus Club on top of a heritage building completely ruins it. That said, I'd prefer that to demolition.

Q6 **Tall Buildings:** The guidelines aim to ensure that tall building forms minimize shadowing impacts on public spaces and have adequate distances between buildings to support livability for residents.

Do you think the guidelines provide sufficient direction to help achieve this?



Yes, I think the guidelines provide sufficient direction to help achieve this. Please tell us more.

Screen Name Redacted
4/23/2021 06:06 PM

If guidelines are followed instead of deal-making with developers to allow them to compromise standards.

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 09:46 AM

Sunlight is so important! I don't think tall buildings belong in the residential area of the city core, but I appreciate the sunlight analysis

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 10:03 AM

They should work, if council sticks to them and doesn't grant variances to every building that comes along.

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 01:53 PM

Yes. And please consider wind/air flow. Season one episode 4 of Abstract: The Art of Design. On Netflix. I have put a link but it may not open so have given you the reference where to find this. https://www.netflix.com/watch/80093807?trackId=13752289&tctx=0%2C0%2Cbc6595da-46bd-43f4-b352-3f18d3ee6236-152707288%2Cae2c0c3d6894747a5a4bbf0bfacfcf76b378580a%3Ab2a327e9910d71bca19576b6c269413a8799a780%2C%2C

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 10:54 PM

I do not think high rises should be in the downtown core. Even with a suggested spacing.

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 11:13 PM

Minimize is different than minimal! There still needs to be many opportunities for more and increase housing in the greater victoria region...

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 04:42 PM

I'm not competent to judge guidelines such as the ratios of building heights to street widths, but the general intent seems right. There are two areas where there is guidance, but where I wish the guidance was stronger. (1) From the perspective of someone living or visiting the city, the most important part of any building, and especially of tall buildings, is how the building meets the street, because that's what people walking by see, and because it's what everyone who lives or works in the tall building sees every time they go in or out. For residential towers, providing outdoor common spaces, POPS, etc. is especially important. I'd like to see the

guidelines "double down" on the need for a strong street interface for tall buildings. (2) I was very glad to see section 6.2e, which says: "Integrate a combination of indoor and outdoor, private and common amenity space, where appropriate, into the design and massing of the upper floors of tall buildings." This is really important for tall buildings, as, unless they're done right, tall buildings can be socially isolating. Brent Toderian has an excellent blog post on this topic (Toderian, B. (2014, June 1). Tall Tower Debates Could Use Less Dogma, Better Design. Planetizen. https://www.planetizen.com/node/69073).

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 05:23 PM

Especially after COVID, I think requiring minimum sized balconies and outdoor spaces for residents is a must. Lack of access to any even semi-private outdoor space or having too small balcony (like a Juliet balcony) should really not be considered livable.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 09:23 AM

My only concern is that developers will be given too many variances to get around these guidelines. We need to minimize tall buildings as much as possible.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 10:20 AM

I think this is a start to provide direction. I did not see any mention of wind tunnel effects attributable to building size & orientation

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 10:52 AM

The giude lines are fine but in practice, I see the biuldings getting taller and taller and blotting out the sun.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 11:48 AM

I'm not a big fan of 'big buildings'. They can easily over power the city scape. Great care must be made in assessing their placement and overall impact and there needs to be a sense of 'cumulative impact' as more and more of them are approved and built.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 08:51 PM

Just no tall buildings in the downtown. We need to respect the established height of the buildings that we have.

Screen Name Redacted
4/30/2021 11:58 AM

Too little too late re. proposed redevelopment of 257 Belleville with the equivalent of an 11 story luxury condo that will block our sunlight and views from the entire Inner Harbour including the Empress and all along Wharf St. nevermind tourists arriving on the Clipper and Coho.

Screen Name Redacted 5/02/2021 01:47 PM	Balconies are great, but not Juliet (read: unusable) balconies. Tower height is less important than how the building interacts with the street; every building should have lots going on on the lowest 3 levels.
Screen Name Redacted 5/05/2021 10:23 PM	Not sure about the minimum balcony restrictions of 2m depth. Juliet balconies are wonderful!
Screen Name Redacted 5/07/2021 09:08 AM	This is great, we absolutely need to increase density in the downtown core and I'm very happy to see that the guidelines provide a thoughtful way to do so without losing the walk ability and scenery that is the heart of Victoria's downtown. I agree with a comment I read in the Questions section highlighting the need for further detail on preventing wind tunnel effects, but I think the current guidelines will be effective for light and visibility

Optional question (17 response(s), 81 skipped)
Question type: Essay Question

> **No, I don't think the guidelines provide sufficient direction to help achieve this. Please tell us more.**

Screen Name Redacted 4/23/2021 10:12 PM	Good intentions, but these limitations will significantly limit density, which prevents developers from getting returns on their significant investment in the site. We need to encourage MORE housing, by limiting density we incentivize fewer, more expensive units, or no development at all.
Screen Name Redacted 4/24/2021 04:20 PM	Once again this guideline assumes we should have tall buildings. Victoria does not need this. Developers and city officials talk about density but really it's all about selling condos at the highest price. No towers! All the examples in the guideline are boring and stale. Laughable planning that can't see the forest for the trees.
Screen Name Redacted 4/25/2021 03:29 PM	Maybe. But I question why we want to become a city of towering buildings anyway. We cannot build our way to affordability with developer driven density, Vancouver has proven this.
Screen Name Redacted	It's still building a concrete jungle.

4/25/2021 03:59 PM

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 09:31 AM

Once again, using aspirational language with room for 'flexibility'. For the price that people have paid to buy or live downtown, it needs to be ensured that their quality of life and access to views (one of the only perks of being high up..) and sunlight in uninhibited. Densification is absolutely needed, but it must be done in a way that does not impact existing beneficiaries. Especially when we live in rain for months at a time and many many people rely on their SMALL balconies and terraces to grow some sort of local food production - which is something that needs to be prioritized and supported.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 10:25 AM

I don't think the guidelines sufficiently protect existing residential buildings from new construction that significantly obstructs their view, and which also has a negative impact on the value of their property.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 10:33 AM

Height continues to be a issue - sunlight / shade / wind.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 11:21 AM

end tall building boondoggle, restrict to 10 storeys

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 04:28 PM

There are far too many tall buildings dotting our skyline with even more like the Ocean Telus as an example

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 07:52 AM

Not clear enough

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 01:09 PM

I am, generally, opposed to residential bldgs as high as the examples at the bottom right corner of page 21A, despite the building separation and architecturally differentiated bases. I support mid-rise bldgs, and encourage more pockets of mid-rise density

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 05:48 PM

Only in part. Too many tall structures are creating wind tunnels in the downtown core and detracting from the character of the city.

Screen Name Redacted

I believe Victoria should keep a "cap" on the height of tall buildings

4/28/2021 11:22 AM

in order to avoid shadowing and disruption of our open skyline and views.

Screen Name Redacted

4/29/2021 02:30 PM

We can achieve very high densities without a single tower. We need mid-rise buildings, the "missing middle", and more. Internal hallways from elevators will never be socially sustainable. We need a goldilocks scale that allows for community. 3 story walkups, such as Le Jardinier by ADHOC architects, can be the dominant building form anywhere in the city. Should a tower be planned for any reason, the upper portion's size should be heavily restricted. Right now, we have proposals for 14 and 17 story towers by dalmatian that will completely shadow out the block. Where's the consideration for sunlight here?

Screen Name Redacted

5/06/2021 11:20 AM

The following comments pertain to the above referenced section and do not necessarily claim that direction is insufficient, rather are provided here to align with the online survey format: Overview Note that with an interest in taller, slender towers to reduce the impact on sunlight/shadows and the sky view, relaxations in height restrictions on certain sites should be considered where proposed designs successfully respond to the context and achieve collective development objectives. 6.1 Form, Scale and Orientation: Sunlight Access and Sky View Item a – Note that setting back towers from all streets surrounding a site may not be the most suitable response to the specific site context, ex: view corridors, adjacent park space, adjacent heritage buildings etc. This requirement also conflicts with the intent to create interior plaza spaces. Item b – More clarity on how to calculate 4 hours on 60% of adjacent sidewalk would be beneficial (continuous or incrementally accumulative?). Item c, iv – Recommend that for internal courtyards, the street wall height proportion limit apply to 2 sides only in order to allow the location of the tower or additional shifted density to create the courtyard framework. Item e. Relative to the recommendation on increasing the max building height of 21m noted above, it would be beneficial to increase the 18m base building height to 19m or 20m. Item f. Mid-Rise Residential: iii. Provide clarity on how ‘facing’ distance of 25m is defined, confirming whether this is measured between parallel and opposite faces. Further, complying with this minimum distance is only feasible on very large sites; on typical sites this would limit the ability to provide entitled density (including affordable housing) by reducing the scheme to one tower only. viii. Note the N-S orientation of towers creates E-W facing facades which are more difficult to control for solar heat gain, and more likely to require cooling. 21m height for buildings below the ‘tall building’ category –

Consider increasing this to 23m as 21m is tight for a 6 storey wood frame with a commercial ground floor. It requires all residential floors to be limited to a 9' ceiling or less. Often a taller top floor will improve the façade proportion, and this will not be possible at a 21m cap. Note also that with increasing building performance expectations, buildings require more extensive ventilation (HRV, ERVs) of residential units which is putting new pressure on floor-to-floor heights; a relaxation of the 21m will improve unit livability. Item g. High Rise Residential Rationale on different requirements for residential and commercial high-rises (such as side yard setbacks and floor plate size) would be appreciated. From an urban design and built-form perspective, they are the same regardless of use. Item iv – Recommend increasing residential tower floorplate of 650 sqm, as a point tower core alone requires approx. 100 sqm of area. With restricted floor plate sizes, height restrictions will need to be revisited/relaxed in order to achieve density requirements. Item vi. – Staggering towers may not always be the most appropriate design solution to suit the neighbourhood context. Design should be encouraged to first and foremost respond to the surrounding sites/area which may result in towers that do not comply with the level of staggering outlined these guidelines. 6.2 Tower Composition Item c – same comment as 6.1 g, vi. above

Screen Name Redacted
5/07/2021 08:19 AM

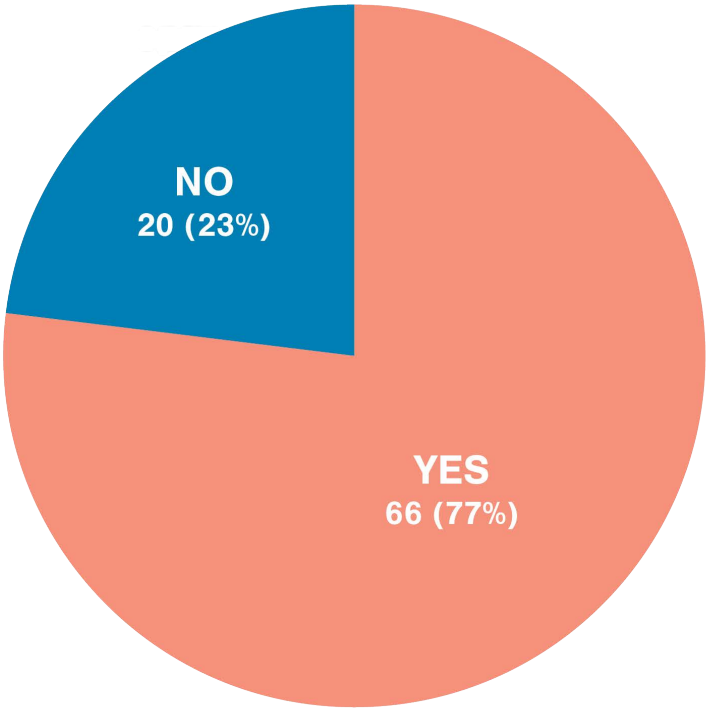
I don't like how this question is worded. I do t like allowing any more tall buildings in the downtown core. It doesn't suit our downtown nor can the roads support that many more vehicles (believing that most people living downtown don't need a vehicle is wishful thinking).

Additional comments: (the following comments were provided in the survey by respondents that did not select a yes/no response, but simply provided a comment).

- I do not think that tall buildings or shadows should be restricted in any way.
- Due to the housing crisis we are currently in, I believe that if a development increases density as well as offers below market rentals and social housing that increased height should be allowed ignoring shadowing effects.
- Victoria needs to get over its fear of tall buildings. Also, any building 10 floors or less is NOT tall.
- No, I think we have seen new tall buildings that have people looking across at very nearby tall buildings. They often seem to rise directly from the sidewalk, with no room for greening.
- I think that "generally staggered" is not very specific. All the rest of the guidelines in this section are very concrete.
- I support higher density to help address the affordability crisis. Shadowing is a minor concern.
- No, these buildings are totally inappropriate for a community the size of Victoria, create shadowy chasms on our streets and bankrupt the urban landscape and any sense of scale and human engagement with the streetscape.
- taller is better in many cases because it could save green space.
- because you already provide too much variance in return for a large fee to support your pet projects

Q7 **High Performance Buildings:** The guidelines seek to ensure that new buildings consider a variety of strategies to improve energy performance and efficiency.

Do you think the guidelines provide sufficient direction to help achieve this?



Yes, I think the guidelines provide sufficient direction to help achieve this. Please tell us more.

Screen Name Redacted
4/23/2021 06:06 PM

Each developer must describe how they aim to achieve this.

Screen Name Redacted
4/23/2021 10:12 PM

There is contradiction in this section and previous ones on how much articulation is desired.

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 04:20 PM

Smart environmental design is a good idea. The example building is good. Curtain wall glazing should be avoided.

Screen Name Redacted
4/25/2021 03:29 PM

Okay but can keeping up with changing tech is challenging. There is a development in our neighbourhood that is using the excuse that they started their development proposal before current EV charging regs and should not be required to update to current standards. How to deal with this?

Screen Name Redacted
4/25/2021 03:59 PM

...except these guidelines seem to conflict with the other guidelines. It looks like we have to choose between efficiency or aesthetics.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 01:28 PM

New buildings should go beyond energy efficiency to facilitate low carbon mobility. Make it easy to live a car-free lifestyle with indoor secure bicycle parking, including space for cargo bikes. This can also be incentivized by revising historic occupant-to-parking ratio standards to discourage car ownership in the city core. Or at least provide every unit with secure space to park a cargo bike / wagon. Do not provide guest parking spaces. If the presence of parking spaces is required, consider providing occupants with a car space at an additional monthly cost. To avoid having occupants store their vehicle on public streets, consider changing on-street parking in residential neighbourhoods to require an annual parking permit.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 10:20 AM

A start - there is no mention of using the adjacent water to provide cooling - Toronto Hydro (https://www.acciona.ca/projects/construction/port-and-hydraulic-works/deep-lake-water-cooling-system/)

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 10:52 AM

Energy efficiency is a good idea.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 11:48 AM

Very important. Lots of good work being done around the world on this. Victoria needs to take advantage of the latest energy-saving technology and incorporate it everywhere possible.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 01:09 PM

I support steps in this direction. I wish I understood how the fixed fins in your example (25a) were beneficial with so few fins.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 05:48 PM

In part again. The two pictures , beside the written guidelines on P.23, are perfect examples of the material that should NOT be used on new construction. The guidelines for high performance buildings are commendable but keep in mind, much more, how the look of these buildings is going to hold up over decades to come. The material used on the facade of these buildings completely ruins the look and character of Victoria. New well constructed high performance buildings do not have to incorporate artificial looking facades. They look cold, unwelcoming and "cheap".

Screen Name Redacted
5/03/2021 04:28 PM

I'm not sure I have the expertise necessary to evaluate this section. Maybe I don't know enough about 'passive' methods. I like the sound of using less energy.

Optional question (12 response(s), 86 skipped)
Question type: Essay Question

> **No, I don't think the guidelines provide sufficient direction to help achieve this. Please tell us more.**

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 09:21 AM

There word ‘consider’ is used a lot. I’d like to see more explicit requirements

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 09:46 AM

I think it’s extremely important that buildings are energy efficient, so I appreciate the question, but there is no mention of fossil fuel divestment. A building that uses 200 kW of electricity is still better for the planet than a building that uses 100 kW of natural gas. There should be a greenhouse gas emissions metric included in the report. But I do like the inclusion of shading with trees and cooling considerations

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 10:03 AM

They could go further but are a good start.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 11:21 AM

more emphasis on trees and greenspace to retain water, cool and help with climate

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 04:28 PM

Don't know what that means other than too dense

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 04:42 PM

This section just seems weak. I agree that minimizing the need for space cooling in a warming climate is the main issue. I just think that that point needs to be made much more strongly. Also, unless this is covered elsewhere, we should be pushing new construction to be all electric. My take: (1) Heating in a large, downtown, building in Victoria's climate isn't likely to be an issue. Certainly for residential uses, any multi-family residential building will be vastly more heat efficient than typical single detached homes. For example, my apartment has homes on both sides and above. Our heat NEVER came on this winter. (2) Heat efficiency, therefore, should not be a priority. Instead, for heating, the priority should be using electricity, not gas. (3) On the other hand, we SHOULD be emphasizing passive cooling. Victoria has historically been blessed with moderate summers, and there hasn't been any need for air conditioning in most buildings. But with summers getting warmer, and with our sunny climate, tall buildings with a lot of glass can quickly get hot. Our guidelines should push new construction to minimize the need for air conditioning. (4) Finally, extracting and burning natural gas produces GHG emissions. Furthermore, using gas for cooking is heat inefficient, which is problematic during the summer months. Finally, we are in an earthquake zone, and gas fires are problematic during earthquakes.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 07:52 AM

It should not say CONSIDER it should say it in MANDATORY

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 09:23 AM

Generally good, but there needs to be more emphasis on trees.

Screen Name Redacted
4/29/2021 02:30 PM

Every new building that doesn't do everything right is a missed opportunity - they will exist for another hundred years, after all! Avoiding glass towers is the solution to energy efficiency.

Reasonably sized operable windows are more common at lower heights. We can't ignore the climate impact of embodied energy. Thanks to technologies like Hempcrete and Mass Timber, we can avoid concrete like the plague. In addition, by excluding car parking, foundations can be smaller and less time is wasted digging massive holes.

Screen Name Redacted
5/06/2021 11:20 AM

The following comments pertain to the above referenced section and do not necessarily claim that direction is insufficient, rather are provided here to align with the online survey format: With growing expectations of enhanced building performance and BC Energy Step Code adoption, consideration of simpler building forms will be required. This will contrast with other sections of the guidelines which promote building stepping and terracing.

Screen Name Redacted
5/07/2021 08:19 AM

No mention of LEED at all?

Screen Name Redacted
5/07/2021 09:08 AM

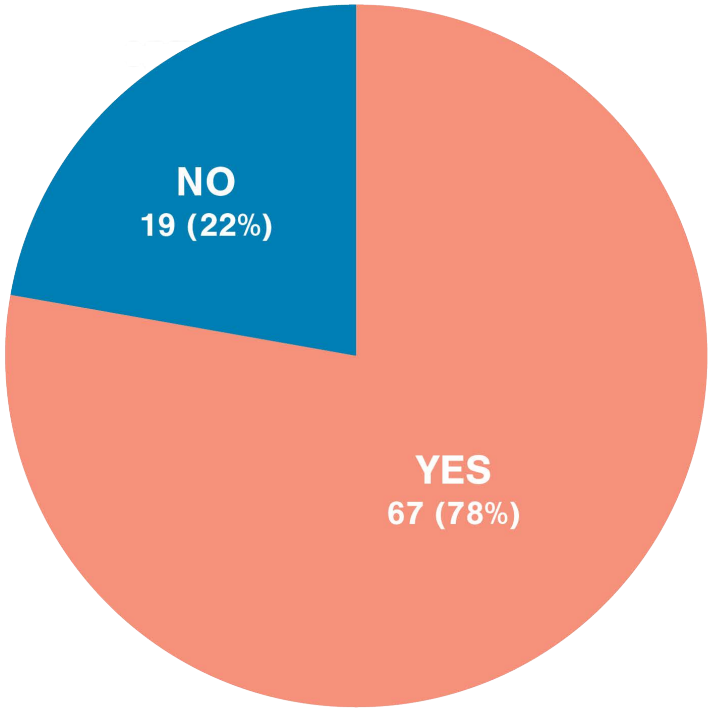
This section did seem quite light to me, and even contradicts some of the aesthetic guidelines previously given around light availability. I think it would be worth revisiting this to offer more insightful suggestions for achieving this critical energy efficiency goal while also supporting the rest of the guidelines. Innovation in design may be required.

Additional comments: (the following comments were provided in the survey by respondents that did not select a yes/no response, but simply provided a comment).

- Keep in mind that "high performance" will increase the cost of new construction. If you think Victoria is expensive now, adding even more stringent guidelines WILL result in the prices soaring even higher.
- I am concerned that in pursuit of energy efficiency, indoor air quality will not be healthful and liveable. Don't see enough green rooves
- No. Lots of them say "consider". That's basically saying you can reject this guideline by pretending to think about it and deciding it won't work.
- It's important that energy efficiency standards reflect Step 5 of the Step Code as quickly as possible. I support Victoria moving to this level quicker than will be mandated by the Province by 2032.
- The language is too vague. We are in a climate emergency and developers should not be encourage to consider green features. Certain features should be mandated. We should also aim to exceed the building code. The code after all is really designed to meet minimum requirements for safety and reliability. I doubt that even the highest end of the code is sufficient. Let's be bold!
- Guidelines seem to be fairly general.
- The guidelines for these buildings seem to be in conflict with some of the other guidelines for building design which seem to encourage greater articulation and multiple setbacks etc. vs the "simplified building form and massing and fewer complex junctions" called for in these performance buildings.
- I think a more visually inspiring high-performance building could be used as the example image. Designers complain that energy efficiency measures kill creativity, which is not necessarily the case. Using an inspiring image in this section could encourage rather than discourage designers and architects.

Q8 **Inner Harbour:** The guidelines seek to ensure that new developments within the Inner Harbour area continue to complement and reinforce the area's unique character and context.

Do you think the guidelines provide sufficient direction to help achieve this?



Yes, I think the guidelines provide sufficient direction to help achieve this. Please tell us more.

Screen Name Redacted
4/23/2021 06:06 PM

These are quite stringent, and need to be, even if it takes much longer for a new build to be approved.

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 10:03 AM

Again they should work as long as council uses them and doesn't grant tons of variances. Councils tend to do this.

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 01:53 PM

By the way, thanks for being able to add comments whether we answer yes or not.... The downtown waterfront, I think, will forever be precious for its ability to enjoy our Victoria through connection to water, air and sea. Add to this dynamic lighting and improved social spaces that encourage social distancing (pandemics will continue to ebb and flow so I hear scientists predicting) and we have some good elements for a vibrant victoria.

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 04:20 PM

Haha, again however, look at the photo chose to illustrate the guideline. What are those ugly lumps at the left of the photo and how do they reflect the primacy of the Legislature and the Empress

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 01:28 PM

The guidelines look good. Please also consider rejuvenating the waterfront as a greenspace for walking and biking (like Vancouver, BC). The waterfront should NOT be a parking lot.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 04:42 PM

This seems OK, and I'm glad that it's not overly broad and, instead, focuses on Parliament Bulding, Empress Hotel, and CPR Steamship Terminal. My biggest concern is that the guidelines not be weaponized to prevent improvements to the Inner Harbour. I think the history of the "Northern Junk" developments is a tragedy, and that we made a terrible error in not allowing the original 2012 proposal to advance. Opponents weaponized historical preservation and a romanticized vision of the Inner Harbour, killed an excellent project, and left us with another decade of two graffiti covered warehouses instead of a real gateway to downtown. If you haven't seen it, I recommend this article (http://victoriavision.blogspot.com/2012/02/northern-junk-proposal-best-development.html).

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 09:23 AM

This is an extremely important aspect of the downtown. The current flavour must be preserved and enhanced. Development should be very limited.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 10:52 AM

Again, sounds good but I don't see it happening. We are turning into Vancouver.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 11:48 AM

So much a part of the city's unique appeal.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 01:09 PM

I suppose the inner harbour will get sufficient attention, but we only need look to work on the Chateau Laurier in Ottawa, to see how developers and owners can destroy historic sight lines. So enforcement, as always, is a concern.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 05:48 PM

All the points given seem to provide good direction. Why can't the guidance, below, be used for the entire downtown area, not just limited to the inner harbour? That is my point, in my previous comments. Using the direction, below, for all new structures would provide the correct vision for the future development of Victoria. "Consider the use of high-quality finishing materials, with detailed architectural quality for new building and open space design surrounding the Inner Harbour basin. Use of masonry, brick, dressed stone and architectural finishing metal work is encouraged. Design streets, plazas, marine facilities and landscaped open spaces to reflect the unique identity of the Inner Harbour."

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 08:51 PM

Could the City please consider fixing the pedestrian crossing at Bellevue & Government. Get rid of the small “islands” that can no longer safely handle the volume of pedestrians & create a multi-crosswalk like we installed at the corner of the visitor centre & the Empress. That makes us look & function like a world class city!

Screen Name Redacted
4/28/2021 11:22 AM

Keep building heights to a minimum

Screen Name Redacted
4/30/2021 11:58 AM

The proposed redevelopment of 257 Belleville will NOT "continue to complement and reinforce the area’s unique character and context". In fact it totally flies in the face of the Guidelines.

Screen Name Redacted
5/02/2021 01:47 PM

The fact that parking lots on the water were ever allowed and continue to exist is an travesty. They are abominations and should be eliminated yesterday. This area should have tons and tons of public space above all else.

Screen Name Redacted
5/06/2021 11:20 AM

No comments on this section.

Screen Name Redacted
5/07/2021 09:08 AM

I would hate to be a developer trying to build in this important and historic section of downtown, because I think the guidelines are most strict here. However, as a lifetime Victorian I think this is important for maintaining what locals and tourists alike envision as the iconic Inner Harbour. Kudos.

Optional question (17 response(s), 81 skipped)
Question type: Essay Question

> **No, I don't think the guidelines provide sufficient direction to help achieve this. Please tell us more.**

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 11:13 PM

I think the guidelines are far too conservative. There is a massive parking lot along the waterfront that has been there for many decades. This could be an ongoing vibrant community in the downtown area - but it is just pavement. Yes, the downtown area is amazing, but there is a lot of potential that seems to be unrealized.

Screen Name Redacted
4/25/2021 03:29 PM

Need longterm plan to acquire privately owned waterfront access, however long it takes to create public paths around the entire harbour. We need benches, walkways, greenspace suited to all abilities.

Screen Name Redacted
4/25/2021 03:59 PM

This is so vague as to be useless. There's nothing about height and density.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 10:33 AM

Concern that Guidelines will have ‘work arounds’ . Example, redevelopment proposal for current Admirals Inn.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 11:21 AM

sink the yachts and provide more trees and greenspace

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 04:28 PM

Ocean Telus for an example is an abomination.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 07:32 AM

I think the current space can be better used than for a ferry terminal and parking lot.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 10:20 AM

No discussion of rectifying / aligning the multi level governmental ownership of the lands surrounding the waterfront. In addition we have the most impressive parking lots on the water (read intense sarcasm) which are not addressed.

Screen Name Redacted
4/29/2021 02:30 PM

The measures are sound - but the appearance has already been ruined by the luxury condo development that destroyed the customs building. When lighting was mentioned, I couldn't help but point out that light pollution is becoming a major problem. Efforts need to be made to maintain a consistent, dim level of lighting across every area. By reducing the contrast between spaces, security is increased while intensity is reduced.

Screen Name Redacted
5/03/2021 04:28 PM

Development of the Inner Harbour should keep working to include First Nations presence. The Signs of Lekwungen is great, and I'd like to see more of this as visitors arrive here by air and sea. These partnerships take time, but any development in the Inner Harbour is going to be on a timeline that can incorporate this. Also, consideration of small vessels (kayaks, SUP's, canoes) that use the waters must be taken into account. Remember the uproar around Boom and Batten and the new marina there?

Screen Name Redacted
5/07/2021 08:19 AM

I would like to see stronger language around protecting views of historic landmark buildings. I never want to see anything behind the Parliament Buildings as we can behind The Empress (which should never been allowed to happen).

Additional comments (the following comments were provided in the survey by respondents that did not select a yes/no response, but simply provided a comment).

- If by the "unique character and context" of the Inner Harbour you mean decades more of waterfront parking lots, then by all means keep doing what you've been doing.
- Not necessarily. There are some higher developments that have no place there. I hope the standards have been updated since then.
- Maybe.

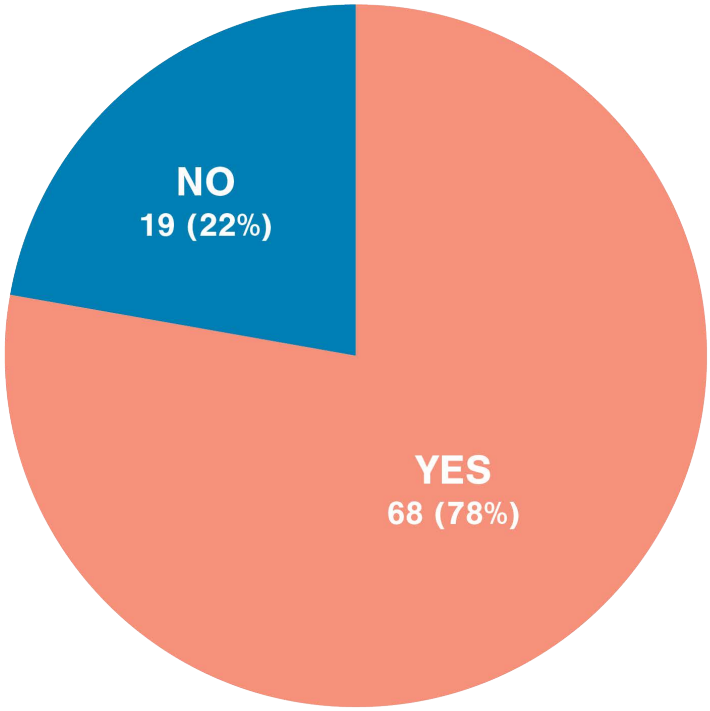
- With increased density for living/work attention should be paid to increasing public spaces for overflow through expansion of docks and revisiting the plan for terraced green space and outdoor venue at ships point

- Cielo at Customs build tried, but that building is huge and sends a big, cold shadow on Government and Courtney.
- No. Guidelines again are far too general to provide effective direction in this regard. I would rather see vision statements for various components of the downtown area. For example, if I was imagining how I would like the inner harbor areas to be, I think that more of the elements that currently exist near the Empress would be encouraged. For example, pedestrian walkways, space for street vendors and small shops, restaurants with patios facing out into the harbor, places for music etc. etc. etc.

- Make sure the amphitheater effect regarding building heights are maintained and iconic views of the harbor aren't compromised by developments (the proposed Telus building behind the Empress) that are out of character in design, form and height with existing heritage icons surrounding the harbor.
- There MUST be a height restriction as buildings approach shoreline. Heights should "step" up as they approach central core where the tallest buildings would be. The first block from the shoreline should not exceed (for example) 4 or 6 stories, next block in 6 to 9, next block 9 to 14 ....along those lines

- The proposed amendments appear to jettison the public outward and external view guidelines from the DCAP (appendix 1 and 2). These guidelines provide important context and compositional information regarding the evolution of key building ensembles important to the sense of place in Victoria, much of which depends upon the persistence of particular views of the city and the skyline from key vantage points. The proposed guidelines appear not to reference these concerns and appear to rely instead on the application of more abstract guidelines to projects on a case by case basis. This gap misses a key aspect of urbanism in Victoria -ensuring that new development contributes to the positive evolution of the existing context into a condition of greater wholeness.

Q9 **Clarity and Interpretation:** Overall, do you think the updated guidelines clearly explain the desired design objectives for new buildings in the Downtown Core Area?



Yes, I think the guidelines are clear enough. Please share any comments.

Screen Name Redacted
4/23/2021 06:06 PM

Any new developers with big plans can always ask for further clarification.

Screen Name Redacted
4/23/2021 10:12 PM

The guidelines are clear in their objectives.

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 10:03 AM

Again, as long as councils abide by them.

Screen Name Redacted
4/25/2021 03:29 PM

Objectives are clear. Will they be observed? Or one by one exceptions made.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 10:25 AM

They are clear but don't go far enough. Some more creative thinking needs to be brought to bear. City planners might consider a series of visits to different European cities to get ideas on how to restructure their downtown cores to be more people- and pedestrian-friendly.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 04:42 PM

I found the guidelines to be well written and clear. Thank you.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 09:23 AM

I am impressed overall by the focus on preserving the unique character of the downtown core. However, I fear that developers will have too much leeway to get around the guidelines. These principles need teeth. All too often developers use their financial leverage to negotiate unfortunate concessions. Also, developers spend a lot of money and effort lobbying the public to get their way. For example, Telus is trying to get around current guidelines to put its large building downtown. This is not appropriate..

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 10:20 AM

A fairly good start - more actual detail with regards to creating a downtown that is inhabitable 24/7 and is an attraction/destination for residents of the Greater Victoria area

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 10:52 AM

Practice what you preach.

Screen Name Redacted
4/27/2021 01:09 PM

The proof is in the regulations, and not the city plan (I mean no disrespect), and the regulations need sufficient muscles. Some city councils in Europe have iterative processes with developers, going through many drafts. Developers would prefer fewer regulations, but citizens may prefer more, to ensure livability (and affordability - but that's another subject)

Screen Name Redacted
4/29/2021 02:30 PM

These guidelines need to be rigorously followed and council should use them to evaluate proposals in some way. I highly suggest any incentives in simplifying the approval process when buildings are designed around these guidelines.

Screen Name Redacted
4/30/2021 11:58 AM

I totally support the Guidelines but they should apply to proposals (ie 257 Belleville) currently before Council regardless of whether they were preiously approved over 10 years ago but not built. Much as changed in the world since then. I would like to see the site redeveloped but in compliance with the Guidelines and public consultation.

Screen Name Redacted
5/06/2021 11:20 AM

See comments to final question.

Screen Name Redacted
5/07/2021 08:19 AM

I think the plan considers the things most Victorians care about. I couldn’t find anything in it about wind tunnels but did see a question and response about that. That’s an important consideration. I do not want to see a cluster of tall buildings next and across from each other that would create a wind tunnel and shade the street.

Screen Name Redacted
5/07/2021 09:08 AM

I found the document easy to read and follow, and particularly appreciated the example images and diagrams. Well done!

No, I don't think the guidelines are clear enough. Please share any comments.

Screen Name Redacted 4/23/2021 04:39 PM	Please take further steps to protect heritage buildings downtown. No more facadism.
Screen Name Redacted 4/24/2021 09:21 AM	It isn't that they aren't clear enough in their individual categories, it is more that I don't glean what the holistic vision for the downtown area is.
Screen Name Redacted 4/24/2021 04:20 PM	It's a bunch of lame planner-ese that caters to developers and worships at the altar of density (read condo profits)
Screen Name Redacted 4/26/2021 11:21 AM	its the vision of the city hall social engineers not of the city's residents, its pate de foie gras
Screen Name Redacted 4/27/2021 07:52 AM	We need to ensure that only BC companies are working on the projects. Guidelines or not, the work should be done by British Columbians not a cheaper contractor from Alberta or Alaska. I'm sick and tired of seeing it happen here.
Screen Name Redacted 4/27/2021 05:48 PM	My previous comments express my opinions about how the guidelines should be improved.

Additional comments: (the following comments were provided in the survey by respondents that did not select a yes/no response, but simply provided a comment).

- No - accessibility should be an objective, and if it were, you would have accessibility representation on the steering committee.
- Could do better at how each guideline would be achieved through strategic measures
- They are very wordy. There is a lot of reading. Simple plainer language would help someone like me with ADHD, or another neurodivergent person. Pictures are great!
- No, overall I find the guidelines vague and lacking any kind of real vision for the urban landscape of our community.
- The language could be simpler and easier to read for novices.
- In order for this guideline to ensure that new buildings in the downtown core are not hazardous to birds, the bird-safety items need to be more detailed and not contradict other elements of the guidelines, such as the requirement for extensive areas of transparent glass at ground-level.

- Yes the objectives are clear but if there's a way to hone the document down then do so. The bigger the document, the more people will just skim it.

- The guidelines are only as successful in achieving desired objective if they are followed.

Q10 **Please provide any other comments or feedback related to the Updated Downtown Core Area Plan Design Guidelines.**

Screen Name Redacted 4/13/2021 10:20 AM	Please support vehicles. Not everyone can take a bus or ride a bicycle.
Screen Name Redacted 4/15/2021 01:16 PM	And keep it Inclusive for Easy access and safety

Screen Name Redacted
4/15/2021 01:49 PM

I think over the past eight years the downtown core has changed immensely in a positive way with more people being able to live downtown as well as creating a more vibrant walkable area I think we should continue to encourage more developments to be built in the downtown core as well as mixed use development near transit hubs. We live on an island And we need to continue to densify our neighbourhoods instead of building out we need to build up.

Screen Name Redacted
4/15/2021 09:26 PM

It, or other guidelines allow for constricted sidewalks, littered with sandwich boards, tables and chairs.

Screen Name Redacted
4/16/2021 02:53 PM

Why were we not asked our opinion about terminating vistas? Why skip one section out of the document, but ask about every other one? Very weird approach.

Screen Name Redacted
4/21/2021 06:42 PM

Love the creativity and attention to detail applied across the board here!

Screen Name Redacted
4/21/2021 10:18 PM

The Guidelines are mostly fine, as far as they go, and those who put in what was obviously a great deal of work to develop them are to be commended. Please, however, consider the following suggestions for improvement: * In reading the Guidelines, one would have no clue that we are in a climate crisis. Perhaps it is assumed that "design" is somehow separate from or unimportant with regard to addressing the climate crisis, but this would be incorrect. So, for example, why is there no content addressing the incorporation of photovoltaics into building facades and rooftops? Why does the section on "sunlight access" not offer protection for building designed with photovoltaics or thermal mass to ensure that new buildings do not diminish the sunlight they receive? Why is the only mention of bicycles with regard to ensuring that bicycle storage rooms are not located along the street? Why is there no mention of charging stations whatsoever? It would be difficult to overstate how serious an oversight this is, and how deeply it undermines the Guidelines as a whole. * It's apparent that the Guidelines assume that architectural façadism is an appropriate form of heritage building preservation, but it isn't. * The inclusion of guidelines for buildings that are taller than 21 metres presumes that it is appropriate to construct buildings that are taller than 21 metres in the downtown core. It isn't! Those who want to construct buildings of such heights should do so in Vancouver or other metropolitan areas, but they are out of place in Victoria. * Making Douglas Street the eastern boundary of the DPA 1 (Historic Core)

area may be appropriate on some streets, but is not on Yates or Fort, where the existing heritage buildings in the 700-block should be preserved as is.

Screen Name Redacted
4/22/2021 11:08 AM

I demand universal accessibility as a priority! It must be first in each of the building guidelines. Accessibility has historically been an afterthought which promotes the concept of universal accessibility as a luxury, when it is not!

Screen Name Redacted
4/22/2021 11:23 AM

Keeping human and natural space at the center of the design process is important. Green space, horizontal and vertical need to be prioritized as there is too little of it remaining in the downtown core. Don't forget to assure access to toilets. Sydney has public maps of all its public toilets posted, along with the hours of each facility, which is very welcome.

Screen Name Redacted
4/22/2021 11:30 AM

I think a lot of the guidelines regarding the inner harbour are too generous to developers. There is a lot of "consider doing this" -- I want to see more stringent guidelines to protect what is Victoria's most iconic and picturesque view. The heritage building guidelines are overall good, but I would like to see new builds that blend in even better with heritage buildings to better preserve Victoria's heritage. After all, it's a huge tourism draw.

Screen Name Redacted
4/22/2021 12:41 PM

I can see the attempts here. Just need to do everything possible to preserve the essence of downtown Victoria - it's quaintness, it's laid back vibe, it's feeling of safety and space. It is our city, not the developers.

Screen Name Redacted
4/22/2021 01:14 PM

Let's be bold and insist on creative and engaging architecture. The Telus Ocean proposal is an excellent example of what we should have more of. Whereas the Custom House is an excellent example of what we should stop doing. It's an incredibly exclusive and luxurious building which adds nothing of public value. All the city gets is one more generic boring cube.

Screen Name Redacted
4/22/2021 01:20 PM

Just to reemphasize that we must still live and work in our city everyday. Progress is important, but not all at once so residents feel stressed by traffic jams, etc. Some of the building improvements downtown and road improvements (new lights on wharf street for example) don't work well and there are very long

delays during peak times. Thank you.

Screen Name Redacted
4/22/2021 02:35 PM

The City and community would be better served with 21st century development strategies that addresses and works respectfully with the colonialist architectural past while incorporating a live able-workable culturally and actively engaged inclusive community. That embraces change.

Screen Name Redacted
4/22/2021 03:35 PM

No, I believe that the design guidelines should be based on a vision and a strong set of specific, detailed guideline. (The city of Paris is an example of a city built on this type of plan. The designer saw a city of wide boulevards, buildings of a uniform height and a unity of line from one building to the next - to name just a few elements.)

Screen Name Redacted
4/22/2021 05:29 PM

All outdoor lighting facing toward a public street above the first floor should be prohibited, this means no exterior hallways or stairways around the exterior perimeter of buildings. No light pollution! No articulation on buildings just for the sake of articulation. The recent development of high rise buildings with facades with different colors, setbacks, and articulation every few stories has, in my estimation, been less than successful. The two new almost identical buildings on Yates and Johnson, between Quadra and Blanshard, for example, seem to have been designed by a different architect every 6 or so stories with little knowledge of what the design of the building is above or below, leading to a disharmonious effect that is disconcerting to the eye. The color pallet is dull and washes out in the winter light and the façade looks like plastic. Don't be afraid to go with buildings have a consistent design theme that is elegant and harmonious with a color scheme that is tasteful and adds color to those dull west coast winter days. The Jukebox, the Yello with it's sculpture on the side, are fun and interesting! Also why not use Juliette balconies? Encourage windows that open on high rises, as per Germany, to aid in incorporating fresh air and reducing dependence on air conditioning? Green roofs should be encouraged, wherever possible. Trees planted on building recesses and setbacks are nice to look at from the street! Maintain and encourage views to Olympic Mts. and Sooke Hills as well as Harbor re terminated views.

Screen Name Redacted
4/22/2021 07:04 PM

Summary The Victoria Bird Strike Initiative is pleased to see recognition of the danger posed by glass to birds in Victoria’s

“Downtown Core Area: Urban Design Guidelines” (April 2021 draft). Addressing the problem of bird collisions is essential for reversing the extensive declines seen across North America’s birds. However, the design guidelines in the current draft are unlikely to be effective at reducing collisions as they do not cover the ground floor, where many collisions occur, and do not contain enough detail to allow developers to design buildings that are safe for birds. To ensure that new buildings in Victoria’s downtown core are not a threat to birds, we recommend that Victoria adopt bird-friendly design guidelines that are consistent with the CSA standards for Bird-friendly Building Design (CSA A460-2019) or Toronto’s Green Standard. Detailed feedback by section Section 2.2 “d. Incorporate a high proportion of transparent glazing at the street level to enhance the visual presence of ground floor uses.” “e. Avoid blank walls at grade over 5 m in length.” “o. Avoid expansive areas of transparent, mirrored, or reflective glass above street level to minimize bird collision” Points d and e go directly against bird-friendly design guidelines, unless bird-friendly (patterned using etching, fritting or other methods) glass is used. While bird-friendly design doesn’t suggest getting rid of windows, one of the main tenets is reducing unnecessary glass, which can have other benefits such as increased insulative qualities and reduced glare. Most collisions occur at the lowest 4 storeys (~16m) of a building, or below the height of the surrounding mature canopy, whichever is higher. The current CSA standard for bird-friendly design requires that a minimum of 90% of glazing within this height be bird-friendly. This figure aligns with other standards that have been proven effective at preventing collisions, such as Toronto’s Green Standard. While reducing areas of “transparent, mirrored, or reflective glass above street level” would likely decrease collisions compared to a building that is entirely made of these materials, allowing or even encouraging extensive ground-level glazing will mean that collisions continue to be a major issue (unless bird-friendly glass is used). All existing standards require a high percentage of glazing below 16 m to be bird-friendly, as this is essential for preventing collisions. 2.3 e. Consider architectural elements that provide visual cues for birds to avoid. The following elements can be incorporated into building designs to reduce bird collisions without impacting views from the interior of buildings: i. Ornamental grills ii. Screen shutters or exterior shades iii.Visual markers such as fritted or etched glass iv.UV glass v. Consider less transparent materials for balcony railings to reduce bird strikes. Recommending fritted or etched glass is excellent, but certain guidelines must be followed for this glass to effectively stop collisions. The most important requirements are: a) The pattern must be on the external surface of the glass, b) the pattern must be in a contrasting colour and c) the pattern must follow appropriate

spacing (5cm x 5cm between pattern elements, with pattern elements being a minimum of 6mm in size). Without specifying the requirements for bird-friendly glass, it is highly likely that architects/designers will use ineffective patterns, which would negate the benefit of this guideline. Similarly, terms like “less transparent materials” may not be enough to ensure that the materials are bird-friendly. UV glass is a controversial subject in the world of bird collisions. While some tests have suggested that it can be effective, many other tests have shown that it doesn’t prevent collisions, and in some cases can even increase them. The theory behind UV glass is that including UV-reflective elements in glass will mean that UV-sensing birds will see the glass as a barrier, while humans will see it as transparent. However, not all species of birds see UV light, and those that don’t will continue to collide with UV glass. Additionally, most collisions occur in the early morning, when there isn’t enough UV light present to reflect and be visible to birds. UV glass is therefore unlikely to prevent the majority of collisions, as it is ineffective for many species, and during the most important time of day. 2.4. Weather Protection, Signage and Lighting j. Use lighting to highlight building features and illuminate the public realm while avoiding over illuminating the building, projecting light into the sky, and spillover on adjacent buildings. k. Utilize low energy lighting options that emit soft light, where appropriate. Light pollution has a major effect on bird collisions, as nocturnally-migrating birds are attracted to urban areas with light pollution; these areas also tend to have the most glass, resulting in high numbers of collisions. The CSA bird-friendly design standards specify that all external lighting fixtures be dark sky compliant to reduce light pollution. Items j and k address light pollution, but perhaps less stringently.

Screen Name Redacted
4/22/2021 09:47 PM

These guidelines are so general that I’m not sure how they could accomplish any of the stated goals. Are you serious.

Screen Name Redacted
4/22/2021 10:18 PM

Where is the First Nations meeting place?

Screen Name Redacted
4/23/2021 06:56 AM

From a lay person perspective the plans appear thoughtful and clear. Exciting to see detailed directions for any potential developments of our beautiful downtown core as it continues to grow.

Screen Name Redacted
4/23/2021 09:56 AM

Overall, I think these provide a vision of a beautiful and vibrant downtown and I'm excited to see how Victoria grows in the future!

Screen Name Redacted
4/23/2021 11:35 AM

The guidelines in and of themselves are clear and are supported by illustrative material that is helpful to increasing understanding of the intent of the guidelines. What is missing is a rooting of the guidelines in the specific character objectives for the particular places within the DCAP sub-areas. For example, there are more iconic spaces in downtown than the Inner Harbour precinct that deserve place specific design attention. I would recommend a cross referencing of buiding guidelines with placemaking guidelines so that the general guidelines are tuned to achieve defined placemaking outcomes.

Screen Name Redacted
4/23/2021 11:40 AM

I think the City has to be prepared to say no to developers in the downtown core. Simply voting in favour of a development because it adds hotel accommodation or housing is not a sufficient basis for approval. I would like to see the City consider the long term impact on our downtown and require new proposals to provide better design and more appropriate proposals for a downtown that benefits from height restrictions (think the heart of Paris).

Screen Name Redacted
4/23/2021 12:05 PM

There needs to be a plan in place to keep architecture downtown —specifically in the Old Town — consistent. In my humble opinion, it is virtually impossible to blend modern-style (i.e. glass box) builds with historic ones. They need to share the same style. Please look at this example from Ludlow, UK for how it is possible to seamlessly blend restored historic buildings with new builds: https://www.shropshirestar.com/news/2009/07/15/71959/

Screen Name Redacted
4/23/2021 06:06 PM

Security concerns must be properly acted on - eg, good siting of CCTV cameras.

Screen Name Redacted
4/23/2021 10:12 PM

The overall objectives are good and noble, but ultimately may pose too prescriptive. Developers, generally, only care about maximizing profit. We live in a capitalist society, and they have few incentives to do otherwise. Victoria's property values are high enough as is, and by limiting density, they may feel projects just aren't viable. If plate sizes are to be limited, we must be willing to build taller. Furthermore, these are guidelines, but are treated by the Planning department functionally as by-laws. The most critical aspects should be made into bylaws, and if they are found to be democratically unpopular, that should be taken into account.

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 09:46 AM

We need more public recreation opportunities.

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 10:03 AM

I like the guidelines in general but I have little faith that councils will abide by them.

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 01:53 PM

I have not been meticulous about reading the guidelines cover to cover. I may have missed your research footnotes chronicling staff research of cities that have faced similar challenges to ours. If not included, it may be of interest (as it is to me) to Victorians to reflect for themselves on this research.

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 04:20 PM

No tourist visits Victoria to see modern buildings and local people draw meaning and a sense of place from a City that is not always changing. Attractive streetscapes of Victorian - Edwardian commercial buildings is a hallmark of Victoria and that quality must be maintained and enhanced.

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 10:54 PM

I do not think that high rises, even multi use ones, should be incorporated into down town. Cap the height.

Screen Name Redacted
4/24/2021 11:13 PM

I lived downtown for 10 years and only recently moved away. It is exciting to see a lot of the development in the past few years. I wish some of this could extend beyond the tightly constrained boundaries of downtown and Harris Green to help ease housing pressure in the region. More housing supply is needed to keep prices under control. The population is growing and people need a place to live.

Screen Name Redacted
4/25/2021 03:29 PM

I question the goal of turning Victoria into Vancouver by equating a successful City with more people and more high rises. Keep the City small and charming. More trees, grass, flowers, and places for artists. More City owned housing and multi-use space. Vancouver has become a cultural wasteland since artists, musicians, and creators cannot afford to live there. We are going in the same direction. Victoria City should be searching for ways to buy every building that comes on the market and retaining it for our use. We say we want to be green, but when the people needed to work in our restaurants and stores and the cultural creators have to commute from farther and farther, we will be a sterile, stressed out city like Vancouver in no time.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 09:31 AM

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE. We need a massive focus on the integration of green design and infrastructure in the city...especially when considering climate change and the impacts our urban areas are already facing and continue to increase. We need habitat for pollinators and insects, corridors for larger animals, and we desperately need to do everything we can to conserve water where it lands and stop the polluted and sediment-full runoff from reaching our precious coastal waters. There are some great implemented solutions in the PNW of U.S.A

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 10:25 AM

Again I encourage even more creative thinking as Victoria becomes more and more a desirable tourist and residential destination. Eliminating cars (during daylight hours) would go a long way to attracting tourism and young families to the downtown core. It seems very drastic, as provisions for moving people around (trolleys?) would have to be installed, but it has been shown to be doable in other cities around the world.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 10:33 AM

Green spaces.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 11:21 AM

hyper development puts lie to al of the climate leadership, green rhetoric

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 01:28 PM

Great work.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 04:42 PM

Thank you for putting this together. Overall, I think the top priorities should be: (1) Creating an excellent interface between buildings and the street. (2) Making the city a wonderful place to live. (3) Making sure that new residences provide spaces for social interaction so that taller buildings, and especially those with smaller homes, do not become socially isolating.

Screen Name Redacted
4/26/2021 05:23 PM

I'm wondering if the city has any protected view cones like Vancouver has. Are there some that are protected and may also dictate development patterns in parts of the city? (e.g. the View from Chambers of the Olympic mountains at the top of the hill where it meets Pandora)

Screen Name Redacted 4/27/2021 07:52 AM	No bike lanes
Screen Name Redacted 4/27/2021 08:16 AM	Down town needs a big family attraction. Something like a Great Wolf Lodge or Indoor water park. Something for families to do in the winter too. Maybe a “west Edmonton wall” idea. We never go down there anymore. And of course the homeless issue needs to be addressed. That is the #1 deterrent for people now. We don’t feel safe anymore downtown!
Screen Name Redacted 4/27/2021 09:23 AM	Less emphasis on automobiles. More emphasis on pedestrians. More areas closed to vehicles. More bicycle paths.
Screen Name Redacted 4/27/2021 11:48 AM	I was looking, in particular, for a few things - impact on birds, light pollution, human scale, shading, energy conservation and heritage protection. I'm please to see that all of these have been addressed, at least to some extent. The draft plan for the new Telus building drew me to this website and this survey. I believe the original plan called for an expansive glass facade and this can be extremely dangerous to resident and migrating birds. This should be strongly discouraged. I would reiterate that the guidelines need to be backed up by regulations in places where enforcement is required.
Screen Name Redacted 4/27/2021 05:48 PM	I would hope that large tree plantings would be incorporated into the plans, as much as possible, as we know that this is vital to help reduce the negative impact of climate change.
Screen Name Redacted 4/27/2021 08:51 PM	Thanks for asking for my opinion!😊
Screen Name Redacted 4/28/2021 11:22 AM	make Government street pedestrians only with a designated time for delivery vehicles and busses etc. continue making the downtown core pedestrian and cycle friendly. Move vehicles to above Douglas street with designated parking lots and transport options into the downtown core eg. electric trams or mini busses
Screen Name Redacted 4/29/2021 02:30 PM	These are only design guidelines but I'm tired of seeing towers that produce no benefit. Expensive, socially and environmentally unsustainable towers have no purpose. These guidelines are only the beginning.

Screen Name Redacted
5/03/2021 04:28 PM

As manager of an arts company (not for profit) I wish there were more incentives for developers to partner with arts groups to provide amenities. Is this document a place to convey that we have arts groups in Victoria that desperately need space for offices, small-scale performances, and creative hubs. Consider partnering with a professional arts group to enhance the offerings beyond the physical capital. Such a collaboration could bring rich social capital to downtown.

Screen Name Redacted
5/06/2021 11:20 AM

1.1 Overview and Intent It is understood that a proposed development may deviate from these guidelines in order to provide a design that appropriately and respectively addresses its context; where it is proven that the intent of the guidelines is met, support/approval will not be withheld if a design is not explicitly compliant with a prescriptive item. Key statements as listed below are taken as license to interpret or challenge the guidelines where appropriate: “The guidelines are intended to foster innovative, creative, and unique design responses to individual site conditions, opportunities, and constraints within the broader context of the design principles and goals established in the Downtown Core Area Plan”. “The guidelines focus on how buildings interact with streets and open spaces to create comfortable, human scaled, pedestrian oriented and memorable public spaces.” “This includes the integration of taller, vertically proportioned buildings through a classic form of development that seamlessly integrates a defined base building, middle (tower) and top, expressed in a building form and design that is both contemporary and contextual.” 1.2 How to Use the Guidelines Note that Map 1 includes areas that fall under the Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan and therefore must comply and will be reviewed against a different set of design and development parameters relative to the specific vision for this region. While building design will be evaluated against the DCAP Guidelines and also held within constraints such as maximum height limits, it is again encouraged that relaxations be supported where appropriate to achieve optimal design that suits the needs of the neighbourhood. As commented above on section 1.1, the final paragraph opens the door to interpretation in application of the guidelines where design rationale can be provided. “It is important to note that the design strategies included under each statement of intent are not an exhaustive list, and that additional design strategies may be considered in response to specific site conditions, constraints, and adjacencies and further, to advance emerging innovation with building design, energy efficiency and sustainability on a case-by-case basis. In this way, the design guidelines are not intended to be an absolute checklist for all

developments. Rather they function as a benchmark and design framework to ensure that careful thought and consideration has been given to important design objectives while still supporting creativity, innovation, and design excellence. Where alternative design approaches are proposed by an applicant, they will be reviewed against the statements of design intent to ensure that key design objectives are still being achieved. Applicants may be required to provide additional diagrams and studies to support the proposed design solutions."

Screen Name Redacted
5/07/2021 08:19 AM

I have concerns over language such as strategies and guidelines as they are not strong enough. It's like these are nearly suggestions rather than rules (not the best word but it gets my point across).

Attachment 3

NO. 22-008

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN BYLAW, 2012, AMENDMENT BYLAW (NO.41)

A BYLAW OF THE CITY OF VICTORIA

The purpose of this Bylaw is to amend the Official Community Plan to revise references to the Downtown Core Area Plan (2011) and related design guideline sections with the updated Downtown Core Area Plan (2021).

Contents

1 Title
2-10 Amendments
11 Commencement

Under its statutory powers, including Division 4 of Part 14 of the *Local Government Act*, the Council of the Corporation of the City of Victoria, in an open meeting assembled, enacts the following provisions:

Title

1 This Bylaw may be cited as the "OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN BYLAW, 2012, AMENDMENT BYLAW (NO.41)".

Amendments

2 Bylaw No. 12-013, the Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2012, is amended in Schedule A, Appendix A, within DPA 1 (HC): Core Historic, by repealing section 5 in its entirety and replacing it with the following:

"5. Guidelines:

These Guidelines are to be considered and applied for both Heritage Alteration Permits and Development Permits:

(a) Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada

(b) Old Town Design Guidelines – New Buildings and Additions to Existing Buildings (2019)

(c) Downtown Core Area Plan (2011), revised 2021 – with special attention to the following sections:

(i) Appendix 1: Public Outward View Guidelines

(ii) Appendix 2: Public External View Guidelines

(iii) Appendix 3: Sidewalk Width Guidelines

(iv) Appendix 4: Building Design Guidelines

(d) Guidelines for Fences, Gates and Shutters (2010)

(e) Victoria Harbour Plan (2001)

(f) City of Victoria Heritage Program Sign & Awning Guidelines (1981)

(g) Advisory Design Guidelines for Buildings, Signs and Awnings (1981)"

3 Bylaw No. 12-013, the Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2012, is amended in Schedule A, Appendix A, within DPA 2 (HC): Core Business, by repealing section 5 in its entirety and replacing it with the following:

"5. Guidelines:

These Guidelines are to be considered and applied for both Heritage Alteration Permits and Development Permits:

(a) Downtown Core Area Plan (2011), revised 2021 – with special attention to the following sections:

(i) Appendix 1: Public Outward View Guidelines

(ii) Appendix 2: Public External View Guidelines

(iii) Appendix 3: Sidewalk Width Guidelines

(iv) Appendix 4: Building Design Guidelines

(b) Guidelines for Fences, Gates and Shutters (2010)

(c) Urban Design Guidelines, Fairfield Block, Parcels 1 and 2 (2001)

(d) Yates Street 700 Block Guidelines for Buildings, Canopies, Awnings and Signs (1984)

(e) Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada

(f) Advisory Design Guidelines for Buildings, Signs and Awnings (1981)

(g) City of Victoria Heritage Program Sign & Awning Guidelines (1981)

(h) Bay Site Design Guidelines (2006)"

4 Bylaw No. 12-013, the Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2012, is amended in Schedule A, Appendix A, within DPA 3 (HC): Core Mixed-Use Residential, by repealing section 5 in its entirety and replacing it with the following:

"5. Guidelines:

These Guidelines are to be considered and applied for both Heritage Alteration Permits and Development Permits:

(a) Downtown Core Area Plan (2011), revised 2021 – with special attention to the following sections:

(i) Appendix 1: Public Outward View Guidelines

(ii) Appendix 2: Public External View Guidelines

(iii) Appendix 3: Sidewalk Width Guidelines

(iv) Appendix 4: Building Design Guidelines

(b) Guidelines for Fences, Gates and Shutters (2010)

(c) Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada

(d) Advisory Design Guidelines for Buildings, Signs and Awnings (1981)

(e) City of Victoria Heritage Program Sign & Awning Guidelines (1981)"

5 Bylaw No. 12-013, the Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2012, is amended in Schedule A, Appendix A, within DPA 7A: Corridors, by repealing section 5 in its entirety and replacing it with the following:

"5. Guidelines:

These Guidelines are to be considered and applied for Development Permits:

(a) Guidelines for all corridors:

(i) Advisory Design Guidelines for Buildings, Signs and Awnings (1981)

(ii) Guidelines for Fences, Gates and Shutters (2010)

(b) In addition to the above guidelines, the following guidelines apply to specific corridors:

(i) Burnside Road East corridor:

1. Design Guidelines for: Multi-Unit Residential, Commercial and Industrial (2012), revised 2019

2. Revitalization Guidelines for Corridors, Villages and Town Centres (2017)

(ii) Douglas-Blanshard corridor:

1. For areas within this DPA located south of Bay Street, the following guidelines from the Downtown Core Area Plan (2011), revised 2021 apply – with special attention to the following sections:

a. Appendix 3: Sidewalk Width Guidelines

b. Appendix 4: Building Design Guidelines

2. For areas within this DPA located north of Bay Street, the following guidelines apply:

a. Design Guidelines for: Multi-Unit Residential, Commercial and Industrial (2012), revised 2019

b. Revitalization Guidelines for Corridors, Villages and Town Centres (2017)

(iii) Gorge Road East corridor:

1. Design Guidelines for: Multi-Unit Residential, Commercial and Industrial (2012), revised 2019

2. Revitalization Guidelines for Corridors, Villages and Town Centres (2017)

(iv) Esquimalt Road corridor:

1. Design Guidelines for: Multi-Unit Residential, Commercial and Industrial (2012), revised 2019

2. Revitalization Guidelines for Corridors, Villages and Town Centres (2017)"

6 Bylaw No. 12-013, the Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2012, is amended in Schedule A, Appendix A, within DPA 7B (HC): Corridors Heritage,

(a) by repealing section 1 (c) and replacing it with:

"(c) Heritage conservation of existing and potential heritage properties of the type described in section 3 (e) and properties of individual significance."

(b) by repealing section 3 (e) and replacing it with:

"(e) Fort Street has heritage value as a historic commercial district between Wharf Street and Cook Street. The Fort Street Heritage Corridor is characterized by significant surviving historic buildings from the streetcar era (1890-1948), and Victoria's Edwardian era building boom (1901-1912) in particular. There are also clusters of high-quality examples of Italianate, Gothic Revival, Second Empire and Edwardian Vernacular-style houses between Cook Street and Ormond Street. Some of the lands between Douglas Street and Blanshard Street are located in the view corridor of heritage landmark buildings as identified on Map in this plan: St. Andrew's Cathedral and St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, the spires of which punctuate the surrounding skyline."

(c) by repealing section 5 in its entirety and replacing it with the following:

"5. Guidelines:

These Guidelines are to be considered and applied for both Heritage Alteration Permits and Development Permits.

The following guidelines apply to the Fort Street Corridor:

(a) Buildings are encouraged to have 3 to 5 storey facades that define the streetwall, with the upper storey(s) set back

(b) Downtown Core Area Plan (2011), revised 2021 – with special attention to the following sections:

(i) Appendix 3: Sidewalk Width Guidelines

(ii) Appendix 4: Building Design Guidelines

(c) Guidelines for Fences, Gates and Shutters (2010)

(d) Buildings are encouraged to have shop windows and building entrances that are oriented to face the street

(e) City of Victoria Heritage Program Sign & Awning Guidelines (1981)

(f) Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada

(g) Advisory Design Guidelines for Buildings, Signs and Awnings (1981)"

7 Bylaw No. 12-013, the Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2012, is amended in Schedule A, Appendix A, within DPA 9 (HC): Inner Harbour, by repealing section 5 in its entirety and replacing it with the following:

"5. Guidelines:

These Guidelines are to be considered and applied for Heritage Alteration Permits and Development Permits:

(a) Downtown Core Area Plan (2011), revised 2021 – with special attention to the following sections:

(i) Appendix 1: Public Outward View Guidelines

(ii) Appendix 2: Public External View Guidelines

(iii) Appendix 3: Sidewalk Width Guidelines

(iv) Appendix 4: Building Design Guidelines

(b) Guidelines for Fences, Gates and Shutters (2010)

(c) Advisory Design Guidelines for Buildings, Signs and Awnings (1981)

(d) Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada

(e) Old Town Design Guidelines – New Buildings and Additions to Existing Buildings (2019)

(f) City of Victoria Heritage Program Sign & Awning Guidelines (1981)

(g) The Belleville International Terminal Design Guidelines (2000)

(h) Victoria Harbour Plan (2001)

(i) Royal British Columbia Museum Urban Design Guidelines (2006)"

8 Bylaw No. 12-013, the Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2012, is amended in Schedule A, Appendix A, within DPA 10A: Rock Bay, by repealing section 5 in its entirety and replacing it with the following:

"5. Guidelines:

These Guidelines are to be considered and applied for both Heritage Alteration Permits and Development Permits:

(a) Downtown Core Area Plan (2011), revised 2021 – with special attention to the following sections:

(i) Appendix 1: Public Outward View Guidelines

(ii) Appendix 3: Sidewalk Width Guidelines

(iii) Appendix 4: Building Design Guidelines

(b) Guidelines for Fences, Gates and Shutters (2010)

(c) Advisory Design Guidelines for Buildings, Signs and Awnings (1981)

(d) Design Guidelines for Multi-Use Residential, Commercial and Industrial Development (2012), revised 2019

(e) Work-Live Design and Planning Guidelines (1999)"

9 Bylaw No. 12-013, the Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2012, is amended in Schedule A, Appendix A, within DPA 10B (HC): Rock Bay Heritage, by repealing section 5 in its entirety and replacing it with the following:

"5. Guidelines:

These Guidelines are to be considered and applied for both Heritage Alteration Permits and Development Permits:

(a) Downtown Core Area Plan (2011), revised 2021 – with special attention to the following sections:

(i) Appendix 3: Sidewalk Width Guidelines

(ii) Appendix 4: Building Design Guidelines

(b) Guidelines for Fences, Gates and Shutters (2010)

(c) Advisory Design Guidelines for Buildings, Signs and Awnings (1981)

(d) Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada

(e) City of Victoria Heritage Program Sign & Awning Guidelines (1981)

(f) Design Guidelines for Multi-Use Residential, Commercial and Industrial Development (2012), revised 2019"

10 Bylaw No. 12-013, the Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2012, is amended in Schedule A, Appendix A, within DPA 14: Cathedral Hill Precinct, by repealing section 5(c) in its entirety and replacing it with the following:

"(c) Downtown Core Area Plan (2011), revised 2021 – with special attention to the following sections for the areas west of Quadra Street:

(i) Appendix 1: Public Outward View Guidelines

(ii) Appendix 3: Sidewalk Width Guidelines

(iii) Appendix 4: Building Design Guidelines"

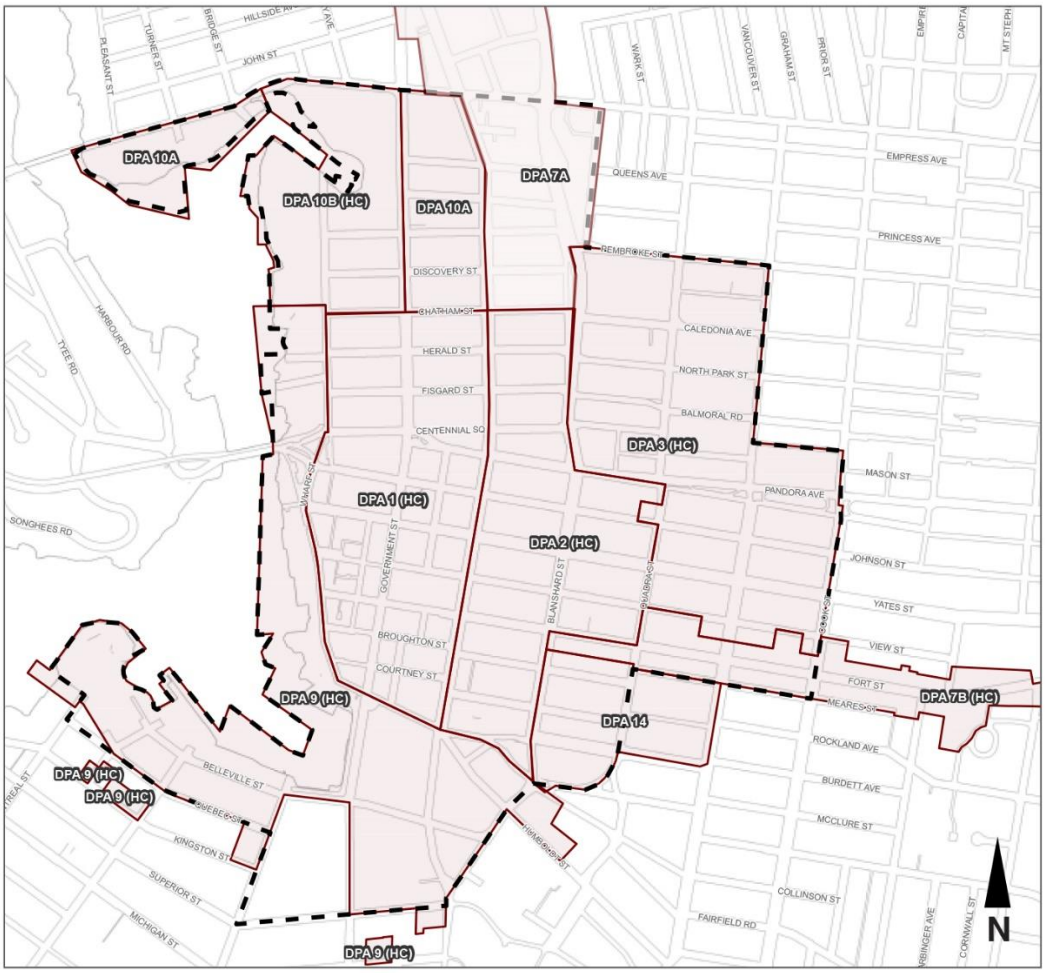
Commencement

11 This Bylaw comes into force three months after adoption.

READ A FIRST TIME the	day of	2022.
READ A SECOND TIME the	day of	2022.
Public hearing held on the	day of	2022.
READ A THIRD TIME the	day of	2022.
ADOPTED the	day of	2022.

CITY CLERK MAYOR

Downtown Core Area
Development Permit Areas and Heritage Conservation Areas



MAP 1A

DCAP Boundary

Development Permit Areas (DPA)

- » DPA 1 (HC): Core Historic
- » DPA 2 (HC): Core Business
- » DPA 3 (HC): Core Mixed-Use Residential
- » DPA 7A: Corridors
- » DPA 7B (HC): Corridors Heritage
- » DPA 9 (HC): Inner Harbour
- » DPA 10A: Rock Bay
- » DPA 10B (HC): Rock Bay Heritage
- » DPA 14: Cathedral Hill Precinct

Burnside Gorge Community Association
471 Cecelia Road, Victoria, BC V8T 4T4
T. 250-388-5251 | F. 250-388-5269
info@burnsidegorge.ca | www.burnsidegorge.ca

December 7, 2021

Mayor & Council
#1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC

Dear Mayor and Council:

Re: Updated DCAP Design Guidelines

The Burnside Gorge Land Use Committee (BGLUC) wishes to thank Robert Batallas along with Leanne Taylor for the November 29, 2021 presentation of the updated DCAP Guidelines.

Overall the updated DCAP addresses some of the development guideline issues in the Rock Bay area. The DPA10 A&B areas are well defined with the recognition of the Arts and Innovation district along with the development of residential along the Douglas Street corridor.

The addition of “affordable housing” and the “Inclusionary Housing and Community Amenity Policy” being supported from the density bonus system is in our view exactly opposite to the purpose of the funding which is to provide public amenities in a community to compensate for the increased density of a development. The density of affordable housing only increases the need for more community amenities. While we agree for the need for these policies they must be funded through Provincial and Federal grants and be distributed throughout the region.

The transportation and mobility framework must continue to improve the active transportation networks connecting Burnside Gorge to downtown along the Government and Douglas corridors. Your Map 16 has these networks as future considerations and Burnside Gorge requires this to remain in our mandated area to ensure the community’s interests are maintained.

The Appendix 3 and 4 sidewalk guidelines, accessible design, and the bird friendly Building design guidelines are worthwhile additions to the DCAP.

Respectfully,

Avery Stetski Chair, Burnside Gorge Land Use Committee

cc: Robert Batallas, Sustainable Planning and Community Development Department

FAIRFIELD GONZALES
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

December 17, 2021

The Fairfield Gonzales Community Association Community Land Use Committee (FGCA CALUC) would like to thank Robert Batallas for a presentation on the Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP) Design Guidelines.

As a community whose members benefit from Victoria's downtown and its amenities, It is exciting to hear that the guidelines will provide "enhanced livability through improved building design", "well-designed outdoor amenity spaces" and "accessibility and barrier-free guidelines."

As a community that borders on the downtown area, we are reassured that the DAP doesn't replace the Fairfield local area plan.

The FGCA CALUC is aware of the guidelines and in general supports them as amended. However, we do feel that the guidelines can do more to make public as well as publicly accessible private property more welcoming to all users of these spaces, and would like to see the guidelines amended to reflect this.

Thank you,

Joanna Fox, CALUC Chair
On behalf of the FGCA CALUC

From: harold stanley

Sent: December 17, 2021 12:48 PM

To: Robert Batallas

Cc: Eleni Gibson - NPNA; Sarah Murray; Board; Sarah Potts (Councillor)

Subject: North Park Comments Re: DCAP Design Guidelines

Hello Robert;

Thank you for consulting with us regarding the proposed revisions to the design guidelines contained in the Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP). When the DCAP was originally proposed there was very little consultation with the North Park community, so this is a welcome change. The comments contained in this letter reflect not only my opinions, as Chair of the North Park Community Association Land Use Committee, but also those of other members of the North Park community who were consulted in the writing of this letter and who I've communicated with on these and similar issues during my tenure with the NPNA.

The DCAP covers a large area of North Park, more so than other communities affected by the Plan outside the Downtown and Harris Green neighbourhoods (which I'll refer to as the "downtown"). However the DCAPs' influence on North Park is barely acknowledged compared to these other communities, as witnessed in the Plan's Executive Summary:

"It (the DCAP) serves as a local area plan for the Downtown and Harris Green neighbourhoods, and provides additional guidance – in conjunction with their neighbourhood plans – for the portions of Rock Bay, Fairfield and James Bay that are located within the boundary of the Downtown Core Area".

Unlike other communities outside the downtown that are covered by the DCAP, like Rock Bay, the Inner Harbour, Cathedral Hill etc., North Park isn't recognized for its distinctiveness in terms of its existing land use, architecture, setting, heritage, demographics, and socio-economic characteristics. Instead North Park is lumped in with the Core Mixed Use Residential area which covers much of the downtown.

The lack of recognition by the DCAP of North Park as a distinct entity from that of the downtown appears to contradict that of the OCP which purports to "recognize(s) the unique neighbourhood character and sense of place of different parts of the city."

My biggest concern, therefore, is that North Park is seen by the City as just an extension of the downtown. Although the new draft LAP for North Park mentions that North Park has a distinct character from the downtown, there's very little in it, and nothing in the DCAP, that shows that this is the case. What I want, when the area of North Park covered by the DCAP is built out, is for people to walk east from the downtown, across Blanchard, and realize they're in a different neighborhood with a distinct character from that of the downtown.

The height and density designations in the DCAP, especially west of Quadra, have not been a concern of the community, as we already have examples of this that occurred prior to the DCAP. However, the DCAP should have included, and we should have been consulted on, land use, urban design, street level development, and public spaces (not "outdoor common spaces" which exist on private property) to address the need for accessible green space in the area of North Park covered by the DCAP. There's not much in the North Park LAP update that applies to this area except along Quadra, which is to be turned into a "street of culture".

It's unclear as to how the North Park LAP and the DCAP are supposed to work together. It would have been better, and simpler, to have taken the uses and densities called for in the DCAP, incorporated them

into the updated LAP, and then developed design guidelines specific to this area in consultation with the neighborhood. The DCAP, by virtue of its name and to avoid confusion, should be confined to the downtown area.

Because nothing of note has been built in North Park under the DCAP, with the exception of the BOSA development at the corner of Pandora and Vancouver which met with widespread community condemnation leading to a number of changes by the applicant, comments regarding the revised guidelines can only be viewed by what has been happening with regard to development in the downtown since the DCAP was introduced.

For the most part, the revised guidelines are an improvement over the previous ones, especially regarding the spatial separation of high rise development, view lines and the streetscape. However I'm concerned, as are others, about the architecture of many of the buildings built since the DCAP was implemented . The need to be different from Vancouver has manifested itself in the seemingly uncoordinated addition of colors and textures on many of these newer buildings (likely adding to construction costs and making housing less affordable) . The design of these buildings appears forced and done by committee, with each member of the committee having limited knowledge of what the others were doing. The result is a lack of grace and harmony of design. Sometimes "less is more".

In conclusion it would have been beneficial to have included design guidelines specific to North Park, ones that reflect the eclectic character and nature of North Park as a distinct neighbourhood from that of the downtown. These guidelines could have have been done through meaningful consultation with those who know North Park the best, the residents and businesses who live and operate here. Hopefully in the future the community's values will be taken into account when reviewing new developments proposed in the area of North Park covered by the DCAP.

Regards

Harold Stanley
North Park Neighbourhood Association Community Land Use Committee Chair

Harold Stanley
M. Env. Design
Community Planning Consultant

CAPITAL REGION **URBAN DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE**

November 15, 2021

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

Re: DCAP Review Letter of Support

Dear Mayor and Council –

The Urban Development Institute (UDI) – Capital Region would like to commend City Staff for their outstanding engagement process with the development industry through their review and update of your Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP). The industry appreciates the care and consideration staff have taken to update the plan with a focus on urban design and form that will provide a valuable resource to guide growth in a more responsible and aesthetically pleasing way.

Members of UDI participated in both a City led working group as well as were provided with the opportunity to meet with City staff numerous times through their review process. At each meeting, UDI members were able to provide comments regarding the draft changes that had been made to the guidelines and provide feedback on how changes would impact development sites. The industry is pleased with the shift from a very prescriptive approach to a more flexible way to look at architectural and urban design for the downtown. This will encourage a greater breadth of design creativity and diversity enriching the vibrancy of the city.

The overall changes made to the proposed guidelines have been well received by the development community. In particular, the industry would like to express our appreciation for staff's consideration pertinent to the floor plate maximum sizes and height thresholds in the context of tall commercial buildings. These changes will enhance the liveability within the downtown and ensure good neighbour approaches to future development activity.

Once again, UDI would like to thank City of Victoria staff, Robert Batallas and Joaquin Karakas, for their numerous meetings with UDI members – keeping us informed about changes to the draft guidelines and listening and applying our suggested changes. We look forward to future engagement and collaboration, furthering our efforts of well-balanced development creating a vibrant, inclusive Victoria.

Kind Regards,

Kathy Whitcher (Executive Director)

CC: Karen Hoese, Robert Batallas and Joaquin Karakas

James Bay Neighbourhood Association

jbna@jbna.org
Victoria, B.C., Canada

www.jbna.org

December 21st, 2021

Robert Batallas,
Senior Planner
Sustainable Planning & Community Development
City of Victoria

Dear Robert,

Re: DCAP and the JB Neighbourhood Plan

Thank you for presenting proposed changes to the DCAP at the JBNA December 8th ZOOM forum.

As you are aware, a significant portion of the DCAP area falls within James Bay. During the City's amendment process, we noted that a decision was made to NOT include JBNA on the steering committee. Hence, the opportunity to discuss amendments which might be desirable for our community, some of which were identified but not addressed directly in the OCP and DCAP process of a decade ago was lost.

It appears that amendments you presented at the December 8 JBNA Zoom meeting did not significantly impact our neighbourhood, but do somewhat streamline the DCAP.

The JBNA Board does not object to these changes. However, in the days following your presentation the Downtown Victoria Business Association announced preferred new boundaries which would take in more of James Bay than the current DVBA area. The JBNA Board wishes to confirm that the DCAP boundary will not enlarge to match the DVBA area. The DVBA's inclusion of the parking lot bounded by Montreal to the West, Quebec to the North, and Kingston to the South is concerning as this area is currently being considered for redevelopment.

Please include this letter in the DCAP review to be presented to Mayor and Council during considerations of the proposed DCAP amendments.

For your consideration.

Sincerely,

Marg Gardiner,
President, JBNA
marg.jbna@telus.net

CC: Councillor Stephen Andrew

SAFE WINGS OTTAWA
Bird Collision Research, Prevention and Rescue

safewings.ca • 613-216-8999 • info@safewings.ca

18 January, 2022

Dear Victoria City Council

I am writing in support of the bird-friendly building design section in the draft of the updated Downtown Core Area Plan Design Guidelines. In my view, the proposed guidelines will help ensure that new buildings in Victoria support urban biodiversity by preventing bird-glass collisions.

I am a biologist in the final year of my PhD, and have been working as a biologist for 12 years and specifically with window collisions for the past 5 years. I have experience working with the City of Ottawa to train their planning department on Ottawa's bird-safe design guidelines, and assessing building applications for potential hazards to birds.

Collisions with glass are one of the leading human-caused sources of bird mortality, with ~25 million birds killed each year in Canada, and up to a billion in North America[1]. It is a common misconception that collisions occur mainly at skyscrapers; most collisions occur on the first four storeys, making it vital that all buildings be bird-safe. Canada has already lost ~30 of all its birds in the last 50 years[2]; the proposed guidelines are a major action that can be taken to slow or reverse this trend. Victoria benefits from its birds not only for the ecological services like insect control and seed distribution they provide, but also for the well-being of its residents: research shows that individuals living in areas with higher bird diversity also show greater life satisfaction[3].

Through approving the DCAP Design guidelines, Victoria would join cities such as Toronto, Ottawa, Calgary, and Vancouver in having guidelines to protect birds from collisions. In my opinion, the proposed guidelines are comprehensive, and based on current best practices derived from collision research, while still allowing for design creativity and desirable architectural features. Truly sustainable development includes the protection of wildlife, and the proposed guidelines are an excellent means to ensure that this goal is achieved.

Regards,

Willow English, BSc, MSc
Victoria Bird Strike Initiative
Safe Wings Ottawa

1. Calvert, A. M., et al. 2013. A synthesis of human-related avian mortality in Canada. Avian Conservation and Ecology 8(2): 11.
2. Rosenberg, K. V. et al. 2019. Decline of the North American Avifauna. Science 365(6461)
3. Joel Methorst, et al. 2020. The importance of species diversity for human well-being in Europe. Ecological Economics, 106917

OCP Amendment Bylaw Feedback

Hello,

I do not support the extension of the downtown area to the south or to the east.

The downtown area should not extend further into the south or the east as we need to keep the downtown area confined. As one example having this area extent to the edge of Beacon Hill Parlk does not respect the beauty of the Park being a refuge in the City.

Any extensions would work against keeping the buffer zones which are currently around the downtown area.

I hope you will be open to listen to opinions such as mine. So often I find that minds at City Hall are already made up.

Thank you.

Joan Halvorsen

From: Manon Elder
Sent: December 17, 2021 4:54 PM
To: Robert Batallas <RBatallas@victoria.ca>
Subject: CYSTAL POOL

Does the crystl pool fallunder DPA3 nd will be taken down for housing?
Why is there still no mention or plan for a crystal pool rebuild?

Dec 22 2021
Concerns for the Downtown Core Area Plan Revisions
Attention Mayor Helps, and City of Victoria Councilors Alto, Andrew, Dubow, Isitt, Loveday, Potts, Thornton Joe, Young
Your Worship and Victoria Councilors,

I write to note topics of specific concerns regarding revisions to the Victoria Downtown Core Area Plan. With good intention and serious intent I hope that these topics may be altered before the revised DCAP is accepted as finalized. Forms and increases of building height, and protection of historic Victoria are especially concerning to me (and many Victorians), as well as other topics.

Some time ago I had been invited to meet with Victoria Community Planning Staff, who asked to hear my assessments and recommendations for the most important elements of the Downtown Core Area Plan. Repeatedly I heard that it was good to meet with me, that further communications were encouraged, and to look forward to further consideration of important elements of the Downtown Plan. So, with open constructiveness, I had shared observations on a series of what I still see as key topics for crucial urban design planning for Victoria's Downtown Core Area.

Unfortunately, I have heard not a word of further contact – but as invited and encouraged, wish to share with the City, and with you as its Councilors, planning and urban design measures that I see as consequential for a good quality future for our City Centre. With notice now brought to my attention of an impending December 23 dead-line for comments on a revised DCAP, with my own very earnest concerns, I wish to outline some key areas of urban design - both for support of many topics – but, with conscience, identifying what I see as significant mis-evaluations, for this proposed Plan - hopefully topics to be improved and well resolved as a set of formalized Victoria City policies.

Some Positive Features of DCAP - These Should Not be Compromised:

Stick to Clear, Cogent, Guiding Concepts for Developing Downtown's Urban Form
- Maintaining the essential urban design structures of the 'Crosstown Concept' - pulling downtown growth to the north and east, away from Downtown's most historic areas; and of the 'Urban Amphitheatre', protecting a low-scale basin over the harbour and its surrounding vintage districts - are straightforward, large scale urban design concepts for the future evolution of the City, fortunately and beneficially these concepts are retained.

Safeguard Downtown's Historic Features – Both Buildings, Districts and Views
- Augmented recognition and protections for Victoria's historic districts: for its heritage buildings; its general form stepping upwards from the water; and its important landmark views, such as of Old Town and of the Inner Harbour area - are an essential safekeeping for Victoria's character. Recently there have been very unfortunate compromises along Wharf Street, and in the area of the Empress, which will mar this planning wisdom – the Downtown plan must resume and stalwart the protection of areas of historic character – and planning is to be lauded where and when these public values are effectively maintained and strengthened – not given blithe lip-service.

Commitment to Sustainability, Vitality, and Safety Strategies
- Any progressive sustainability measures, including building and infrastructure upgrading, and regional transportation advancements, must be integral as Victoria advances – and should remain central in the Downtown Plan.

- High-lighting social, economic, institutional vitality, and public safety is also an invaluable emphasis. For over a century Downtown has had its various struggles to flourish – continuing - and regenerating our community's commitment to its City centre will always be critical. I have great faith that a cared for, well-planned Downtown Victoria will again thrive.

Carry Through on Carefully Considered, Good Quality Urban Design Features
- All well-executed urban design initiatives are to be commended - especially in these challenging times. For example, identifying and celebrating four distinctive, prominent, gateways to downtown remains a valuable objective. Also the recently implemented all-ways pedestrian crossing at Government and Humboldt has been an excellent success – an effective measure to be considered in other key locations, and commended.

- Extending the Government Street Mall to link to Centennial Square and Chinatown is so many decades overdue (over fifty years) – this will be a great way to bring visitors north to help revitalize a less advantaged quarter of downtown. Extending the Mall should be a greater priority than a cosmetic reworking of the paving of the established south areas of the Mall. Yes, delicate trees should replace the visually obscuring current trees, as well as better designed outdoor dining seating enclosures, and furnishings.

Foster Intricate, Richly Expressed, Fine-Scale Building Street-Scapes

- Reaching for intricate architectural diversity and quality – particularly for street-scapes – is an essential component of pedestrian ambiance and vitality. Treatments of similar or single facades stretching over the entire face of a block are generally uncharacteristic of Victoria's downtown – instead rhythms of mixed frontages along blocks help maintain fine scale and pedestrian momentum. Part of that quality of scale is a limit to street-scape heights – on all sides of block street faces. Varied three to five storey façade heights is a well-recognized general scale and context for thriving pedestrian uses. Good environmental street planning for Victoria's latitude and climate is best delivered at this scale. - although yes, occasional accents of about six storeys are survivable – especially with high quality architecture.

Some Mis-Evaluated Tangents, Misjudged Plan Features - Wise to be Remedied:

Continuation of a Compact Array of Distinctive and Colourful Downtown Districts

- The Downtown Plan was conceived to accentuate a variety of compact, distinct, contrasting districts – most with already existing individual characteristics. The intention was to create a diverse, easily perceived, cluster of complementary but disparate areas - with readily experienced individual contexts and boundaries – a characteristic already present in the historic areas of Downtown. Distinctive building typologies, streetscapes, sidewalk paving suites, selections of public art, and street furnishings - and colour scheme cues - should help accent the identities and the differences of Downtown's diverse districts. Unfortunately this objective has been under-regarded and quite weakly executed – the proposed revised DCAP, and the descriptions for Development Permit Areas both apply hopeful rhetoric for such distinctions, but are short of identified material differences between what should be lively, colourful, and stimulatingly distinct areas – all for the higher objective of a compressed, multi-character downtown. These types of strategies for district distinctions help avoid a bland public realm for downtowns, and have been very successful in diverse historic cities and districts – for example in: Portland Maine, Albuquerque, Durham, Oklahoma City, NYC Times Square, Miami and other cities – typically furnished with colour-coded wayfinding signage helping to reinforce individual areas.

- Elevated, more urbane and formalized streetscape standards can also help signal, distinguish, and notably, economically up-lift an area intended for specialized uses – such as for our currently uncertain Central Business District, or for an entertainment or institutional and cultural focal location, such as Centennial Square.

Celebration of Two Distinguished Main Streets

- In the initial survey layouts of Downtown by Victoria's first urban design planner – surveyor Joseph Despard Pemberton - Douglas Street and Yates Street were ordained to become the City centre's two main streets. Two wide right-of-ways met approximately at the high point of the plateau then being drawn up to create Downtown Victoria - allowing for dominant views in four cardinal directions. Both streets have distinguished commercial, institutional, and social histories, and this can help provide a basis for uplifting the individual character of each street – along with a visual celebration and recovery of what for generations had been the principle intersection and traditional Downtown meeting place: Yates and Douglas. So far nothing greatly effective has been applied for the benefit of either of these streets, nor for their under-appreciated focal intersection - proposed plan changes need to take specific initiatives for what should accent these two signature streets - and their crossing, as a recovered centre point for Downtown.

Reinforcement of Two Distinguished Urban Places

- Bastion Square and Centennial Square were Victoria's two great Downtown urban design achievements, both created about fifty years ago. Each is over-due for restoration and for improvements - for both reaffirmation and reanimation. Measures for protecting the historic and design pedigrees and strengths of each - rehabilitating time-worn features, and adding well-considered new complements – merit deeper consideration. Centennial Square is one 4 of Canada's best remaining urban design examples of' 'Centennial Architecture' – an national idiom now identified as historically significant, and is to be maintained and restored.

Revitalization of a Great Urban Harbour

- Victoria's Harbour was historically the well-source for the emergence of this City. Maintaining an animated, complex, economically productive, and a grand urban harbour is a civic mandate. Consigning waterfront land uses for static landscaped space, and for diminutive passive activities, is counter to the potential of a great port city. Instead, backing maritime commercial and transportation functions, and concentrating additional public cultural and recreational uses – can help move forward the harbour's potency. Where heavy port industry has been removed, emphasize a renewing variety of intensive public activities. The DCAP should endorse an advancing concentration of public cultural uses around the entire larger harbour – to complement continuing and enhanced mixed transportation and commercial purposes – not additional park space. Consider a wide ring of interacting waterfront uses for: museums, maritime study, conferences, music, theatre, science, art, sports, seniors, children, First Nations, etc. – all fitted around a lively working harbour.

A Well Cared For Inner Harbour Area

- Victoria's Inner Harbour is the City's premium urban setting – celebrated and beloved for well over a century by Victorians – and recognized and saluted continuously worldwide.
- This noble, late nineteenth century and Edwardian era stage-set merits carefully sympathetic wisdom for guiding its future. Obviously conserving its integral qualities is a trust for the future – and that future should be stewarded to mature and evolve in a complementary fashion. My time as Victoria Senior Planner Urban Design generated proposals for this precinct, such as a floating observatory and illuminated fountain, carefully placed within the geometries of the Inner Harbour precinct. Also a new south-wing for the Empress Hotel was studied, as a means to support the economy of a grand old (and sometimes needy) hotel, while completing its grandiloquent architecture, - and maintaining its garden landscaping. Similarly: elevated, formalized street-scaping is warranted for all of the Inner Harbour area, such as unique high-quality sidewalk paving, lighting, and plantings.

In-Character Building Typologies – Stick to Moderate Scales and Heights

- This topic, saved for last, is arguably the most important and threatened general canon of urban design for Victoria - the proposed DCAP update precariously puts this City at risk of some unnecessary, fraught, and fated-to-be-unpopular changes related to high buildings.

- One of the central purposes of the urban design elements of the initial Downtown Plan had been to foster a compact urban scale - a variety of types and sizes of buildings, with typologies and mixes distinctive for the differing districts identified for Downtown. Maintaining a moderate height, intricate downtown should remain an essential value that distinguishes Victoria from other, much less historic, and less character-full cities.

- The urban design criteria for new downtown buildings, of the original DCAP, had taken great care to set out firm mechanisms to ensure taller building setbacks, over and over prescribing terraced building designs and emphasizing low and mid-rise building forms - utilized to off-set

the vertical thrusts of tall buildings. I was assigned to illustrate potential for the great diversity of building types and designs, and composite street-scapes, all possible for an expanded downtown for over ten thousand new residents - all within height and set-back limitations, and with benign relationships to: vital sidewalks, small plazas, through-block walkways, pocket parks, enriching street furnishings, and diverse character areas.

- Low-rise street frontages (3-5 storeys), and mid-rise building forms had been called for throughout all of that Plan's urban design criteria, setting out: no on-parcel limits to lower floor areas; ample floor areas for mid-rise buildings and portions of buildings (5-10 storeys); and then carefully limiting floor areas for taller levels of buildings - to avoid high-rise monsters such as View Towers. These larger floor area allowances on lower levels act to absorb more of the permitted floor space on sites, thus decreasing any tendency to push for greater height and larger scale tall buildings. A predominance of low and mid-rise portions of larger buildings helps to create an urban intimacy – well familiar and beloved in popular historic places such as Quebec City, Old Montreal, historic Boston, San Francisco's North Beach, Miami Beach, etc, and almost any historic city in Europe.

– From the beginning of the preparation of DCAP's initial urban design planning I had been directed to help institute and illustrate simple, directly designated numerical set-back and floor area and set-back mechanisms - to reliably favour the public experience and quality of City streets - not a system of vague or subjective, inferred interpretations.

- In concert with an orchestration of low and mid-rise floor area allowances, the City's excellent long-standing building street set-back envelope of 1/5, above 10 or 15 metre street wall heights, had been retained. This system allows for a great versatility of individual building frontage designs, while ensuring good openness to the sun and sky for the public on City streets, and inhibition of wind down-drafts through set-back, terracing building faces. Scaling of larger, taller buildings is broken down, encouraging more complex and contextual building designs. As well the 1/5 envelope tends to create notched-back terminating penthouses. The intention is to engender lower building forms, to complement the established scale and character of urban Victoria, and to underline the City's uniqueness – not to look to the model of parvenu high-rise places such as Calgary.

- Street trees are also advantaged by these building set-backs, on all four sides of blocks. And ironically, terraced building set-backs not only benefit people and trees, both enjoying an environmentally favoured downtown: the occupants of taller new buildings also benefit from the aspects of wider open areas and more sweeping views along streets.

- The proposed new draft of the DCAP sets out very different criteria for new tall buildings. Low floor podiums are prescribed, but there are few factors, if any noted, to encourage the creation of wider mid-rise elements of new buildings. Instead, generally a simple constrained floor area limit is called for all levels above a three to five storey podium. This prescribes a narrow, tall, vertically emphasized high-rise building form. To utilize zoning floor area allowances, these constrained floor area limits for a tower push for greater heights and increased verticality, further departing from the idiom of Victoria's established and popular urbanism. Verticality above low podiums was the model adopted for high-rise development in Vancouver in the early 1990's – now criticized for architectural sameness and street-scape anonymity.

- The case made now for these narrow, and inevitably tall towers, is that this form allows for increases in spacing between the towers, and seems to decrease shadowing effects on surrounding streets.

- Lower buildings, better framing streets, are a more intimate urban form than clusters of celery stalk high-rises, which threaten to be reminiscent of suburban Hong Kong. It is debatable if narrower high-rises actually create lessened street shadowing, but there is little doubt that these taller forms generate more downdraft and more wind vortex turbulence. As well, it has been amply demonstrated that livable increases in urban density are not related to tall building forms – but rather that, at similar densities, low and mid-rise buildings can readily house as many living units as soaring towers. Moreover, widely, contemporary urban planners are arguing that the street vitality and 'propinquity' (friendliness) of mid-rise areas are far more successful and popular than in areas of clustered high-rises.

- The other pre-eminent issue here is that of over-all civic identity. High-rise clusters in unwary provincial cities have become naïve urban clichés of the early twenty-first century. There is little doubt that the towns which will retain their distinctive identities and qualities, and their timeless best allure for visitors, through generations to come, will be mid-rise places which have fended off high-rises, like Florence, Oxford, Salzburg, Valencia, Antwerp, Prague, Budapest, Vienna, Santa Barbara, Savanna, Santa Fe, Quebec, - as well as older low and mid-rise areas of well-regarded, much visited larger places such as Rome, Paris, Berlin, Athens, Boston, Montreal, etc. Why should Victoria not choose to keep to this better company?

- Urban Capital, a prominent journal of city business, identifies that the most successful economies are in lower scale towns, and asserts: "It's generally accepted that mid-rise development creates friendlier cities".

In Closing

- It is disheartening to think that the proposed allowances for unnecessarily tall and narrow building forms in this City will primarily benefit their building developers, with little regard for our citizens on the sidewalks - Victoria's public. Better housing can be provided in mid-rises.

- So, in good conscience for a City that I esteem and value very highly, I must strongly advise that this push for tall narrow high-rises is a critical mis-judgement of the proposed updated DCAP, and would make for disservice to the character of Victoria.

I ask for reconsideration of these simplistic, tall, vertical building form criteria, better care of historic areas, and avoidance of ongoing damaging compromises to the quality of Victoria.

Sincerely, and always with good hope for Victoria,

Chris Gower, Architect, Urban Design Planner

MAIBC, FRAIC, MCIP, RPP

From: Martin Segger
Sent: December 23, 2021 8:57 PM
To: Karen Hoese <KHoese@victoria.ca>
Subject: FW: Request for input regarding Downtown Core Area Plan Revisions

Request for input regarding Downtown Core Area Plan Revisions

December 23, 2021

Attn. Mayor Lisa Helps and members of Council

I have an ongoing interest in the DCAP having been a member of the community advisory committee that provided input into the original Downtown Plan from which the current version was developed.

I list five main concerns.

1. **Urban Morphology:** If the current urban form for the backdrop to Old Town, tall high-rises cheek-and -jowl forming clusters of narrow canyons, is any indication of the direction of future development then I fear for the future of Victoria as a livable city. Indeed, some changes to the Plan should encourage a flatter, bulkier, more street oriented architectural urbanism. One thinks of the great cities of the world (Geneva, Paris, Florence, Munich etc.) which achieve equal density without the need for menacing towers and attendant wind tunnels obliterating sunlight, inimical to vibrant street life.

2. **History:** Provision should be made to better appreciate, and therefore delineate and express, the historical precincts of the urban core, each with their own history, stories, styles and building types.

3. **Heritage:** A better alignment of conservation policies with community interests is needed. In order for Old Town to better share a more inclusive significance of its landscape features, streetscapes, buildings, and stories the City should seek advice from a wider diversity of interests, ranging from First Nations to people of colour and youth. A major effort to improve street-level interpretation is needed to explicate our community stories.

4. **Conservation:** A dynamic shift in approaches to heritage conservation should be developed. Old Town needs to be reconceptualized as a monument in itself. At street level it is a series of thematic precincts and urban rooms each telling parts of the rich narrative which constitutes the history of our City. So “restoration” should include putting back lost or missing pieces such as roof-line cornices and turrets, or even entire building frontages. Their loss is like pages or chapters ripped from a book.

5. **Planning Processes:** The Heritage Advisory Panel should review all new construction in Old Town, from minor restorations to proposed new insertions in the historic fabric. Only by so doing can the historical and architectural integrity of the City’s urban core be properly considered and respected. In addition, an important research priority needs to address the lack of heritage **Statements of Significance** for more than half the historic building stock of Old Town. SOS’s ultimately drive preservation priorities and approaches.

Overall, the Downtown Core Area Plan remains an anchor document which enables us to envision a future for Victoria's Downtown as a livable place, a cultural statement and an viable economic asset - but also a meaningful reference in our shared imagination as a community.

Sincerely yours,
Martin Segger

2022

CITY OF VICTORIA | SUSTAINABLE PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Downtown Core Area Plan – Design Guidelines

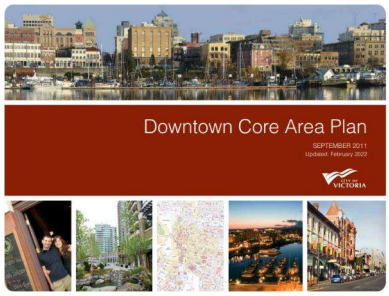
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE FEBRUARY 17, 2022

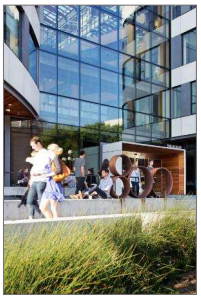
CITY OF VICTORIA

1

Purpose

- Present updated Downtown Core Area Plan (2022) and related Official Community Plan amendment bylaw





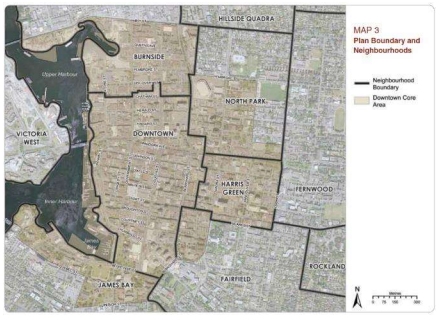
Downtown Core Area Plan – Design Guidelines | February 17, 2022

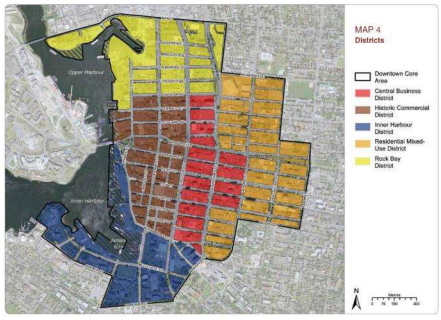
CITY OF VICTORIA

2

Background

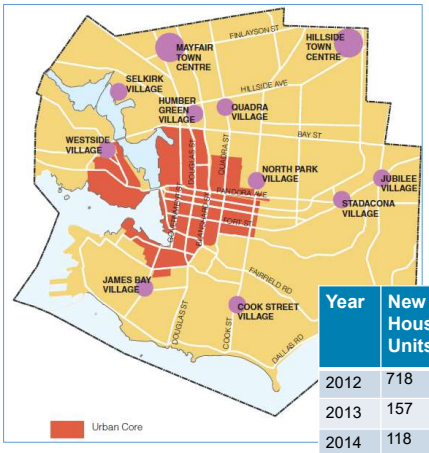
- DCAP approved September 2011
- Developed to accommodate forecast growth while maintaining a strong office core (CBD)
- 30-year neighbourhood plan for Downtown and Harris Green
- Additional policy guidance in conjunction with neighbourhood plans for portions of Burnside, North Park, Fairfield and James Bay





Background

- Downtown Core Area encompasses most of Urban Core (OCP)
- Residential growth in Urban Core exceeding OCP target (50%)
- Increased liveability concerns
- Project plan approved May 2020 to update guidelines
- Maintain land use policies (e.g. height and density)



Year	New Housing Units	City wide Share
2012	718	73%
2013	157	33%
2014	118	33%
2015	833	81%
2016	493	67%
2017	651	78%
2018	858	62%
2019	316	53%

Design Guidelines - Application

- Apply to development permits and heritage alteration permits as per Local Government Act (LGA)
- Evaluation tool for Council and staff
- Guide the exterior 'form and character' of new buildings, additions or retrofits to existing buildings:
  - Building massing, bulk and orientation
  - Landscaping
  - Materials and finishes
- Guidelines differ from land use policies and zoning regulations
- DCAP design guidelines contained in Appendices

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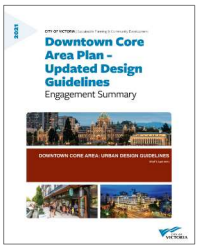
Project Engagement

- Aligned with City's Engagement Framework
- Initial stakeholder meetings
- Working Group - communities, development industry, design and heritage professionals
- *Have Your Say* - project webpage (Public)
- Virtual Engagement and Survey - feedback on draft DCAP
- Advisory Committee meetings
- Community Association meetings



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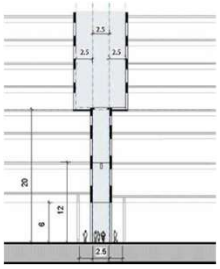
What We Heard

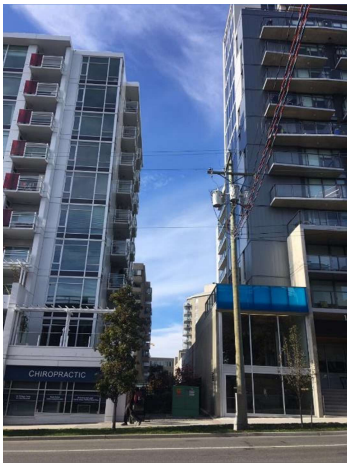
- Survey hosted on Have Your Say webpage (April 12 – May 7, 2021)
- Advertised through community associations, stakeholder organizations, working group, email, social media, and City website
- Survey web page visited by 1153 people of which 109 completed the survey
- Strong level of support (approx. 70%-80%) by respondents that new guidelines will effectively achieve the DCAP design objectives and improve overall liveability within the Downtown Core Area

Current Issues

Building Separation

- Tall buildings with large floor plates and insufficient building separation creates impacts on liveability (sunlight access and shadowing)





Current Issues
Building Bulk and Massing

- Large upper storey floor plates and minimal side setbacks create bulkier buildings along the street
- Reduced liveability and privacy between buildings

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Current Issues
Challenging Sites

- Undersized or residual parcels create challenges for applying guidelines to tall buildings
- Windows and balconies with minimal side yard clearance
- Creates false expectation for achieving maximum building height and density

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Proposed Improvements

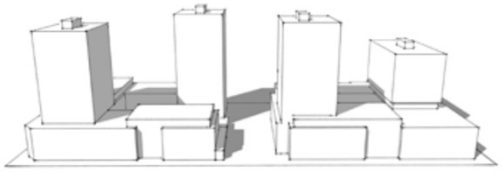
Human scaled streetscapes and facades

- Perimeter block pattern - well defined streets, active edges and interesting and varied building facades
- Reflects the established built form and street wall pattern of the downtown

Proposed Improvements

Built Form and Livability

- Vertically proportioned buildings with increased tower separation, side and rear setbacks
- Improved sunlight access and privacy for residential units
- Floorplate sizes reflect functional needs of commercial office uses
- Minimum parcel sizes:
  - 1400 sq m (Corner lots)
  - 1600 sq m (Interior lots)

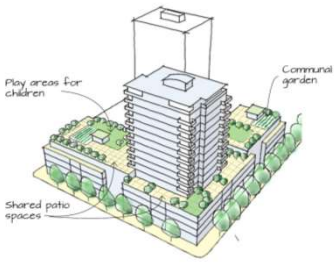


Proposed Improvements
Balconies and Patios

- Encourage integration of useable balconies and other private outdoor spaces
- Designed for usability, comfort, and building performance

Proposed Improvements
Outdoor Common Spaces

- Available for all building residents
- Encourage social interaction, play and urban food production



Proposed Improvements
POPS (Privately Owned Public Spaces)

- Compact open spaces (e.g., patio plaza, atrium, green space, through-block walkways)
- Extension of the public open space network

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Proposed Improvements
Universal Accessibility

High standard of accessibility with (exterior) site, building and landscape design

- Building interiors and on-site exterior open spaces regulated through BC Building Code
- Guidelines reflect CSA Accessible Design for the Built Environment standards
- Guidelines provided to Accessibility Advisory Committee (October 2021)

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Proposed Improvements
High Performance Buildings

- Guidelines encourage high performance building forms
- Compatibility with Step Code in balance with form and character design goals

Proposed Improvements
Bird-Friendly Building Design

- Specialized guidelines to mitigate bird strikes
- Incorporate 'best practices' appropriate for local urban context
- Focus on building design, treatment of glass surfaces, lighting, visual cues, and placement of landscaping
- Guidelines reviewed by *Safe Wings* organization

Proposed Improvements

Inner Harbour and Heritage

- Ensure new buildings complement and reinforce the character and context of the Inner Harbour
- Maintain visual prominence of landmark historic buildings
- Specialized guidelines for new buildings adjacent to heritage buildings and additions to heritage buildings (outside of Old Town)

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Interpretation and Use

- Address key urban design topics
- Clear statements of design intent
- Design strategies for achieving intent
- Responsive to individual context; unique site conditions, opportunities and constraints
- Foster design innovation, creativity and excellence on a case-by-case basis

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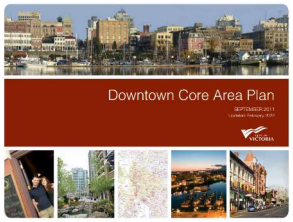
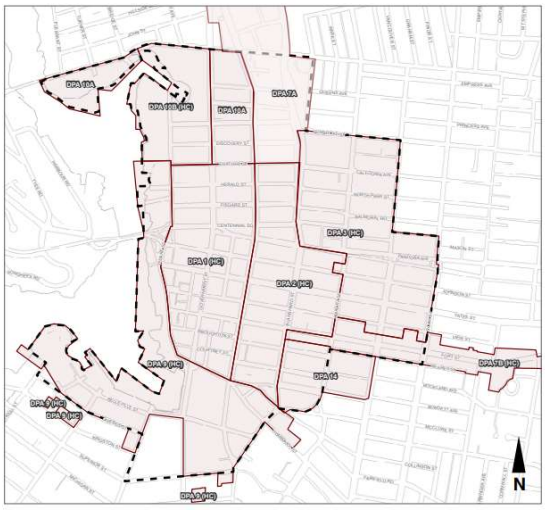
Other Updates to DCAP

- Updated maps
- Replaced conceptual illustrations with photos
- Updated reference to City policies (e.g., Downtown Public Realm Strategy, Go Victoria, Urban Forest Master Plan)
- Consolidated design guidelines from eight into four appendices
- Consolidated sidewalk width guidelines



OCP Amendment Bylaw

- Implementation requires OCP amendments to the following:
  - DPA 1 (HC): Core Historic
  - DPA 2 (HC): Core Business
  - DPA 3 (HC): Core Mixed-Use Residential
  - DPA 7A: Corridors
  - DPA 7B: Corridors Heritage
  - DPA 9 (HC): Inner Harbour
  - DPA 10A: Rock Bay
  - DPA 10B (HC): Rock Bay Heritage
  - DPA 14: Cathedral Hill Precinct



OCP Amendment Bylaw

- OCP bylaw will take effect three months after approval
- Allows existing DP applications to be processed under current guidelines
- Allows forthcoming applications to be adjusted to align with new guidelines
- Avoids potential conflicts with new guidelines
- New guidelines will apply to all new applications received after OCP bylaw approval

Amendments to Zoning Bylaw 2018

- Amendments required to align development regulations with new guidelines:
  - Remove 5:1 angle of inclination (results in multiple upper storey step-backs)
  - Update (increased) side and rear setbacks for commercial and residential buildings

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Approve the Downtown Core Area Plan (2022)
2. Receive feedback on OCP bylaw for information
3. Give 1st and 2nd readings to OCP amendment bylaw prior to public hearing
4. Direct staff to report back with amendments to Zoning Bylaw 2018

VICTORIA DOWNTOWN RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

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

15 February 2022

Re: DCAP Review

Dear Mayor Helps and Council,

The DCAP Review process that the DRA LUC participated in will shape what this city will become. The details matter. The current iteration of DCAP, if built out as allowed, will be an unmitigated disaster for our city and its citizens, both present and future. This situation is bad enough to start with, and the time to correct it is already late. As such we should be especially wary of making things worse.

The DRA position, clearly made at the stakeholder meetings, is to identify and strengthen the prescriptive language that is known to be weak (eg replace words like “consider” with “shall”). We are encouraged that prescriptive language has been proposed in several of the most important instances including tower separation, setbacks and floor plate maximums. However, the draft proposes language that is less prescriptive for minimum lot sizes for towers and there are no proposed limits for densities on smaller lots. This is a concern.

Fort Street is a recognized heritage corridor yet DCAP is facilitating its total destruction and redevelopment. This was pointed out by the DRA when DCAP was first created and we were assured that heritage character would be preserved by way of the design guidelines. We have reiterated that concern during this review and it appears nothing concrete will be done.

While the industry has advocated for and would certainly prefer the looser performance based regulation, rather than the any prescriptive language, there is a strong case not to move away from prescriptive language at all. To state the obvious, the developers have much better lawyers and consultants. They have more time and they have a great deal more money. Any goal which is qualitatively defined is thus immediately vulnerable to the onslaught of a small army of extremely capable intellectual consultants, who can reliably distort, twist and otherwise abuse the language (and process) to suit the ends of their clients. It is an extremely lopsided contest already that does not benefit the community at large, and the support the development

industry has given the proposed amendments likely means it will remain so. ***A writing of the guidelines that is unambiguously prescriptive is the best defense for this massive asymmetry.***

While the proposed amendments should be considered the bare minimum essential to create a livable city the existing prescriptions of the current DCAP, with its substandard setbacks and excessive densities, are constantly being exceeded and approved by Council without reflection. So we not only ask Council to approve the proposed DCAP amendments as quickly as possible, but to also abide by them.

Sincerely,

Ian Sutherland
Chair Land Use Committee - Downtown Residents Association