

**F.3 Bylaw for Official Community Plan, Amendment Bylaw: Local Area Plans and OCP Amendments for Fernwood, North Park and Hillside-Quadra**

**Moved By** Mayor Helps

**Seconded By** Councillor Loveday

That the following bylaw be given first and second readings:

1. Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2012, Amendment Bylaw (No. 43) No. 22-055

FOR (5): Mayor Helps, Councillor Alto, Councillor Dubow, Councillor Loveday, Councillor Potts

OPPOSED (4): Councillor Andrew, Councillor Isitt, Councillor Thornton-Joe, Councillor Young

**CARRIED (5 TO 4)**

**Moved By** Councillor Loveday

**Seconded By** Councillor Alto

That Council:

2. Consider the Bylaw in conjunction with the City of Victoria 2018-2022 Financial Plan, the Capital Regional District Liquid Waste Management Plan, and the Capital Regional District Solid Waste Management Plan pursuant to Section 477(3)(a) of the Local Government Act and deem those plans to be consistent with the proposed bylaw.
3. Refer the Bylaw for consideration at a public hearing.
4. Consider final approval of Hillside-Quadra Neighbourhood Plan (2022), the North Park Neighbourhood Plan (2022), the Fernwood Neighbourhood Plan (2022), the edited Downtown Core Area Plan (2022), the General Urban Design Guidelines (2022) and the Fernwood Village Design Guidelines (2022) at the same Council meeting at which the associated Bylaw is considered for adoption.
5. Rescind the Hillside-Quadra Plan and Design Guidelines Parts 1, 2, and 3 (1996), the North Park Plan (1996), and the Fernwood Plan (1994) following approval of the respective 2022 Plans.

FOR (5): Mayor Helps, Councillor Alto, Councillor Dubow, Councillor Loveday, Councillor Potts

OPPOSED (4): Councillor Andrew, Councillor Isitt, Councillor Thornton-Joe, Councillor Young

**CARRIED (5 TO 4)**



## Council Report

### For the Meeting of June 23, 2022

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**To:** Council **Date:** June 10, 2022  
**From:** Karen Hoese, Director, Sustainable Planning and Community Development  
**Subject:** Official Community Plan Amendments to implement local area planning for Fernwood, North Park and Hillside-Quadra

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### RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Give first and second readings to *Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw 22-055* (the “**Bylaw**”).
2. Consider the Bylaw in conjunction with the *City of Victoria 2018-2022 Financial Plan*, the *Capital Regional District Liquid Waste Management Plan*, and the *Capital Regional District Solid Waste Management Plan* pursuant to Section 477(3)(a) of the *Local Government Act* and deem those plans to be consistent with the proposed bylaw.
3. Refer the Bylaw for consideration at a public hearing.
4. Consider final approval of *Hillside-Quadra Neighbourhood Plan (2022)*, the *North Park Neighbourhood Plan (2022)*, the *Fernwood Neighbourhood Plan (2022)*, the edited *Downtown Core Area Plan (2022)*, the *General Urban Design Guidelines (2022)* and the *Fernwood Village Design Guidelines (2022)* at the same Council meeting at which the associated Bylaw is considered for adoption.
5. Rescind the *Hillside-Quadra Plan and Design Guidelines Parts 1, 2, and 3 (1996)*, the *North Park Plan (1996)*, and the *Fernwood Plan (1994)* following approval of the respective 2022 Plans.

### BACKGROUND

The proposed OCP Amendment Bylaw No. 22-055 (Attachment A) is provided for Council’s consideration.

The issue came before Council on June 9, 2022 where the following resolution was approved:

#### **Official Community Plan Amendments to implement Local Area Plans for Fernwood, North Park and Hillside-Quadra**

That Council direct staff to:

1. Consider approval of *Hillside-Quadra Neighbourhood Plan (2022)*, the *North Park Neighbourhood Plan (2022)*, the *Fernwood Neighbourhood Plan (2022)*, and the edited *Downtown Core Area Plan (2022)* at the same Council meeting at which the associated



*Official Community Plan* Amendment Bylaw is considered for adoption, and allow for public comment.

2. Direct staff to bring forward an *Official Community Plan* Amendment Bylaw for first and second readings prior to consideration at a public hearing.
3. Rescind the *Hillside-Quadra Plan and Design Guidelines Parts 1, 2, and 3 (1996)*, the *North Park Plan (1996)*, and the *Fernwood Plan (1994)* following approval of the respective 2022 Plans.

## ISSUES AND DISCUSSION

Staff have made one notable change to the proposed *General Urban Design Guidelines* (Attachment F) since they were presented at Committee of the Whole on May 5, 2022. Additional language has been added in the Introduction, in the sub-section titled “How to Use these Guidelines,” for the purpose of providing flexibility in how the General Urban Design Guidelines would be applied to institutional uses, including cultural and religious buildings:

“Greater discretion and a more broad interpretation of the design guidelines is envisioned when reviewing institutional, civic, religious and cultural buildings given the different programming and use requirements of these buildings.”

Additionally, the proposed neighbourhood plans and design guidelines (Attachments B-G) have been formatted in their final form. When presented at the May 5, 2022 Committee of the Whole, recent changes were marked in red for convenience of review. Some additional typos, mapping clarifications, mis-numberings, and other minor errors were also fixed.

Respectfully submitted,

Marc Cittone  
Senior Planner  
Community Planning

Lauren Klose  
Senior Planner  
Community Planning

Karen Hoese, Director  
Sustainable Planning and  
Community Development Department

## Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager

### List of Attachments:

- Attachment A: Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 22-055
- Attachment B: Fernwood Neighbourhood Plan (2022)
- Attachment C: North Park Neighbourhood Plan (2022)
- Attachment D: Hillside-Quadra Neighbourhood Plan (2022)
- Attachment E: Updated Downtown Core Area Plan (May 2022)
- Attachment F: General Urban Design Guidelines (2022)
- Attachment G: Fernwood Village Design Guidelines (2022)

A BYLAW OF THE CITY OF VICTORIA

The purpose of this Bylaw is to amend the Official Community Plan to support the implementation of 2022 neighbourhood plans and their objectives related to residential and commercial development.

**Contents**

1	Title
2	Definition
3-9	Amendments
10	Commencement

Under its statutory powers, including Divisions 4 and 7 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. 43)”.

**Definition**

- 2 “OCP Bylaw” means Bylaw No. 12-013, the Official Community Plan Bylaw, 2012.

**Amendments**

- 3 The OCP Bylaw is amended in Schedule A, Table of Contents under the heading “List of Maps”, by inserting the following immediately after “Map 75: HCA 2: Robert Street Heritage Conservation Area”:  
“Map 76: DPA 16A: General Urban Design”; and  
“Map 77: DPA 17 (HC): North Park Village and District”.
- 4 The OCP Bylaw is further amended in Schedule A, Section 6: Land Management and Development as follows:
  - (a) by inserting the following new section immediately after section 6.1.5:  
“6.1.5.A **Mixed Residential** consists of multi-unit residential in both ground-oriented and low-rise apartment forms, serving as a transition between Traditional Residential and Urban Residential areas. Mixed Residential areas are envisioned to be diverse in housing type and tenure. Incentives and flexibility in height and density may be considered to encourage tenures beyond market strata. Limited local serving commercial may be considered where the use provides community benefit and contributes to the overall objectives of

this plan. All forms should adhere to good urban design principles, consistent with the City’s design guidance, and should be responsive to the existing and envisioned context of the surrounding area.”;

- (b) by inserting the following new section immediately after section 6.1.6:

“6.1.6.A **Housing Opportunity** consists primarily of multi-unit residential in low and mid-rise apartment forms, with a public realm character similar to Urban Residential. At higher densities, Housing Opportunity areas are envisioned to accommodate primarily secured rental housing and provide public benefit, including through amenity contribution and on-site, non-market and affordable rental where possible. Limited mixed use may be considered where the use provides community benefit and contributes to the overall objectives of this plan. All forms should adhere to good urban design principles, consistent with the City’s design guidance, and should be responsive to the existing and envisioned context of the surrounding area.”;

- (c) by repealing Map 2 Urban Place Designations and replacing it with a new Map 2 Urban Place Designations, attached to this Bylaw in Schedule 1;

- (d) in Figure 8: Urban Place Guidelines, in the row of the table pertaining to Public Facilities, Institutions, Parks and Open Space Designation, in the column pertaining to Uses, by adding the following immediately after “Accessory and commercial services”:

“Co-location of residential uses with public facilities and institutional uses to achieve non-market rental housing objectives may be considered, as indicated in local area plans, depending on site conditions and context.”;

- (e) in Figure 8: Urban Place Guidelines, in the row of the table pertaining to Public Facilities, Institutions, Parks and Open Space Designation, in the column pertaining to Density, by adding the following immediately after “Total floor space ratios ranging up to approximately 0.5:1.”:

“Total floor space ratios of a residential component for non-market housing may range up to approximately 2.5:1, as indicated in local area plans.”;

- (f) in Figure 8: Urban Place Guidelines, by adding the following row to the table immediately beneath the row pertaining to Traditional Residential Designation:

<b>Mixed Residential</b>	Ground-oriented buildings and low-rise, multi-unit buildings that may generally range	Variable yard setbacks with primary doorways facing the street.	Mix of residential forms, including those described for Traditional Residential, in addition to low-	Total floor space ratios of approximately 1.6:1.
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	<p>from three to five storeys, depending on site conditions and context.</p> <p>Forms that provide a transition between Traditional Residential and higher densities, while providing opportunities for diverse housing types and tenures.</p>	<p>Variable front yard landscaping, boulevard and street tree planting.</p> <p>On-street parking and collective driveway access to rear yard or underground parking.</p>	<p>rise apartment forms.</p> <p>Limited local-serving commercial may be considered.</p> <p>Home occupations.</p>	<p>Flexibility in height and density may be considered to encourage diverse housing types and tenures.</p>
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(g) in Figure 8: Urban Place Guidelines, by adding the following row to the table beneath the row pertaining to Urban Residential Designation:

<b>Housing Opportunity</b>	<p>Low-rise and mid-rise multi-unit buildings that may generally range from four to six storeys, depending on site conditions and context.</p>	<p>Variable yard setbacks with primary doorways facing the street.</p> <p>Variable front yard landscaping, boulevard and street tree planting.</p> <p>On-street parking and collective driveway access to rear yard or underground parking.</p>	<p>Forms that reflect those described for Urban Residential with some opportunity for additional density where substantial public benefit is provided.</p> <p>Limited mixed-use and local-serving commercial may be considered.</p> <p>Home occupations.</p>	<p>Total floor space ratios of approximately 1.2:1.</p> <p>Increased density of approximately 2:1 may be considered where public benefit is provided consistent with the objectives of this plan and other City policies.</p> <p>Additional increased density of approximately 2.5:1 may be considered for projects where</p>
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				<p>substantial public benefit is provided consistent with the objectives of this plan and other City policies, such as secured rental projects with additional benefits.</p> <p>(SEE POLICY 6.1.6A)</p>
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- (h) in Figure 8: Urban Place Guidelines, in the row of the table pertaining to Small Urban Village Designation, in the column pertaining to Built Form, by striking “Buildings of four and five storeys may be considered at Fairfield Plaza Village for the advancement of plan objectives.”, and replacing it with the following:

“Buildings of four and five storeys may be considered at Fairfield Plaza Village and other Small Urban Villages as indicated in local area plans for the advancement of plan objectives, depending on site conditions and context.”;

- (i) in Figure 8: Urban Place Guidelines, in the row of the table pertaining to Large Urban Village Designation, in the column pertaining to Built Form, by adding the following immediately after “Low-rise and mid-rise multi-unit buildings up to approximately six storeys including row-houses and apartments, freestanding commercial and mixed-use buildings.”:

“Buildings above six storeys may be considered where on-site public benefit is provided, as indicated in local area plans.”;

- (j) in Figure 8: Urban Place Guidelines, in the row of the table pertaining to Large Urban Village Designation, in the column pertaining to Density, by adding the following immediately after “Increased density up to a total of approximately 2.5:1 may be considered for the advancement of plan objectives.”:

“Densities above 2.5:1 may be considered where on-site public benefit is provided, as indicated in local area plans.”;

- (k) in Figure 8: Urban Place Guidelines, in the row of the table pertaining to Core Residential Designation, in the column of the table pertaining to Density, by adding the following immediately after “Total floor space ratios ranging from a base of 1:1 to a maximum of 2:1 for areas: on Mason Street/ east of Vancouver Street/ west of Cook Street.”:

“Total floor space ratios ranging from a base of 2:1 to a maximum of 3:1 for areas on the east side of Quadra Street, between North Park Street and Pembroke Street.”;

- (l) in Figure 8: Urban Place Guidelines, in the row of the table pertaining to Industrial Employment-Residential Designation, in the column pertaining to Density, by adding the following immediately after “Of the total floor space, residential uses may comprise up to 1.5:1 floor space ratio.”:

“Total floor space ratios of approximately 2.5:1 FSR may be considered, as indicated in local area plans, for projects that advance both housing affordability objectives and industrial land objectives on-site.”; and

- (m) by adding the following new sections immediately after section 6.5:

“6.5.A Where a site or area is providing primarily non-market housing or other significant public benefit, guidelines specified in policy 6.2 and Figure 8 may be varied, including through increases to height and density, if the development is consistent with City policies, good urban design principles, and the objectives of this plan, and is responsive to the envisioned context of the surrounding area.  
[SEE ALSO SECTION 13 – HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS]

6.5.B Site specific development can depart from Figure 8 if the development goes through a rezoning, is supported by the local area plan, is consistent with City policies, good urban design principles, and the objectives of this plan, and is responsive to the envisioned context of the surrounding area.”.

- 5** The OCP Bylaw is further amended in Schedule A, Section 9: Parks and Recreation as follows:

- (a) by repealing Map 9: Parks, Open Space and Recreational Facilities and replacing it with a new Map 9: Parks, Open Space and Recreational Facilities, attached to this Bylaw in Schedule 2.

- 6** The OCP Bylaw is further amended in Schedule A, Section 14: Economy as follows:

- (a) by repealing Map 14: Employment Lands and replacing it with a new Map 14: Employment Lands, attached to this Bylaw in Schedule 3.

- 7** The OCP Bylaw is further amended in Schedule A, Section 21: Neighbourhood Directions as follows:

- (a) by repealing Map 22: Fernwood Strategic Directions and replacing it with a new Map 22: Fernwood Strategic Directions, attached to this Bylaw in Schedule 4;

- (b) by repealing sections 21.7 and 21.8 in their entirety and replacing them with the following new sections:

**“21.7 Vision in the citywide context includes:**

- 21.7.1 Residential character with mature streetscapes, ample heritage assets, and local-serving parks and amenities through much of the neighbourhood.
- 21.7.2 Local-serving commercial in several nodes throughout the neighbourhood, including along sustainable mobility corridors.
- 21.7.3 Central location that houses many citywide facilities including Victoria High School, and the No. 1 Firehall.
- 21.7.4 Community services and amenities in and near Fernwood Village and North Park Village.
- 21.7.5 Transition between the Urban Core and primarily ground-oriented Traditional Residential areas to the east.
- 21.7.6 Home to several shared villages, including North Park Village, Haultain Corners, and Stadacona Village.
- 21.7.7 Diverse multi-unit housing options in and near the urban villages, including between North Park and Fernwood Villages.
- 21.1.8 Diverse multi-unit housing options on and off the Bay Street, Cook Street, and Fernwood Road corridors.

**21.8 Strategic directions include:**

- 21.8.1 Accommodate new population and housing growth within walking distance of North Park Village, Fernwood Village, and villages and mobility options along Bay Street, and improve pedestrian and cycling connections to the Downtown Core Area.
- 21.8.2 Continue to explore options for the Fort Street and Yates Street corridors to evolve into high-quality frequent transit routes, including through diverse housing options, villages, and amenities within walking distance of the corridor.
- 21.8.3 Enhance Fernwood Village with additional local-serving businesses, housing options, and refreshed public spaces.
- 21.8.4 Continue to explore opportunities to use neighbourhood school sites as community facilities to serve the broader city population.
- 21.8.5 Support the Bay Street corridor to evolve into a high-quality frequent transit route, including through diverse housing options, villages, and amenities within walking distance of the corridor.

21.8.6 Retain neighbourhood heritage character, buildings and streetscapes of significance while considering diverse and compatible multi-unit forms for a variety of housing choices.

21.8.7 Enhance east-west bike connections through the neighbourhood.

21.8.8 Develop a local area plan to enhance Stadacona Village.

21.8.9 Enhance Haultain Corners Village.”;

(c) by repealing Map 25: Hillside-Quadra Strategic Directions and replacing it with a new Map 25: Hillside-Quadra Strategic Directions, attached to this Bylaw in Schedule 5;

(d) by repealing sections 21.13 and 21.14 in their entirety and replacing it with the following new sections:

**“21.13 Vision in the citywide context includes:**

21.13.1 Diverse multi-unit housing options near Quadra Village, Tolmie Village, and within walking distance of the Douglas, Finlayson, and Hillside mobility corridors and other community parks and amenities.

21.13.2 Local-serving commercial nodes throughout the neighbourhood including along sustainable mobility corridors.

21.13.3 Home to a citywide recreational facility at Topaz Park.

21.13.4 Location of a regionally significant sensitive ecosystem at Summit Park.

21.13.5 Key transportation corridors along Blanshard Street, Bay Street, Hillside Avenue, and Quadra Street, and potential future frequent transit along Finlayson Street.

**21.14 Strategic directions include:**

21.14.1 Further develop Quadra Village as a complete Large Urban Village with housing options, diverse local-serving commercial and services for daily needs, cultural assets, and new public spaces.

21.14.2 Complement the ground-oriented Traditional Residential character in the majority of the neighbourhood with diverse and compatible multi-unit forms for a variety of housing choices.



- 21.14.3 Consider opportunities to re-envision major sites in Quadra West, including the Evergreen Terrace site and the former Blanshard School site, with mixed-income housing, public open spaces, updated community serving amenities, and improved connections to other neighbourhood assets in the north and east.
  - 21.14.4 Enhance Tolmie Village with additional local-serving businesses, housing options, and new public spaces.
  - 21.14.5 Protect, enhance and renew the significant stand of Garry Oak woodlands in the Summit Park area and enhance public access.
  - 21.14.6 Enhance Hillside Avenue, Bay Street, Cook Street, Blanshard Street, and Finlayson Street as multi-modal corridors.”;
- (e) by repealing Map 27: Jubilee Strategic Directions and replacing it with a new Map 27: Jubilee Strategic Directions, attached to this Bylaw in Schedule 6;
  - (f) in section 21.17.4, by striking “and Oak Bay Avenue.” and replacing it with “Oak Bay Avenue and East Bay Street (Bay and Shakespeare to Shelbourne).”;
  - (g) by repealing Map 28: North Park Strategic Directions and replacing it with a new Map 28: North Park Strategic Directions, attached to this Bylaw in Schedule 7;
  - (h) by repealing sections 21.19 and 21.20 in their entirety and replacing it with the following new sections:

**“21.19 Vision in the citywide context includes:**

- 21.19.1 Location of citywide recreation facilities at Crystal Pool, Royal Athletic Park, and the Save On Foods Memorial Centre.
- 21.19.2 Areas west of Quadra Street and fronting Pandora Avenue identified as a mixed use residential area within the Downtown Core Area.
- 21.19.3 Southern portion of the neighbourhood along Pandora Avenue identified for higher density mixed use development in the Downtown Core Area.
- 21.19.4 Key transition area linking higher density Downtown and Harris Green with other residential areas of the city; the area between Quadra Street and North Park Village is a key transition zone envisioned to accommodate diverse housing options with a residential character and mature streetscapes.

- 21.19.5 Significant commercial area at North Park Village.
- 21.19.6 Significant cluster of heritage buildings along and near Quadra Street.
- 21.19.7 Light industrial (artisan and maker space) area along North Park Street between Quadra and Cook Streets.

**21.20 Strategic directions include:**

- 21.20.1 Renew citywide recreational facilities at Crystal Pool and Royal Athletic Park and explore opportunities for diverse public uses.
  - 21.20.2 Support diverse multi-unit housing options within walking distance of the North Park Village and within portions of the neighbourhood designated Core Residential close to downtown amenities and frequent transit options.
  - 21.20.3 Support the evolution of North Park Village as a complete Large Urban Village with housing options, diverse commercial and services for daily needs, and new public spaces.
  - 21.20.4 Retain existing light industrial uses along North Park Street and support new similar uses to locate in the area, including ground floor artisan and maker spaces with residential uses above.
  - 21.20.5 Establish a high density mixed use area along Pandora Avenue that responds to the surrounding skyline of visually prominent heritage landmarks.
  - 21.20.6 Enhance pedestrian connections with Downtown and the Douglas Street rapid transit corridor.
  - 21.20.7 Continue to examine opportunities for the introduction of a central community space that serves the neighbourhood.”;
- (i) by repealing Map 29: Oaklands Strategic Directions and replacing it with a new Map 29: Oaklands Strategic Directions, attached to this Bylaw in Schedule 8; and
  - (j) by adding the following immediately after section 21.22.7:
    - “21.22.8 In future local area planning, consider diverse housing options along and near the Cook Street Corridor to support sustainable mobility and housing objectives.”.

- 8** The OCP Bylaw is further amended in Schedule A, Appendix A: Development Permit Areas and Heritage Conservation Areas as follows:

- (a) by repealing Map 32: Composite Map of Development Permit Areas and Heritage Conservation Areas and replacing it with a new Map 32: Composite Map of Development Permit Areas and Heritage Conservation Areas, attached to this Bylaw in Schedule 9;
- (b) by repealing Map 35: DPA 3 (HC): Core Mixed-Use Residential and replacing it with a new Map 35: DPA 3 (HC): Core Mixed-Use Residential, attached to this Bylaw in Schedule 10;
- (c) by repealing Map 39: DPA 5: Large Urban Villages and replacing it with a new Map 39: DPA 5: Large Urban Villages, attached to this Bylaw in Schedule 11;
- (d) within DPA 5: Large Urban Villages, at section 5(b)(v), by striking out “Quadra Village Design Guidelines (1998)” and replacing with “General Urban Design Guidelines (2022)”;
- (e) by repealing Map 47: DPA 5: Large Urban Villages – Quadra Village and replacing it with a new Map 47: DPA 5: Large Urban Villages – Quadra Village, attached to this Bylaw in Schedule 12;
- (f) by repealing Map 49: DPA 6B (HC): Small Urban Villages Heritage and replacing it with a new Map 49: DPA 6B (HC): Small Urban Villages Heritage, attached to this Bylaw in Schedule 13;
- (g) within DPA 6B (HC): Small Urban Villages Heritage, by repealing section 5 in its entirety, and replacing it with the following new section 5:

“5. Guidelines:

These guidelines are to be considered and applied for both Heritage Alteration Permits and Development Permits.

(a) Guidelines for all Small Urban Villages Heritage:

- › Fernwood Village Design Guidelines (2022).
- › Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.
- › City of Victoria Heritage Program Sign & Awning Guidelines (1981).
- › Guidelines for Fences, Gates and Shutters (2010).”;

- (h) within DPA 16: General Form and Character, at Section 2(b)(i)(1)(A), by adding the following items to the list immediately after “DPA 14, Cathedral Hill Precinct”:

“DPA 16A, General Urban Design  
DPA 17 (HC), North Park Village and District”; and

(i) by adding immediately after HCA 2: Robert Street Heritage Conservation Area the contents of Schedule 14, Schedule 15, Schedule 16, and Schedule 17 attached to this Bylaw.

9 The OCP Bylaw is further amended in Schedule A, Appendix B: Glossary of Terms, by inserting the following new definition immediately after the definition for "Landmarks":

"Light Industrial: Light Industry uses typically have less intensive, and more consumer-oriented uses than heavy industry, but may still include a variety of production, distribution, and repair services. Light industrial uses are also characterized by the lighter impact they may have on adjacent or ancillary uses."

**Commencement**

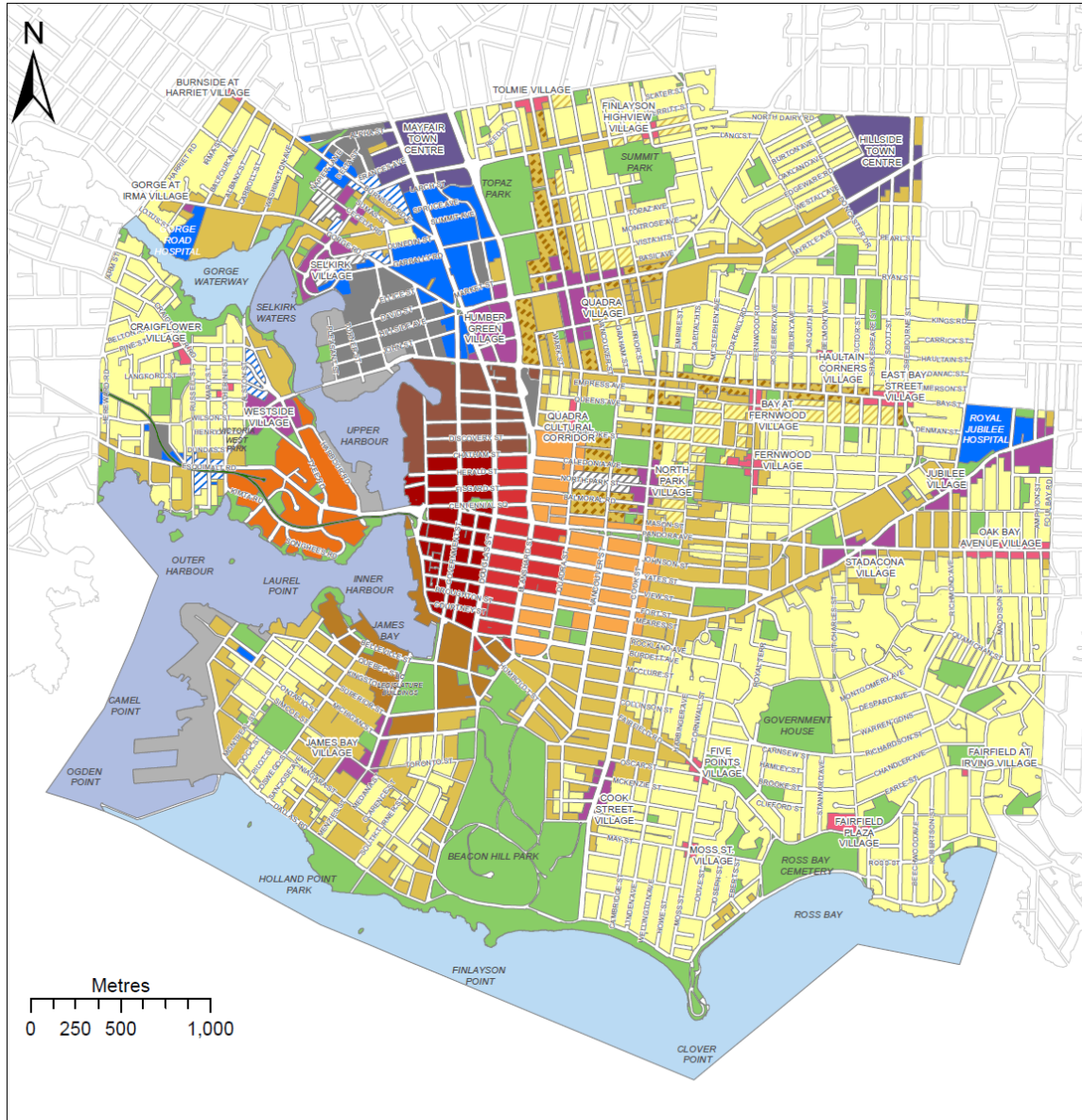
10 This Bylaw comes into force forty-five days after the date of adoption.

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 on the	day of	2022

CITY CLERK

MAYOR

# Schedule 1

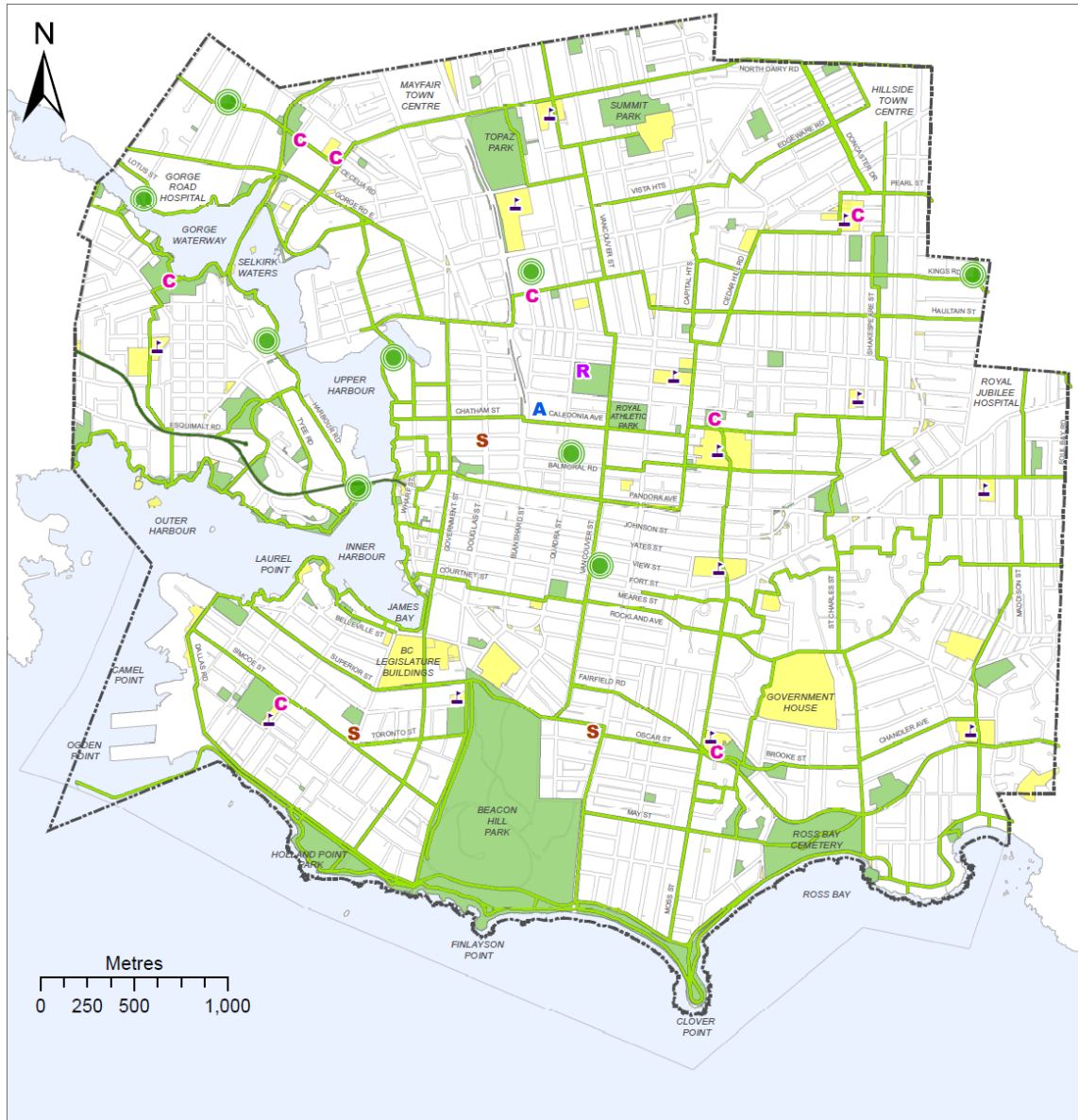


## MAP 2 Urban Place Designations







- Core Historic
- Core Business
- Core Employment
- Core Inner Harbour/Legislative
- Core Songhees
- Core Residential
- General Employment
- Employment with Limited Residential
- Industrial Employment
- Light Industrial Employment with Limited Residential
- Marine Industrial
- Town Centre
- Large Urban Village
- Small Urban Village
- Urban Residential
- Housing Opportunity
- Traditional Residential
- Mixed Residential
- Public Facilities, Institutions, Parks and Open Space
- Rail Corridor
- Marine - Harbour
- Marine - General

Urban Place Designations extend to the centerlines of adjacent streets.

Schedule 2



## MAP 9 Parks, Open Space and Recreational Facilities

- C** Community Centre
- R** Recreation Centre
- S** Seniors Centre
- A** Arena
-  Existing Public School
-  Proposed Park (approximate location)
-  Park
-  Open Space
-  Designated Greenway
-  Rail Corridor

**Park:** Land managed by the City of Victoria as a park.

**Open Space:** Land that is generally publicly-accessible, other than City parks. Includes private lands, public lands and other City-held property, such as greens and street rights of way.

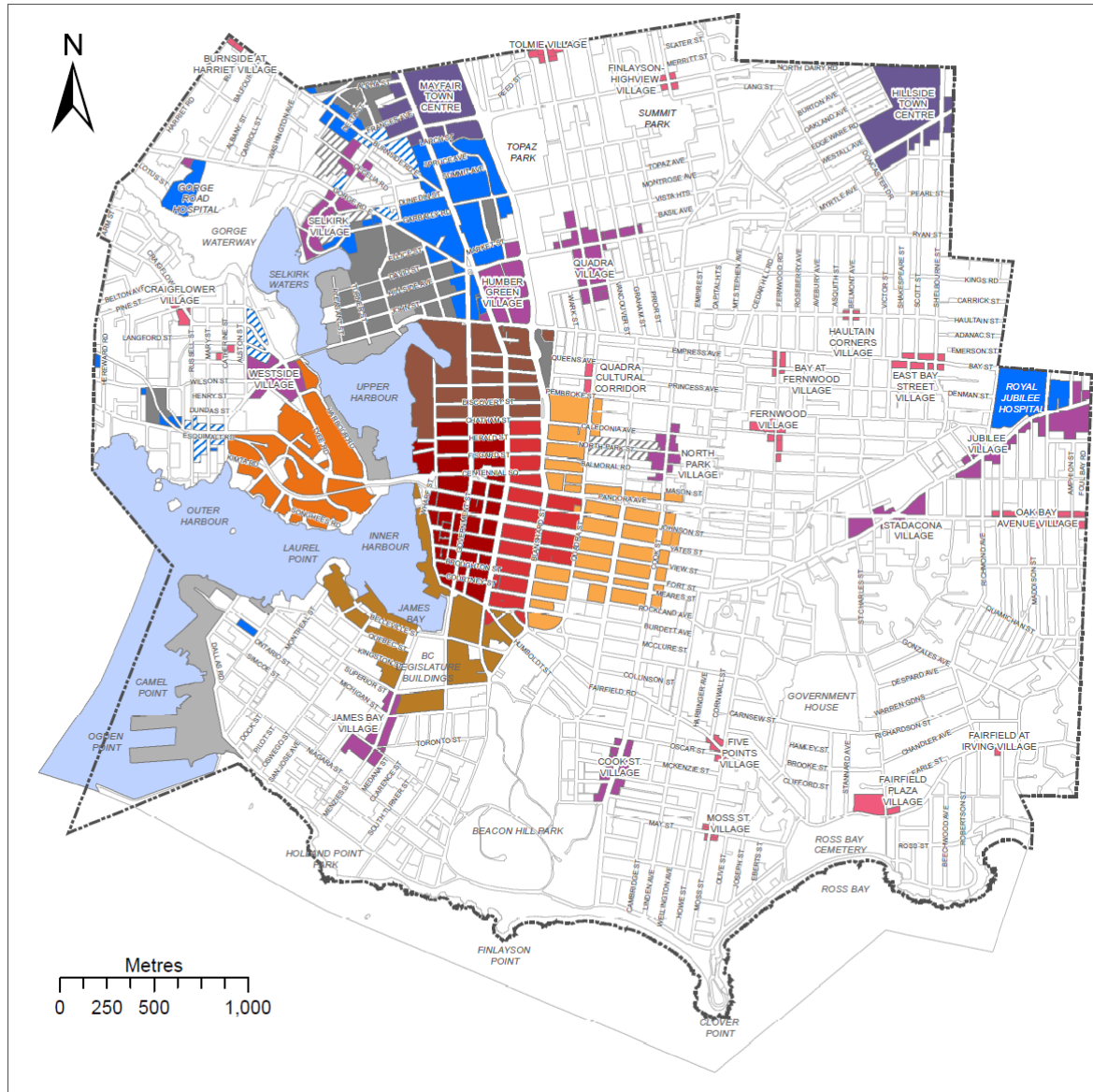
This map is provided for information purposes only. Please refer to Map 2 and Figure 8 for designation information.



Schedule 3

MAP 14

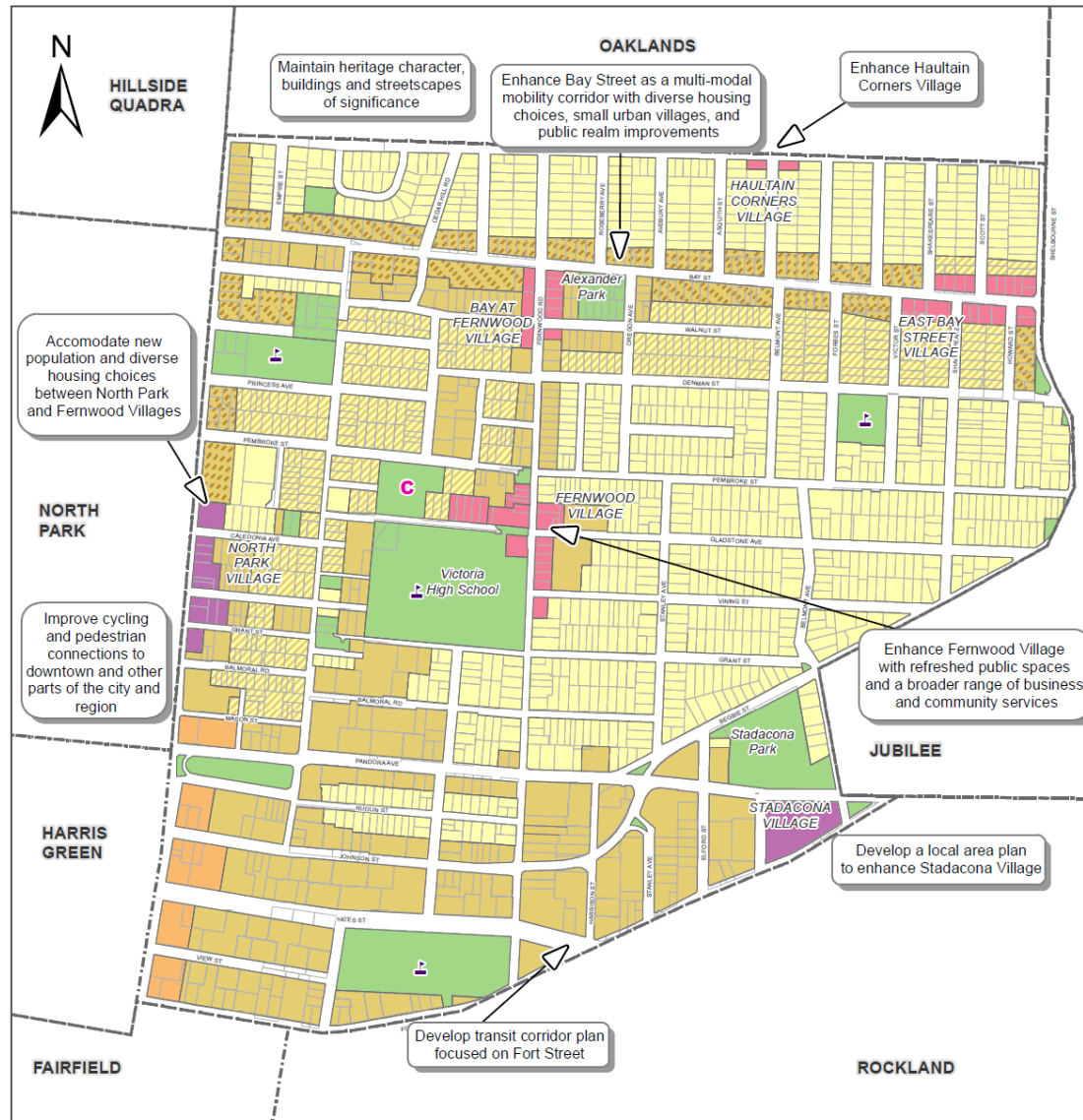
Employment Lands



- Core Historic
- Core Business
- Core Employment
- Core Inner Harbour/Legislative
- Core Songhees
- Core Residential
- General Employment
- Industrial Employment
- Marine Industrial
- Town Centre
- Large Urban Village
- Small Urban Village
- Marine - Harbour
- Employment-Residential
- Industrial Employment-Residential

Urban Place Designations are provided for information purposes only. Please refer to Map 2 and Figure 8 for designation information.

Schedule 4



# MAP 22 Fernwood Strategic Directions

## Urban Place Designations\*

- Core Residential
- Large Urban Village
- Small Urban Village
- Urban Residential
- Housing Opportunity
- Traditional Residential
- Mixed Residential
- Public Facilities, Institutions, Parks and Open Space

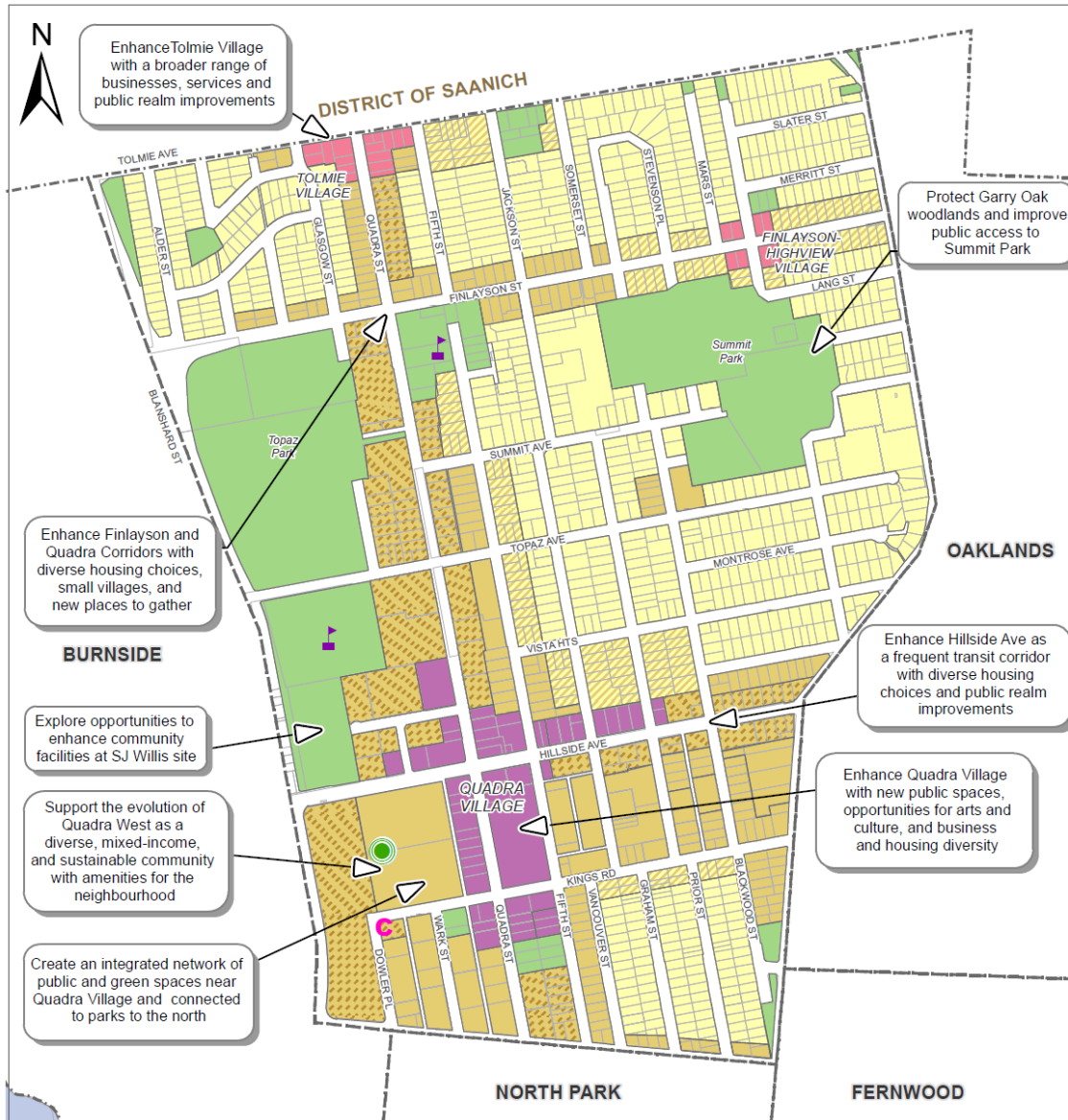
## Public Facilities

- Existing Public School
- Community Centre

\*Urban Place Designations are provided for information purposes only. Please refer to Map 2 and Figure 8 for designation information.



Schedule 5



# MAP 25

## Hillside-Quadra Strategic Directions

### Urban Place Designations\*

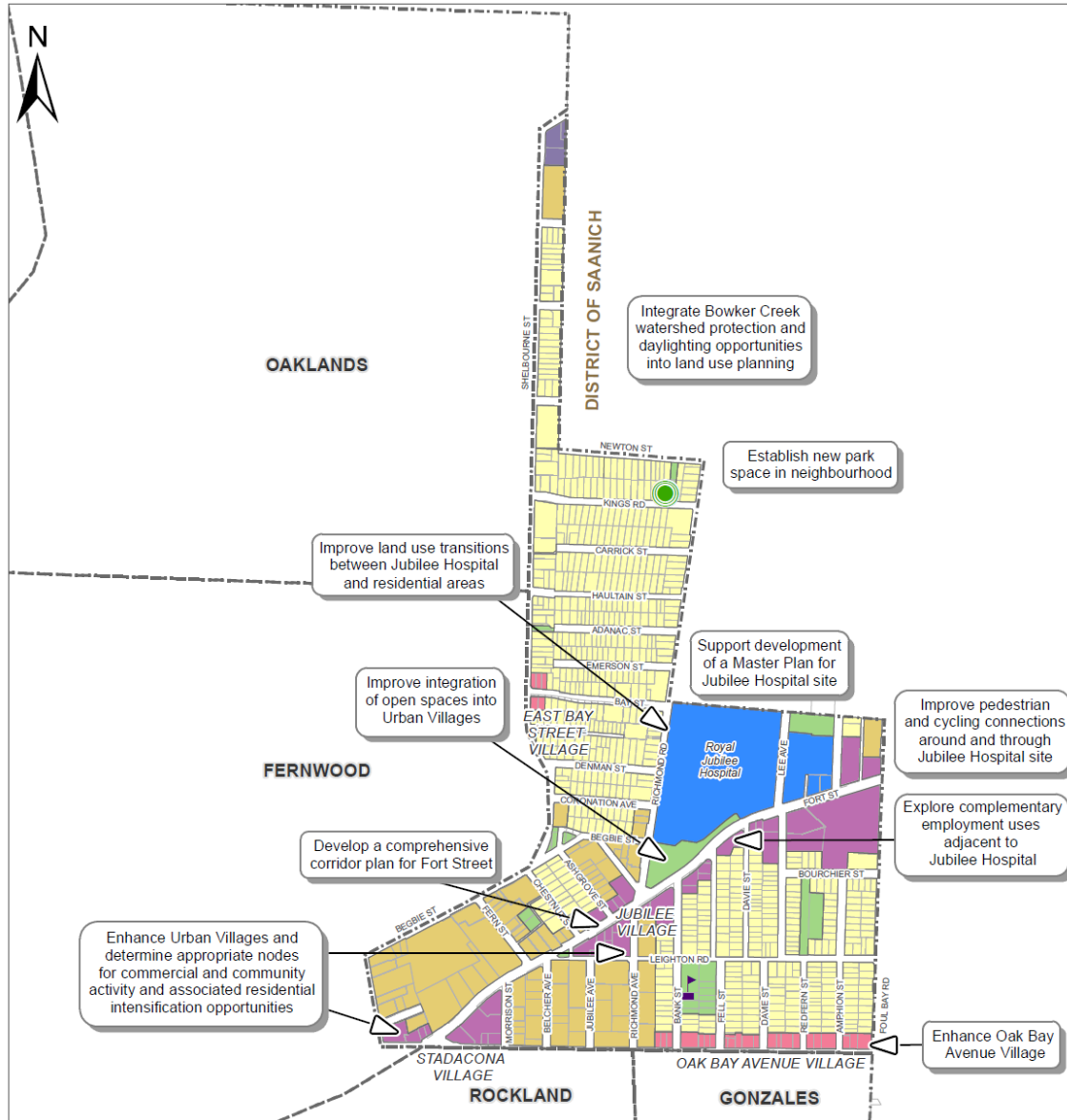
- Large Urban Village
- Small Urban Village
- Urban Residential
- Housing Opportunity
- Traditional Residential
- Mixed Residential
- Public Facilities, Institutions, Parks and Open Space

### Public Facilities

- Existing Public School
- Community Centre
- Proposed Park (approximate location)

\*Urban Place Designations are provided for information purposes only. Please refer to Map 2 and Figure 8 for designation information.

Schedule 6



## MAP 27

### Jubilee Strategic Directions

#### Urban Place Designations\*

- General Employment
- Town Centre
- Large Urban Village
- Small Urban Village
- Urban Residential
- Traditional Residential
- Public Facilities, Institutions, Parks and Open Space

#### Public Facilities

- Existing Public School
- Proposed Park (approximate location)

\*Urban Place Designations are provided for information purposes only. Please refer to Map 2 and Figure 8 for designation information.

Schedule 7



# MAP 28

## North Park Strategic Directions

### Urban Place Designations\*

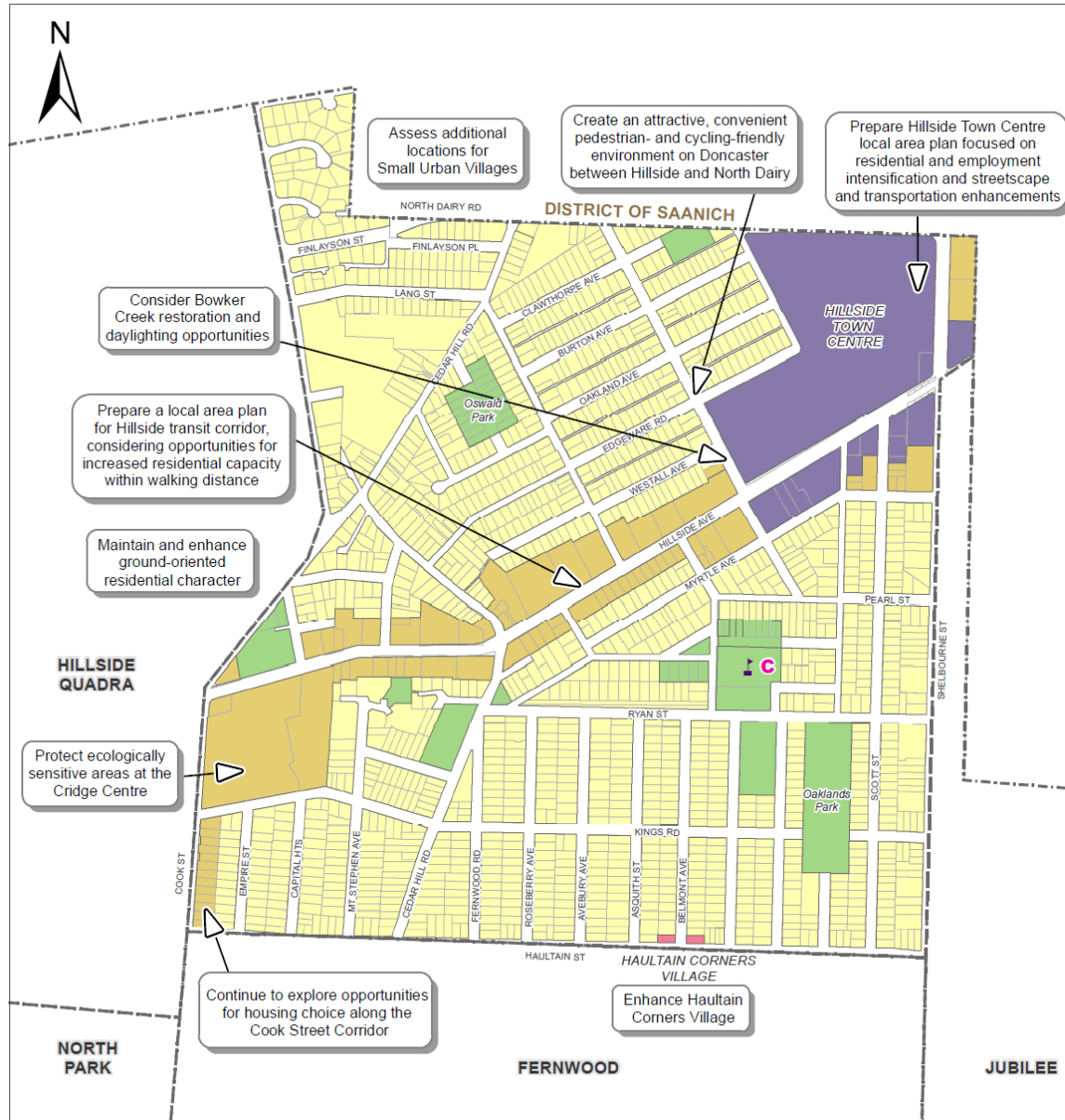
- Core Residential
- Light Industrial Employment with Limited Residential
- Large Urban Village
- Small Urban Village
- Urban Residential
- Housing Opportunity
- Traditional Residential
- Mixed Residential
- Public Facilities, Institutions, Parks and Open Space

### Public Facilities

- Proposed Park (approximate location)

\*Urban Place Designations are provided for information purposes only. Please refer to Map 2 and Figure 8 for designation information.

Schedule 8



# MAP 29

## Oaklands Strategic Directions

### Urban Place Designations\*

- Core Residential
- Town Centre
- Small Urban Village
- Urban Residential
- Traditional Residential
- Public Facilities, Institutions, Parks and Open Space

### Public Facilities

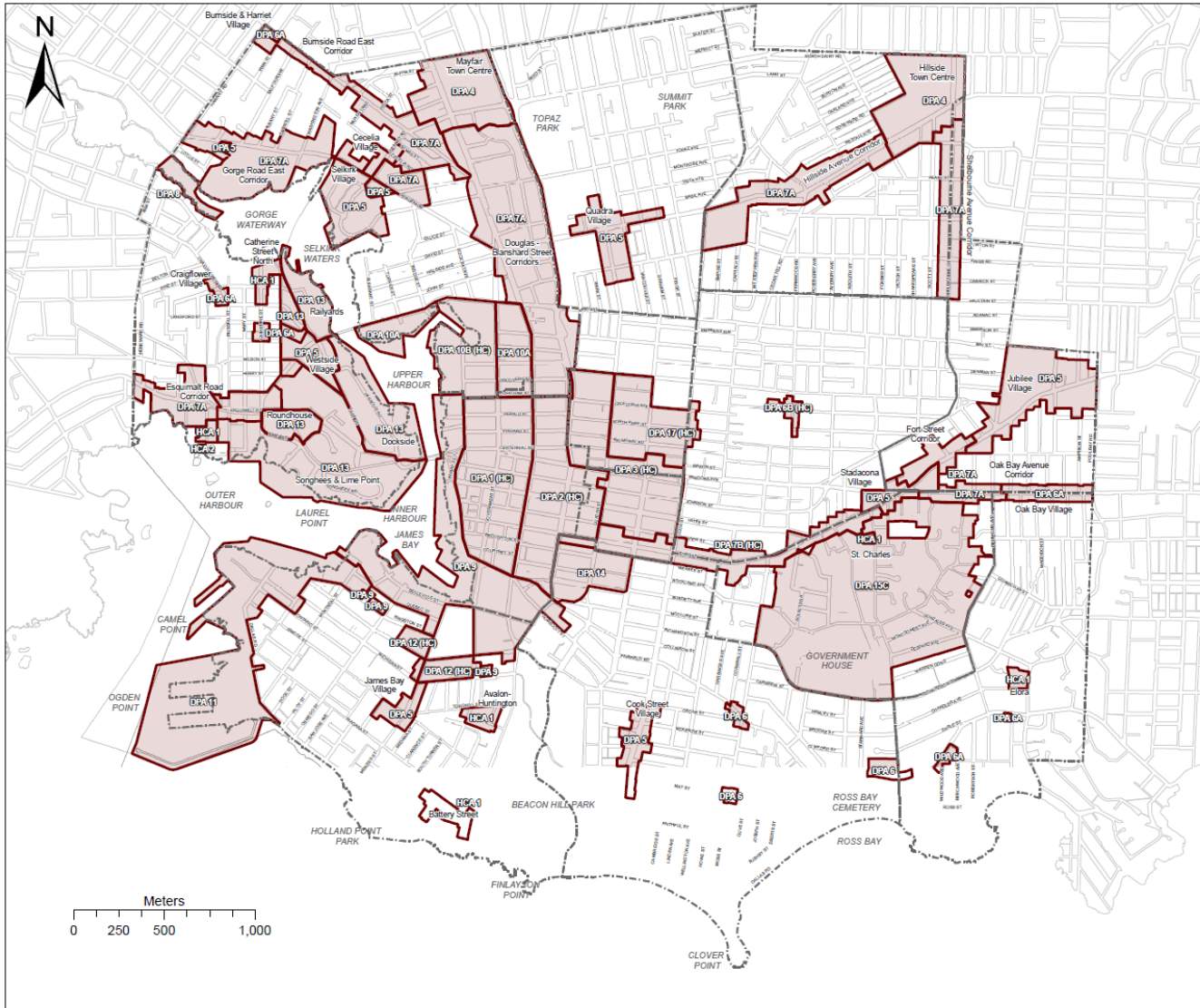
- Existing Public School
- Community Centre

\*Urban Place Designations are provided for information purposes only. Please refer to Map 2 Figure 8 for designation information.



Schedule 9

Map 32: Composite Map of Development Permit Areas and Heritage Conservation Areas



## MAP 32 COMPOSITE MAP OF DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREAS AND HERITAGE CONSERVATION AREAS

- DPA 1 (HC): Core Historic
- DPA 2 (HC): Core Business
- DPA 3 (HC): Core Mixed-Use Residential
- DPA 4: Town Centres
- DPA 5: Large Urban Villages
- DPA 6A: Small Urban Villages
- DPA 6B (HC): Small Urban Villages Heritage
- DPA 7A: Corridors
- DPA 7B (HC): Corridors Heritage
- DPA 8: Victoria Arm Gorge Waterway
- DPA 9 (HC): Inner Harbour
- DPA 10A: Rock Bay
- DPA 10B (HC): Rock Bay Heritage
- DPA 11: James Bay and Outer Harbour
- DPA 12 (HC): Legislative Precinct
- DPA 13: Core Songhees
- DPA 14: Cathedral Hill Precinct
- DPA 17 (HC): North Park Village Area
- HCA 1: Traditional Residential
- HCA 2: Robert Street Heritage Conservation Area
- DPA 15C: Intensive Residential Rockland

See Map 32A for the following Intensive Residential Development Permit Areas:

DPA 15F: Intensive Residential - Attached Residential Development

See Map 76 for DPA 16A: General Urban Design

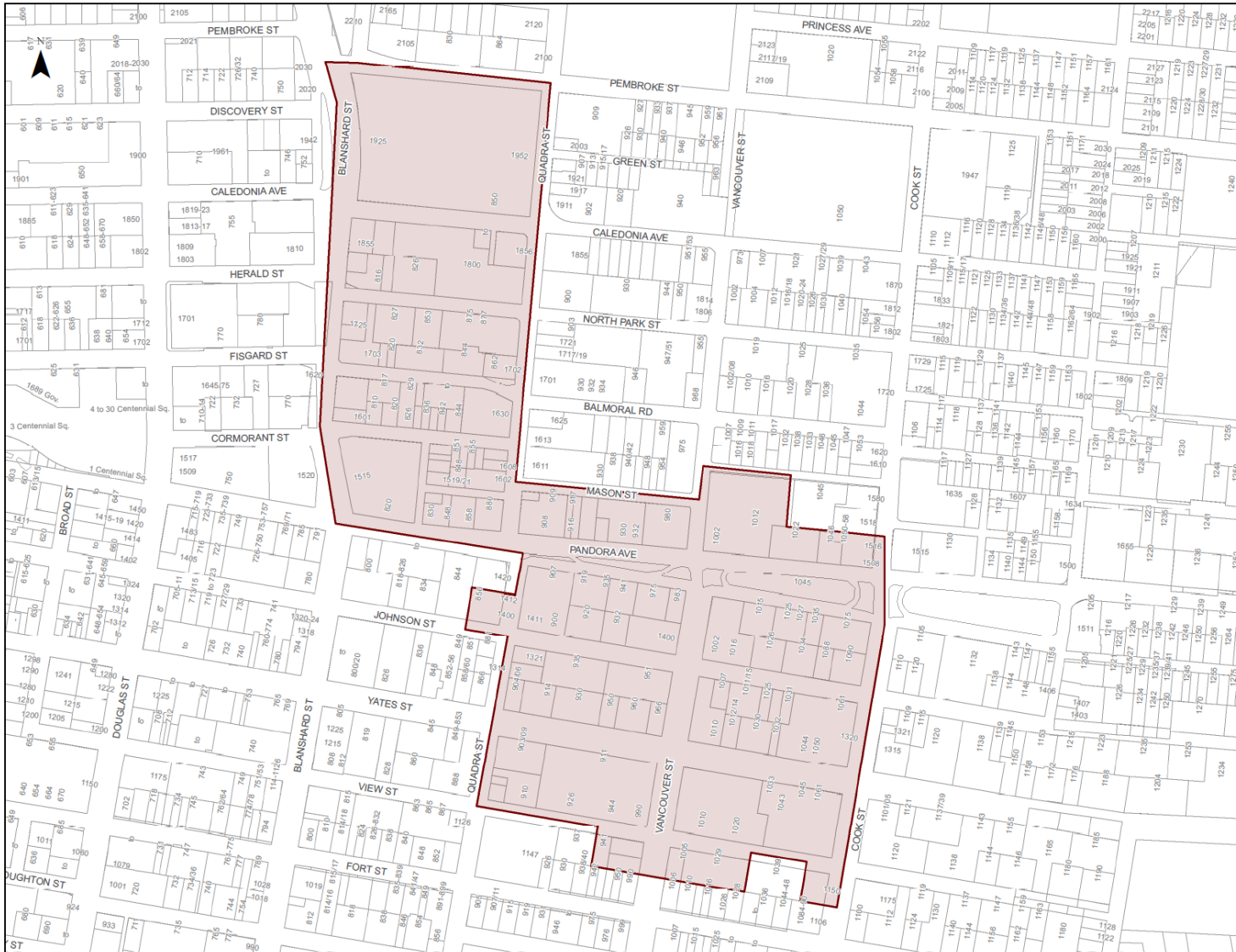
The following designations apply to all areas within the City of Victoria and are not shown on this map:

- DPA 15A: Intensive Residential Small Lot
- DPA 15B: Intensive Residential Panhandle Lot
- DPA 15D: Intensive Residential Duplex
- DPA 15E: Intensive Residential Garden Suites
- DPA 16: General Form and Character

This composite map is provided for reference only. Please see the map and provisions for each designated DPA and HCA for legal information.

# Schedule 10

## Map 35: DPA 3(HC): Core Mixed-Use Residential



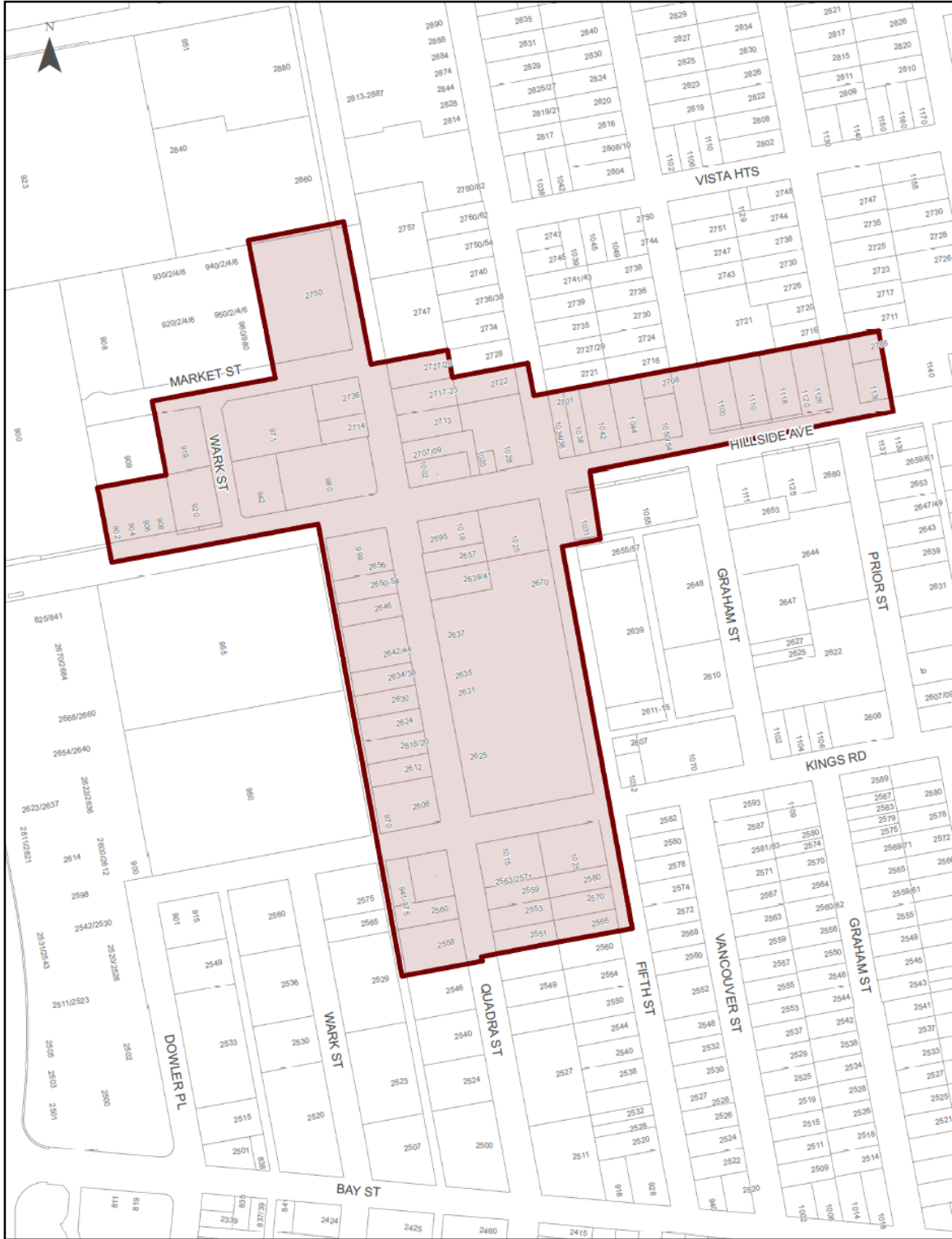
## Schedule 11

Map 39: DPA 5: Large Urban Villages



# Schedule 12

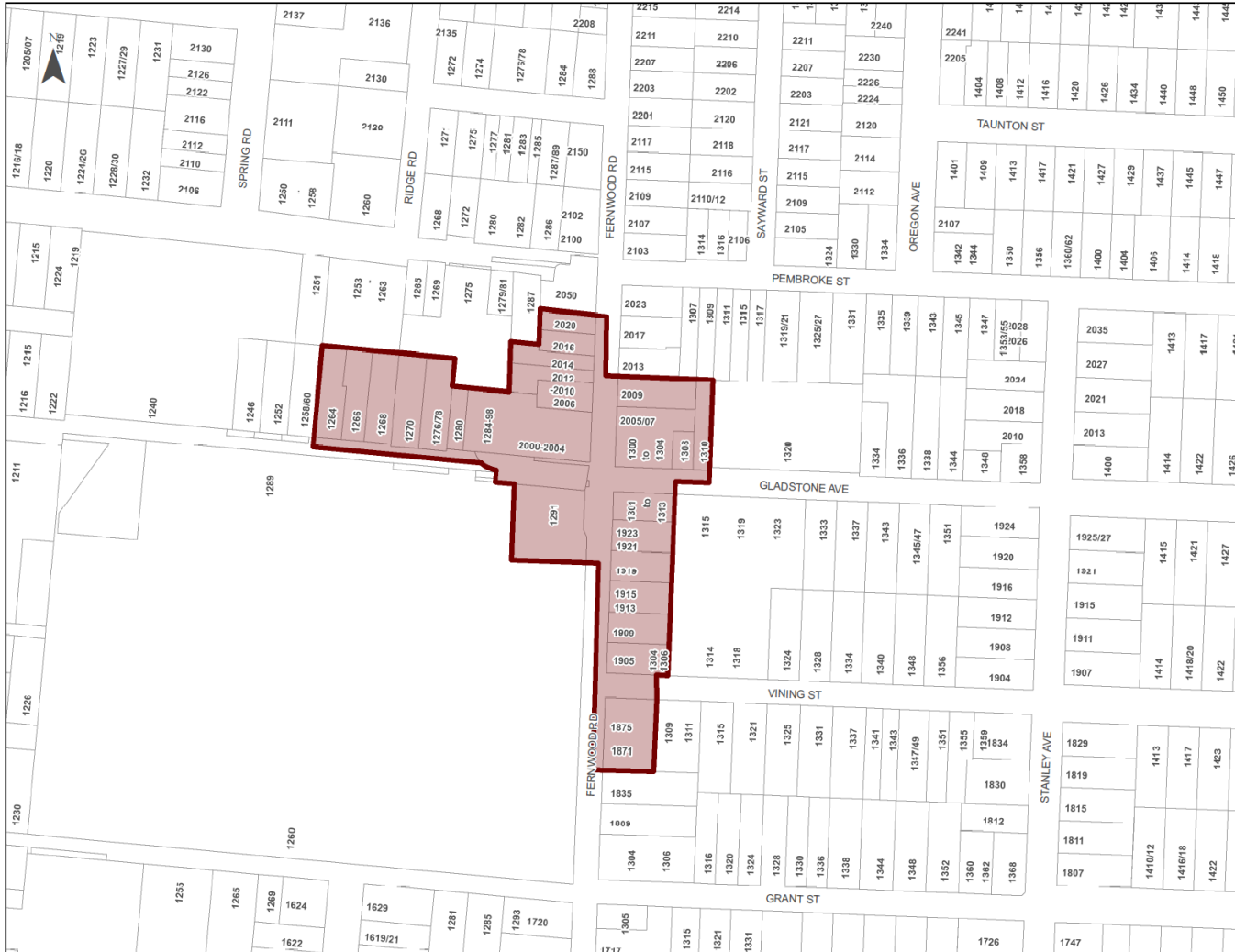
## Map 47: DPA 5: Large Urban Villages – Quadra Village





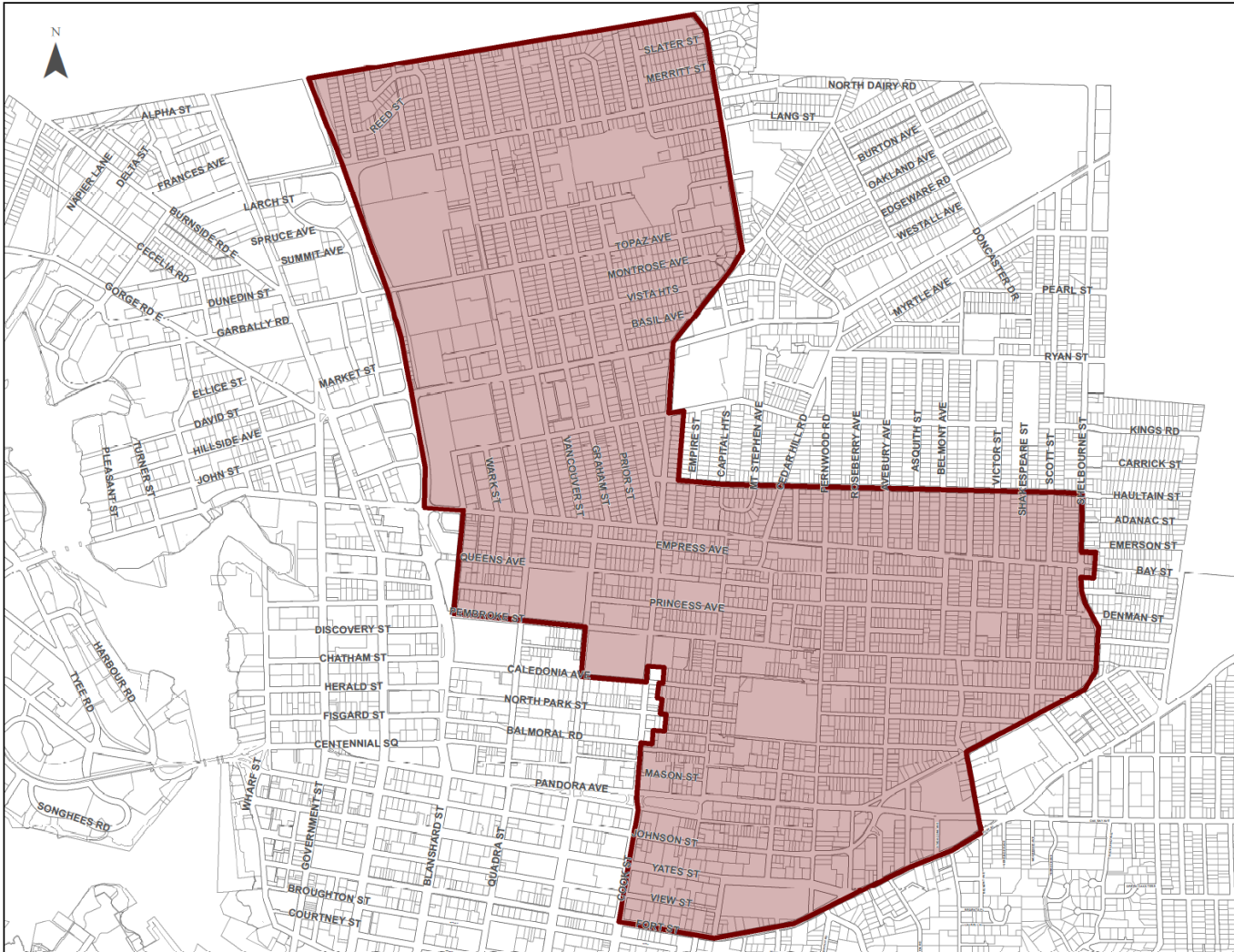
# Schedule 13

## Map 49: DPA 6B (HC): Small Urban Village Heritage



Schedule 14

Map 76: DPA 16A – General Urban Design



## Schedule 15

### DPA 16A: GENERAL URBAN DESIGN

1. Pursuant to Section 488 (1) (e) (h) (i) and (j) of the Local Government Act, the area that is shaded and circumscribed by solid lines on Map 76 is designated as Development Permit Area DPA 16A, General Urban Design, for the following purposes:
  - (a) establishing objectives for the form and character of commercial, industrial, and multi-family residential development;
  - (b) establishing objectives to promote energy conservation;
  - (c) establishing objectives to promote water conservation; and
  - (d) establishing objectives to promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
2. Application and Exemptions:
  - (a) Development Permits are required for multi-family (multi-unit) residential (three or more units), commercial, and industrial development in accordance with the Local Government Act, subject only to the General Exemptions identified in the "Overview" section of this Appendix and the following exemptions.
  - (b) Specific Exemptions for DPA 16A, General Urban Design:
    - (i) A Development Permit is not required for:
      - (1) the subdivision of land or the construction of, addition to, or alteration of a building or other structure:
        - (A) within any of the following Development Permit Areas or Heritage Conservation Areas:
          - DPA 1(HC), Core Historic;
          - DPA 2(HC), Core Business;
          - DPA 3(HC), Core Mixed-Use Residential;
          - DPA 4, Town Centres;
          - DPA 5, Large Urban Villages;
          - DPA 6A, Small Urban Villages;
          - DPA 6B(HC), Small Urban Villages Heritage;
          - DPA 7A, Corridors;
          - DPA 7B(HC), Corridors Heritage;
          - DPA 8, Victoria Arm – Gorge Waterway;
          - DPA 9(HC), Inner Harbour;
          - DPA 10A, Rock Bay;
          - DPA 10B(HC), Rock Bay Heritage;
          - DPA 11, James Bay and Outer Harbour;
          - DPA 12(HC), Legislative Precinct;

DPA 13, Core Songhees;  
 DPA 14, Cathedral Hill Precinct;  
 DPA 17, North Park Village Area; or  
 HCA 1, Traditional Residential; or

(B) for which a Development Permit is required, not exempt, and has been applied for under:

DPA 15A, Intensive Residential – Small Lot;  
 DPA 15B, Intensive Residential – Panhandle Lot;  
 DPA 15C, Intensive Residential – Rockland;  
 DPA 15D, Intensive Residential – Duplex;  
 DPA 15E, Intensive Residential – Garden Suites; or  
 DPA 15F, Intensive Residential – Attached Residential Development.

(2) development that is not commercial, industrial, or multi-family residential development, or that does not otherwise include a commercial, industrial or multi-family residential component including for greater certainty:

(A) residential single-family dwellings and their accessory buildings and structures; or

(B) residential duplexes and their accessory buildings and structures;

(3) house conversion;

(4) alterations to existing buildings, excluding new additions; or

(5) the construction, placement or alteration of a building or structure having a total floor area, including any floor area to be added by alteration, no greater than 9.2m<sup>2</sup>.

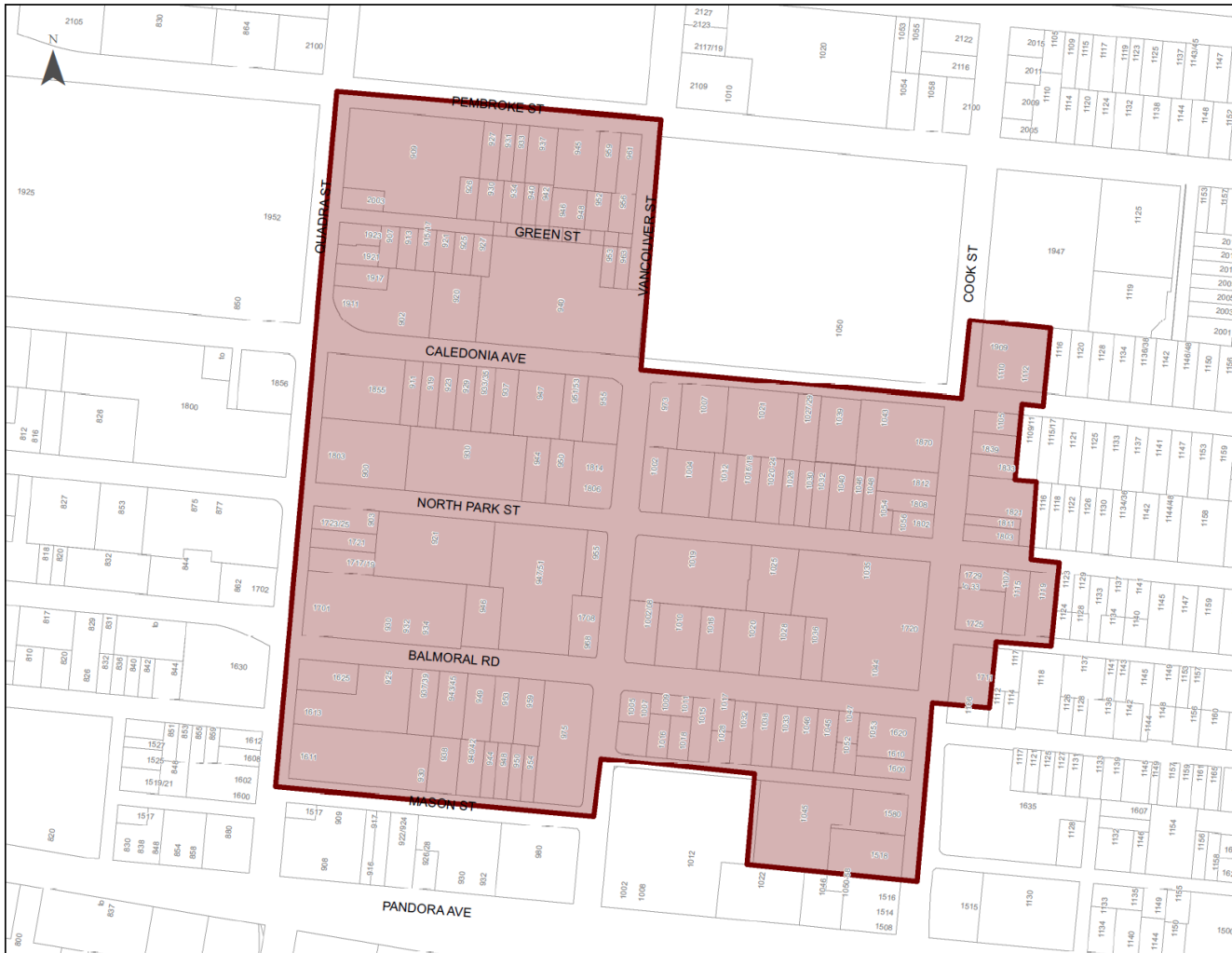
3. The special conditions that justify this designation include:

- (a) Commercial, industrial and multi-unit residential developments are envisioned in designated areas throughout the city, with further growth identified in this plan.
- (b) Multi-unit residential, commercial and industrial developments may be located along or visible from prominent transit corridors, quiet streets or public spaces. They therefore merit attention to mitigate any negative impacts, co-exist with adjacent existing or planned future development, support livability for new residents, and enhance the character of streetscapes and surrounding areas.
- (c) Commercial, industrial and multi-unit residential buildings may share an interface with areas envisioned for low-rise built form that requires consideration for sensitive transition.
- (d) The presence of heritage properties throughout the city warrants special design consideration that balances heritage conservation and new development that responds to historic setting, where this is relevant.

- (e) Thirty-two percent of greenhouse gas emissions in Victoria are generated by multi-unit residential, commercial, institutional or industrial buildings and addressing these emissions in new buildings is an important aspect of climate change mitigation.
  - (f) Climate change is anticipated to lead to more extreme weather events, including more intense rainfall and heat waves. As new buildings and associated landscapes are built, consideration of energy and water conservation is an important aspect of climate change mitigation.
4. The objectives that justify this designation include:
- (a) To support commercial, industrial and multi-unit residential developments that provide a sensitive transition to adjacent and nearby areas with built form that is often three storeys, or lower.
  - (b) To integrate commercial, industrial and multi-unit residential buildings in a manner that is complementary to established place character in a neighbourhood or other area, including its heritage character.
  - (c) To enhance the place character of established areas and their streetscapes through high quality of architecture, landscape and urban design that responds to each distinctive setting through sensitive and innovative interventions.
  - (d) To achieve more livable environments through considerations for human-scaled design, quality of open spaces, privacy impacts, safety and accessibility.
  - (e) To reduce greenhouse gas emissions generated by new buildings.
  - (f) To enhance energy and water conservation qualities of new buildings and associated landscapes.
5. Guidelines:
- (a) These Guidelines are to be considered and applied for Development Permits:
    - > General Urban Design Guidelines (2022).
    - > Guidelines for Fences, Gates and Shutters (2010).

# Schedule 16

## Map 77: DPA 17 (HC): North Park Village and District



## Schedule 17

### DPA 17 (HC): NORTH PARK VILLAGE AND DISTRICT

1. Pursuant to Section 488 (1) (d), (f), (h), (i), and (j) and 614 of the Local Government Act, the area that is shaded and circumscribed by solid lines on Map 77 is designated as Development Permit and Heritage Conservation Area DPA 17 (HC), North Park Village Area, for the purposes of:
  - (a) revitalizing an area in which a commercial use is permitted;
  - (b) establishing objectives for the form and character of commercial, industrial and multi-family residential development;
  - (c) establishing objectives to promote energy conservation;
  - (d) establishing objectives to promote water conservation;
  - (e) establishing objectives to promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions; and
  - (f) heritage conservation.
2. Application and Exemptions:
  - (a) Development Permits and Heritage Alteration Permits are required in accordance with the Local Government Act, subject only to the General Exemptions identified in the "Overview" section of this Appendix and the following exemptions.
  - (b) Specific Exemptions for DPA 17 (HC), North Park Village Area:
    - (i) A Heritage Alteration Permit is not required except for land, buildings or other structures, or portions thereof, which are:
      - (1) listed on the City of Victoria Heritage Register;
      - (2) subject to a Heritage Designation Bylaw; or
      - (3) subject to a Covenant for heritage conservation.
    - (ii) A Development Permit is not required for:
      - (1) actions subject to and addressed in a Heritage Alteration Permit;
      - (2) residential single-family dwellings and their accessory buildings and structures; or,
      - (3) residential duplexes and their accessory buildings and structures.
3. The special features, characteristics, and special conditions that justify this designation include:
  - (a) This part of the North Park neighbourhood is characterized by a significant residential district, evolving urban village and employment land on the edge of the Downtown Core Area, a regional commercial and employment district. It has lands available for residential growth through intensified multi-unit residential and mixed use development.

- (b) Thirty-two percent of greenhouse gas emissions in Victoria are generated by multi-unit residential, commercial, institutional or industrial buildings and addressing these emissions in new buildings is an important aspect of climate change mitigation.
- (c) Climate change is anticipated to lead to more extreme weather events, including more intense rainfall and heat waves. As new buildings and associated landscapes are built, consideration of energy and water conservation is an important aspect of climate change mitigation.
- (d) This part of the North Park neighbourhood has heritage value for its role as an early neighbourhood of the city that was home to a wide variety of businesses and residents, which informed its form and character and continues to do so. The diverse mix of uses and corresponding building types in a relatively small area gives it a unique character and value.
- (e) Areas along Quadra Street have heritage value for their role as a church precinct. The form and character of the area has evolved in response to clustering of places of worship along and near Quadra Street, with the spires of which have been prominent features in the surrounding skyline since the late 19th and early 20th century.

4. The objectives of this designation include:

- (a) To support a mix of mid-rise residential development within this district between Quadra Street and Cook Street, balanced with protection of views from public vantage points of heritage landmark buildings primarily clustered along Quadra Street, as identified on Map 8 in this plan.
- (b) To support the continued evolution of North Park Village as a vibrant mixed-use centre for the surrounding neighbourhoods.
- (c) To support the continued evolution of parts of North Park Street as a location for artisan and light industrial employment compatible with its location within a residential area.
- (d) To conserve and enhance the heritage value, special character and significant historic buildings, features and characteristics of this area.
- (e) To enhance the area through a high quality of architecture, landscape and urban design that reflects its adjacency to, yet unique identity from the downtown, while responding to its context of a skyline with prominent heritage landmark buildings and enhancing the urban forest in the more urban parts of the North Park neighbourhood.
- (f) To reduce greenhouse gas emissions generated by new buildings.
- (g) To enhance energy and water conservation qualities of new buildings and associated landscapes.

5. Guidelines

These Guidelines are to be considered and applied for both Heritage Alteration Permits and Development Permits:

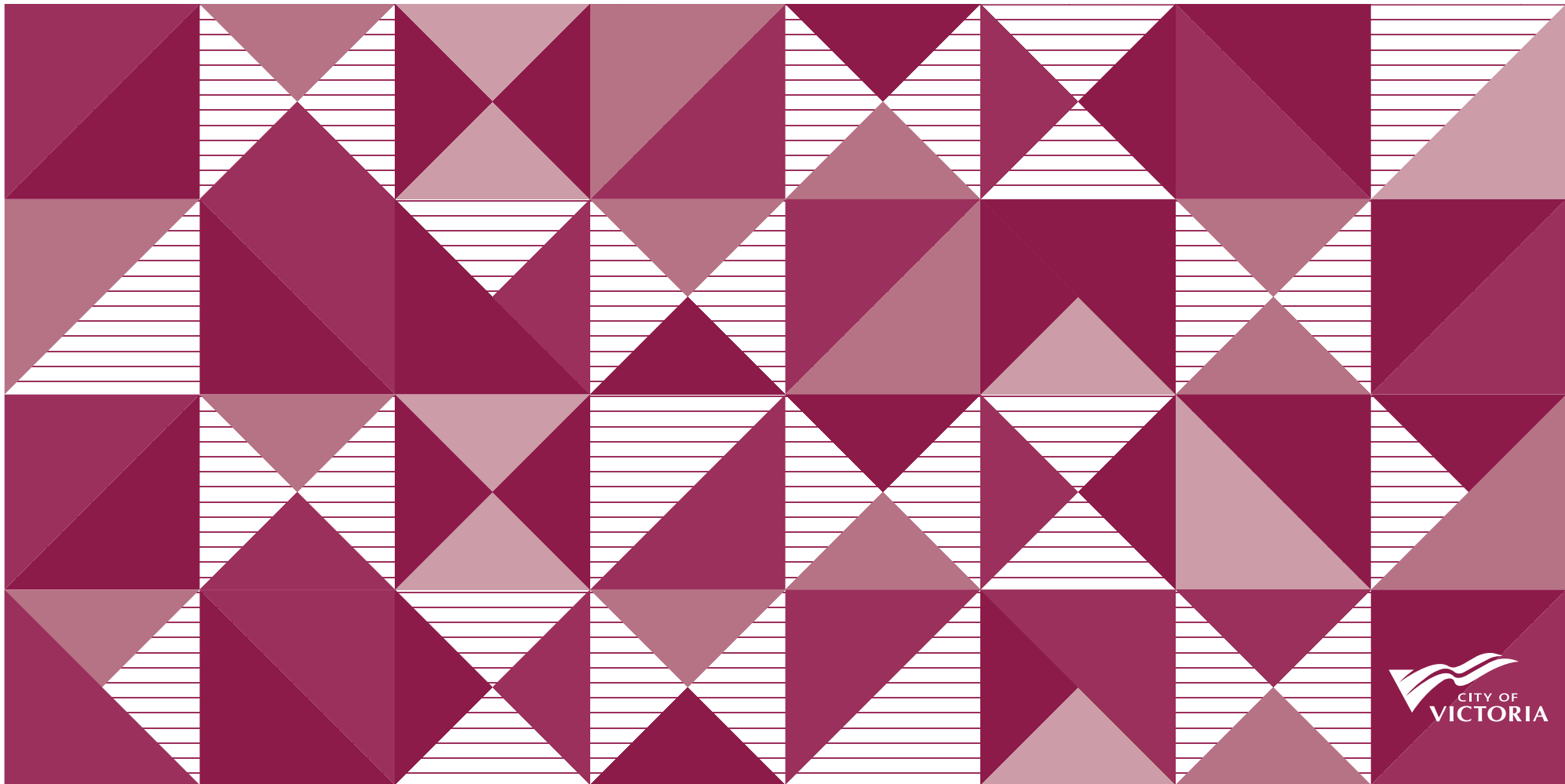


- › General Urban Design Guidelines (2022), with special attention to the following sections:
  - 7.1 Buildings with industrial uses,
  - 7.2 Heritage building context and skyline, and
  - 8.3 Supplementary design guidelines for urban villages.
- › Guidelines for Fences, Gates and Shutters (2010).
- › Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.
- › City of Victoria Heritage Program Sign & Awning Guidelines (1981).

2022

# Fernwood

Neighbourhood Plan | City of Victoria



## **Publishing Information**

Title:	Fernwood Neighbourhood Plan
Author:	City of Victoria
Status:	DRAFT for Council Approval (2022)
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Additional Copies:	The City of Victoria Sustainable Planning and Development Department Victoria City Hall, 2nd Floor 250.261.0382  Electronic versions available on the City of Victoria website: <a href="http://www.victoria.ca">www.victoria.ca</a>

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**THE CITY OF VICTORIA IS LOCATED ON THE HOMELANDS OF THE SONGHEES AND ESQUIMALT PEOPLE.**

# What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

## This is the Plan for Fernwood 2040

### Long-term Plans Working Together

Local area plans, like this neighbourhood plan, work together with the city's *Official Community Plan (OCP)* and other city-wide plans and policies to guide the evolution of communities over the next 10 to 20 years and beyond. The OCP provides a vision and goals to guide future growth and change, meeting the needs of residents today and the future. Local area plans describe how that vision will land in the neighbourhood, while preserving and enhancing the community identity.



### Keeping Up and Catching

**Up:** Between 2020 and 2040, Victoria will add 11,300 new households. Meanwhile, the City has some catching up to do to meet the housing needs of existing residents, including for those who cannot find suitable or affordable housing today.



### Addressing Climate Change:

As we plan for the evolution of Victoria and its neighbourhoods to meet current and future needs, we have a chance to rethink the way we live in and move around the city. By locating the right housing in the right places we can reduce greenhouse gas emissions and make our city more resilient to climate change.



### Advancing Equity, Diversity

**and Inclusion:** Planning for incremental change also provides an opportunity to ensure we're creating a community for everyone - one with diverse housing choices where all residents can live in walkable, vibrant neighbourhoods and reduce the combined costs of housing + transportation.

# Where Are We and How Did We Get Here?

This plan was drafted together with the community.



## Early Engagement

Between January 2020 and March 2020, the City explored Issues, Opportunities, and Big Ideas together with the community. Over 1,000 residents provided ideas and insights. The result was a sampling and illustrative synopsis of what people love about Fernwood and Fernwood Village, and what they would like to see improved in the future. See the Early Engagement Summary Report for details.

## Planning Together

In the fall of 2020, the City hosted a series of planning and design workshops with the community. The workshops built on what we heard through early engagement, and what we learned through technical studies and analyses to develop draft concepts together with the community.

These concepts were then presented to the broader public for review and feedback through a diverse and far-reaching Virtual Open House, focus groups, and online surveys.

## Reviews and Revisions

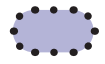





Based on the first two stages of engagement and policy and technical analyses, a draft plan was prepared and presented to the public for review. Based on community input, the plan was revised and presented to Council for consideration.

## Implementation

The approved plan will be implemented over time as budgets allow and opportunities arise. The plan may be amended periodically according to the overarching Official Community Plan's adaptive management framework.

Some of Fernwood's urban villages and mobility corridors - key areas for future planning - are shared with other neighbourhoods. As local area planning is completed for these areas (e.g., the Fort Street Corridor and Stadacona Village), this plan will be updated accordingly.

# Big Moves for Fernwood

-  Large Urban Village
-  Small Urban Village
-  New small urban village
-  Making room for housing
-  Placemaking or formalized Public Space
-  Key pedestrian and active transportation routes







## 1. Pedestrian Connections

### What we heard

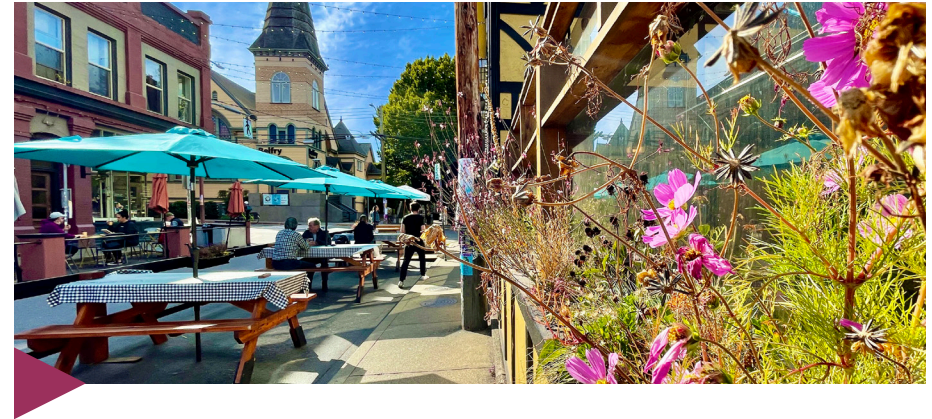
The community would like to see enhanced and accessible pedestrian connections throughout, particularly along Fernwood Road and near Fernwood Village. People noted the narrow sidewalks, uncomfortable crossings, and significant pedestrian traffic, notably near Fernwood Square and Victoria High School. People also acknowledged opportunities to better use public space in the road right-of-way for comfort and enjoyment, and to improve routes throughout the community.

### What we learned

- Fernwood Road is an important bus route.
- The road also accommodates on-street parking.
- Given the heritage and character assets along the road, contiguous redevelopment is unlikely, making it difficult to expand sidewalks through obtaining right-of-way on private lands.

### Where we're headed

To learn more about how the plan addresses what we heard and learned, **see Sections on Fernwood Village and Mobility.**



## 2. Expand & Enhance Fernwood Village

### What we heard

Fernwood Village, surrounding Fernwood Square is beloved for its character, local serving businesses, and accessible public space. Some would like to see a “refresh” of public spaces in and near the square to enable more flexible use (e.g. with movable furniture and lighting), for diverse events and everyday enjoyment in all seasons. Some would also like to see more shops and services to meet everyday needs, but would like to keep the scale small and local-serving.

### What we learned

- The area in and near Fernwood Village can accommodate more commercial and residential over the coming decades without impacting existing local businesses.
- Temporary patios and outdoor spaces along Gladstone, east of Fernwood were successful and enjoyed by the community.

### Where we're headed

To learn more about how the plan addresses what we heard and learned, **see Section on Fernwood Village and Placemaking**





### 3. Support Diverse, Mixed Housing

#### What we heard

People who live in Fernwood, or would like to, feel the pains of the housing crisis. Renters and young families find it difficult to find suitable, affordable housing in the community they love. Most residents are supportive of making room for more, diverse housing forms to meet these needs, but want to ensure that new housing reflects and enhances what people love about the neighbourhood, is livable, and is neighbourly.

#### What we learned

- The city has to catch up with housing needs today and keep up with future needs as 11,300 households form between 2020 and 2040, in all neighbourhoods.
- Rental housing, including affordable (non-market rental), is a key need and can be difficult to build with existing land costs and regulations, like parking requirements.

#### Where we're headed

To learn more about how the plan addresses what we heard and learned, **see Section on Housing and Residential Uses.**



### 4. Revitalize Bay Street

#### What we heard

Bay Street is viewed as an uncomfortable road to walk along and a barrier to get from one part of the community to the other. Some recognized Bay Street as a good area to add multi-family housing, supported by transit, others were concerned such housing wouldn't be livable or comfortable along a busy street. Many viewed this as an equity concern - that renters and others in multi-family buildings should have choices both on and off busy corridors.

#### What we learned

- Bay Street is a key east-west connector through the city and is identified as Frequent Transit route by BC Transit.
- Additional retail could be supported in the coming decades in and near emerging villages, without impacting existing local businesses.
- Rental housing may be viable to build along the corridor with reduced parking requirements.

#### Where we're headed

To learn more about how the plan addresses what we heard and learned, **see Sections on Bay Street Villages and Mobility.**



## 5. Preserve & Enhance Green Space

### What we heard

People love the parks in Fernwood and would like to see spaces, features, and improvements for different ages, interests, and cultural backgrounds. Improvements for specific parks and connections between green, open, and public spaces are desired. People are also interested in an expansion of space and programs at the community centre, continued use of school district lands, opportunities for growing food, and reflecting the ecological significance of Rock Bay Creek.

### What we learned

- There are more than a dozen parks, facilities, and community assets that can serve the diverse and evolving needs of Fernwood now and into the future.
- New and evolving programs and future redevelopment can provide additional opportunity for public spaces and facilities.

### Where we're headed

To learn more about how the plan addresses what we heard and learned, **see Section on Parks, Facilities, and Community Assets.**

## 6. Future Planning

### What we heard

Geographic areas and subject matters that were not a focus of this process are important to the community. Stadacona Village and Haultain Corners are important assets to Fernwood, as well as Jubilee, Oaklands, and Rockland residents. Residents also desire an opportunity to work together to advance other community initiatives, like the location of new community gardens, support for arts and culture, and the development of public art and murals.

### What we learned

- The next phase of local area planning will explore the future of Stadacona Village and Haultain Corners with all related communities and this plan will be updated following that process.
- Other subjects of interest can be advanced by the community with City support through a Neighbourhood Led Action Plan.

### Where we're headed

To follow the next phase of planning, visit [engage.victoria.ca](https://engage.victoria.ca). To learn more about Neighbourhood Led Action Plans, contact your Community Association or the City's Neighbourhoods Team.



# Community Identity

Understanding what is important to Fernwood residents was a cornerstone of the engagement for this plan. People described what they love about their community and what they hope to love about it in the future. The word clouds on the following page provides a sense of community identity and what is most valued about Fernwood.



## Guiding Principles and Objectives

*Together with the community identity word cloud, the below principles and objectives should be considered when implementing this plan.*

1. Advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion.
2. Making room for everyone.
3. Advancing sustainable mobility.
4. Creating joyful public spaces.
5. Supporting resilient, walkable villages.
6. Enhancing and supporting arts and culture.
7. Preserving and enhancing natural and historical assets.

# What people **love** about Fernwood today



# What people **hope to love** about Fernwood in the future



# About the Fernwood Neighbourhood

## Fernwood Today

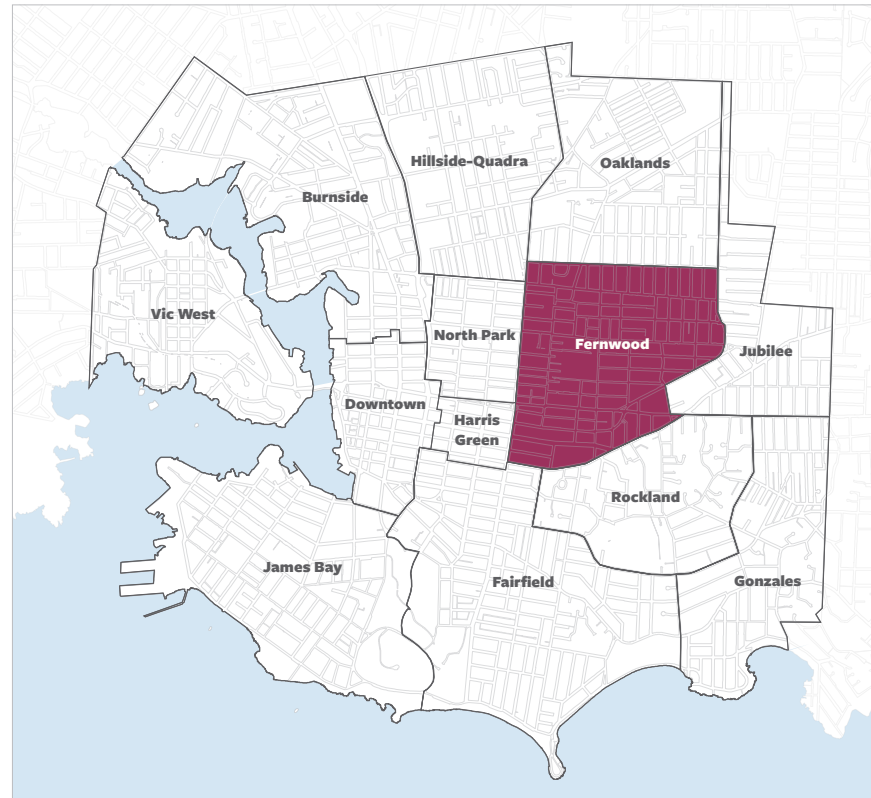
Fernwood is a neighbourhood rich with arts, culture, and opportunities for community connection. The community is known for being home to artists, artisans, and makers, as well as people of all ages and many families. As of 2016, the neighbourhood had the city's highest total number of families with children at home, and one of the highest shares of young adults aged 15-34. It also has among the higher shares of residents identifying as Indigenous.

However, rising housing costs in the neighbourhood, and the city, have left fewer opportunities for young families and others looking to make a start and find suitable housing.

## Community Assets

The area's history of offering family and community connections through arts, culture, and local festivals is reflected in its most beloved assets. Among these assets are the Belfry Theatre, Fernwood Square, Victoria High School, and local community organizing

Map 1: Fernwood Boundaries



**The neighbourhood is bounded by Haultain Street to the north, Fort Street to the south, Cook Street to the west, and Belmont Avenue, Begbie Street, and Shelbourne Street to the east.**

## About Fernwood

and supporting groups like the Fernwood Neighbourhood Resources Group (NRG) and the Fernwood Community Association (FCA). Many of Fernwood's residents benefit from its proximity and connections to the downtown core, and several large and small urban villages (including Fernwood Village, Haultain Corners, North Park Village, and Stadacona Village) within walking distance.

### Community Make-up

The neighbourhood is home to close to 10,000 residents in over 5,000 households. While the neighbourhood has the highest total number of family households, household types and age of residents is quite diverse – with a mix of families, seniors, youth, couples, and singles.

The neighbourhood has a slightly higher share of renters (66% of households) than the city as a whole (at 60%). It also hosts some affordable and co-operative housing.

Most of the housing in the neighbourhood is single family with and without suites (about 24% of dwellings) and apartments (about 63% of dwellings, most of which are closer to Downtown, Stadacona Village, Pandora

Avenue and the Fort Street Corridor). Apartment buildings are typically three to four storeys and include both rental and strata, most were built between the 1960's and 1990's.

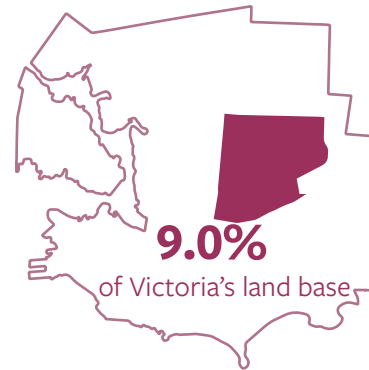
The area has seen little growth in recent years. According to the City's building permit data, just 42 new housing units were built in the neighbourhood between 2012 and 2018. Fourteen additional units were approved through building permits in 2019-2020. A recently approved proposal near Caledonia Street envisions approximately 140 net additional homes, a majority of which are proposed to be deeply subsidized or rent-geared-to-income.

*See the Neighbourhood Snapshot on page 14 for more statistics.*

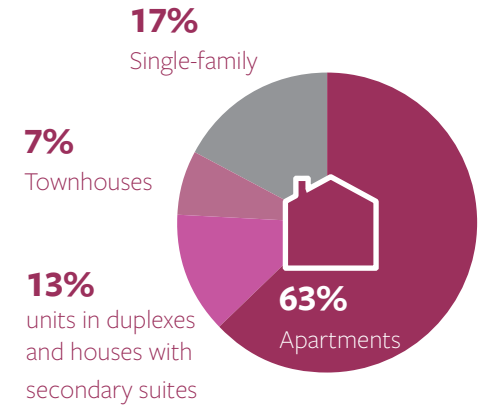


About Fernwood

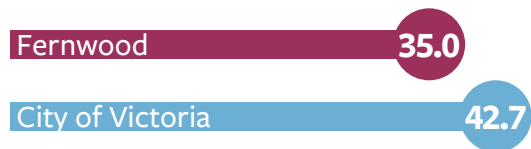
# Neighbourhood Snapshot



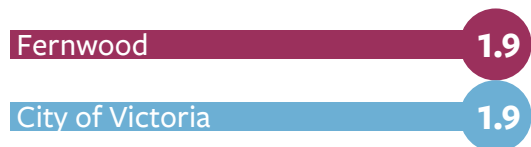
## Housing Types



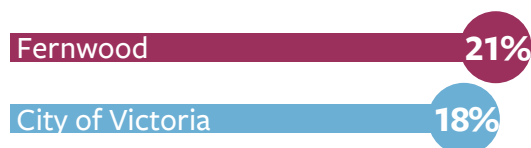
### Median Age



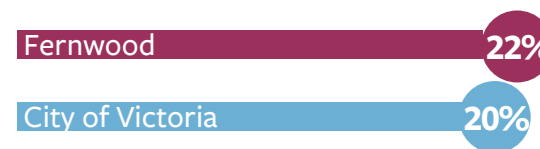
### Average household size



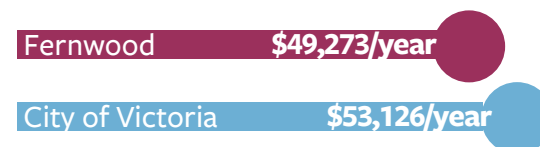
### % Total of households that have children at home



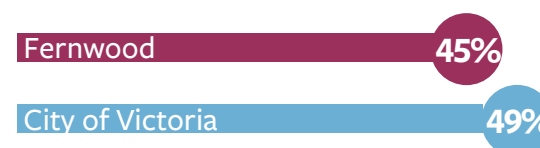
### Low-income Households



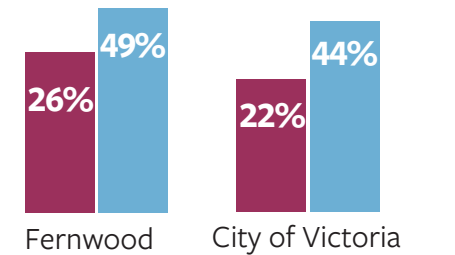
### Median Household Income



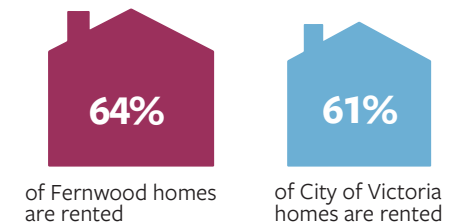
### % Households that are one-person households



## Housing Affordability



## Rental Housing





## About Fernwood

### History and Heritage

The area is intrinsically tied to the historical growth of Victoria. Just west of Fernwood Village is a district known as Spring Ridge. Gravel deposits left after the retreat of the last Ice Age 10,000 years ago underlie this area. Numerous freshwater springs gave it its name. Until the damming of Elk Lake in the early 1870s, these springs were the principal source of drinking water for Victoria.

Fernwood as it is today developed over time with the subdivision of large estates and the arrival of the streetcar in what is now Fernwood Village. The community has always been diverse and vibrant, which is reflected in the heritage and streetscapes of the neighbourhood.

*See the Moments in History on page 17 for more of Fernwood's history.*

*See the Fernwood Village Design Guidelines for more about the history of Fernwood Village.*

### Fernwood Heritage Features Map

The Heritage Features Map (Map 2 on the following page) illustrates some key heritage features in the neighbourhood. The map recognizes the numerous registered and designated heritage properties in the neighbourhood, particularly in and near Fernwood Village, in addition to a number of older character homes and heritage features. The map is a useful tool in considering the past and present identity of the neighbourhood, and how it can inform and shape its future.

However, it is important to note there are limits to what is shown on the map, or what is otherwise known, understood, and valued about Fernwood's history and identity. For example, heritage of Indigenous and immigrant communities is often not evident in the built form - this may be referred to as intangible heritage.

Victoria's Official Community Plan recognizes both tangible and intangible heritage features are important. However, most tools to protect, enhance, or recognize heritage tend to be limited to tangible features, largely evident in the built form - a limitation reflected

in the features identified on Map 2. The City of Victoria continues to work to advance its heritage program, together with other organizations and levels of government.



## About Fernwood

### About this Map

A Heritage Designated property is protected by a municipal bylaw and may not be altered or demolished without approval by Council.

The Victoria Heritage Register is a tool to help monitor assets and promote conservation or enhancement of heritage features. Having a registered property does not by itself restrict changes proposed by an owner.

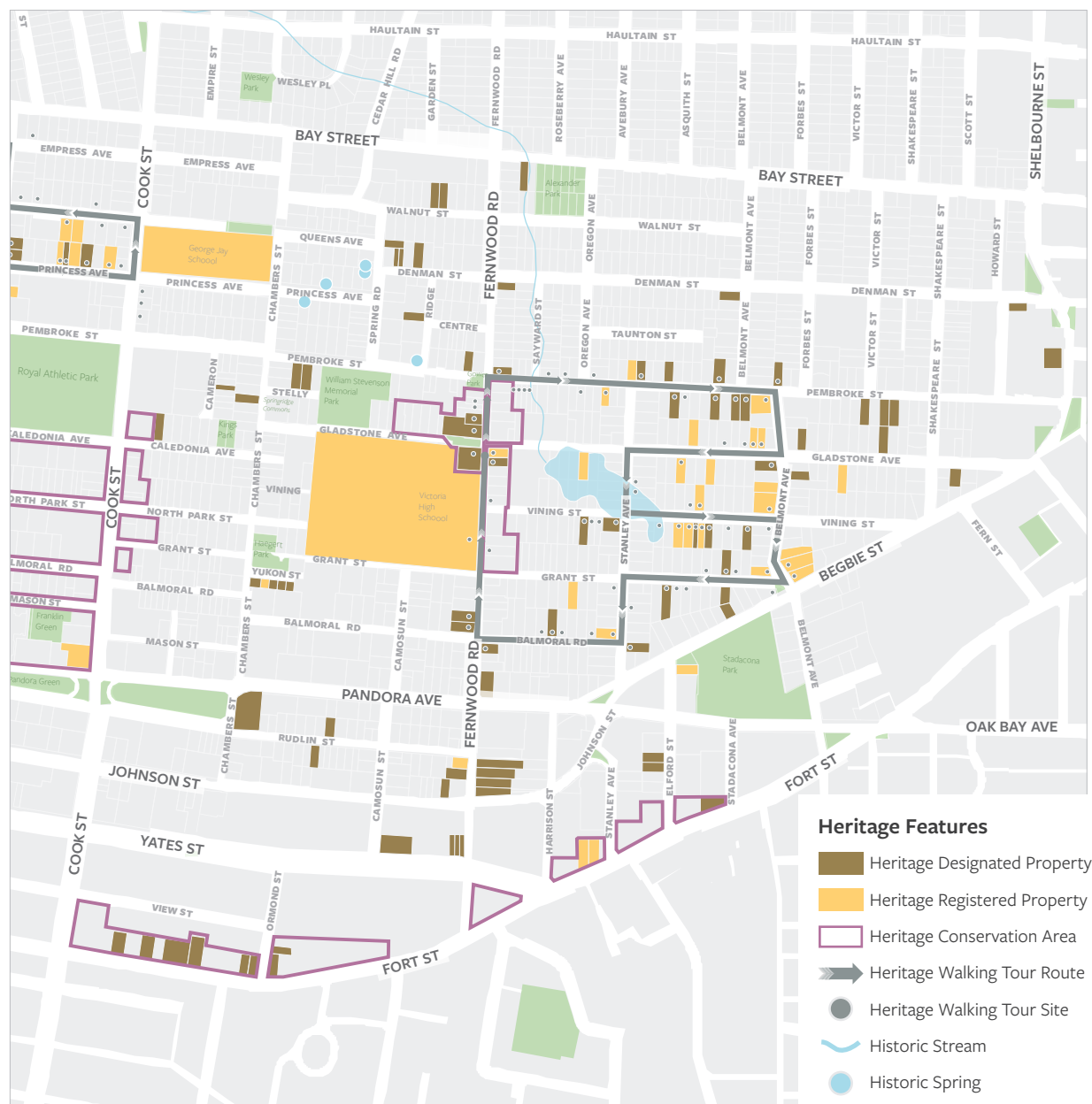
Heritage Conservation Areas are another tool to protect, preserve or enhance the heritage value or character of related properties with collective historical significance. Properties within these areas require a heritage alteration permit for changes to the property.

Heritage Walking Tours are self-guided routes that describe assets that may not be on the Heritage Register. They are curated by the Victoria Heritage Foundation and have no policy or regulatory implications, but can provide meaningful insights when considering property or land use changes.

Some known Historic Environmental Features are shown to illustrate additional heritage features that may not be readily evident the built form.

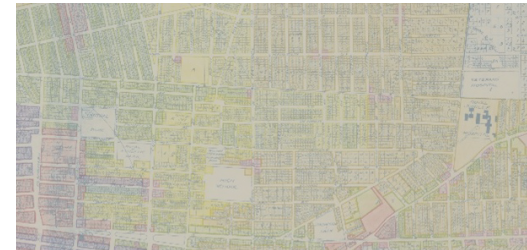
See the *Housing and Village* sections of this plan for more on the management of Fernwood's heritage assets.

Map 2: Fernwood Heritage Features



## About Fernwood

# Neighbourhood History



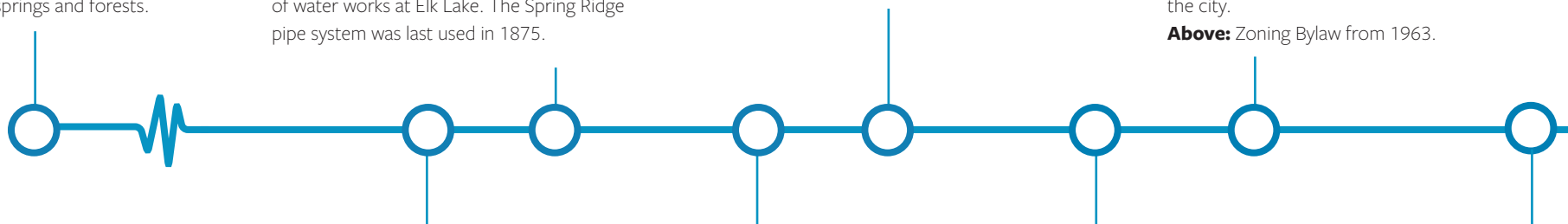
Lekwungen people live, hunt and harvest in the area, cultivating camas fields and Garry Oak meadows. What is now Fernwood is marked by springs and forests.

**1863:** The Spring Ridge Water Company is formed, piping water from Spring Ridge and Harris Pond into the city. Complaints about the quality of the water are common, so in 1872 the City authorized the construction of water works at Elk Lake. The Spring Ridge pipe system was last used in 1875.

**1891:** The streetcar line terminating in what is now Fernwood Square is opened. This instigated the development of the square as the commercial hub of the community, including business such as the Rennie and Taylor Bakery and the Parfitt Brothers construction firm.

**1927:** The first zoning bylaw is implemented, shaping the growth and development of Fernwood and the rest of the city. Single-family detached zoning made it difficult to build alternatives to the detached house, which excluded many people from living in the most desirable neighbourhoods in the city.

**Above:** Zoning Bylaw from 1963.



**1860:** Assistant Colonial Surveyor Benjamin Pearse builds Fernwood on his large estate, at the corners of what is now Fort and Fern Streets. Many other stately homes are soon built nearby along Fort and Yates Street. Fernwood was demolished in 1969.



**1886:** Construction begins on the Emmanuel Baptist Church at the corner of Fernwood and Gladstone. The church was sold in 1971 and became the first home of Cool Aid, before it was purchased by the present owners, the Belfry Theatre Society, in 1990.



**1912:** Victoria High School is built at its present location. The school is the fourth high school building to be constructed, all located in Fernwood. The other three were demolished to make way for other schools, including Central Junior High School in 1952.

**2005:** The Fernwood Neighbourhood Resource Group purchases the Cornerstone Building (1910) at the corner of Fernwood and Gladstone opposite the Belfry Theatre. With over 10,000 volunteer hours they rehabilitate the structure as affordable housing on the upper floor and businesses at the street level, including a community café, reinvigorating the area as a community hub.



# Future Land Use Summary

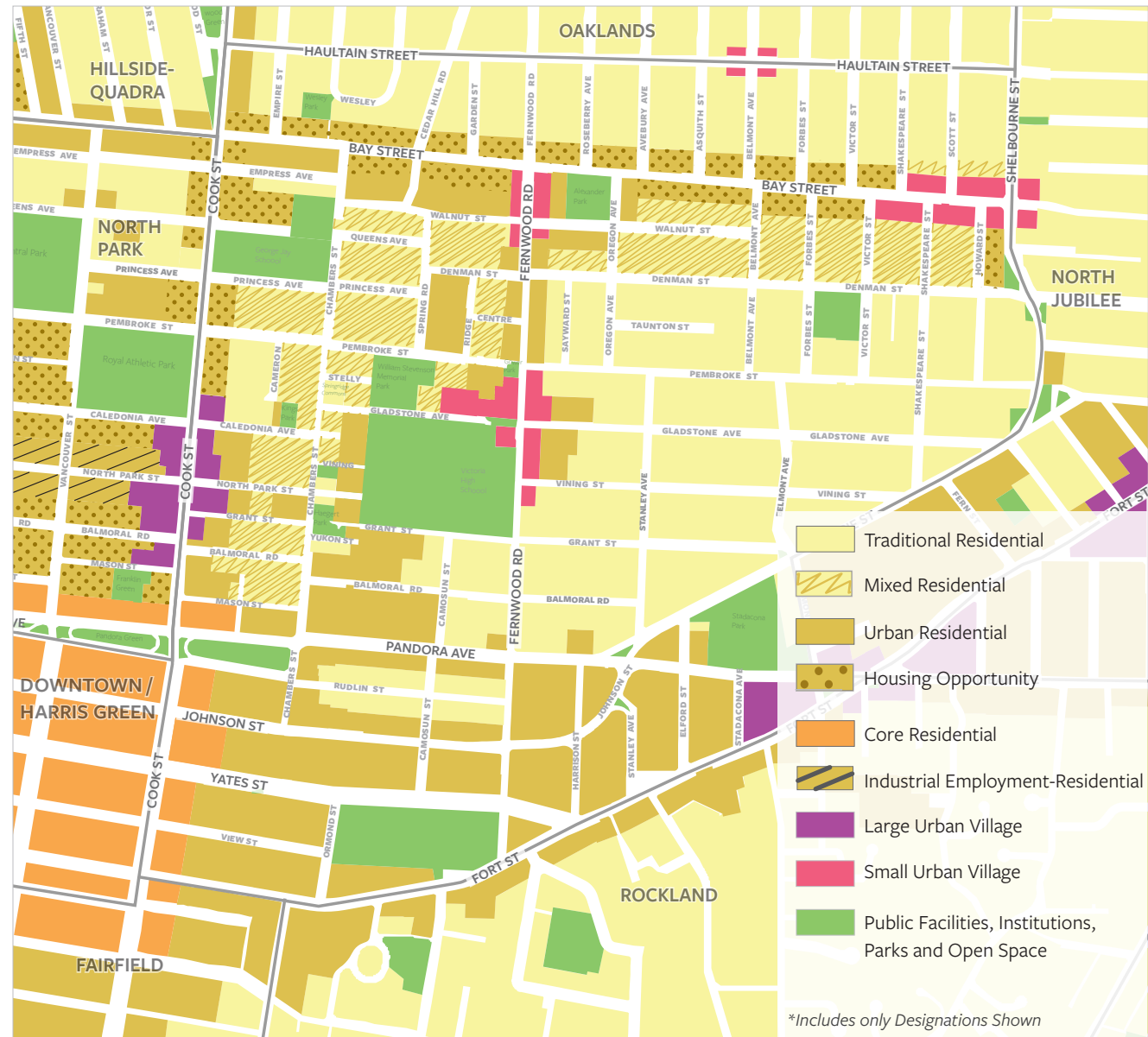
This section provides a summary of future land uses envisioned for the Fernwood Neighbourhood.

Further details are provided in subsequent sections or related City plans and policies as noted.

## Relevant Policies and Bylaws

- Official Community Plan
- Missing Middle Housing Policy (under development)
- Inclusionary Housing and Community Amenity Policy
- Design Guidelines (Development Permit Areas)
- Zoning Bylaw
- Urban Forest Master Plan
- Tree Protection Bylaw

Map 3: Fernwood Land Use (for reference only, please see OCP)



## Land Use Summary Table

Envisioned future land uses are illustrated as Urban Place Designations on Map 3 and are summarized here for convenience. Please see the OCP and the Village and Housing sections of this plan for additional details.

Urban Place Designations envision future land uses and development forms, if a property redevelops. This summary is for convenience only. Please see the *Official Community Plan* bylaw for the most current and accurate Urban Place Designations throughout the city. To understand the specific uses and densities that are permitted to occur on any given site today, please see the Zoning Bylaw.

\*Overarching policies are summarized for convenience, based on Urban Place Designations (envisioned future uses and form); other policies and regulations may apply depending on the nature of any redevelopment that may be proposed.

	Intent	Envisioned Scale and Form	Overarching Policy*
<b>Traditional Residential</b>	To encourage a variety of housing options throughout the community and consider small scale commercial on a case-by-case basis in appropriate locations.	Primarily ground-oriented residential forms, including houseplexes and townhouses, consistent with City plans and policies.	Please see, as appropriate, policies and bylaws noted on page 18, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Missing Middle Housing Policy (under development)</li> <li>&gt; House Conversion Regulations</li> <li>&gt; Secondary Suite Regulations</li> <li>&gt; Garden Suite Regulations</li> </ul>
<b>Mixed Residential Housing</b>	To encourage the transition of ground-oriented residential areas to a mix of ground-oriented and multi-unit housing that provide diverse living options at neighbourly scales, including through the retention of character homes through conversion.	A mix of ground-oriented and apartment residential forms at densities of approximately 1.6:1 FSR, consistent with City plans and policies.	Please see, as appropriate, policies and bylaws noted on page 18, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; House Conversion Regulations</li> <li>&gt; Secondary Suite Regulations</li> <li>&gt; Garden Suite Regulations</li> </ul>
<b>Urban Residential</b>	To encourage a variety of multi-unit housing options in low- to mid-rise buildings.	A mix of low-to mid-rise apartment residential forms at densities of approximately 1.2:1 to 2.0:1 FSR, with higher densities in this range considered where public benefits or affordable housing are provided, consistent with City plans and policies.	Please see, as appropriate, policies and bylaws noted on page 18.

## Future Land Use - Land Use Summary Table

	Intent	Envisioned Scale and Form	Overarching Policy*
<b>Housing Opportunity</b>	To encourage a variety of multi-unit housing options in low- to mid-rise buildings with additional density to support the provision of affordable housing and community amenity, where the site and context allows.	A mix of low- to mid-rise apartment residential forms at densities of approximately 1.2:1 to 2.5:1 FSR, with densities at the highest end of this range considered where substantial public benefits or affordable housing are provided, consistent with City plans and policies.	Please see, as appropriate, policies and bylaws noted on page 18.
<b>Core Residential</b>	To encourage a variety of multi-family housing options in low-, mid-, and high-rise mixed use buildings in and proximate to the Urban Core.	A mix of low-, mid-, and high-rise mixed-use buildings at densities that range based on location and context.	Please see, as appropriate, policies and bylaws noted on page 18 in addition to the <i>Downtown Core Area Plan</i> and related policies and guidelines.
<b>Small Urban Village</b>	To encourage a mix of commercial and community services primarily serving the surrounding residential area.	Low-rise apartment residential and mixed-use buildings at densities of approximately 1.5:1 to 2.0:1 FSR, with higher densities in this range considered where public benefits or affordable housing is provided.	Please see, as appropriate, policies and bylaws noted on page 18.
<b>Large Urban Village</b>	To encourage ground-level commercial, offices, community services, visitor accommodation, and multi-unit residential apartments.	Low- to mid-rise mixed-use buildings at densities of approximately 1.5:1 to 2.5:1 FSR, with higher densities in this range considered where public benefits or affordable housing are provided, consistent with City plans and policies.	Please see, as appropriate, policies and bylaws noted on page 18.

# Urban Villages

Urban villages provide a heart to the community - a place for walkable shops and services, socializing and placemaking, and diverse living options.

This plan seeks to maintain and strengthen existing villages in Fernwood and encourage new ones to evolve to serve the growing community.



- ▶ **Support the development and evolution of villages that enables all residents to have walkable access to shops and services.**
- ▶ **Support the vitality and resiliency of local businesses.**
- ▶ **Enable diverse housing options for people of all household types, lifestyles, and incomes.**
- ▶ **Encourage design that reflects the identity of the community.**
- ▶ **Encourage and support the creation and enhancement of vibrant and inclusive public gathering spaces.**

## Relevant Policies and Bylaws

Official Community Plan  
Inclusionary Housing and Community Amenity Policy  
Design Guidelines (DPAs)  
Zoning Bylaw  
Tree Protection Bylaw  
Arts and Culture Master Plan



## Urban Villages

# 1. Fernwood Village

### About Fernwood Village

Fernwood Village surrounds the intersection of Fernwood Road and Gladstone Avenue, with Fernwood Square providing a central gathering place for much of the community. What now serves as a heart of the neighbourhood, the area first developed in the 1890s and early 1900s as a terminus of the streetcar line connecting the neighbourhood to downtown. Many of the commercial and service buildings from that era still stand today and are home to local businesses, restaurants, and cultural institutions. Fernwood Square saw significant revitalization starting in the 1990s and the square is now an active village and public space.

### Nearby Assets

Several major community assets are in and near the village. The Belfry Theatre is one of the main landmarks of the village, producing contemporary plays and promoting artistic, cultural, and educational events for the Greater Victoria Region. The Belfry building is a former Baptist church and the company's





## Urban Villages | Fernwood Village

history is rooted in community, having once shared the site with a shelter operated by the Cool Aid Society. The Fernwood Community Centre, operated by the Fernwood Neighbourhood Resources Group (NRG), is located just west of the square on Gladstone Avenue. The NRG provides childcare, family support and food security programs, as well as recreational activities. The NRG has also developed several social enterprises in the community over the years. Victoria High School, a heritage building, is located just south of the square. And just across the street is the Fernwood Community Association which often displays local art and provides a space for community meetings at Paul Phillips Hall (1923 Fernwood Road).

The area is rich with other opportunities for social connection, including through the Compost Education Centre, Spring Ridge Commons, Vic High grounds, Gower Park, and William Stevenson Park. Smaller retail businesses, restaurants, coffee shops, and a pub all draw local customers as well as others from across the city and region.

### Connections and Village Features

Fernwood Avenue is a bus route and collector road, connecting to Bay Street and Pandora Avenue. All Ages and Abilities (AAA) cycling routes (planned, designed, or constructed) are close to the village area. The neighbourhood's travel mode share largely reflects that of the city's, with 50% of trips by walking, cycling or transit (similar to the city-wide average of 49%), which is among the most sustainable of Canadian cities.

Fernwood Village is identified as a Small Urban Village in Victoria's *Official Community Plan* (OCP). The area has many of the features that characterize a Small Urban Village, and others that are often found in larger villages, including:

- Ground-oriented commercial and community buildings in and near the village.
- Services to meet daily needs, including restaurants, cafés, and a small grocer.
- Clear sense of place, character, and identity.
- Local transit service.
- Proximity to parks and community amenities.

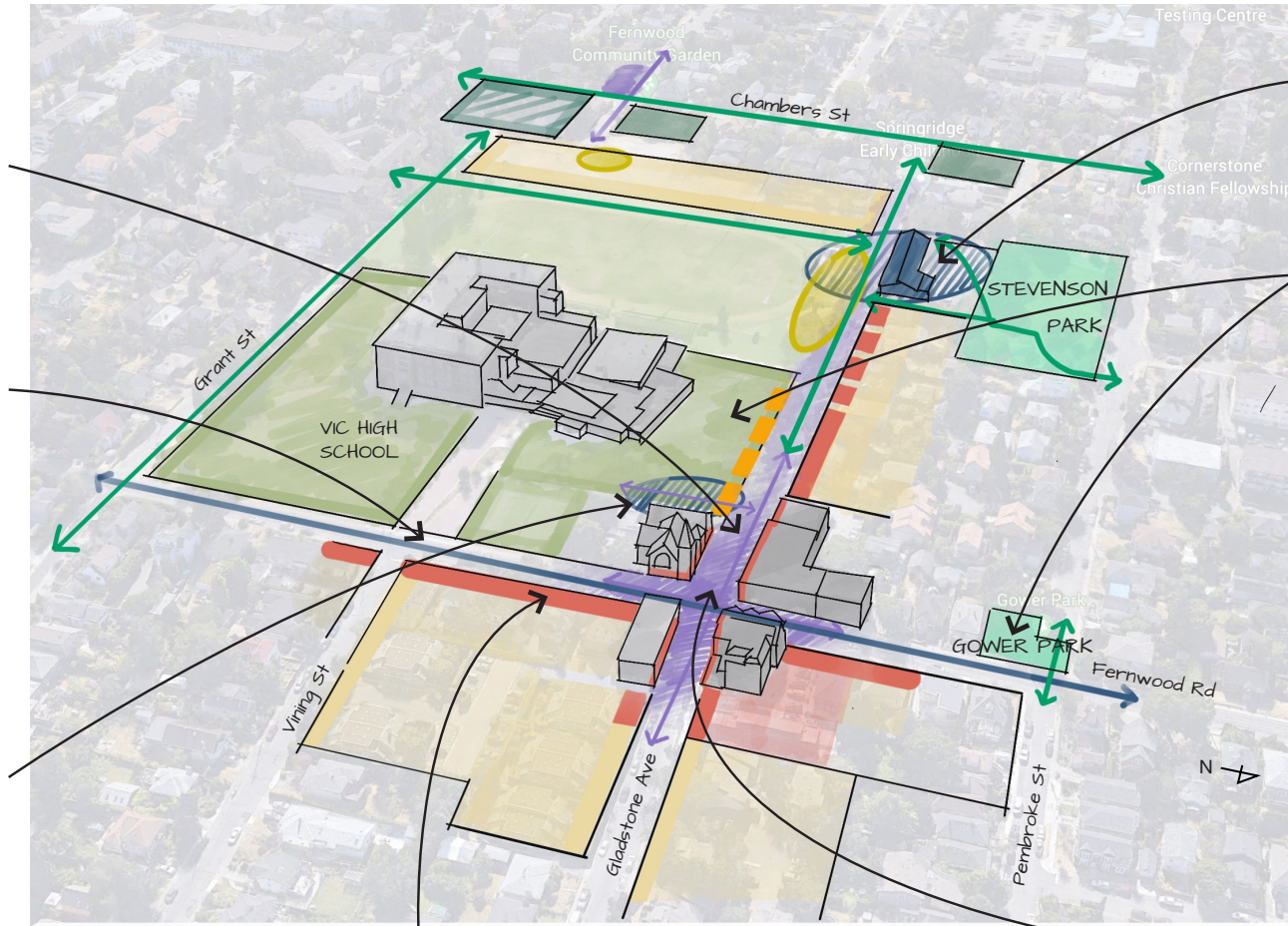


## Fernwood Village Directions

Enhance the public realm along Gladstone Avenue, considering pedestrian enhancements, pedestrian-scale lighting, and potential locations for kiosks supporting emerging small businesses.

Support pedestrian-priority elements along Fernwood Road including enhanced crossings, relocating or enhancing bus stops, and expanding sidewalks when opportunities arise.

Support the expansion of cultural space adjacent to the Belfry Theatre if the opportunity should arise, with enhanced connectivity between the square and the Vic High grounds.



Support the renewal of the Fernwood Community Centre space, with mixed-income housing above if the opportunity should arise.

Enhancing existing green spaces, including nearby parks, considering added seating in Gower park and accessible connections.

Retain existing heritage buildings, considering sensitive additions.

Encourage urban design, public realm, and placemaking features that build on or complement the historic assets of the Village, including reflections of Indigenous or environmental histories.

Allow for a flexible expansion of Fernwood Village along Fernwood Road and west along Gladstone Avenue in a way that enhances the existing commercial, art, and community uses, emphasizes the creation of diverse housing options, complements the existing architecture and reflects the small spaces and visually eclectic storefronts that exist today.

Manage parking to balance needs of businesses, arts and culture, and residents.

Refresh Fernwood Square through placemaking and expand the feel and function of the Square along Gladstone Avenue to the east.



## Urban Villages | Fernwood Village

# Intent and Objectives

These objectives provide context and overarching guidance for the evolution of Fernwood Village and should be considered when interpreting the policies that follow.

### Historic Character

Retain and respect the unique and historic scale, fabric, and built form of Fernwood Village's buildings and their relation to public space.

### Thoughtful Expansion

Thoughtfully expand the footprint of the Village in a manner that:

- Enhances the existing commercial, art, and community uses available to the local residents.
- Emphasizes the creation of diverse housing options.
- Reflects the small spaces and visually eclectic storefronts that exist today.

### Sensitive Urban Design

Seek a high-quality design in new buildings and public spaces, guided by the Principles for Urban Design in this document. Ensure new development adjacent to the historic

heart of the village is of high quality, and is compatible with and complementary to, but still distinguishable from, the iconic, intact, and regionally significant heritage fabric of Fernwood Village.

### Community Identity and Public Space

Maintain and enhance the ways Fernwood Village's public spaces work with the mix of commerce, art, and culture to create a unique community focal point.

Seek to refresh Fernwood Square, retaining the key features that make it a beloved amenity; to expand public space in adjacent locations through community-led and City-supported Placemaking initiatives, with a focus on Gladstone Street; and to enhance connections of community activity to surrounding green spaces.



## Urban Villages | Fernwood Village - Intent and Objectives

### Arts and Culture

Support the success of key arts and culture venues, including the Fernwood Community Association Gallery and the Belfry Theatre which provides a regionally significant cultural space supporting established and emerging artists in the region.

### Business Diversity

Support and strengthen the diversity of smaller shops, community services and eateries, through the maintenance of a variety of smaller-size storefronts, and changes to parking management. Fernwood Village remains a place for smaller-scale shopping, with opportunities for medium-sized establishments in nearby villages and corridors, including those proposed on Bay Street. An improved public realm and the use of placemaking programs create a desirable place to visit, with public areas to enjoy local take-out food.

### Placemaking and Public Space

Seek to refresh Fernwood Square, retaining the key features that make it a beloved amenity, and expand public space in adjacent

locations through community-led and City-supported Placemaking initiatives, with a focus on Gladstone Street.

### Housing Choice

Create opportunities to add a mix of housing in and near the village that supports people of different incomes, lifestyles, and household types.

### Sustainable Mobility

Support growth and change that encourages walking, cycling and transit, and shared mobility (e.g., car share, bike share). Improve the pedestrian experience within and to the village. Ensure access for deliveries, commercial needs, and those with mobility challenges. Manage parking to encourage customer turn over and a balance between residential and commercial interests.

### Urban Forest and Landscapes

Consider opportunities to bring experience of nature into the area, including healthy street trees and public and private landscapes, and more sense of connection between the village and nearby parks.



The City has over 70,000 on-street parking spaces. This curb space is highly valuable to local businesses, residents, and has potential for alternative uses, like public seating or bike parking. See the Mobility section for more about managing curb space for the future of Fernwood.

**Parking  
in the  
Village**

## Policies

Fernwood Village, along Fernwood Road and Gladstone Avenue, is designated as a Small Urban Village in the Official Community Plan (OCP). This plan seeks to expand the local-serving business in the village while retaining its small-scale, heritage character.

### General Land Use - Fernwood Village

**1.1 Redevelopment:** Within Fernwood Village, consider new primarily mixed use development consistent with City policies. Scale and built form should be generally guided by the OCP Small Urban Village Designation and take into consideration the existing and envisioned context of the surrounding area (see policy 1.3).

**1.2 Redevelopment with Public Benefit:** Consider increased density, of approximately 2:1 Floor Space Ratio and generally 4 storeys, where public benefit is provided consistent with the objectives of this plan and City policies, including but not limited to heritage conservation.

**1.3 Consideration of Context:** The form and scale of new development is dependent upon site size, orientation, and context. Achievable densities may be limited by the ability to adhere to good urban design principles, consistent with the City's design guidance, and



*Conceptual view of Gladstone Avenue looking west from Fernwood Square illustrates the types of redevelopment that could bring additional activity and public realm improvements to the Village.*



## Urban Villages | Fernwood Village - Policies

to be responsive to the existing and envisioned context of the surrounding area. See Village Design and Built Form section.

### 1.4 Commercial-Desired Approach:

Consider the following strategies for the “Commercial Desired Area” identified on Map 4 (generally along Gladstone Avenue between Fernwood Community Centre and Fernwood Square, and along Fernwood Road near Vining Street and near Pembroke Street, excluding Gower Park) to support a variety of vibrant, active uses not solely limited to retail:

**1.4.1** Consider mixed-use development with publicly-oriented, active ground floor uses that may include retail, community and public serving spaces, or arts spaces.

**1.4.2** Consider developments that build flexible ground floor space appropriate for future commercial uses but allow residential occupancy in the interim, if there is not sufficient demand for retail at the time. .




**1.4.3** Where the ground floor is not entirely occupied by a commercial space, encourage active residential-oriented uses in the remaining portion of the ground floor

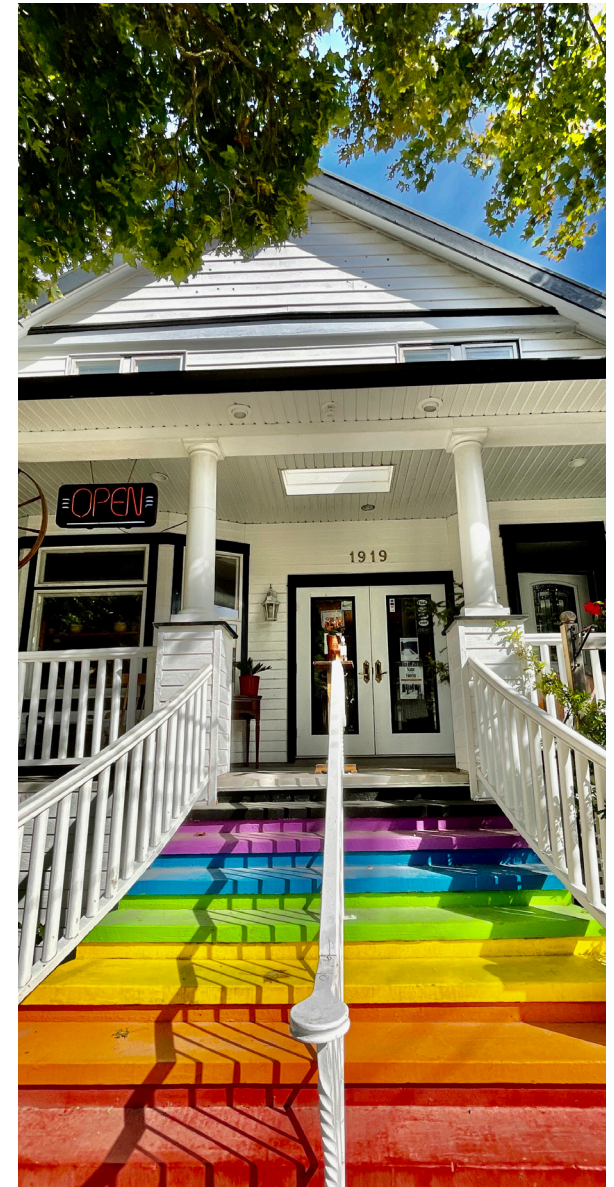
(such as shared laundry, bike storage, and other on-site amenities) that may enliven or activate the street.

**1.4.4** Consider the adaptive re-use of existing residential houses for commercial or community uses, including, where appropriate, houses with heritage merit to encourage their conservation.

Map 4: Fernwood Village



-  Small Urban Village (OCP)
-  Commercial-Desired Area
-  Public Facilities, Institutions, Parks and Open Space (OCP)





### Heritage and Character

**1.5 Retain and Enhance Heritage:** Retain the existing heritage buildings and assets in the village while considering sensitive additions, encourage additions to the Victoria Heritage Register and heritage designation of individual properties, and ensure new development is responsive to the context of heritage features.

**1.6 Complement Heritage Assets:** Encourage urban design, public realm, and placemaking features that build on or complement the historic assets of the village, including reflections of Indigenous, immigrant, or environmental histories (see Design and Built Form and Public Space and Placemaking sections).

**1.7 Highlight the Belfry Theatre Building:** Ensure the spire of the current Belfry Theatre building remains a prominent feature of the village (see Design and Built Form and Public Space and Placemaking sections).

**1.8 Encourage Small Storefronts and Frequent Entries:** Reflect the character of the existing built form by encouraging new developments to have smaller footprints (15.2-30.5 metres frontages with no more

than 8-10 metres between entries along Fernwood Road and Gladstone Avenue), including by reducing, eliminating, or minimizing vehicle parking requirements which tend to encourage larger building forms (see Mobility section for more details).

### Business Diversity

**1.9 Encourage Local Business Growth:** Encourage small format ground floor uses to better support a diversity of smaller, local businesses and to maintain the existing narrow shop front pattern. Consider the inclusion of small commercial spaces (as small as 150-300 square feet) for emerging businesses.



## Heritage in Fernwood

Much of Fernwood's identity is embedded in its ample collection of turn of the century commercial and residential buildings. The community would like to see these assets preserved, enhanced, and complemented, drawing from the more visible settlement history, as well as Indigenous, immigrant, and environmental histories that are less visible today.

The *Official Community Plan* (OCP) includes policies for conservation of heritage areas, properties, uses, landmarks, and other features.

### Public Space and Mobility

**1.10 Refresh Fernwood Square:** Together with the community, prepare a design and seek funding for a refresh of Fernwood Square (see Public Space and Placemaking sections).

**1.11 Improve Connections:** Seek improvements to pedestrian connections, including the Fernwood-Gladstone intersection, and bus waiting areas as identified in the Mobility section of this document.

**1.12 Seek Space for Pedestrians:** Secure public rights-of-way through development, to facilitate continued pedestrian improvements and connections, building on those identified in the proposed development west of Vic High. Where feasible and consistent with City policies, encourage undergrounding of utilities for an improved public realm.

**1.13 Rethink the Curb:** Consider alternative approaches to commercial and residential parking in and near the village that support residents, businesses, and public space needs, per the objectives and policies in the Mobility section of this plan.



*Conceptual view of Fernwood Road at Gladstone Avenue looking south illustrates the types of public space improvements that could better connect Fernwood Square to the activity along Gladstone, and slow movement through the village.*



### Arts, Culture and Community Uses

**1.14 Support the Belfry:** Support expansion of The Belfry Theatre arts and culture space, consistent with the *Create Victoria* Arts and Culture Master Plan and needs identified in the upcoming *Cultural Spaces Road Map*.

### 1.15 Encourage Diverse Public Art:

Encourage public art programs through community action and existing grant programs, to create events, murals, art installations, and other artistic and cultural expressions identified by the community. Seek to involve, empower, and reflect Indigenous and multi-cultural experiences and perspectives.

**1.16 Support Placemaking Projects:** Support community-led placemaking initiatives, partnerships, and public investments that:

- Enliven Gladstone Street east of Fernwood Square with publicly-accessible seating and spaces.
- Activate the stretch of Gladstone from Fernwood Square to the Community Centre and provide opportunities for local artists and entrepreneurs, including through temporary or seasonal markets, or more permanent fixtures like pedestrian-scale lighting, kiosks, and sidewalk enhancements (see Public Space and Placemaking and Mobility sections).



## Arts and Culture in Fernwood

Arts and culture contribute to the vibrancy and eclectic feel of Fernwood. *Create Victoria* is the City's Arts and Culture Master Plan which sets out to nurture conditions for creativity to flourish throughout the city. It is supported by specific arts strategies, grant programs and the Cultural Policy Framework.

Shorter-term community priorities for arts and culture can be documented in a Community-led Action Guide, and realized through City grants, programs, or the implementation of specific strategies (e.g. a music strategy).



## Urban Villages

# 2. Bay Street Villages

### About Bay Street

The Bay Street Corridor is a prominent east west connector in the city. The corridor provides several opportunities to increase housing choice, align land use, mobility, and climate action objectives, and develop complete communities with walkable villages in a currently under-served area.

Bay Street is identified by BC Transit as a future Frequent Transit Route. It connects Royal Jubilee Hospital (a major employer) to the city and provides a direct connection to the Vic West neighbourhood. It meets several important north-south connectors along the way, including Shelbourne Street and Fernwood Road (see the Mobility section for more).

Several small and emerging villages are located along or near the Bay Street Corridor within Fernwood, including Haultain Corners just north of Bay Street, Bay at Fernwood, and the east end of Bay near Shakespeare. A retail study concluded that additional businesses could be supported without impacting existing businesses.

New diverse housing along the corridor, including rental tenure housing, can support these emerging villages and provide a customer base for local businesses to thrive.

The structure diagram on the following page summarizes key moves for the corridor.

The emerging villages on the corridor are discussed in the subsequent section, and specific themes related to design, mobility, and housing for Bay Street are included in the corresponding sections of this plan.

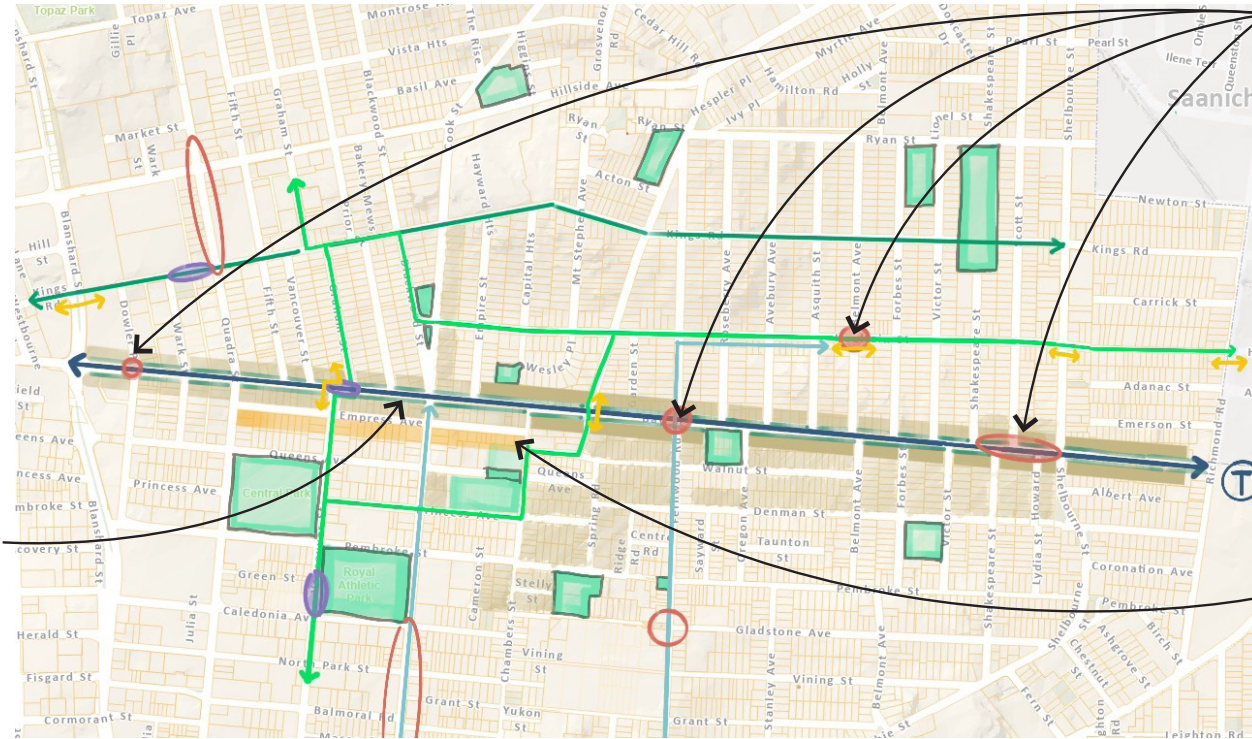
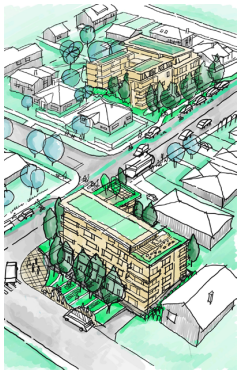
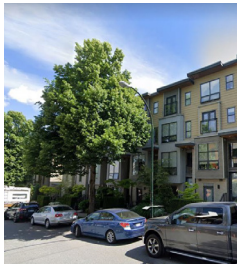


*From the City of Victoria archives, view of the historic commercial along Bay Street near Shelbourne Avenue.*



# Bay Street Directions

Support diverse housing options along and near the Bay Street Frequent Transit Route to connect more people to jobs and communities.



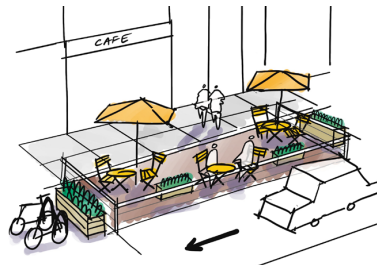
Allow small villages and commercial corners to evolve along the route and support the diverse needs of Oaklands, Fernwood, North Park, Hillside-Quadra.



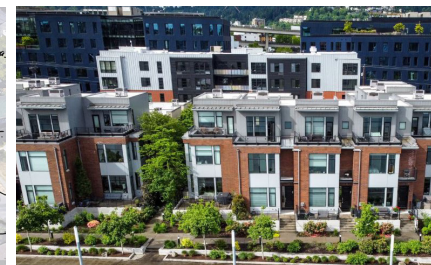
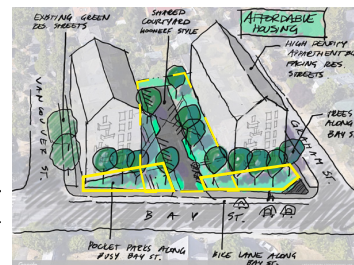
Retain and enhance heritage assets.



Improve pedestrian comfort and calm the impacts of traffic speed and noise along Bay Street through planned mobility improvements (AAA network Crossings).



Enhance the public realm through placemaking, high-quality urban design, and improvements to public spaces in redevelopment.



## Urban Villages | Bay Street Villages

# Intent and Objectives

These objectives provide context and overarching guidance for the evolution of Bay Street and should be considered when interpreting the policies that follow.

### Community Serving Businesses

Considering the current and future needs of residents in Fernwood and Oaklands areas, support the development of commercial uses in smaller and medium-sized commercial spaces in the proposed villages along Bay Street to enhance access to goods and services within a 15-minute walk of home, while ensuring existing commercial areas continue to flourish.

### Sustainable Mobility

While considering Bay Street as a route for frequent transit and emergency vehicles, enhance the comfort of pedestrians and those using mobility devices along and crossing Bay Street (see Mobility section for further details). Support growth and change that encourages walking, cycling, transit, and shared mobility. Ensure access for deliveries, commercial uses, and those with mobility needs.

### Green and Leafy Streets

With new development, ensure the maintenance and creation of a healthy tree canopy, adequate sidewalks, and, in residential areas, landscaped building setbacks.

### Public Space

In the designated village areas, create spaces along the public sidewalks or at corners, for patios, pedestrians, and public seating areas.

### Quality Urban Design

Seek a high-quality design in new buildings and public spaces, with sensitive transition to surrounding lower scale housing, guided by the Village Design and Built Form section of this plan.

### Placemaking and Public Space

Support community-led placemaking initiatives, partnerships, and public investments that enliven Bay Street,

particularly in or near the proposed villages, with publicly accessible seating and spaces.

### Housing Choice and Livability

Create opportunities to add a mix of housing along and near Bay Street that supports people of different incomes, lifestyles, and household types. Prioritize livability in development and building design (see Housing Design and Mobility sections).





# Policies

Bay Street is a Future Frequent Transit Corridor with opportunities for multi-unit housing, streetscape improvements, and the evolution of new urban villages.

## Bay at Fernwood Village

### 2.1 Envision a Bay at Fernwood Village:

Support the evolution of the area around Bay Street and Fernwood Road into a small village that serves as a gateway into the Fernwood Community. The village should complement Fernwood Village to the south, with room for both medium and small scale retail, patios or small gathering spaces, and public realm improvements through redevelopment.

**2.2 Redevelopment:** Within the Bay at Fernwood Small Urban Village, consider new primarily mixed use development consistent with City policies. Scale and built form should be generally guided by the OCP Small Urban Village Designation and take into consideration the existing and envisioned context of the surrounding area (see policy 2.4).

### 2.3 Redevelopment with Public Benefit:

Consider increased density, of approximately 2:5 Floor Space Ratio and generally 5 storeys,

where public benefit is provided consistent with the objectives of this plan and City policies, including but not limited on-site public space or public realm improvements.

**2.4 Consideration of Context:** The form and scale of new development is dependent upon site size, orientation, and context. Achievable densities may be limited by the ability to adhere to good urban design principles, consistent with the City’s design guidance, and to be responsive to the existing and envisioned context of the surrounding area. See Village Design and Built Form section.

### 2.5 West Side - Commercial-Required:

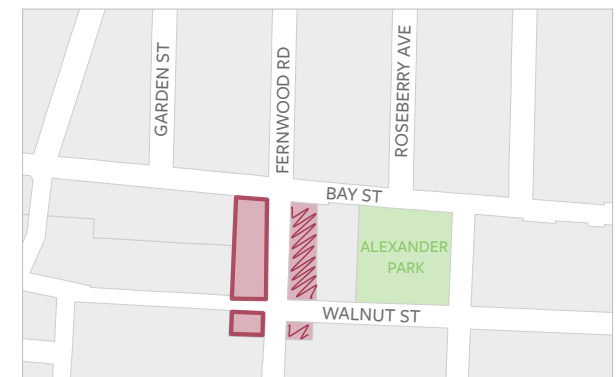
Consider the following strategies for the “Commercial-Required Area” identified on Map 5 (generally on the west side of Fernwood Road from Bay Street to just south of Walnut Street):

**2.5.1** Support mixed-use development for this area with publicly-oriented ground floor

commercial uses that provide amenities and services for surrounding areas.

**2.5.2** Encourage local-serving businesses and a diversity of services that meet daily needs, by providing smaller commercial spaces

Map 5: Bay at Fernwood Village





## Urban Villages | Bay Street Villages - Policies

along with space sufficient to accommodate a medium-sized grocer to serve the local area but is not a regional destination.

### 2.6 East Side - Commercial-Desired:

Consider the following strategies for the “Commercial-Desired Area” identified on Map 5 (generally on the east side of Fernwood Road from Bay Street to just south of Walnut Street) to support a variety of vibrant, active uses not solely limited to retail:

**2.6.1** Consider mixed-use development with publicly-oriented, active ground floor uses that may include retail, community and public serving spaces, arts spaces.

**2.6.2** Where the ground floor is not entirely occupied by a commercial space, encourage active residential-oriented uses in the remaining portion of the ground floor (such as shared laundry, bike storage, and other on-site amenities) that may enliven or activate the street.

**2.6.3** Consider developments that build flexible ground floor space appropriate for future commercial uses but allow residential occupancy in the interim, if there is not sufficient demand for retail at the time.

**2.7 Creating a Sense of Place:** Support community-led placemaking initiatives in and near the Bay at Fernwood Village, including those that help develop a “gateway” to the Fernwood neighbourhood (see Public Space and Placemaking and Mobility sections).

**2.8 Seek Space for Pedestrians:** Secure public rights-of-way through development, to facilitate continued pedestrian and transit stop improvements. Where feasible and consistent with City policies, encourage undergrounding of utilities for an improved public realm.



Conceptual view of Fernwood Road at Bay Street looking south of a new Bay at Fernwood Village. Illustrates the type of redevelopment that could accommodate medium scale retail and provide improvements to the public realm, such as a gateway to the neighbourhood, pockets of green space and public seating.

## Urban Villages | Bay Street Villages - Policies

### East Bay Street Village

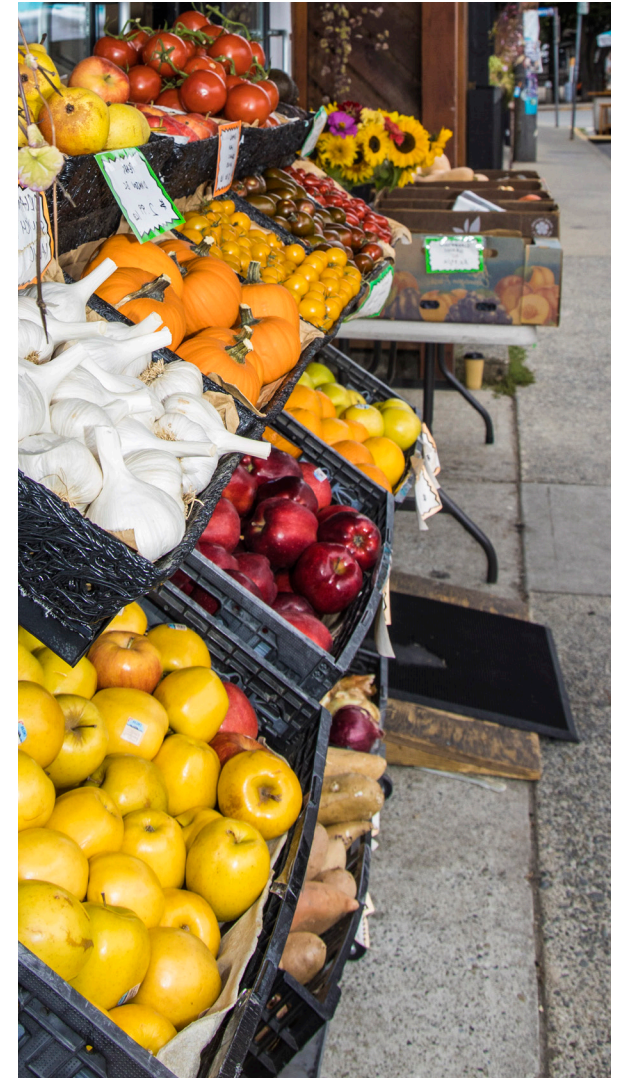
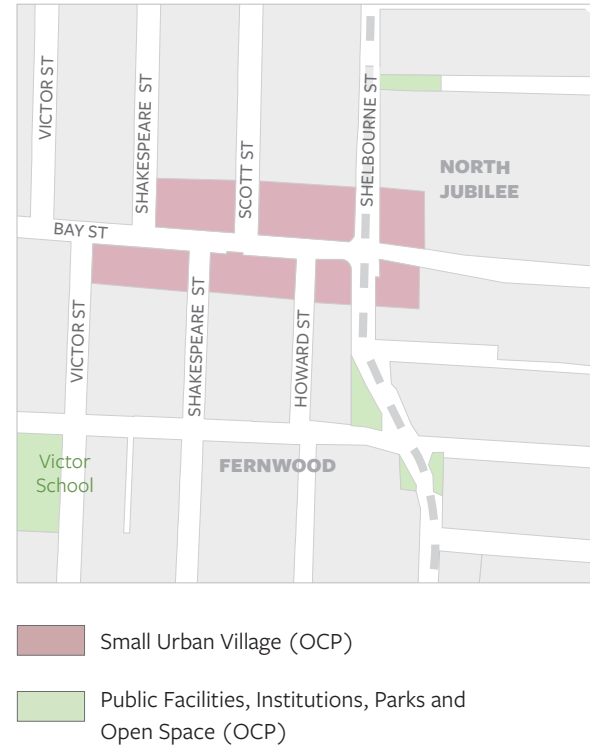
#### 2.9 Envision a Future East Bay Street Village:

Support the evolution of the area along Bay Street from roughly Shakespeare Street to Shelbourne Street into a small village that serves employees and visitors to Royal Jubilee Hospital as well as the surrounding community, with room for both medium and small scale retail, small public gathering spaces, and public realm improvements through redevelopment.

**2.10 Future Planning:** Continue to explore opportunities for the East Bay Street small village and its interaction with the nearby Haultain Corners village and surrounding Oaklands neighbourhood through future local area planning processes.

**2.11 Redevelopment:** In advance of future planning, discourage rezoning to purely residential uses (e.g., without commercial or community-serving uses on the ground floor) and consider developments of a form and scale generally consistent with the OCP Small Urban Village Designation.

Map 6: East Bay Street Village



## Urban Villages | Bay Street Villages - Policies

**2.12 Creating a Sense of Place:** Support community-led placemaking initiatives adjacent to the East Bay Street Village, including in conjunction with the planned AAA cycling improvements (see Public Space and Placemaking and Mobility sections).

**2.13 Seek Space for Pedestrians:** Secure public rights-of-way through development, to facilitate continued pedestrian and transit stop improvements and connections. Where feasible and consistent with City policies, encourage undergrounding of utilities for an improved public realm.



*Conceptual view of Bay Street looking east toward Shelbourne Street of a new East Bay Street Village. Illustrates the type of redevelopment that could accommodate some additional village activity and provide improvements to the public realm, such as boulevards, wider sidewalks, street trees and patio seating.*



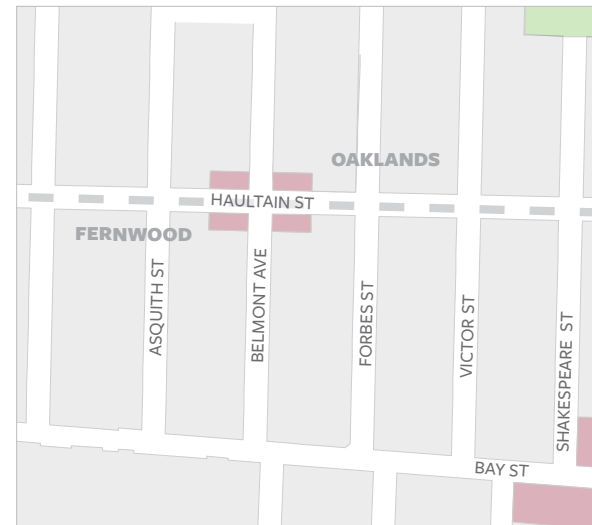
## Urban Villages | Bay Street Villages - Policies



### Haultain Corners Village

**2.14 Future Planning:** Continue to explore opportunities for this Small Urban Village through future local area planning processes together with the Oaklands Neighbourhood.

**2.15 Haultain Corners Redevelopment:** In advance of future planning, redevelopment in and near this village should be guided by the *Official Community Plan*.

Map 7: Haultain Corners



-  Small Urban Village (OCP)
-  Public Facilities, Institutions, Parks and Open Space (OCP)





## Urban Villages

### 3. Shared Large Urban Villages

Some of Fernwood’s important villages are shared with neighbouring communities, like North Park, Jubilee, and Rockland.

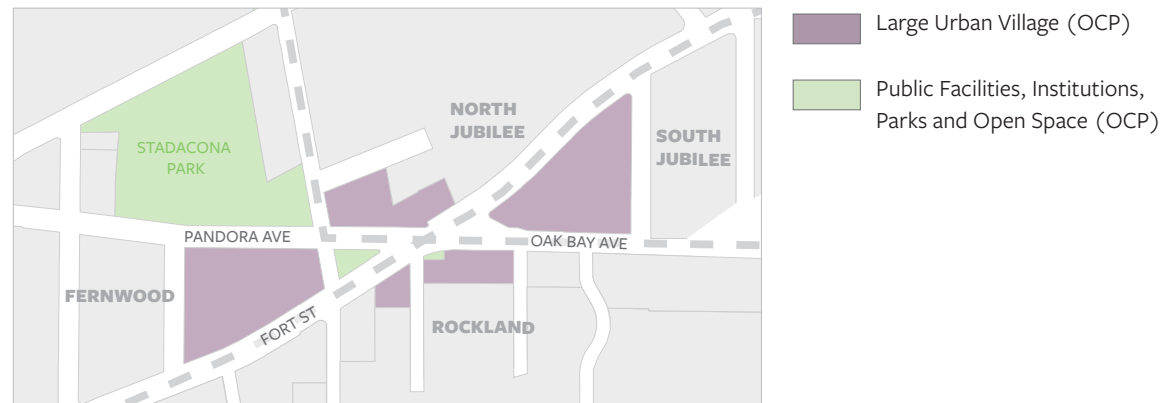
#### Stadacona Village

Stadacona Village is located on the Fort Street Corridor, the border of Fernwood, Jubilee, and Rockland. It is an important village for Fernwood residents, particularly those on the east side of the neighbourhood. It is home to a variety of shops and services, including a medium sized grocer. It is also close to Royal Jubilee Hospital.

Stadacona is designated a Large Urban Village in the *Official Community Plan*. Low- to mid-rise mixed-use buildings with ground-level commercial, offices, and community services are envisioned, along with wide sidewalks, regularly spaced street tree planting and buildings set close to the street frontage.

Planning for the future of Stadacona Village, the Fort Street Corridor and related areas will happen in a future phase of local area planning together with adjacent neighbourhoods.

Map 8: Stadacona Village



## Urban Villages | Shared Large Urban Villages

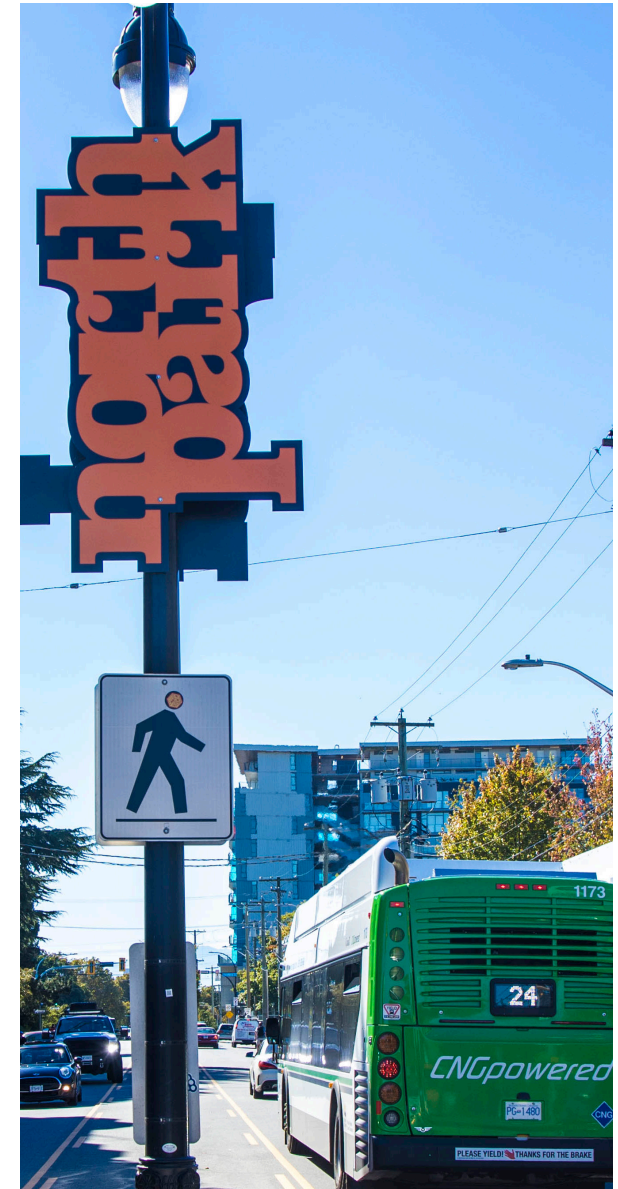
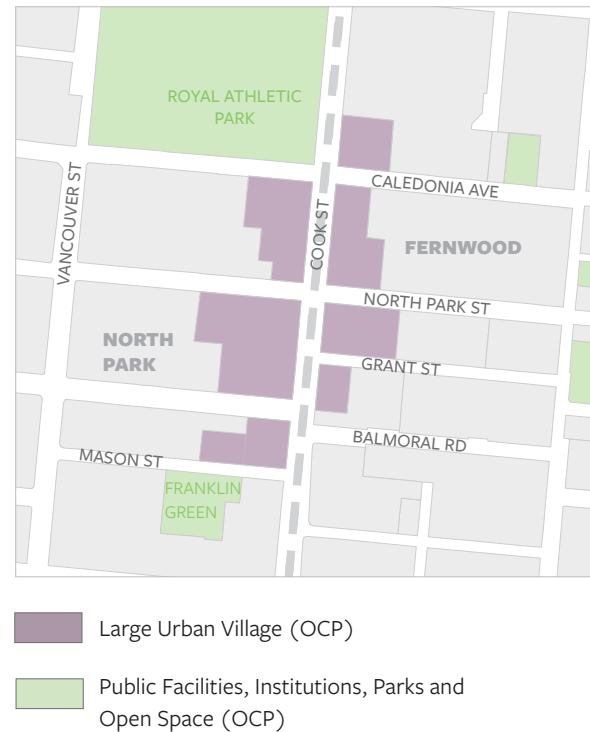
### North Park Village

North Park Village is located on the Cook Street Corridor, on the border of Fernwood and North Park. It is the central village for the North Park neighbourhood and serves Fernwood residents, particularly those living on the west side of the neighbourhood.

North Park Village is designated as a Large Urban Village in the *Official Community Plan*. The North Park Plan envisions some redevelopment to accommodate more shops and services, with an emphasis on retaining the existing local and regional serving functions and mix of eclectic buildings. The plan also seeks to identify opportunities for a central public gathering space in the village, which could be accommodated through future development, or, in the interim, partial or temporary road closures.

Learn more about the directions for North Park Village in the North Park Plan.

Map 9: North Park Village



## 4. Design and Built Form

### About

The City of Victoria aspires to maintain and enhance a high quality built environment that reflects the unique character and identity of the community. Like all municipalities subject to the British Columbia *Local Government Act*, Victoria has some tools to guide a high quality built form, including the Zoning Bylaw and Development Permit Area design guidelines for the form and character of commercial, industrial and multi-family development, and their relationship to the public realm and surrounding neighbourhood.

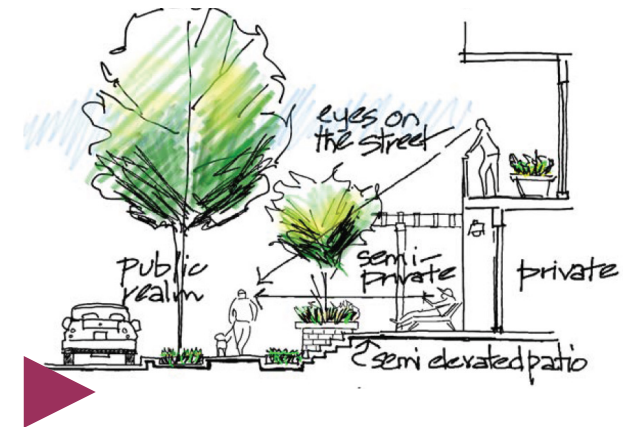
### Design Considerations in Fernwood's Villages

Heritage and historical development patterns define Fernwood Village and are highly valued by the community. The Village is characterized by several heritage-registered or designated buildings, including Paul Philips Hall (1921-1923 Fernwood Road),

the Cornerstone Building (1301 Gladstone Street), the Belfry Theatre, and the Rennie Block north of Fernwood Square. The building at 1300 Gladstone Avenue (the Fernwood Inn) has been renovated with a faux Tudor façade.

Development along the Bay Street Corridor has been characterized by a mix of single-family homes and multi-family buildings, with new and older commercial in the emerging villages near Fernwood Road and in the area between Shakespeare and Shelbourne Streets. Lots vary in shape and size, and there are some heritage assets along the corridor.

There is desire to make the areas north and south of Bay Street feel more connected.



## How Design Guidelines Work

Development Permit Areas (DPAs), and related guidelines, are a tool that help the City shape the form and character of new development and encourage best practices in building design. Guidelines help to implement the policies in this and other relevant plans.

Applicants must apply for a Development Permit and meet the relevant guidelines for a property within a DPA prior to developing or altering buildings. This permit is distinct from a building permit that would also be required at a later stage in the process.

## Intent and Objectives

These objectives provide context and overarching themes for built form design in Fernwood’s villages. Design regulation and guidance is provided in zoning bylaws and design guidelines.

### Fernwood Village Historic Character

Ensure new development in and near Fernwood Village is compatible with and complementary to, but is distinguishable from, the iconic, intact, and significant heritage fabric of Fernwood Village.

### Great Streets

Design, locate and shape buildings to create sunny, welcoming, and walkable public streets with space for pedestrians, patio seating and greenery. Emphasize Gladstone Street and identify opportunities to enhance pedestrian spaces along Fernwood Road and Bay Street.

### Human Scale

Design buildings and open spaces to create visual interest and diversity when approached by pedestrians.

### Community Identity

Encourage new developments and investments in the public realm to reflect the

Community Identity features on page 10-11 of this plan.

### Livability

Ensure homes of all types have sufficient access to sunlight, fresh air, privacy, open spaces, and other amenities that support livability, with special consideration for buildings along busy arterial streets.

### Neighbourliness

Ensure new buildings are good neighbours within the street and neighbourhood, and to existing and future buildings next door.

### Urban Forest

Support a healthy, mature, and continuous tree canopy along all streets with a priority for key gathering spaces, pedestrian routes, connections to parks and other greenspaces, and the maintenance and establishment of mature tree canopy along Bay Street.

### Sustainable Mobility

Integrate support for sustainable mobility options (walking, cycling, transit, shared vehicles, and reduced on-site parking) into building and public space design. Support the evolution of future Frequent Transit bus service and high quality pedestrian space on Bay Street.

### Incorporate Public Spaces

Refresh Fernwood Square while maintaining its beloved function and character for everyday use and community celebration. Consider future public seating along Gladstone Street. Consider the establishment of a smaller public gathering space in the proposed Bay Street villages with a focus on corner sites, supported by thoughtful design of new developments. Encourage a new central gathering space to evolve in North Park Village through placemaking or redevelopment. (See Public Space and Placemaking Chapter for more.)



## Urban Villages | Design and Built Form

# Village Design Guidance

### Village Design Guidance

Design guidance for **Fernwood Village** is provided in the *Fernwood Village Design Guidelines* associated with the Fernwood Village Development Permit Area in the Official Community Plan.

Design guidance for built form in all urban villages is provided in design guidelines associated with relevant Development Permit Areas in the Official Community Plan.

Public realm design guidance will be provided in an Urban Villages Public Realm and Streetscape strategy.



### Relevant Design Guidelines

Fernwood Village Design Guidelines (2022).

General Urban Design Guidelines (2022).

# Public Space and Placemaking

Public spaces provide opportunities for daily gathering and community celebration. Placemaking helps to shape public spaces with meaning, identity and a sense of shared value, strengthening the connection between people and the places they share.

This plan seeks to highlight opportunities for creative, collaborative placemaking to enhance or develop places for gathering.



- ▶ **Support placemaking initiatives that reflect the community's past, present, and desired identity as reflected in this plan's Community Identity (page 10-11).**
- ▶ **Support placemaking and the development of public space in areas where people naturally gather.**
- ▶ **Encourage placemaking that supports local artists, creators, and entrepreneurs.**

## Relevant Policies and Bylaws

Official Community Plan

Parks and Open Spaces Master Plan

Placemaking Toolkit



## 5. Public Space and Placemaking

### About

The City of Victoria encourages the community to utilize public areas for placemaking. Streets, alleyways, sidewalks, boulevards, and parking areas can all serve as a canvas for creating new public spaces.

The City's *Placemaking Toolkit* provides direction, guidelines, and support for realizing placemaking opportunities. The City's *Neighbourhood Led Action Plan Guide* can help communities come together and create strategic directions for placemaking opportunities and other issues of community importance.



### Fernwood Public Space Considerations

Fernwood Square is considered a park in the City's land use inventory, although long-term asset management and maintenance has been a shared among City departments. Enhancements to this space will be considered through a park improvement planning process, which includes community consultation.

Programming parks and open spaces, including both for one-time events, like festivals and markets, and more permanent fixtures, like benches and tables can be supported by the City through permits, grants, and coordination.



## Placemaking in Fernwood

Placemaking is a collaborative process where people work together to create vibrant public spaces that contribute to people's health, happiness, and well-being.

The City has a *Placemaking Toolkit* that helps to bring people together to enhance their neighbourhood, with a grassroots focus, supported through City programs and grants. Key ideas for placemaking are noted here, but others may be identified outside of this plan, including through Neighbourhood Let Action Planning, or through individual or collective organization.

## Public Space and Placemaking

# Intent and Objectives

These objectives provide context and overarching guidance for public space and placemaking and should be considered when interpreting the policies that follow.

### Identity

Maintain and enhance welcoming, diverse, and inclusive public space that supports community gathering, celebrates creativity, reflects the community's identity, and adapts to its changing needs over time.

### Public Spaces

Create joyful and welcoming public spaces for everyday use and community celebration, incorporating public seating and gathering areas appropriate to the scale of urban villages and commercial corners.

### Incremental and Flexible Improvement

Pilot new public space ideas through placemaking in the public realm and/or on private lands. Successful ideas may evolve to become more permanent features for public gathering and enjoyment in the future.





## Public Space and Placemaking Policies

The policies noted here include ideas to enhance public spaces to improve the everyday lives of residents and visitors. Other ideas may emerge over time.

### Public Space

**5.1 Parks and Open Spaces:** See the Parks, Facilities and Community Assets chapter for objectives and policies related to parks and open green spaces.

**5.2 Public Space:** Prioritize and enhance Fernwood Village public spaces for pedestrian and social activity, including public gathering, seating, patio dining, and other daily social activity, and for a range of special events, performances, and other programming.

**5.3 Refresh Fernwood Square:** Collaborate with residents and community partners to plan a refresh of Fernwood Square. Community ideas and considerations include:

- Elements to encourage use and provide comfort in all seasons.
- Diverse opportunities for gathering for people of all ages, abilities, cultures, and lifestyles.

- Heritage elements that reflect the story of the community, including Indigenous, immigrant, and environmental history in addition to the settlement and development history that is evident in the built form.
- Pockets to stay and enjoy, as well as pleasant routes that allow people to pass through.
- Pockets that support free, public enjoyment of the square as well as opportunities to support the nearby businesses and community spaces.
- Future opportunities to expand the feel of Fernwood Square east and west along Gladstone Avenue (through community-led placemaking as described in policy 5.4 or through redevelopment).
- Continued reflection of the creativity of the community in elements of design through colour and vibrancy.



## Public Space and Placemaking - Policies

**5.4 Gladstone Placemaking:** Support community-led placemaking initiatives that activate the stretch of Gladstone from Fernwood Square to the Community Centre and provide opportunities for local artists and entrepreneurs, including:

- Temporary or seasonal markets and festivals.
- Flexible, but more permanent fixtures like kiosks and food trucks.
- Improved lighting, planters, benches, murals, and other elements of art.

**5.5 Bay at Fernwood Placemaking:** Support community-led placemaking initiatives adjacent to the emerging Bay at Fernwood Village.

**5.6 East Bay Street Placemaking:** Support community-led placemaking initiatives adjacent to the emerging East Bay Street Village and Haultain Corners, potentially including areas along Shakespeare Street as part of the planned All Ages and Abilities cycling route.

**5.7 Future Placemaking:** The community may identify or implement additional placemaking through future processes, like a *Neighbourhood Led Action Plan* or individual or collective initiatives, supported by City programs and grants.





# Housing

Housing shapes the neighbourhood, the city, and people's daily lives. The diversity of housing types and tenures influences who can live in an area and contributes to the community's identity.

Where new housing is located, how it is designed, and policies that regulate and support its development all influence community and individual well-being, as well as our collective ability to meet sustainability objectives.

This plan seeks to make room for new and diverse housing options that reflect Fernwood's identity and meet current and future needs.

- ▶ **Encourage housing that is diverse in size, tenure, and form to support diverse populations.**
- ▶ **Encourage housing that is designed to be livable and complement its surroundings.**
- ▶ **Enable housing forms and scales that can support diverse tenures.**



## Relevant Policies and Bylaws

- Official Community Plan
- Inclusionary Housing and Community Amenity Policy
- Victoria Housing Strategy
- Urban Forest Master Plan
- Design Guidelines (Development Permit Areas)
- Zoning Bylaw
- Tree Protection Bylaw

## Housing

# Intent and Objectives

These objectives provide context and overarching guidance for housing when interpreting the policies that follow.

### **Diverse, Sustainable Locations**

Support multi-family, rental, and affordable housing in all of Victoria's neighbourhoods.

Support rental as well as strata housing in a variety of locations, not just on busy street corridors, but in quieter locations, to support varied needs, lifestyles, and preferences.

Make room for housing that is proximate to Downtown, urban villages, and sustainable transportation corridors with access to shops, services, amenities, parks, and open spaces to enhance livability and support Victoria's greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

### **Diversity in Form and Tenure**

Support the creation of varied tenure options including rental housing. Support the inclusion of homes of various sizes and designs for different household types.

### **Preserving Affordable Housing**

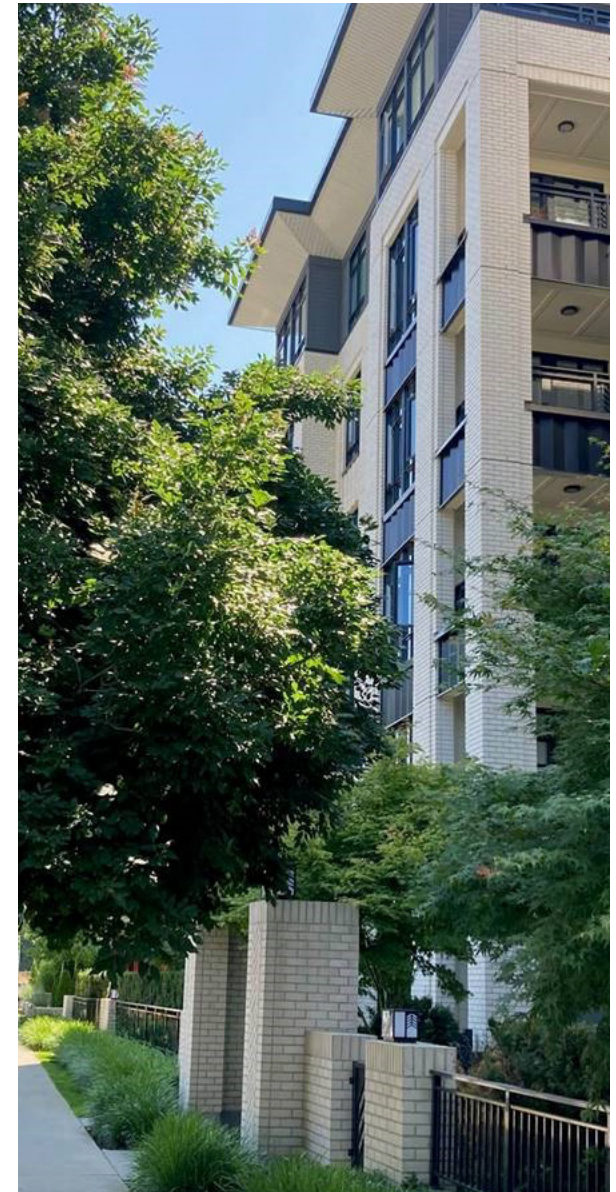
Provide opportunities to meet Victoria's housing needs while minimizing displacement of existing purpose-built rental housing.

### **Making Room for More Affordability**

Support the creation of below-market and non-market housing. Provide diverse mobility options and opportunities for people to choose car-light lifestyles, improving environmental outcomes for the community and reducing the Housing + Transportation cost burden for the household.

### **Complement Ground-Oriented Forms and Heritage Features**

Complement ground-oriented housing, including anticipated missing middle forms, existing lower scale residential, and heritage assets, with diverse forms and tenures of new housing that emphasize high-quality design, livability, and neighbourliness.





## Housing

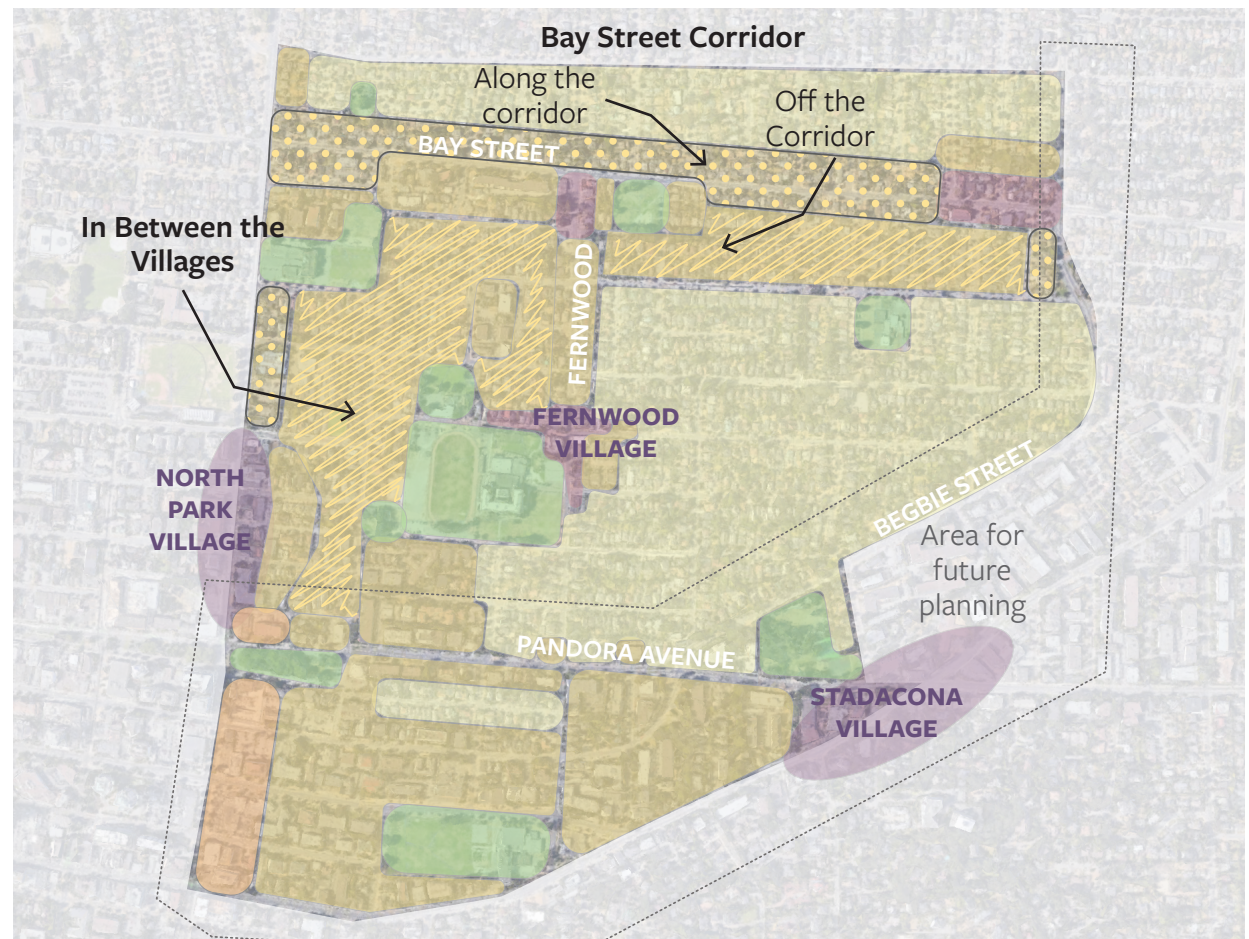
# 6. Housing and Residential Areas

This plan identifies areas to make room for new multi-unit housing, like rental and condo apartments, while keeping a diversity of options throughout the community and maintaining a residential feel and heritage character.

### In Between the Villages

Most of this area has a Mixed Residential Urban Place Designation. The designation is supportive of lower scale multi-family forms that can help to realize a range of housing options. New developments are envisioned to be designed in a manner that can co-exist with other ground-oriented housing, including houses with heritage merit, considering impacts like shadowing and maintaining a cohesive rhythm to the streetscape. Buildings are intended to be diverse in form to achieve a variety of housing options.

Community members supported the Mixed Residential designation in this area, with a desire to complement the unique mix of housing, heritage, and site conditions that exist today, while making room for diverse housing in a place where people want to live. It has many desirable attributes:



Fernwood Housing and Residential Areas

## Housing | Housing and Residential Areas

- Walkable access to two established urban villages and an array of shopping and services.
- Within a 10- to 15-minute walk of the Downtown Core.
- Good mobility options, including the All Ages and Abilities (AAA) bicycle network, and current and future Frequent Transit bus service.
- Proximity to current and future amenities, like Crystal Pool, schools and community centres.
- Several parks within walking distance, and planned enhancement of public green spaces nearby.
- Added population can boost the success of local businesses and support transit investments.
- A place for multi-family housing options that are not located on busy transportation corridors, yet still have access to transit and urban villages.

### Bay Street Corridor

**Along the corridor,** most of Bay Street has the Housing Opportunity Urban Place Designation. This designation is generally supportive of medium scale multi-unit residential building forms, and densities slightly higher than the Urban Residential designation if substantial public benefits is provided.

The Housing Opportunity designation can help to integrate land use and transit objectives, through the creation of new housing opportunities that support transit ridership and investments. The diverse lot sizes and shapes along Bay Street mean that contiguous redevelopment at larger scales is unlikely, but



*Concept of new housing along the corridor that provides public realm improvements, like street trees, incorporates livable design oriented away from the corridor, and transitions to the surrounding community.*



## Housing | Housing and Residential Areas

the designation provides opportunity where there is potential.

Community members supported new multi-family housing in these areas, recognizing both the opportunity for sustainable living options, and the opportunity to transform the corridor as a place for people, not just vehicles.

New housing along the corridor is desirable for many reasons:

- The corridor is along and adjacent to several existing and future Frequent Transit routes.
- The area is also served by two north-south AAA cycling routes that cross Bay Street and an east-west connector along Haultain Street and Kings Road to the north.
- The corridor provides connections to employment, at Royal Jubilee Hospital to the east and the Rock Bay employment areas and the Downtown Core to the west.
- There are nearby parks and amenities along the corridor and to its north and south.
- The eastern parts of Bay Street include evolving commercial areas, providing greater access to shops and services.

- New development could provide the opportunity to create wider sidewalks and landscaped boulevards that support healthy canopy street trees.
- Diverse development opportunities could also help to prevent small-lot subdivisions with many individual driveway accesses. Such subdivisions have resulted in an

increased number of curb cuts in recent years, which slows traffic, create breaks in the sidewalk, increases the likelihood of conflicts with cars and pedestrians, and reduces the number of tree-planting spaces along the street, while adding little new housing or affordability.



*Concept of new housing along Bay Street adjacent to Alexander Park, with public realm improvements like wider sidewalks, boulevards and bulb-outs, street trees, and activation and engagement at the ground floor.*

**Off the corridor**, most of the same advantages noted for housing along the corridor apply, except the opportunity to use redevelopment as a mechanism to improve the public realm.

Opportunities for off-corridor multi-family housing (on quieter neighbourhood streets) is strongly desired, particularly as an option for renters and larger households with children at home. These locations are generally envisioned as Mixed Residential to support different building types that can co-exist in a neighbourly manner.

### Village Mixed Use

Urban villages will support additional housing in good locations by including residential uses above commercial uses in village areas.

All of Fernwood's urban villages support commercial - residential mixed uses. To further support opportunities to increase housing supply, some village areas will consider solely residential redevelopment with alternative active ground floor uses where a commercial use may not be viable at the time.

### Traditional (Ground-oriented) Areas

The City's *Official Community Plan* identifies Traditional (ground-oriented) Residential areas that are supportive of a diversity of lower scale forms, including single-detached homes (with or without suites) and duplexes, as well as lower scale forms that can accommodate more units, like houseplexes, townhouses, and low-rise apartment buildings.

These forms of housing are an important part of the city's housing stock, particularly those that can offer more units in a form that complements its surroundings and offers a diversity of housing options. At the time this plan was developed, the City was undertaking a Missing Middle Housing Initiative to encourage these forms throughout the city.



## Meeting Housing Needs in Fernwood

The development and design of new housing is guided by several city initiatives. The *Victoria Housing Strategy* identifies actions to support better family-friendly housing, accessible and adaptable housing, and affordable housing. These actions will be realized throughout the city, including in Fernwood, through city-wide regulatory tools and policies that exist or are planned.

This plan and the OCP help to provide the foundation for those actions to be realized by making room for the housing needed today and over the coming decades.



## Housing | Housing and Residential Areas

# Policies

The City's *Official Community Plan (OCP)* defines the Urban Place Designations that guide future housing development. The policies in this plan are provided for reference and, in some cases, additional guidance.

### Considerations for All Housing Areas

**6.1 Consideration of Context:** The appropriate form and scale of new housing is dependent upon the site size, orientation, and context. Achievable densities may be limited by the ability to adhere to good urban design principles, consistent with the City's design guidance, and the ability to be responsive to the existing and envisioned context of the surrounding area. See Housing Design section for more.

**6.2 Application of City-wide Policies:** All relevant City policies and regulations, including policies for rental housing, tenant protection, inclusionary housing and community amenity contributions, energy efficiency and green building, urban forest, and heritage, continue to apply in these areas.

**6.3 Heritage Retention and Reuse:** Wherever possible, heritage register buildings should be retained and reused as part of any rezoning that adds density. Encourage the retention and continued use of buildings with heritage merit (such as those identified on heritage walking tours or heritage surveys), including through conservation and adaptive reuse that adds housing.

**6.4 Heritage Advancement:** Heritage surveys, heritage registration and designation, and consideration of Heritage Conservation Areas where merited are encouraged to advance the City's heritage objectives, and to support the retention of local heritage assets and complementary design approaches in new builds.



Heritage conservation areas (HCAs) are districts with special heritage value. They enable the City to manage change in the area and ensure that new construction is appropriate. Learn more about how residents can nominate HCAs at [victoria.ca](https://victoria.ca)

**Heritage Conservation Areas**

**6.5 Interim Rental Retention Policy:** Until the OCP policy regarding rental retention is updated through implementation of the *Victoria Housing Strategy*, any proposed rezoning that would displace existing, purpose-built rental units is generally discouraged, unless the proposal provides considerable housing benefit, including provisions for affordability and significant increase in net new, high quality rental units.

**6.6 Continued Protection for Renters in Zoning Changes:** Where City-initiated zoning changes are considered to facilitate the rapid supply of rental housing, and existing rental protections may not apply, seek to mitigate displacement of residents, including through the provision of on-site affordability, right of first refusal, and other protections for existing tenants, or by focusing City-initiated changes in locations that do not have existing, secured, affordable rental housing.

**6.7 Interim Family-Oriented Housing Policy:** Until a policy supporting the provision of housing for families with children at home is developed through implementation

of the *Victoria Housing Strategy*, family-oriented housing should be encouraged in any proposed development, including the provision of two- and three-bedroom units (including on more affordable lower floors and/or adjacent to on-site open spaces), ample storage space, access for strollers, and indoor and outdoor amenity spaces that can serve families and youth. Family-oriented secured rental projects are particularly encouraged in locations proximate to schools and amenities (e.g., community and rec centres or parks and open spaces).

**6.8 Commercial and Community Serving Uses in Residential Areas:** Limited local serving commercial and community services (e.g., medical offices, childcare) may be considered in primarily residential designations, including Traditional Residential, Mixed Residential, Urban Residential, and Housing Opportunity areas, where the use provides community benefit and contributes to the overall objectives of this plan and citywide objectives, like creating walkable neighbourhoods with access to goods and services.

**6.9 Logical Lot Assemblies:** Encourage lot assemblies that create suitable space for the envisioned scale of housing, minimize “orphaning” of smaller lots between larger ones, and, particularly along busy streets, limit the number of access driveways and interruptions to pedestrian space.



### 6.10 Building Forms and Site Layout

**Focused on Livability:** Along busier arterial corridors, building forms that maximize livability for individual units are encouraged. Depending on lot sizes and depths, this may include forms like courtyard buildings that provide multiple frontages for individual units; “T-shaped”, “L-shaped”, or “C-shaped” buildings; corner buildings oriented to side streets; buildings with greater front yard setbacks; buildings with shared rear yard green spaces; and buildings with commercial-style ground floors.

**6.11 Parking Reductions and TDM:** New housing, particularly rental housing, should allow for reduced parking requirements in tandem with Transportation Demand Management measures (e.g., high-quality bicycle parking, car share, or transit passes) in line with City policy, while still considering the need for accessible parking spaces for people with limited mobility.

**6.12 Public Realm:** Establish an accessible pedestrian network with generous, unobstructed sidewalks and safe crossings alongside landscaped boulevards that accommodate healthy mature canopy street trees.

**6.13 Olympic Mountains Viewshed:** New development should respect the view corridor identified from the ridge of Chambers Street north of Pandora Avenue, looking south to the Olympic Mountains, considering the location, siting and design of new development.



*View of the Olympic Mountains from Fernwood.*



### Urban Forest

The urban forest is highly valued and Fernwood residents would like to ensure trees and green space are priorities when new development occurs. The City’s Tree Protection Bylaw applies to trees on private property and supports growth of the urban forest more evenly across the city.

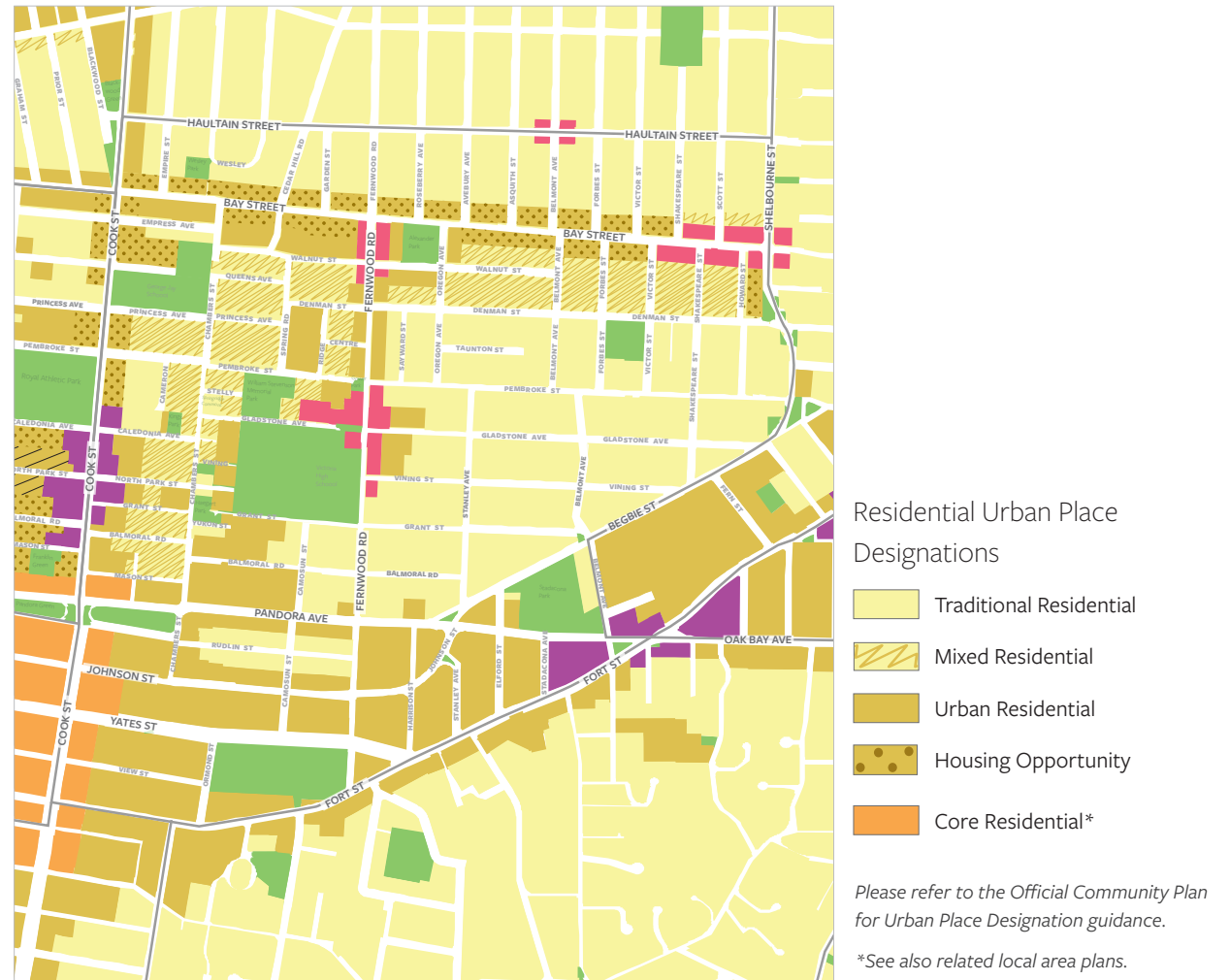


**Traditional Residential**

**6.14 Redevelopment:** Within Traditional Residential areas, as generally shown on Map 10, consider new, primarily ground-oriented residential development, consistent with the intent and guidance provided in the OCP Urban Place Designations and related City policies, including for Missing Middle Housing (see also policy 6.1).



Map 10: Fernwood Land Use - Residential Uses (for reference only, please see Official Community Plan)





**Mixed Residential Areas**

**6.15 Intent - Space for a Diverse Mix of Housing:**

Areas designated Mixed Residential are envisioned as places that can accommodate low-rise multi-unit buildings alongside ground-oriented forms, and, in some cases, provide transition to higher densities that might be found in adjacent areas. Incentives and flexibility in built form should be considered to encourage tenures beyond market strata or for family-oriented housing (see policy 6.7). Notwithstanding the desire to provide a diversity of forms and tenures, new housing should still adhere to good urban design principles, consistent with the City’s design guidance, and should be responsive to the existing and envisioned context of the area (see policy 6.1).

**6.16 Redevelopment:** Within Mixed Residential areas, as generally shown on Map 10, consider new, primarily ground-oriented and low-rise residential development consistent with the intent of City policies. Scale and built form should be guided by the Victoria OCP Urban Place Designations and Development Permit Area Design Guidelines. Heights and densities are dependent on site conditions and the ability to sensitively transition to the existing and envisioned context and mitigate impacts on adjacent properties.

**6.17 Flexibility for Diverse Types and Tenures:** To further support the development of diverse housing in these areas (including cooperative housing, market rental, non-

market rental, below-market homeownership, or family-oriented buildings and units), consider flexibility in density and built form and/or mechanisms such as City-initiated zoning, parking reductions, and financial incentives, while remaining consistent with good urban design principles and responsive to the existing and envisioned context of the surrounding area.

**6.18 Heritage - In Between the Villages:** A Heritage Conservation Area process may be considered to encourage the retention of heritage assets and complementary design approaches in new builds for Mixed Residential areas between Fernwood and North Park Villages, given the valued heritage character of the area and existing intact rows of houses with heritage merit.



*Illustrative concepts of a Mixed Residential area, supporting a variety of housing types at compatible forms and scales.*



### Urban Residential

**6.19 Redevelopment:** Within Urban Residential areas, as generally shown on Map 10, consider new, primarily low- to mid-rise residential development consistent with City policies. Scale and built form should be guided by the OCP Urban Place Designations and Development Permit Area Design Guidelines. Heights and densities are dependent on site conditions and the ability to sensitively transition to the surrounding context and mitigate impacts on adjacent properties (see policy 6.1).

**6.20 Redevelopment with Public Benefit:** Within Urban Residential areas, consider increased density, as described in the OCP, where public benefit is provided consistent with the objectives of this plan and City policies, including but not limited to public amenity contributions, non-market or affordable housing, or heritage conservation.





### Housing Opportunity Areas

**6.21 Redevelopment:** Within Housing Opportunity areas, as generally shown on Map 10, consider new, primarily mid-rise residential development consistent with City policies. Scale and built form should be guided by the OCP Urban Place Designations and Development Permit Area Design Guidelines. Heights and densities are dependent on site conditions and the ability to sensitively transition to the surrounding context and mitigate impacts on adjacent properties (see policy 6.1).

### 6.22 Space for Larger Scales with Public Benefit

**Benefit:** Within Housing Opportunity areas, consider increased density, as described in the OCP, where public benefit is provided consistent with the objectives of this plan and City policies, including but not limited to public amenity contributions, non-market or affordable housing, or heritage conservation. At the higher end of envisioned densities described in the OCP, substantial public benefit is envisioned (such as secured rental with additional amenity contribution).

### Co-location of Housing

**6.23 Affordable Housing at the Fernwood Community Centre:** If redevelopment of the Fernwood Community Centre is considered to renew or expand the community facility, consider opportunities to co-locate affordable housing on the site together with the community space. While uses, heights, and densities on the site should be informed a comprehensive planning and engagement process, generally consider densities and built forms similar to those identified for Housing Opportunity areas.

### Future Planning

**6.24 Future Planning:** Continue to explore opportunities for new multi-unit housing near Stadacona Village and the Pandora, and Begbie-Shelbourne Corridors in future planning processes.

*Urban Villages provide room for mixed-use residential development and will play an important role over time in providing housing options in good locations, see the Urban Villages section for more information.*





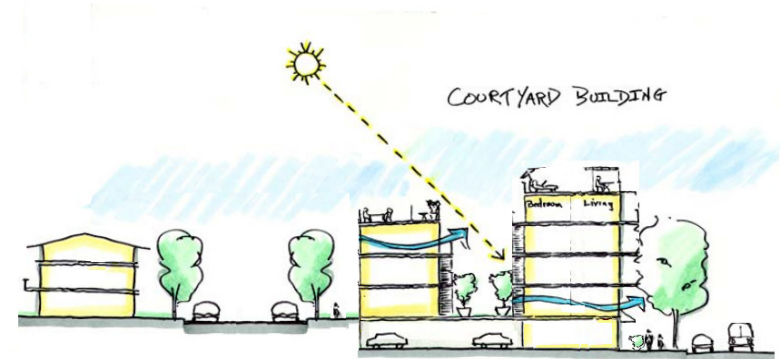
## Housing

# 7. Housing Design

### About

Similar to the community's desire to maintain and enhance a high quality built environment in villages, centres, and Downtown, there is desire for a high quality, neighbourly, and livable built form in residential areas.

The City of Victoria actions this desire through the Zoning Bylaw and Development Permit Area design guidelines for the form and character of multi-unit development.





## Intent and Objectives

### Making Room

Make room for new multi-family housing for different incomes, household types, and lifestyles, in close walking distance to urban villages, Downtown and Frequent Transit routes, considering a diversity of locations both on- and off- of busier corridors to provide equitable choices.

### Sustainable Mobility

Integrate support for sustainable mobility options into building and public space design including for walking, cycling, transit, shared mobility (like car or bike shares), electric vehicles, and reduced on-site parking.

### Amenity and Diversity

Support the ability of multi-family housing to deliver both rental and strata tenure homes and to provide public amenities, affordable housing, family-sized housing, accessibility, and other benefits identified in broader City policies to support housing options for a diverse community (recognizing that no one project will address all of these objectives).

### Human Scale

Design buildings and open spaces that create visual interest, diversity, and identity when approached by pedestrians.

### Great Streets

Design, locate, and shape buildings to create sunny, welcoming, walkable, green and leafy public streets.

### Urban Forest, Landscape and Ecology

Support a healthy, mature urban forest along streets and on private lands, and integrate sustainable landscapes and ecological services into sites (e.g., stormwater retention, climate resilience).

### Energy Efficiency and Climate Change

Support built forms that allow new development to meet increasing energy efficiency requirements and design strategies such as passive house design, while continuing to meet all principles in this plan.

### Livability

Ensure homes of all types have sufficient access to sunlight, fresh air, privacy, open spaces, and other amenities that support livability, with special consideration for buildings along busy arterial streets.

### Neighbourliness

Ensure new buildings are good neighbours within streets and public spaces, and transition sensitively to existing and future buildings next door.



# Housing Design Guidance

## Housing Design Guidance

Design guidance for **multi-unit** (apartments and condos) and **ground-oriented attached** housing is provided in design guidelines associated with relevant Development Permit Areas in the Official Community Plan.



### Relevant Design Guidelines

General Urban Design Guidelines (2022).

Ground-oriented, attached, or missing middle housing design guidance as required.



# Integrated Mobility

Safe, sustainable, and integrated local mobility options can support individual well-being, community vitality, and climate action objectives.

This plan seeks to support city-wide mobility objectives by identifying opportunities to improve Fernwood’s local transportation system.

- ▶ **Over time, transform transit corridors as places for people, that prioritize efficient service, placemaking, urban forest and accessibility.**
- ▶ **Improve local connectivity to key destinations throughout the neighbourhood.**
- ▶ **Make walking, wheeling, and transit safer, more efficient, and more enjoyable.**
- ▶ **Test parking management strategies that better balance the needs of businesses, residences, public space**



## Relevant Policies and Bylaws

- Official Community Plan
- GO Victoria, Sustainable Mobility Strategy
- Streets and Traffic Bylaw
- Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw
- Zoning Bylaw (parking)



## Integrated Mobility

# Intent and Objectives

These objectives provide context and overarching guidance for mobility in Fernwood when interpreting the policies that follow.

### Support Sustainable Mobility in Victoria

Advance the policy objectives and targets outlined in *GO Victoria*, the City's sustainable mobility strategy:

- Integrate land use and transportation.
- Align different transportation networks.
- Improve multi-model level of service.
- Value the public right-of-way.
- Operate and maintain our assets.

Advance the six key priority areas in *GO Victoria*:

- Achieve Vision Zero to eliminate traffic fatalities.
- Transform public transit.
- Accelerate active and accessible transportation.
- Shift to zero emissions.
- Rethink the curb.
- Harness data and technology to improve transportation choice and efficiency.

### Transform Corridors

Enhance corridors as places for pedestrians, those using mobility devices, and transit.

### Improve Walking and Wheeling

Consider enhancements to mobility for people walking, cycling, or using mobility devices to support the future vision for Fernwood's villages, placemaking features, and improved connections.



## 8. Mobility Corridors - General Directions

Frequent Transit Corridors provide opportunities to make room for new housing, advance reliable, sustainable mobility options, and transform busy streets into places for people. This plan works together with city-wide policies and regulations to guide the design and functions of mobility corridors in Fernwood.

### Fernwood Road Corridor

**Priority Travel Modes:** Recognizing the limited right-of-way and limited opportunities to procure additional right-of-way, improvements are focused on the following priority travel modes:

- Walking
- Transit
- Vehicles

### **Pedestrian and Transit User Focus:**

Opportunities to create wider sidewalks and improved transit facilities through redevelopment or as funding and programming permits are a priority for this corridor.

### **Placemaking Through Mobility:**

Enhancements or interventions near Fernwood Road and Gladstone Avenue should support the future vision for Fernwood Square, and the surrounding area.





## Integrated Mobility | Mobility Corridors - General Directions

### Bay Street Corridor

**A Future Place for People:** Future plans, public improvements, and development related decisions should focus on pedestrian conditions and landscape improvements, while accommodating key transportation functions, including transit and emergency response.

### Pandora Avenue Corridor

**Priority Travel Modes:** Cycling, walking, and multi-modal movement are prioritized through the implementation of the All Ages and Abilities (AAA) network along Pandora Avenue.

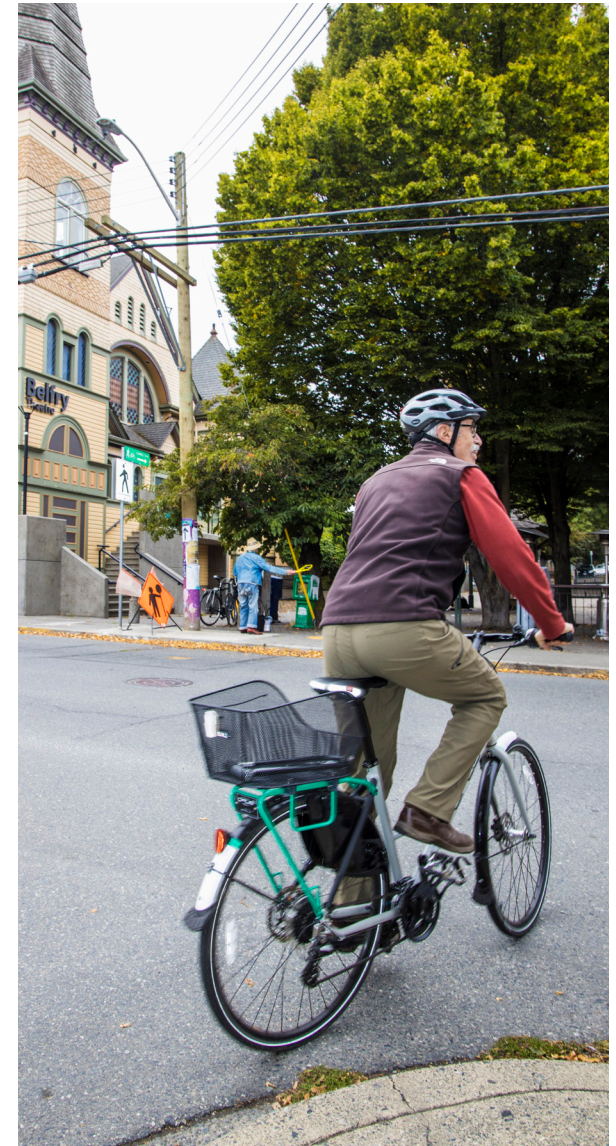
**Future Planning:** Land use changes may be considered in future planning processes together with neighbouring communities, specifically along Pandora Avenue east of Cook Street, to support increased access to the high-quality active travel mode facilities.

### Begbie-Shelbourne Corridor

**Future Planning:** The future of the Begbie-Shelbourne Corridor will be considered in future planning processes together with neighbouring communities.

### Urban Villages

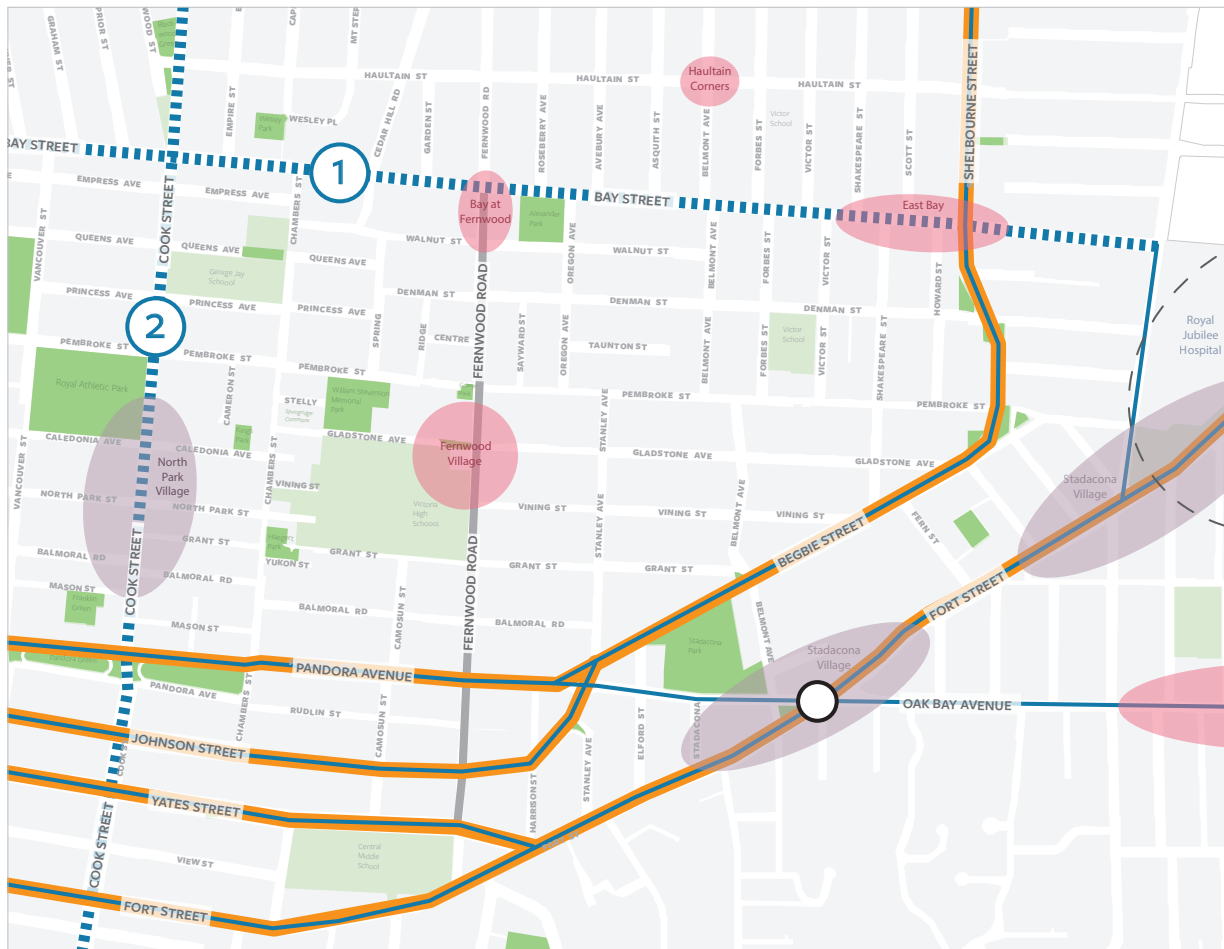
**Public Realm Standards:** The City will develop Urban Villages Public Realm Design Standards, to apply city-wide, as an update to existing pedestrian standards, which will consider desired sidewalk widths to accommodate accessibility, village activity, pedestrian traffic, and furnishing and frontage zones consistent with best practices and local contexts.





# Integrated Mobility | Mobility Corridors - General Directions

Map 11: Victoria Transit Priority Corridors (for reference only, please see Official Community Plan).



## Legend

- Frequent & Express Service / Rapid Bus Candidate
- Cumulative Frequent Service
- Frequent Service Candidate
- Bay Street
- Cook Street
- Local Transit Service
- Mobility Hub
- Transit Exchange
- Large Urban Village
- Small Urban Village
- Park

The "Victoria Region 25 Year Transit Future Plan" and "Victoria Regional RapidBus Implementation Strategy" are administered by BC Transit and may be subject to change (Transit Exchange Study Areas and Mobility Hubs provided as approximate areas of opportunity).

## 9. Local Mobility - Policies

Safe, comfortable and efficient walking, wheeling, and rolling options advance sustainability and contribute to happier, healthier, and more vibrant communities. This plan identifies improvements to local networks that can happen over time through regular city processes or redevelopment.

### Fernwood Village and Fernwood Road

**9.1 Adding Bike Parking:** Create more public bicycle parking in and near the village.

**9.2 Fernwood Square Improvements:** At the intersection of Fernwood Road and Gladstone Avenue, adjacent to Fernwood Square:

**9.2.1** In the short-term, consider features to improve pedestrian comfort and safety at the crossing of Fernwood Road at Gladstone Avenue; balance interventions with placemaking features that may also increase comfort and retain and enhance the feel of the village.

**9.2.2** In the long-term, consider additional improvements for comfort, safety, and enhanced sense of place at the crossing of Fernwood Road at Gladstone Avenue, including a tabletop intersection that continues the design themes of Fernwood Square. (A tabletop intersection is an

intersection that is raised to signal to motorists that this is a priority area for pedestrian traffic).

**9.2.3** Continue to monitor the success of the current partial closure and traffic calming measures along Gladstone Avenue east of Fernwood Road and explore opportunities for a full and/or more permanent closure of the road through community-initiated placemaking or a Community-Led Action process, if there is interest.

**9.3 North of the Square:** On Fernwood Road between Gladstone Avenue and Bay Street:

**9.3.1** Seek wider, accessible sidewalks, as well as transit stop improvements or boulevard spaces as applicable when redevelopment is proposed.

**9.3.2** To facilitate the improvements described above in areas where



## Integrated Mobility | Local Mobility - Policies

redevelopment is unlikely (e.g. adjacent to heritage or character homes), consider removing on-street parking (for instance, south of Denman Street), balancing the need to accommodate parking and loading near Fernwood Village and the proposed Bay at Fernwood Village with desired pedestrian improvements.

**9.3.3** In the Bay Street Village, encourage new development to accommodate patio spaces on private land to provide lively interaction with the street.

**9.3.4** Consider a new crossing of Fernwood Road at Pembroke Street.

**9.4 South of the Square:** On Fernwood Road between Gladstone Avenue and Pandora Avenue:

**9.4.1** Consider opportunities to improve or relocate bus stops near Gladstone Avenue to enhance public space and bus waiting areas.

**9.4.2** Consider removing on-street parking on the east side of the road, south of Grant Street, to facilitate wider sidewalks and boulevards, in conjunction with a broader program of parking management to support village businesses and cultural institutions.

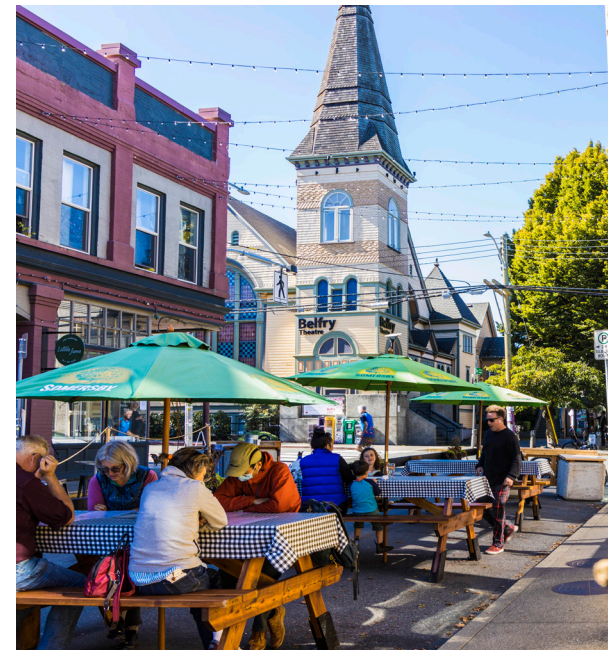
**9.4.3** Consider additional curb bulges at Vining Street.

**9.5 East of the Square:** On Gladstone Avenue, from Chambers Street to Fernwood Square:

**9.5.1** Through redevelopment seek wider, accessible sidewalks and boulevard spaces.

**9.5.2** Consider temporary, partial closures of Gladstone Avenue to facilitate placemaking in connection with Fernwood Square.

**9.5.3** Continue to facilitate truck and delivery access to the Belfry Theatre and Fernwood Square businesses and seek opportunities to improve turning movements and facilitate the expansion of the Square if redevelopment occurs.





## Bay Street

**9.6 Pedestrian Improvements:** Continue to implement improvements along Bay Street for pedestrian comfort, to encourage traffic to slow down, to make it easier to cross, and to enhance transit rider experiences (e.g. with improved bus waiting).

**9.7 Integrated Mobility Study:** Complete a comprehensive integrated mobility study for Bay Street between Blanshard Street and Richmond Road, with the following considerations and draft directions:

**9.7.1** Prioritize investments and development contributions to support walking, frequent transit, and vehicle movement as the priority modes.

**9.7.2** Define the right-of-way acquisition that would be required through new development to realize the priorities described above, and ways to balance acquisition requirements with the desire to accommodate quality residential developments (as described in related sections), giving special consideration to the varied size and shape of lots along Bay Street.

**9.7.3** Identify opportunities to establish a sidewalk on the south side of Bay Street between Wark Street and Quadra Street.



## Improving Local Mobility in Fernwood

Local mobility improvements are realized in multiple ways, often through the redevelopment of private properties or through capital programs.

Fernwood residents can request improvements, like speed humps or new crosswalks, through the City's mobility programs. Some improvements are identified in this plan while others may be identified through future processes or community requests. Requests are reviewed from a technical perspective and how they align with road safety objectives, and then prioritized with other locations city-wide.

### Neighbourhood Connections

**9.8 Development - Sidewalks:** Through redevelopment seek wider, accessible sidewalks with a boulevard accommodating street trees.

**9.9 Development - Vic High Path:** Build an accessible pathway from Fernwood Square to the Vic High grounds through new development for a cultural space that may be considered west of the Belfry Theatre.

**9.10 Haegert Park Connections:** Through potential future expansion of Haegert Park, consider a closure of Chambers Street in front of the park with placemaking features and cycling access.

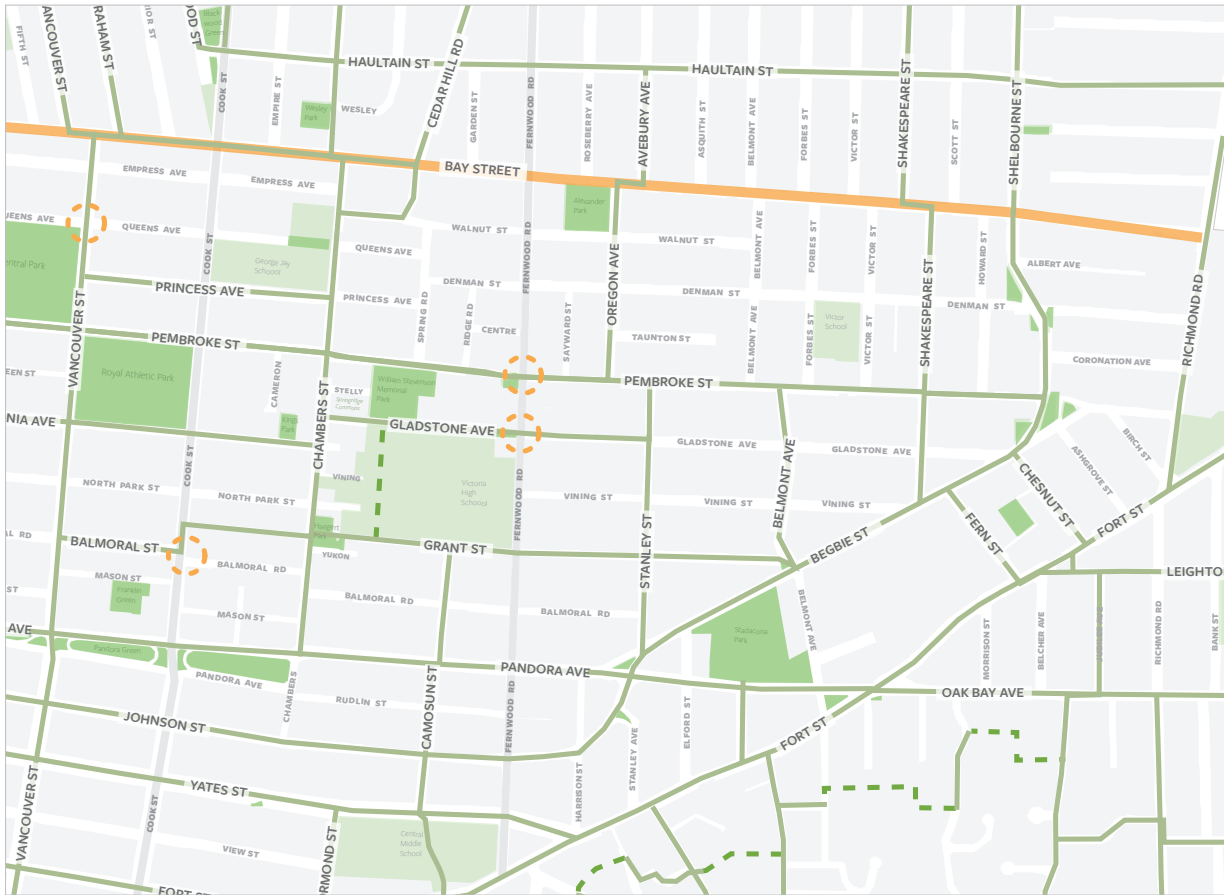
**9.11 Cycling Connections:** Complete bicycle connections from Haultain Street via Princess and Chambers streets and Oregon and Stanley streets.





## Integrated Mobility | Local Mobility - Policies

Map 12: Greenways Network with desired pedestrian and crossing improvements (for reference only, please see Official Community Plan).



### About the Greenways Network

The Greenways Network Map illustrates existing and desired routes for safe, convenient, and/or pleasant walking and wheeling. Improvements to greenways may be realized through several City programs including the *Traffic Calming and Crosswalk Program*, the *Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan* implementation, the *Transit Shelter Program*, *Road Rehabilitation Program*, *Active & Safe Routes to School* initiatives, regional transportation network investments, and major redevelopment projects.

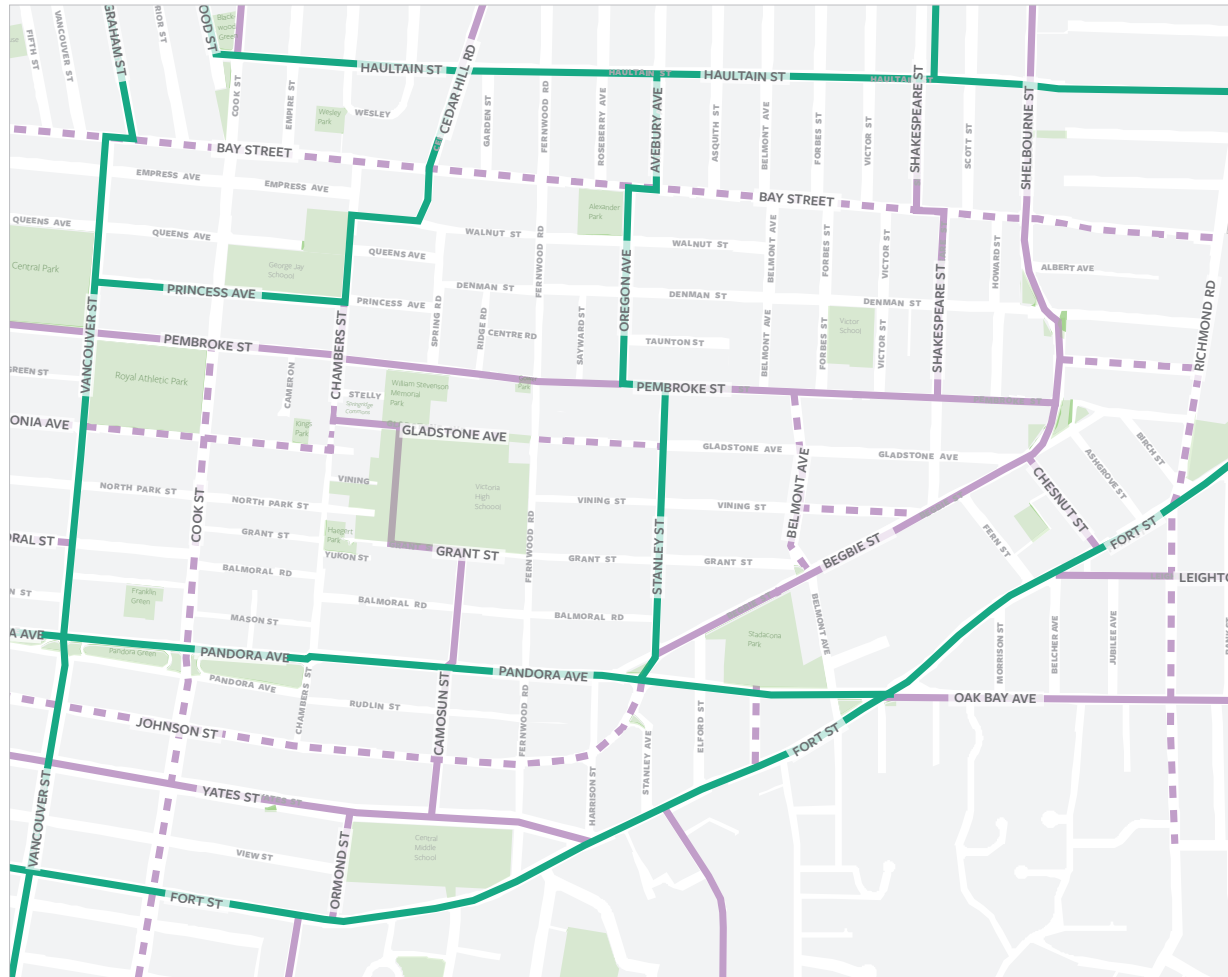
### Legend

- Neighbourhood Greenways
- Key transit corridor in need of pedestrian improvements
- Future Greenway Opportunities
- Desired crossing or crossing improvement



## Integrated Mobility | Local Mobility - Policies

Map 13: Cycling Network (for reference only, please see Official Community Plan).



### Legend

- AAA Priority Network
- - - AAA Expanded Network
- Other Existing and Community-Identified Cycling Routes

### About the Cycling Network

The Cycling Network Map highlights existing and planned All Ages and Abilities (AAA) bicycle facilities. AAA facilities offer a greater degree of safety and comfort. Design treatments will vary depending on the context. Examples include protected bicycle lanes (one-way and two-way), off-street pathways (cycle only or multi-use), and shared-use streets with lower vehicle volumes, speeds, and signage (advisory bicycle lanes and neighborhood bikeways).

The City's AAA plan was adopted in 2016. Once the network is complete, 95% of the municipality will be within 500m of a AAA cycling route, providing safe and convenient access to village centres, parks, recreation centres and schools for all types of riders.

Other components of the cycling network are shown (both existing and desired). These may include painted bicycle lanes, painted buffered bicycle lanes, and signed bicycle routes. Working with partners and private land-owners, the City will continue to be opportunistic to add facilities and improve existing facilities (including addition to the long-term AAA network) as appropriate.

## Integrated Mobility

# 10. Parking - Intent and Objectives

These objectives provide context and overarching guidance for mobility in Fernwood when interpreting the policies that follow.

### Value the Right-of-Way

Per the goals and objectives in *GO Victoria*, the City's sustainable mobility strategy, value the city's limited right-of-way to support access for people, sustainable travel behavior and convenient access for high-occupancy, low-carbon, and active travel modes and the efficient delivery of goods.

### Manage Parking for All Needs

Given the limited allocated parking and curb space in and near Fernwood Village, prioritize parking management to encourage turn over and align with broader goals, including accessibility, vibrancy, and local economic development.



## Integrated Mobility

# Parking - Policies

Parking influences how we live and move about the city, how businesses thrive, and our sustainability objectives. Curb space is valuable public space. This plan works together with city-wide policies and regulations to guide parking in Fernwood.

### Parking Management

**10.1 On-Street Parking:** As part of a city-wide parking modernization program, seek to implement parking management solutions in and near Fernwood Village and along Bay Street in areas proximate to commercial uses, including:

**10.1.1** Working with neighbours and local businesses to reallocate public space from vehicle parking to bicycle parking, in addition to other placemaking initiatives.

**10.1.2** Piloting the elimination of or modifications to resident-only parking programs to better support local businesses.

**10.1.3** Piloting time-limited parking that supports improved turn-over of business patrons.

**10.1.4** In the long-term, consider transportation demand management (TDM) methods such as increased and diverse bicycle parking, car share spaces, and others.

**10.1.5** Expand accessible parking options serving urban villages.

**10.2 Parking Requirements:** Consider updates to relevant bylaws which reduce parking requirements for commercial uses where appropriate (e.g., where the use does not require extensive parking and/or where alternative mobility options are highly accessible).



## Managing Curb Space in Fernwood

On-street parking in Fernwood is a mix of time-limited, residential only, and unrestricted. This parking is public space that can serve a multitude of needs, including for businesses and residences, cars and bikes, and public spaces like seating or greenery. It can also provide additional space for walking and wheeling.

The City manages curb space and a key target in GO Victoria is to ensure that by 2023 all curb space in the city is valued, managed and prioritized.



### Parking Modernization

#### 10.3 Parking in New Development:

Seek to implement parking management solutions for new housing, including shared parking, reduced parking requirements, and transportation demand management (TDM), particularly for purpose-built rental projects and for new housing near large urban villages, active transportation routes and frequent transit routes.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) supports more sustainable transportation choices by offering incentives, information, and infrastructure, like bike shares, that make it easier and more appealing to live car-light.

Transportation Demand Management





# Parks, Facilities, and Community Assets

Parks and open spaces are a centerpiece to Fernwood’s character, culture and vibrancy, while facilities and other community assets provide spaces and programs to connect and build a resilient community.

This plan seeks to support city-wide objectives and identifies priorities for local use of these spaces.

- ▶ **Meet the parks and open space needs of the growing population.**
- ▶ **Emphasize equity, diversity and inclusion in planning, designing, and improving parks, open spaces, and community facilities.**
- ▶ **Grow the urban forest in public and private lands.**



## Relevant Policies and Bylaws

- Official Community Plan
- Parks and Open Space Master Plan
- Urban Forest Master Plan
- Tree Protection Bylaw
- Design Guidelines (Development Permit Areas)
- Zoning Bylaw

## 11. Parks, Facilities, and Community Assets

### Parks and Open Space Planning

The City's *Parks and Open Space Master Plan* provides a high-level road map guiding planning, management, and investment over 25 years. It includes priority short-term, medium-term, and ongoing actions. Individual parks and open spaces may have a park improvement plan to guide improvements. Funding for municipal park improvements comes primarily from the City's tax base or capital reserves. New development also contributes Development Cost Changes (DCCs), which can help to fund park improvement and acquisition based on needs generated by the anticipated population increase.

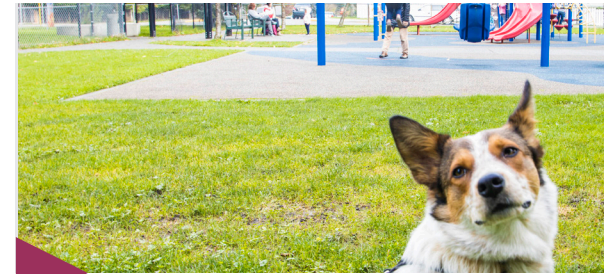
### Parks and Open Spaces in Fernwood

The *Official Community Plan* calls for 99% of Victorians to have a park or open space within 400m of home by 2041. Fernwood as a whole meets this target.

Though some opportunities for expanding green space or environmental enhancement are identified in this plan, the emphasis is on improving existing assets for greater public use.

The greenspaces around Vic High have provided opportunities for both the school population and residents to enjoy sport and recreation for many decades. The planned upgrades at Vic High by the School District will provide further opportunities for new and enhanced amenities.

The *Parks and Open Space Master Plan* reflects a theme that was common throughout engagement – the desire to locate a water/spray park in the northeast area of the city because of the limited access to the waterfront.



### Improving Parks and Open Space in Fernwood

Parks and Open Space improvements are guided by the *Parks and Open Space Master Plan*. This plan identifies ways to improve parks for the desired uses identified by residents, and aligned with city-wide plans.

Prioritization and resourcing for parks planning, acquisition, and improvement projects are provided through shorter-term strategic plans and budgeting.

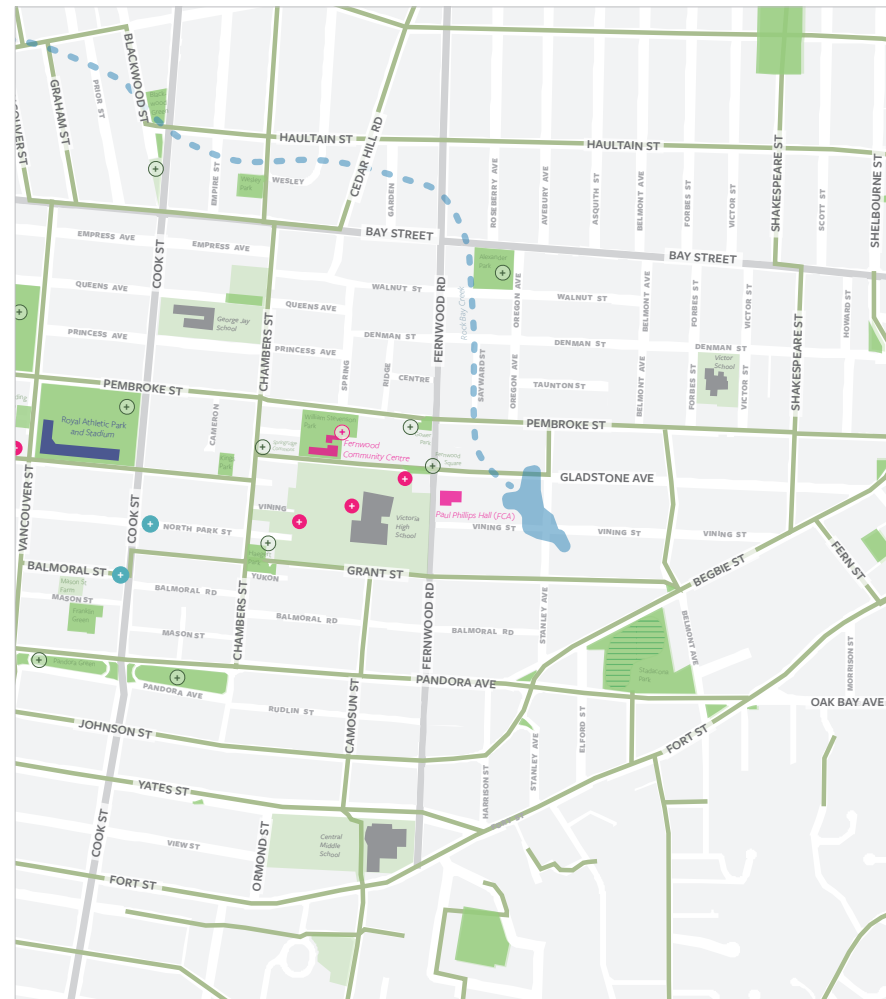


## Parks, Facilities, and Community Assets

### Parks, Open Spaces and Community Amenities serving Fernwood

- Alexander Park
- Gower Park
- Grant Park
- Haegert Park
- Kings Park
- Stadacona Park
- Wesley Park
- William Stevenson Park
- Pandora / Harris Green
- Spring Ridge Commons (School District Property)
- Vic High Lands (School District Property)
- Compost Education Centre
- Fernwood Community Centre
- Fernwood Community Association (FCA) (Paul Phillips Hall)

Map 14: Existing and Desired Parks, Open Spaces and Community Assets in and near Fernwood.



### Legend



#### Existing amenities

-  Park or Open Space
-  Community or Recreation Centre
-  School
-  Stadium or Arena
-  Neighbourhood Greenways (see Map 12)

#### Desired amenities

-  Enhancement to existing park/open space
-  Desired community amenity\*
-  Enhancement to existing community amenity
-  Desired plaza or public space\*

#### Ecological assets for enhancement, recognition, or preservation

-  Former route of Rock Bay Creek
-  Sensitive Ecosystem (Woodland) Identified in Official Community Plan

\*Greater Victoria School District properties provide valuable green and open space to the community. While not owned or managed by the City, the spaces are shown here to reflect their importance and the community desire to continue to provide public access or enhanced community use.

\*Locations are general or approximate and may represent one idea among many; additional planning may be required.

## Intent and Objectives

These objectives provide context and overarching guidance for parks, facilities, and community assets in Fernwood when interpreting the policies that follow.

### Protect the Environment

Parks and open spaces protect and improve native ecosystems and help the city adapt to climate change.

- Increase protection and enhancement of native ecosystems in parks and open spaces across the city.
- Improve sustainability and ecosystem services.
- Mitigate and adapt to climate change.

### Foster Engaging Experiences for Everyone

The parks and open spaces system meets current and future needs of Victoria residents, provides a range of different experiences, encourages active living and is multi-functional, inclusive, and accessible.

- Parks and amenities are equitably distributed and well maintained.
- Expand the variety of experiences and activities within the parks and open spaces system.

- Parks and open spaces offer a wide variety of activity spaces that contribute to the health and wellness of residents and engage youth and children.
- Improve and maximize the utility of existing sports amenities.
- Encourage community gardening and local food production by providing multi-generational, collaborative opportunities for learning and growing.
- Parks and amenities are easy to find and well-connected by pedestrian and cycling routes.

### Celebrate Victoria

Special places and amenities in the parks and open spaces system animate the city and support events for residents and visitors.

- Parks and open spaces highlight Victoria's unique features and character, and support arts, culture, and tourism.





## Parks, Facilities, and Community Assets - Intent and Objectives

### Strengthen Partnerships

Community members, stewards, and partners help enhance all parks and open spaces in the city.

- Collaborate with owners of public green space, other partners, and volunteers throughout the city to maximize community benefits.

### Maintain and Enhance the Urban Forest

The urban forest, habitat, and native ecosystems are maintained and enhanced per the directions in the *Urban Forest Master Plan*.

### Community Facilities

Continue to support the current and evolving needs of the diverse population in Fernwood including households of all ages, incomes, family types and lifestyles.

### Local Food Systems

Build on the strong network of community food systems in Fernwood to reflect the values of food security and sustainability.

Continue to support opportunities to grow, access, and learn about food close to home and encourage the prioritization of equity, diversity and inclusion in food, cooking, and gardening programs.





## Policies

Parks and open spaces, community facilities, and other assets contribute to the well-being of Fernwood and can help to foster a more equitable, inclusive community.

### Parks

**11.1 Community Priorities:** Through the future expansion of parks or the development of park improvement plans, consider the following community priorities:

- Explore introducing a water or spray park and/or other water features that help draw people to and animate the space in a park in the north-central neighbourhoods of Victoria.
- Incorporating more benches, tables, and shade structures for weather protection and seasonal comfort in parks and public open spaces.
- Incorporating public washrooms and drinking fountain facilities.

**11.2 Indigenous Spaces:** In partnership with Indigenous people, seek opportunities to create or enhance spaces that support gathering and cultural practices.

**11.3 Outdoor Music:** Through planning for arts and culture facilities and implementation of the *Music Strategy*, consider the location of an outdoor space designed to accommodate small-scale, outdoor music performance in the northern/central neighbourhoods of Victoria, complementing the Cameron Bandshell at Beacon Hill Park.

**11.4 Haegert Park Improvements:** Seek opportunities to enhance or expand Haegert Park including through redevelopment, land acquisition, street closures (see Mobility section) and/or a park improvement plan that considers the community priorities noted above.

**11.5 Stevenson Park Improvements:** Consider future enhancements to Stevenson Park through a park improvement plan that considers the community priorities noted above.



## Parks, Facilities, and Community Assets - Policies

**11.6 Gower Park Improvements:** Consider future enhancements to Gower Park that considers the community priorities noted above. The following ideas were mentioned during consultation:

- Supporting mobility connections through the park.
- Design features and space planning that better connects the park to Fernwood Square (e.g., seating areas).

**11.7 Alexander Park Improvements:**

Consider future enhancements to Alexander Park through a park improvement plan and planning process, in coordination with the community.

**11.8 Pandora Improvements:** Consider future enhancements to Pandora Green / Harris Green and consider ideas developed during the Pandora Green Charrette.

**11.9 Pockets of Green:** Support community initiatives to explore opportunities to create small green spaces, pockets of nature or food production on underused lands, including through placemaking programs and the Growing in the City program.

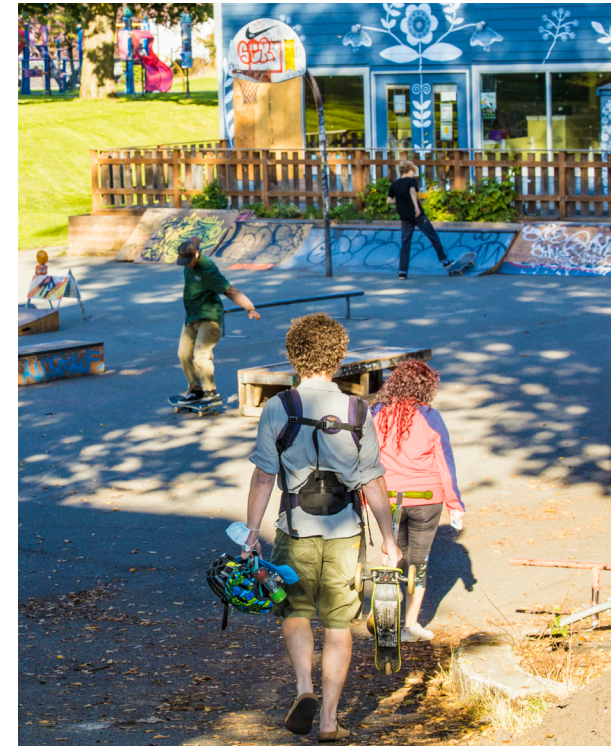
**11.10 Fernwood Square Refresh:** Consider improvements to Fernwood Square (see Public Space and Placemaking section).

**11.11 Fernwood Skateboarding:** Explore opportunities for permanent skate infrastructure in collaboration with the community.

**11.12 Greenways:** Better connect green spaces to one another and to areas of higher-density housing through new greenways (see Mobility section).

**11.13 Use of School Lands:** Work with the Greater Victoria School District to continue to provide public access to and maintain the Vic High grounds as a public asset. Work with the School District to enhance and program the Spring Ridge Common space for community use and enjoyment.

**11.14 Rock Bay Creek:** Identify opportunities for daylighting or celebrating Rock Bay Creek, focusing on public spaces (considering how daylighting would interact with other uses of these spaces), large sites that might redevelop in the future, and streets (Haultain Street, Blackwood Street, Kings Road).





## Parks, Facilities, and Community Assets - Policies

### Community Facilities

**11.15 Indigenous Spaces:** In partnership with Indigenous people, seek opportunities to create or enhance spaces that support gathering and cultural practices.

**11.16 Community Programming:** Continue to work with the Fernwood Neighbourhood Resource Group, the Fernwood Community Association and others to sustain and enhance community programming, services, and facilities that meet the evolving needs of the community.

Support equity, diversity, and inclusion in services and engagement with the community, in line with the City's emerging equity framework.

**11.17 Fernwood Community Centre:**

Work with the Fernwood Neighbourhood Resources Group in exploring the potential redevelopment and enhancement of the Fernwood Community Centre, including community services and amenities, and opportunities to co-locate affordable housing.

**11.18 Community Space Near Vic High:**

Establish an indoor community amenity space as part of the planned affordable and mixed-income housing west of Vic High, with access to outdoor spaces.

**11.19 School Facilities:** Work with the School District to make school facilities more broadly available for community programming, sports, and indoor and outdoor gathering.

**11.20 Indigenous Spaces:** In partnership with Indigenous people, seek opportunities to create or enhance spaces that support gathering and cultural practices.





## Parks, Facilities, and Community Assets - Policies

### Local Food Systems

**11.21 Compost Education Centre:** Continue to encourage community programming and public education at the Compost Education Centre.

**11.22 Community Gardens:** Support community-led efforts to enhance or establish additional community gardens including allotment gardens, native plantings, pollinator gardens or community orchards through the Growing in the City program and other placemaking programs.

**11.23 Food Security:** Support community programs to distribute food and enhance food security, including “Good Food Boxes”, community supported agriculture, and others.

**11.24 Food Programs:** As part of any expansion in community facilities, support additional capacity for commercial kitchen uses and space for family meal programs, community teas and other social connections around food (e.g., “Family Dinners,” cooking programs, or social enterprises).

**11.25 Food in Public Space:** Support the development and enhancement of public spaces that includes opportunities to share, sell, and grow food.

**11.26 Future Food Systems Planning:** Support further exploration of local food systems improvements through community-led planning, including a Community-Led Action process, if there is interest.

### Future Planning

**11.27 Future Planning:** Additional planning for parks, facilities, and community assets may be identified in future stages of local area planning.



## Supporting Food Systems in Fernwood

Growing, cultivating, and sharing food is important to Fernwood residents.

Victoria’s Growing in the City program supports urban food production on public and private land. The program supports urban food production on private land in new developments, provides resources and support for community-led boulevard gardening, bee and hen keeping, urban food trees, rooftop greenhouse, the establishment of community gardens, and more. Short-term Fernwood priorities can be identified in a Community Action Guide.

# Implementation and Next Steps

Implementation of this plan will be ongoing. Some ideas may be realized in the near-term, others could take time. This plan will also be updated as required when additional planning takes place.

The policies and ideas in this plan will be implemented over time, in some cases through City strategic plans and annual budgets. In other cases, concepts may only come to fruition as opportunities arise, including through redevelopment proposals or community-led action.

When development proposals or grant submissions are considered by the City,

this plan will be used as reference to guide decision making, together with the *Official Community Plan* and other City plans, policies, and initiatives.

Planning will also continue and this plan may be amended as future work proceeds. Some future work may be coordinated by the City and completed together with the community, other work may be community-led.

- ▶ **The City will continue to engage Fernwood when considering areas shared with neighbouring communities through future local area planning processes, specifically as noted in this plan.**
- ▶ **The City will support a process to develop a Community-led Action Guide if community members and organizations find such a process to be appropriate or useful.**







# Downtown Core Area Plan

SEPTEMBER 2011

Updated: May 2022





# 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.

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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<sup>2</sup> to 1,174,300 m<sup>2</sup>. If these forecasts are accurate, without increasing the development potential, the Downtown neighbourhood will experience a shortfall of between 110,600 m<sup>2</sup> and 616,900 m<sup>2</sup> 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

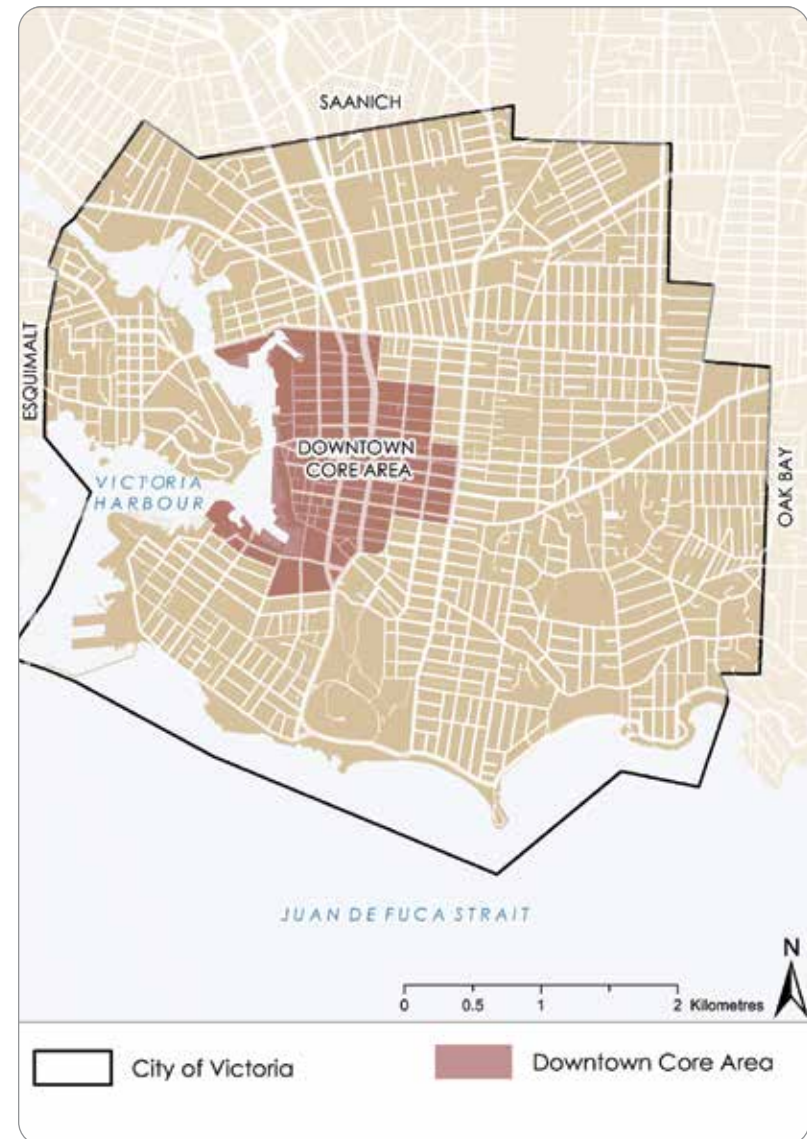
This Plan is called the “Downtown Core Area Plan” – a new name to reflect Victoria’s new urban reality.

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 ...field, 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

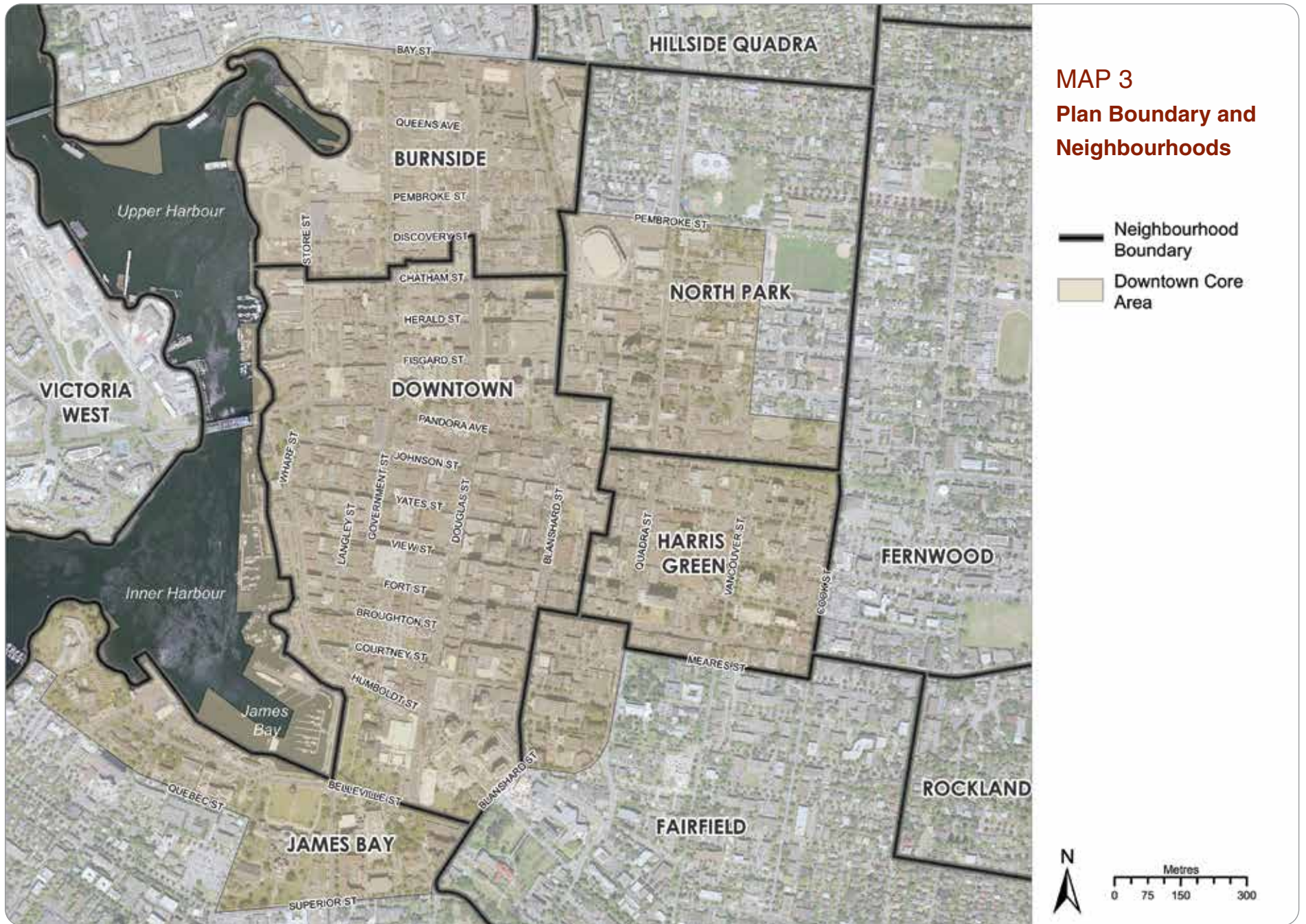
For the purposes of this Plan, the Downtown Core Area is divided into five districts:

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

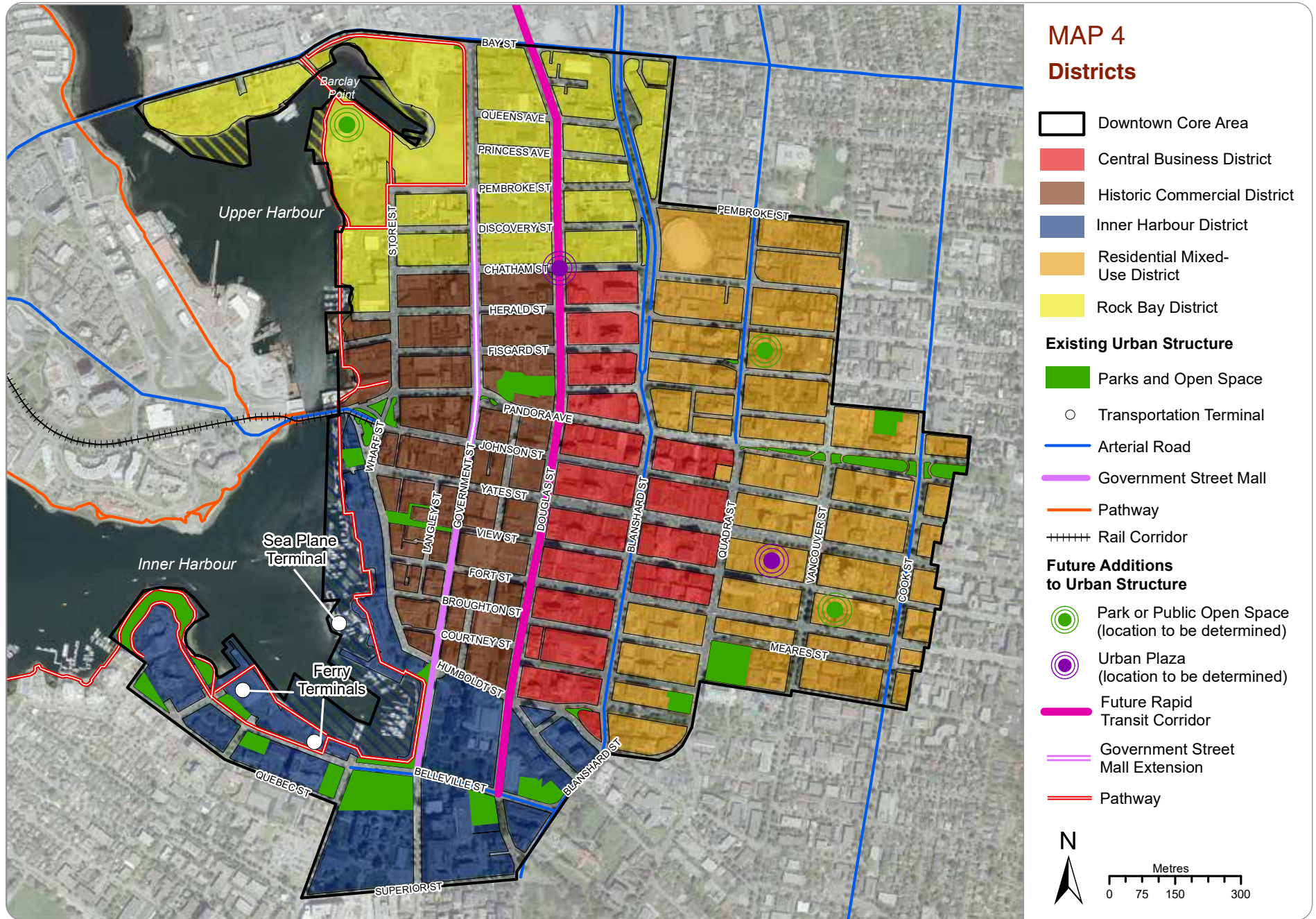
(SEE MAP 4: DISTRICTS)

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.









## 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<sup>2</sup> to 1,174,300 m<sup>2</sup>.
- 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<sup>2</sup> and 616,900 m<sup>2</sup> 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.

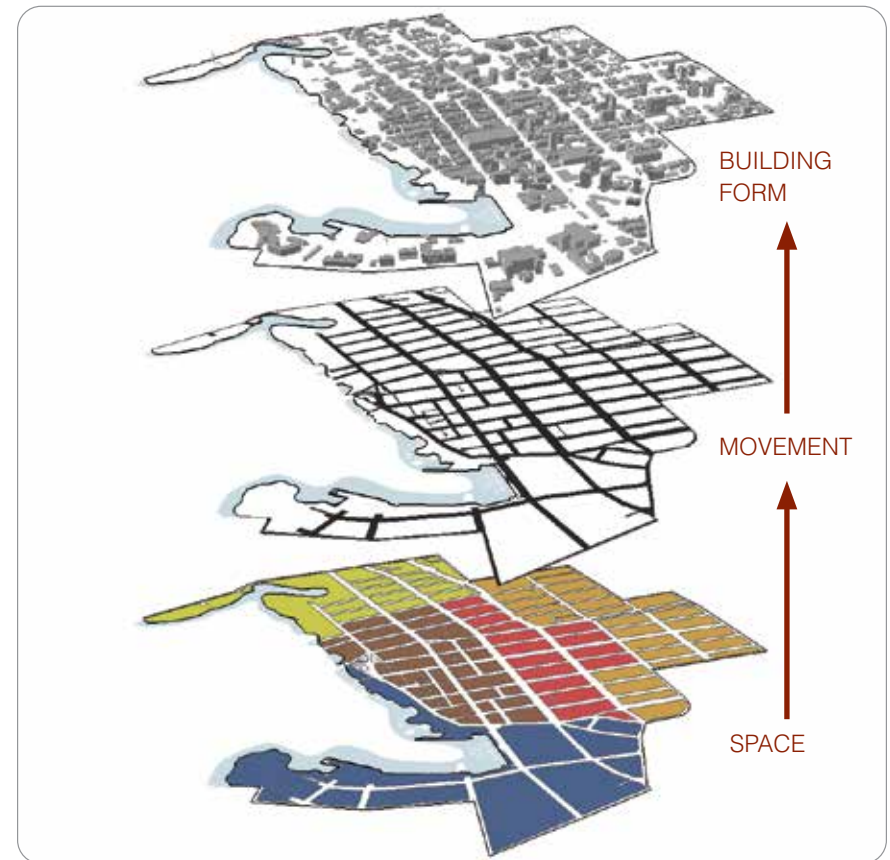


Illustration 1: Urban Structure Elements



## SPACE

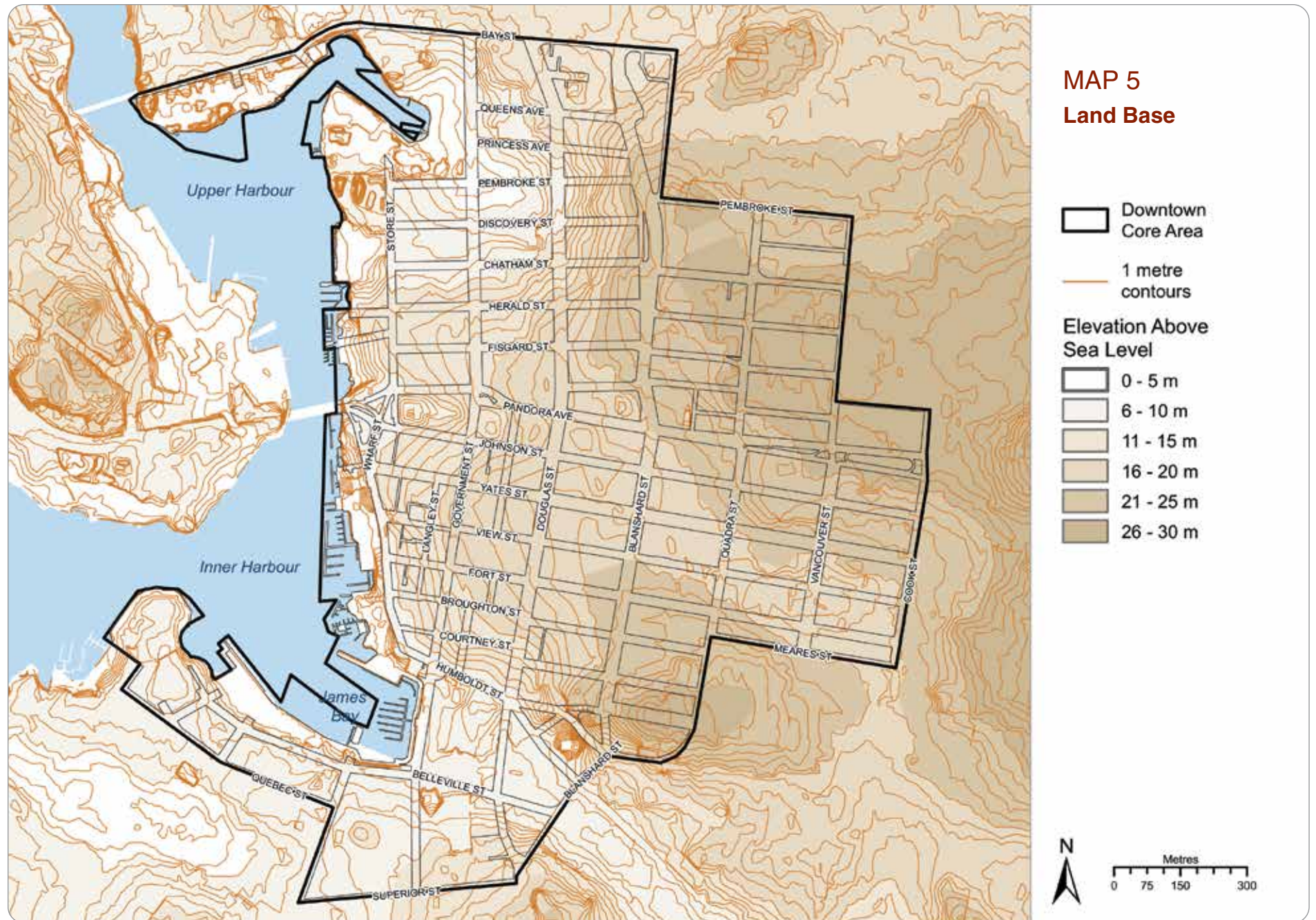
The Downtown Core Area is compact and walkable, covering approximately 188 hectares (465 acres). It gradually rises in elevation from the Inner Harbour towards Douglas Street and Blanshard Street; however, much of the central area is relatively level, with two lower basins around Rock Bay to the north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

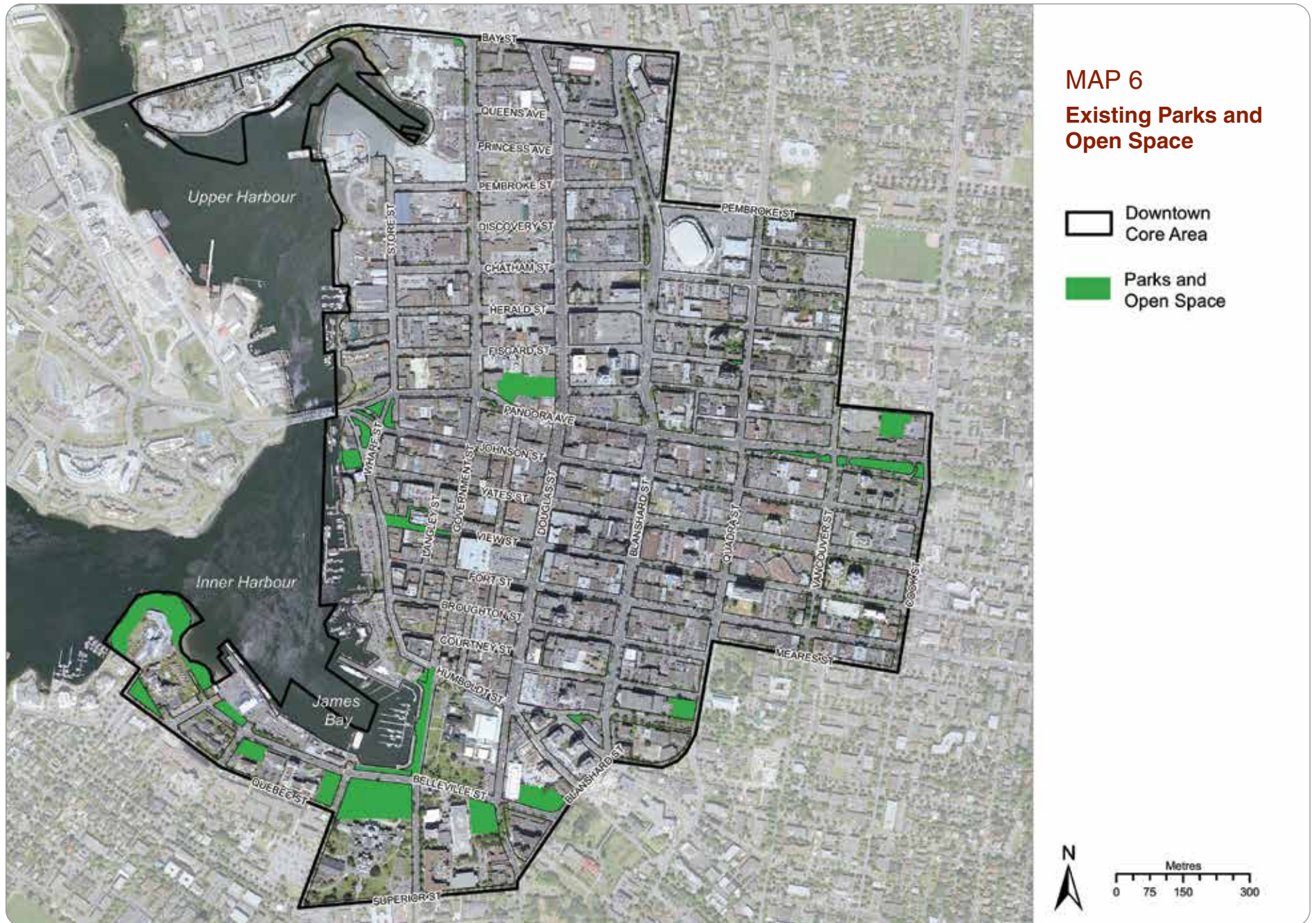
The Downtown Core Area is also defined by a variety of unique public parks and open spaces ranging from the intimate scale of Bastion Square to the large scale openness of the front lawn of the Parliament Building which serves as both a public open space and a place-defining characteristic of the Inner 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

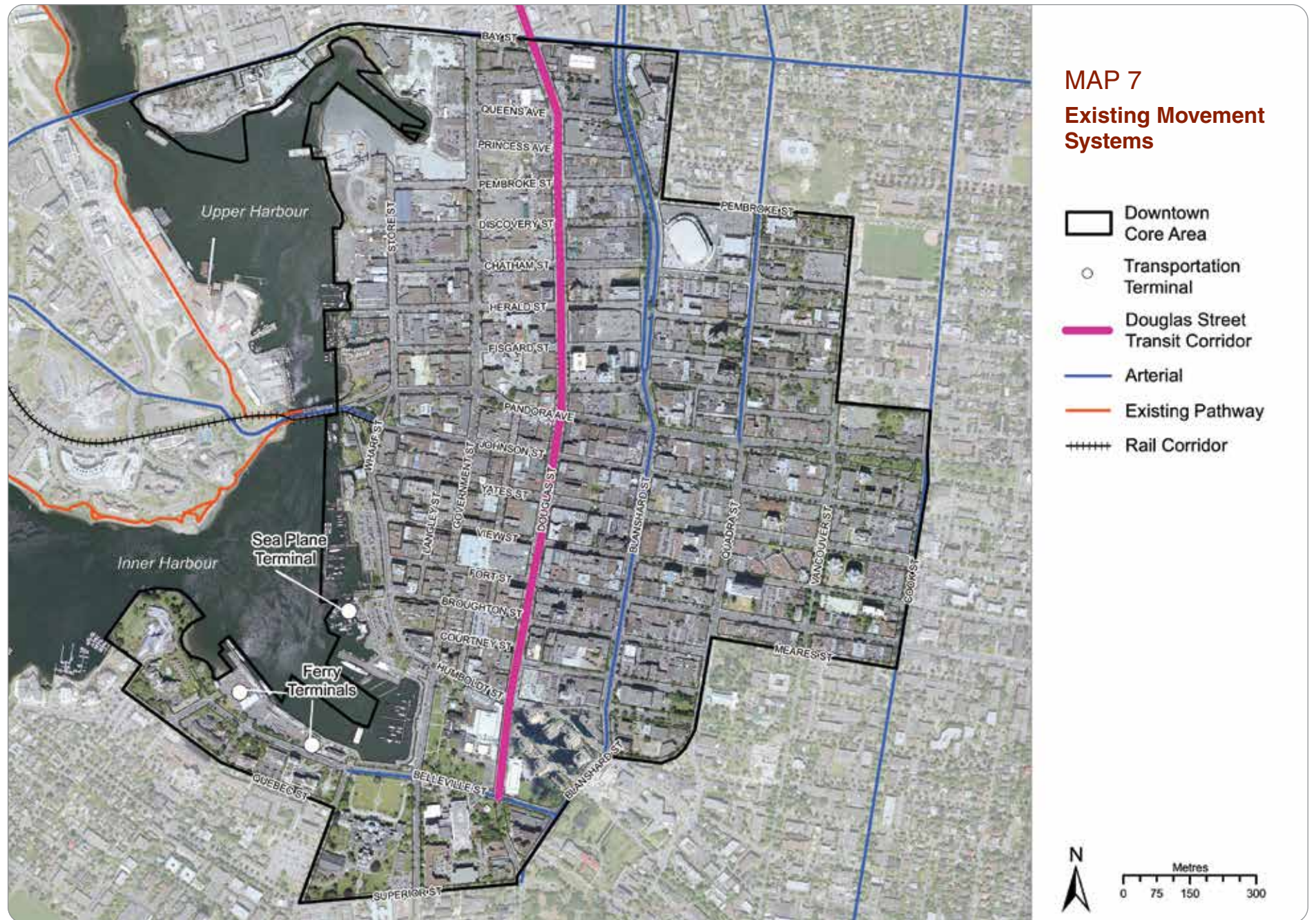
Primary downtown streets from a transportation perspective include Douglas Street, Blanshard Street, Bay Street, Cook Street and the portion of Quadra Street located north of Johnson Street. These streets provide key links between the Downtown Core Area and other surrounding areas of the city and the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











## 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.

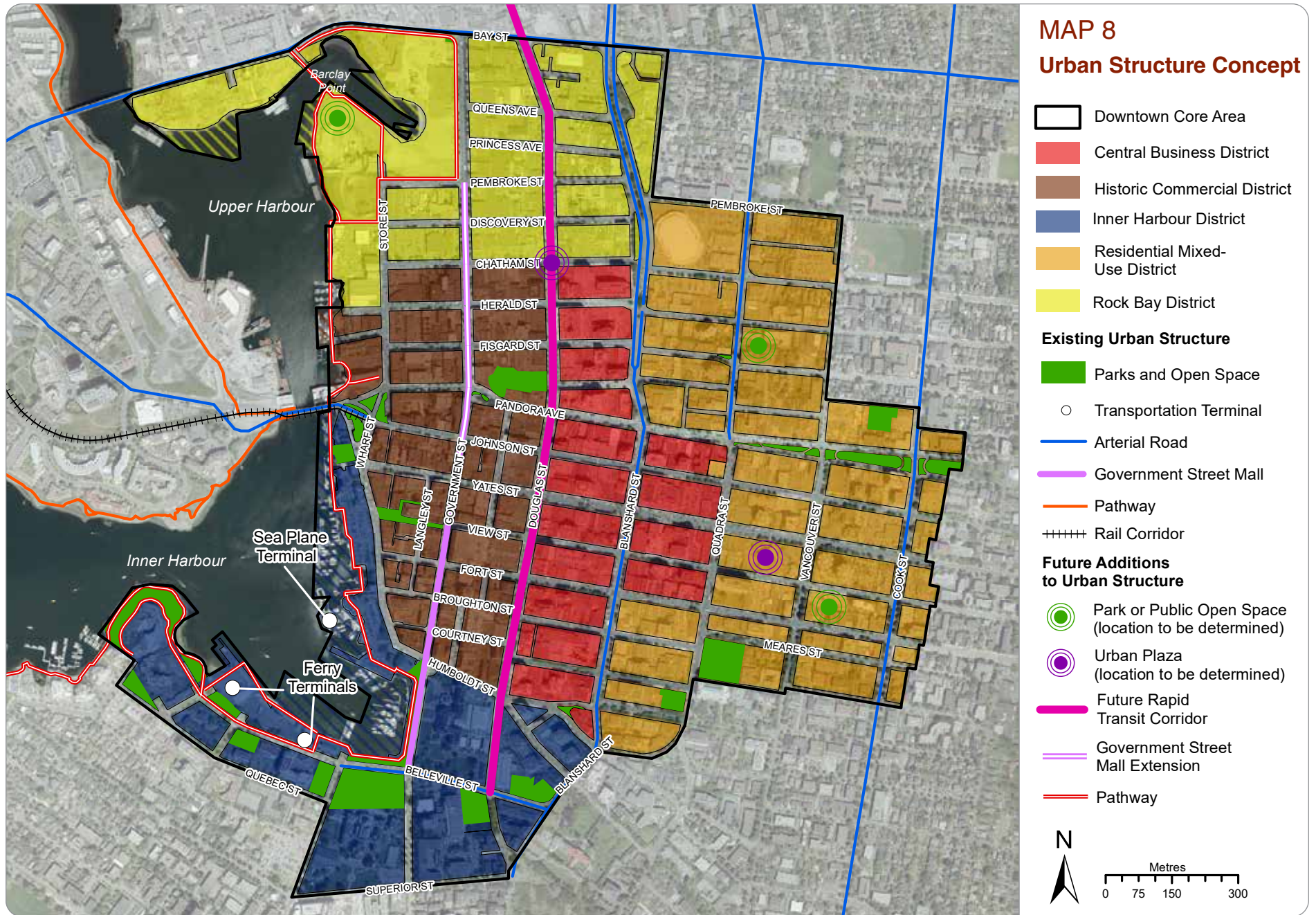
**OFFICE DEVELOPMENT**

- 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)

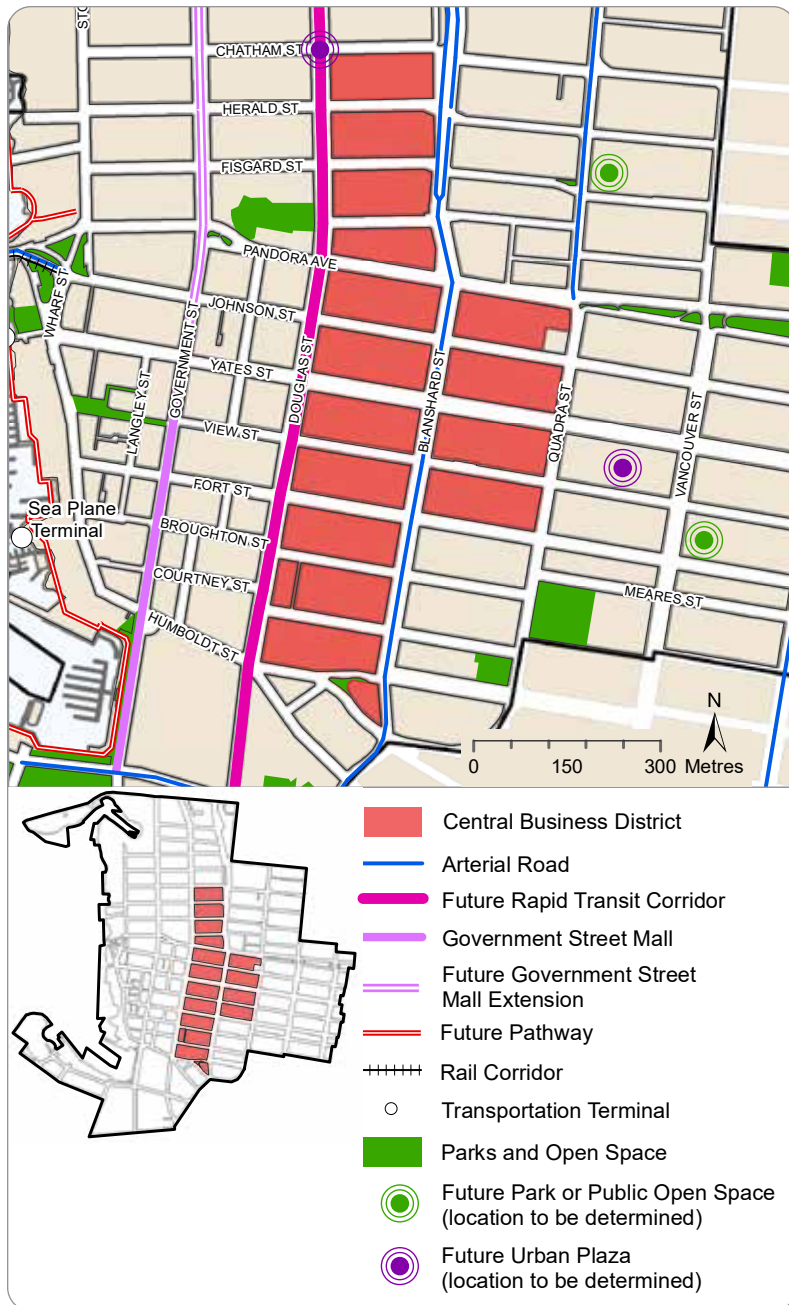
The CBD is the main employment centre for Victoria and the Region as a whole. Its concentration of higher density office buildings helps to attract and retain a range of supporting commercial uses – such as restaurants, cafés, convenience stores, office supply stores, retail stores, hair salons and other 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*.

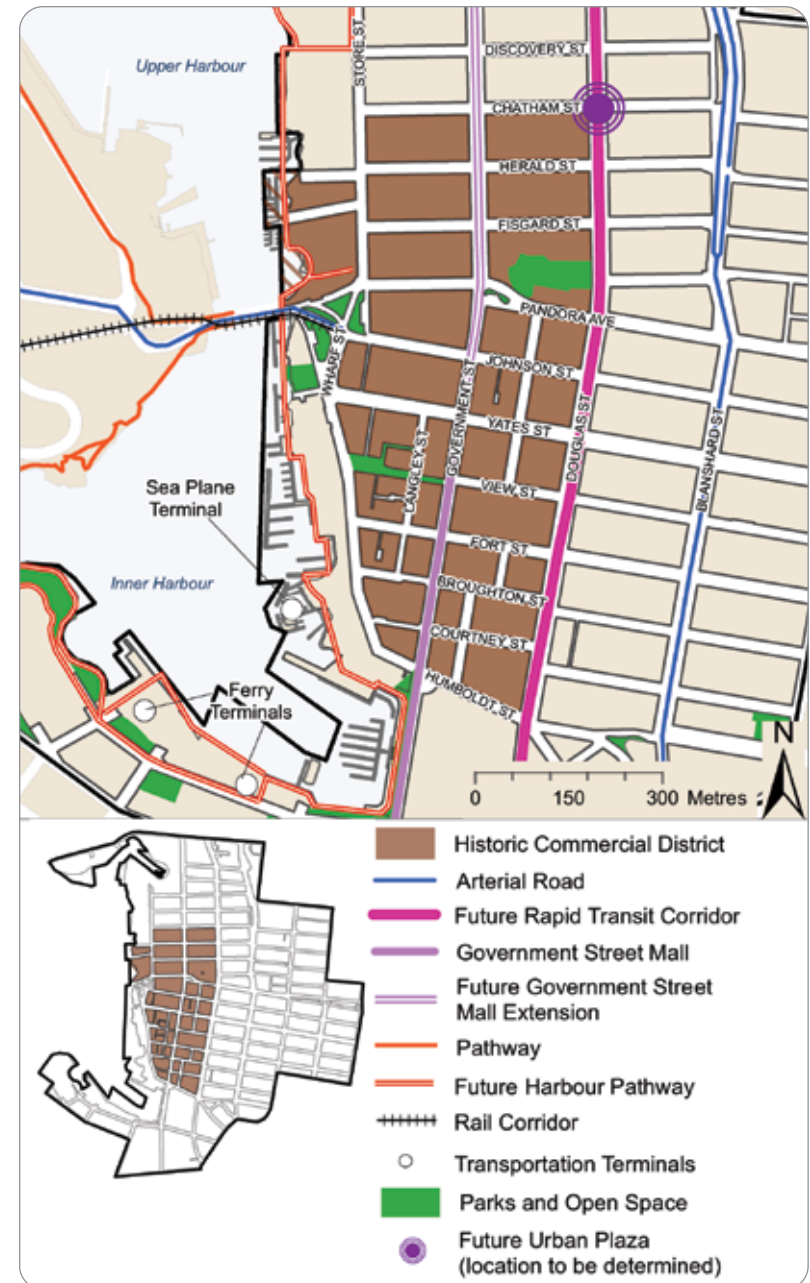
## HISTORIC COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

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 m<sup>2</sup> (420,000 ft<sup>2</sup>) 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).

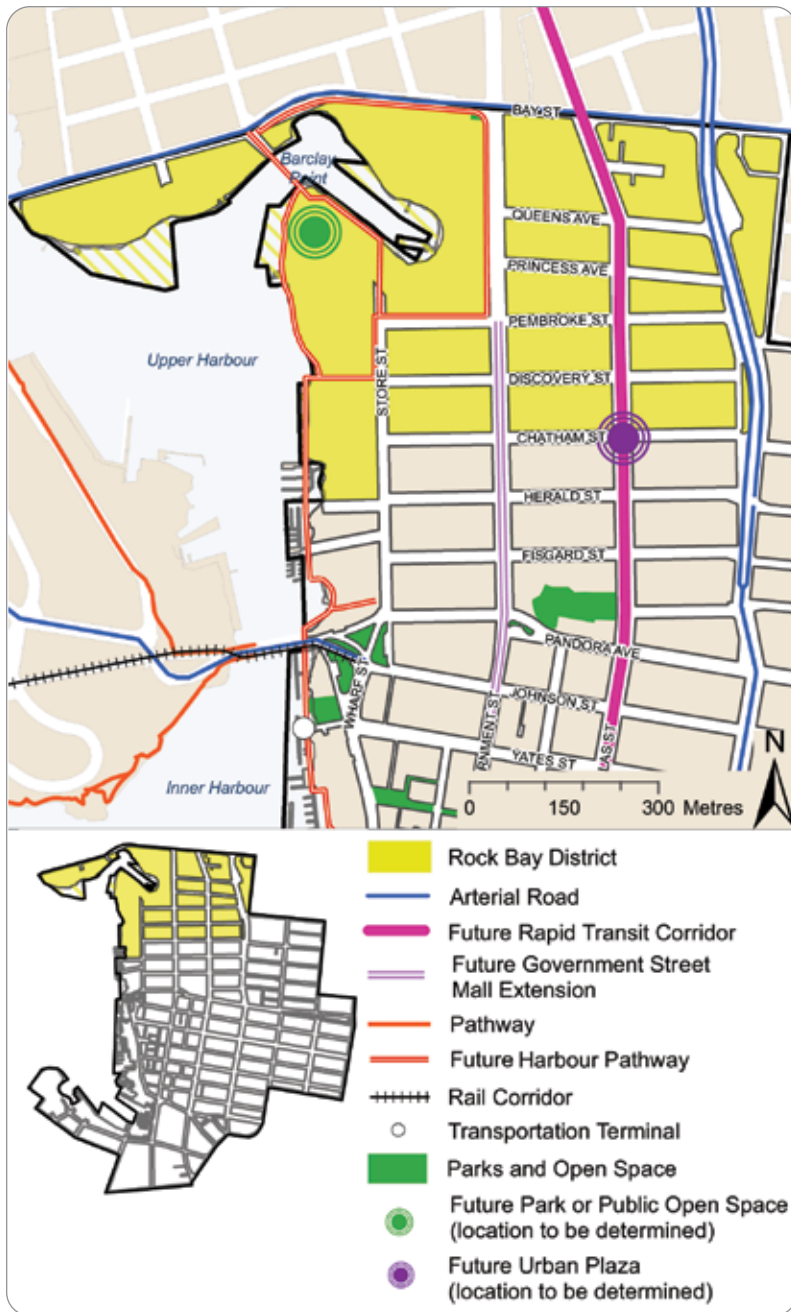
## ROCK BAY DISTRICT

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 City will undertake future planning for an Arts and Innovation district within the Rock Bay area as outlined in the City's economic development strategy: *Victoria 3.0 – Recovery Reinvention Resilience (2020–2041)*. Planning for the Arts and Innovation district will focus on developing policies and strategies for transforming and strengthening the RBD as a key employment centre for Victoria that supports research and development, well-paying jobs, high-quality public spaces, Indigenous economic development, and climate adaptation.



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 RBD 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

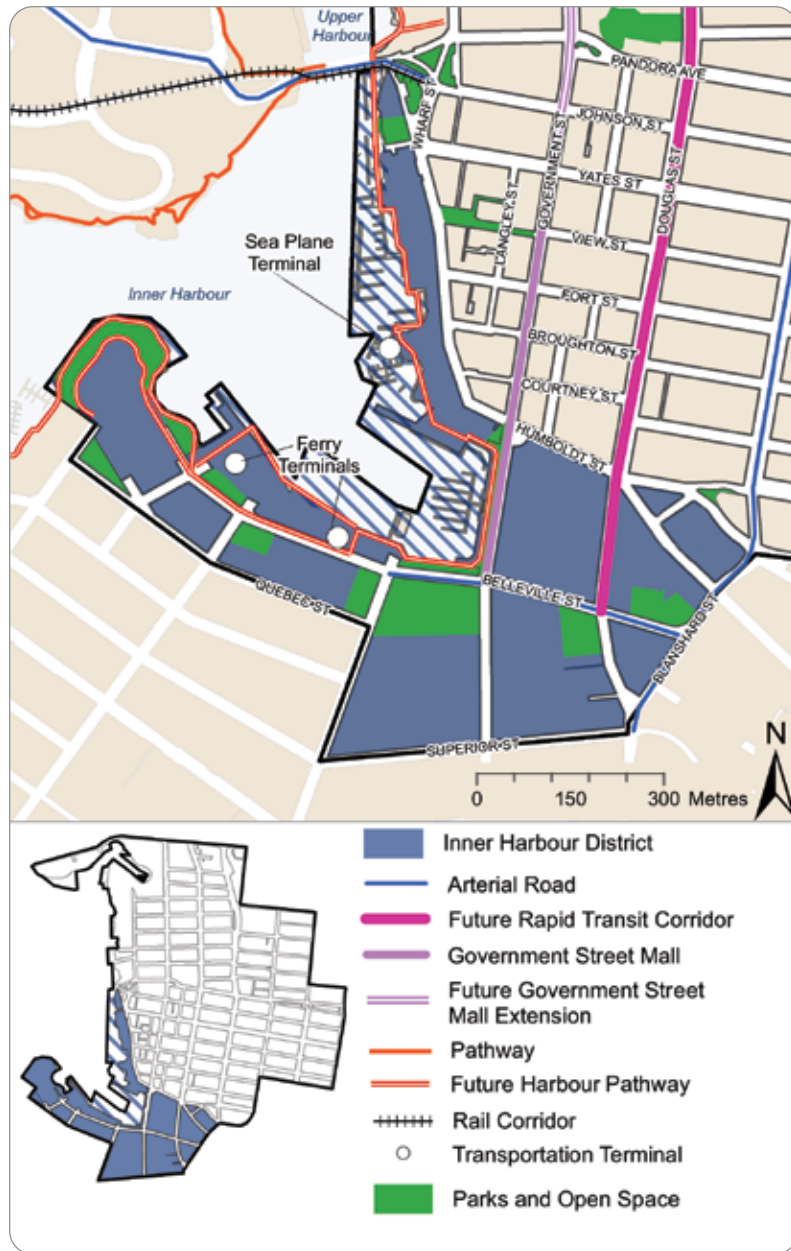
The Inner Harbour District (IHD) is approximately 37 hectares (93 acres) in size and encompasses the waterfront lands located between the Johnson Street Bridge and Laurel Point. The IHD also includes portions of the Legislative Precinct lands in recognition of their proximity to the waterfront and the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



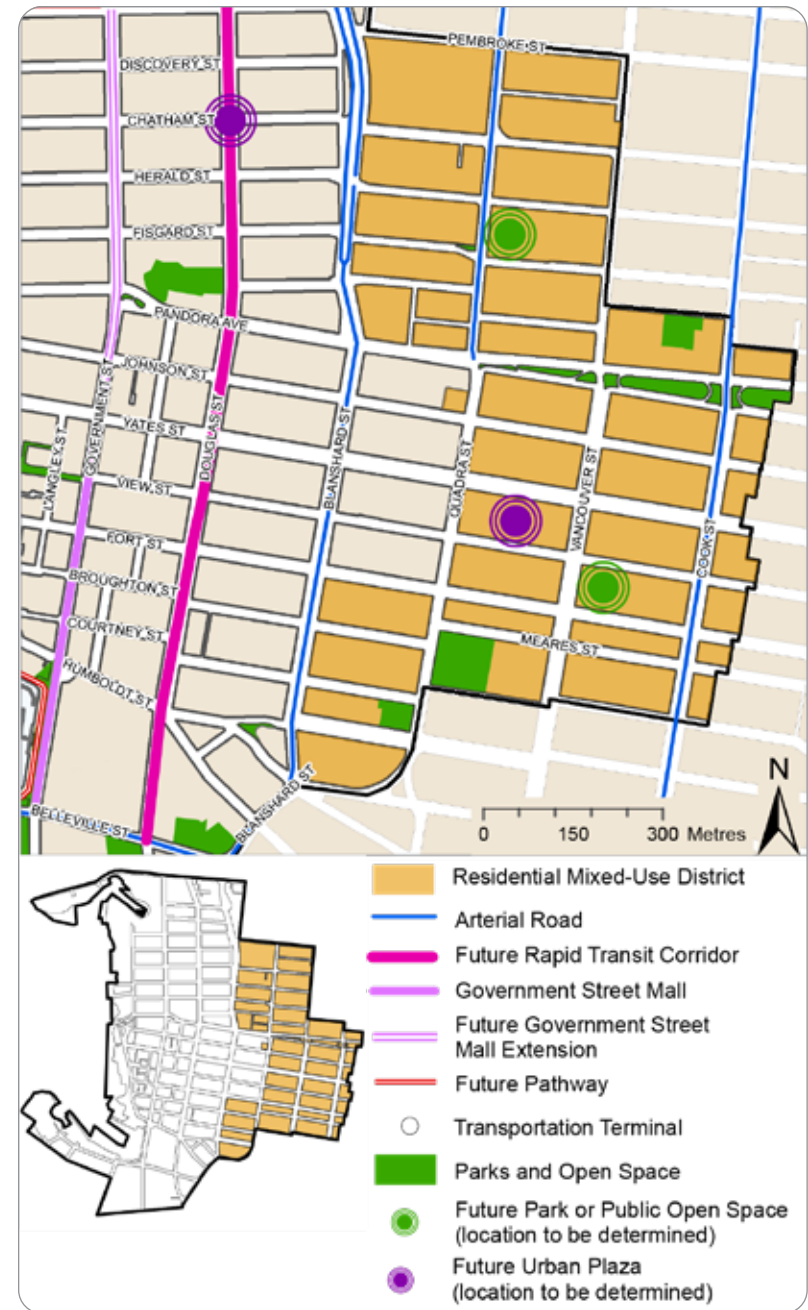
## RESIDENTIAL MIXED-USE DISTRICT

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 south, 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.

Quadra Street is also a special character area, recognized as a cultural corridor containing a series of prominent heritage landmarks, cultural institutions, and places of worship in the RMD.



**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 or office development as described in this Plan, the North Park Neighbourhood Plan (2022) and the Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan (2019).

### 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.

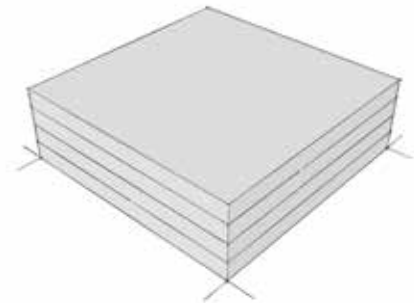
For example, if a new building is proposed on a 5,000 m<sup>2</sup> parcel of land zoned with a maximum density of 4:1 FSR, the maximum total combined floor area for the proposed building would be 20,000 m<sup>2</sup>, because this amount of combined floor area is equivalent to four times the size of 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

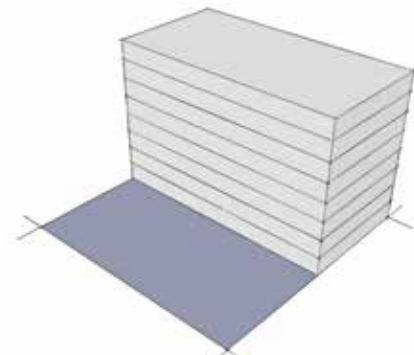
## Example 1

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



## Example 2

- 5,000 m<sup>2</sup> parcel
- 4:1 FSR maximum density
- 8 storey building
- 2,500 m<sup>2</sup> on each storey
- 20,000 m<sup>2</sup> 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

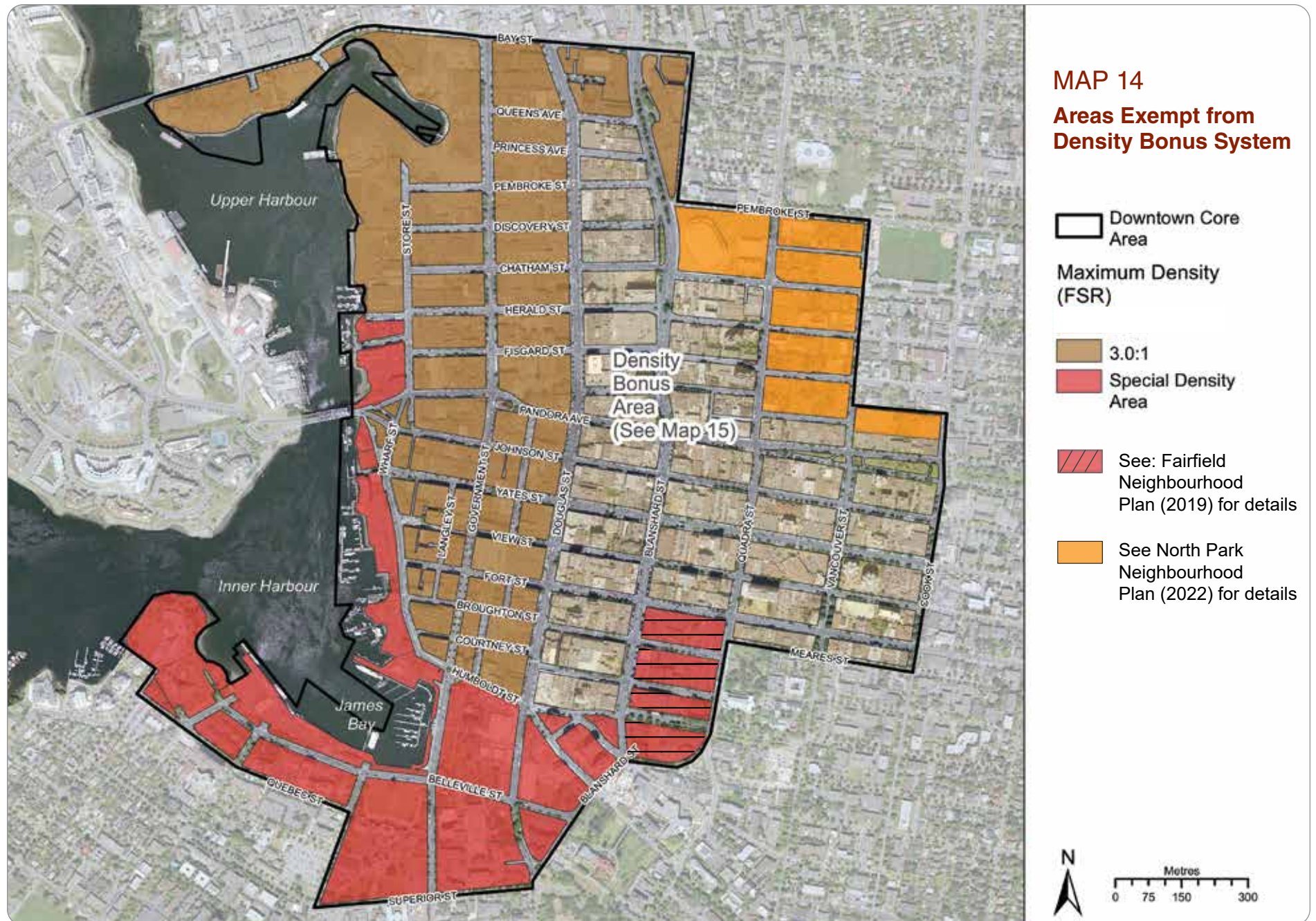
The policies and actions for the density framework contained in this Plan collectively address the following objectives:

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.





## 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 <sup>1,2,*</sup>	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 <sup>3,4,*</sup>	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 <sup>5,6,*</sup>	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 <sup>7,8,*</sup>	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 <sup>9,10,*</sup>	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 <sup>11,12,*</sup>	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 <sup>13,14,*</sup>	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:

$$\text{Land Lift Value} = \text{Additional Floor Area} \times \text{Buildable Rate}$$

$$\text{Buildable Rate} = \text{Land Value} / \text{Base Floor Area}$$

- 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:

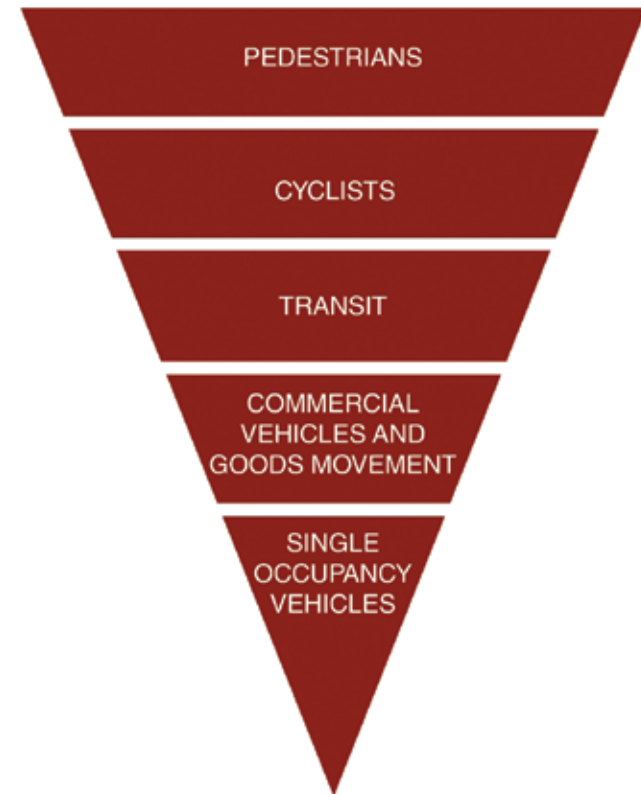
- The City of Victoria *Accessibility Framework*, which operationalizes accessibility to proactively remove and prevent barriers faced by individuals in our community.
- The *Climate Leadership Plan*, which includes strategies to reach an 80 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and transition 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

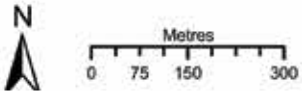
- 5.4. Complete the pedestrian network connections as identified on Map 16 through well-designed streetscape improvements.
- 5.5. Coordinate public and private streetscape improvements that enhance the pedestrian environment and support the policies of this Plan and the *Downtown Public Realm Plan* and *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



## 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.

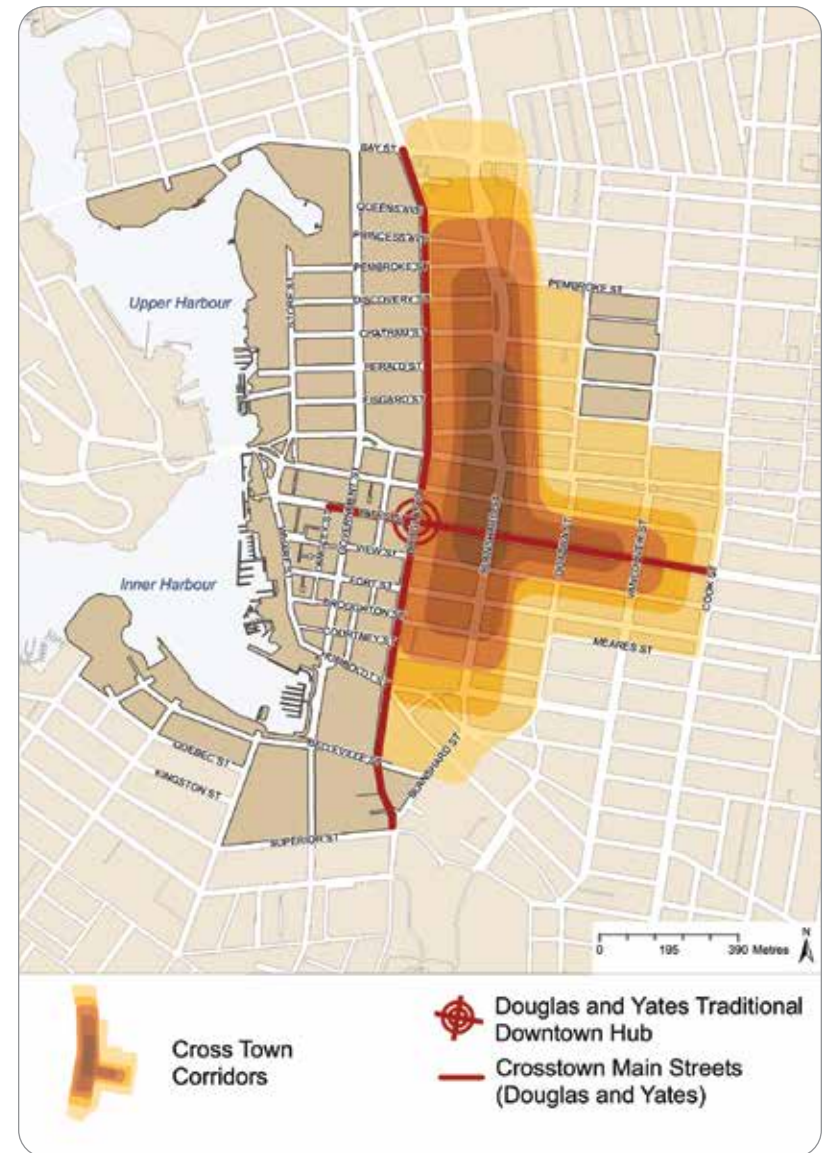


Urban design strategies can be used to create welcoming spaces and context sensitive buildings.

## 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**



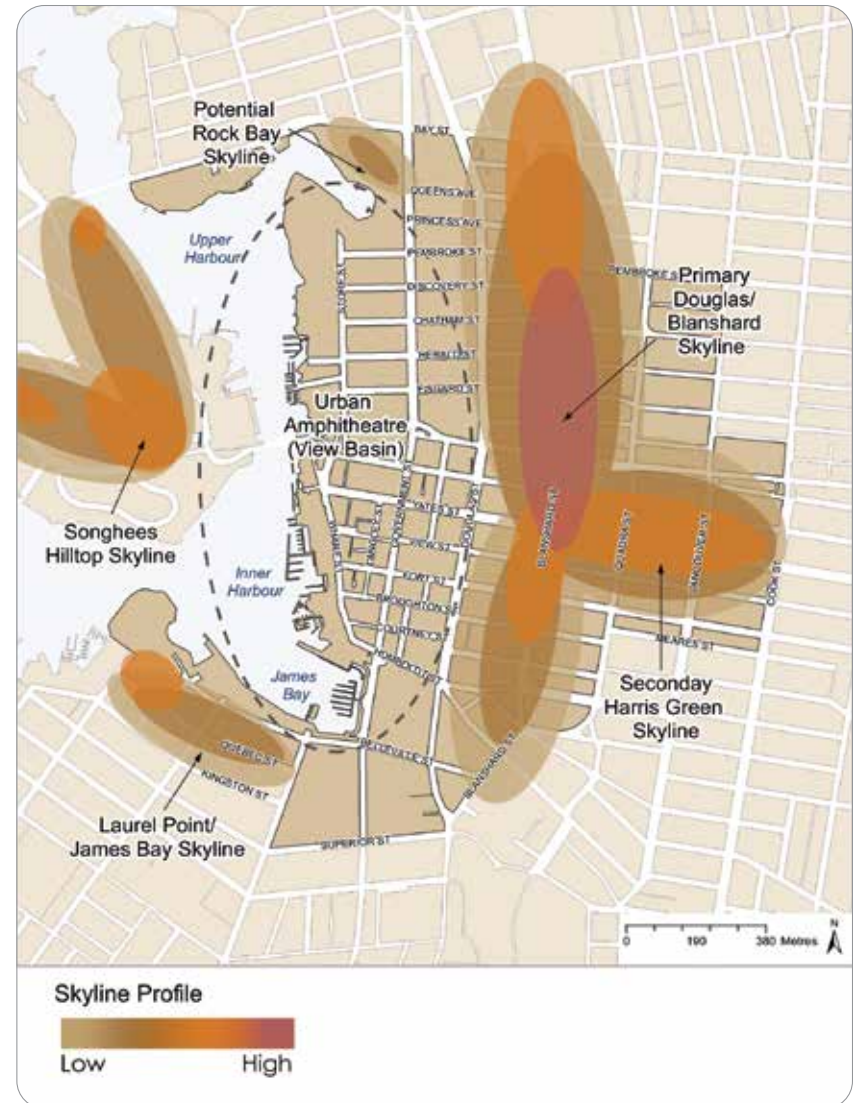
## URBAN AMPHITHEATRE CONCEPT

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)

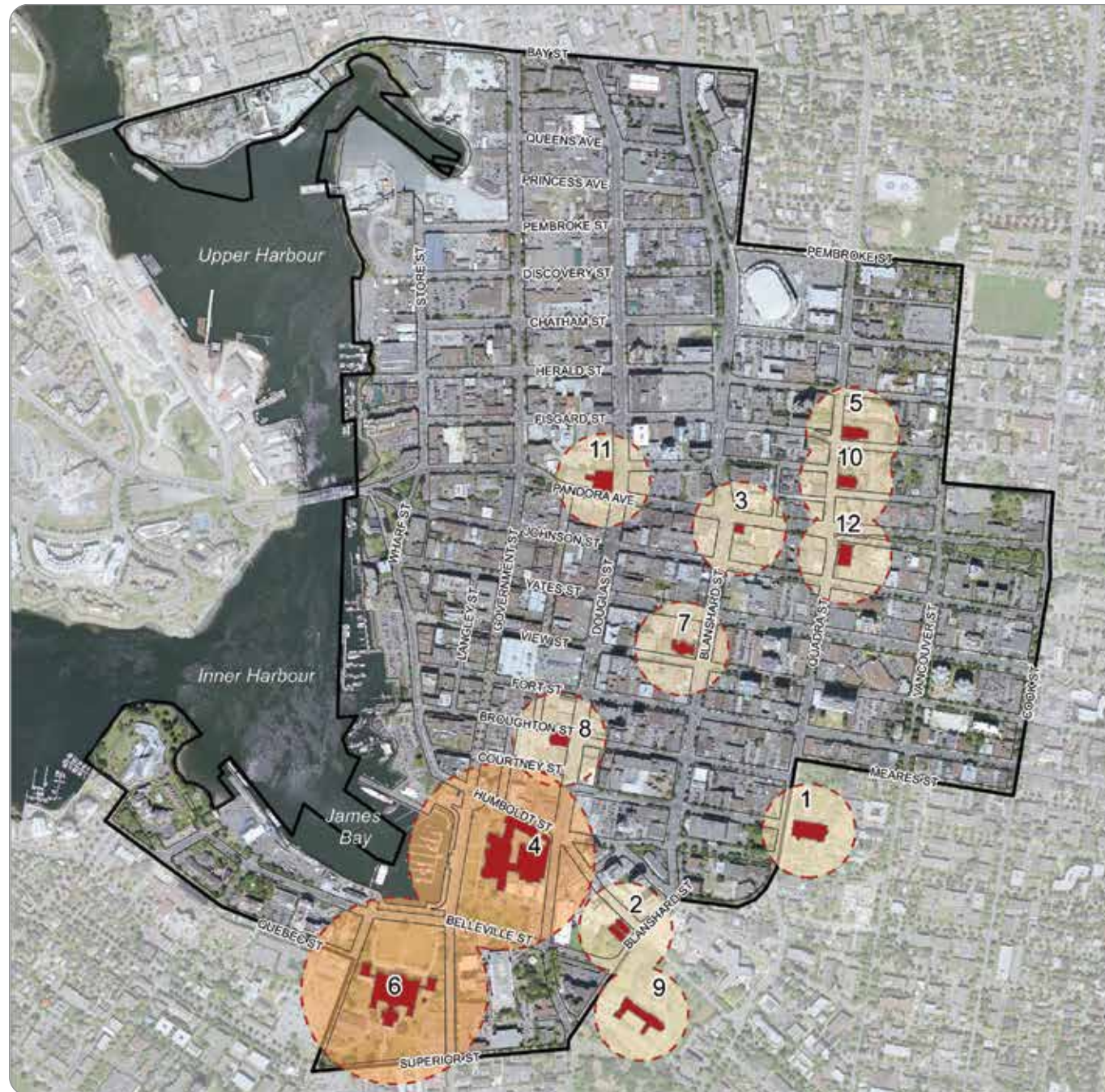
## HERITAGE LANDMARK BUILDINGS POLICIES AND ACTIONS

- 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

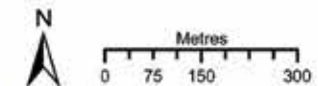
### Heritage Landmark Buildings

- 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





## PUBLIC REALM STRATEGY

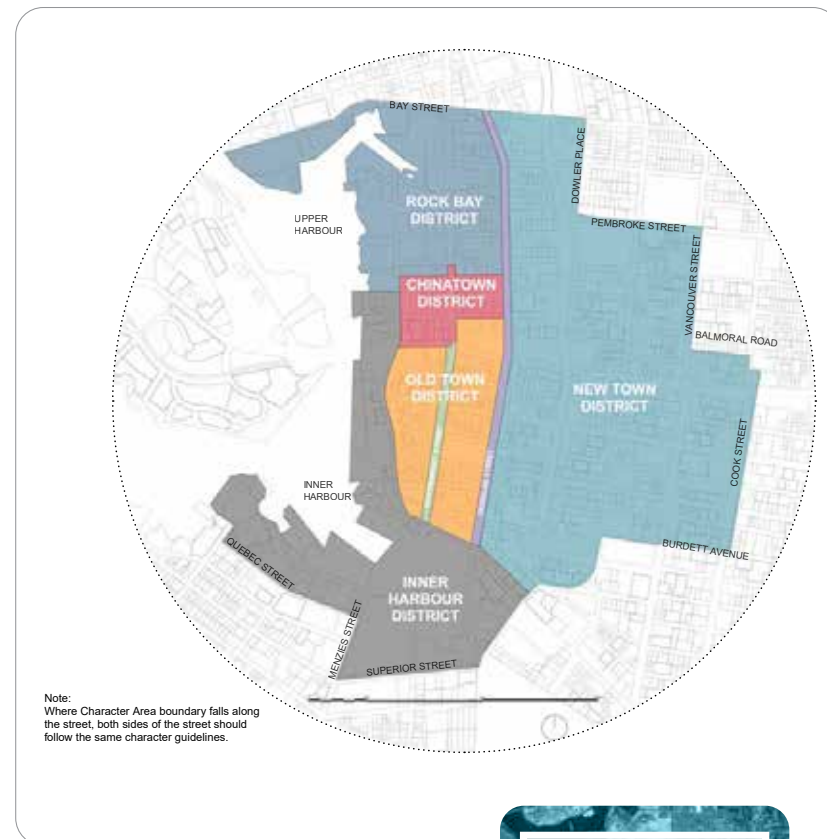
The public realm includes exterior spaces, linkages and the surrounding built form elements that are visually and physically accessible. Public realm components generally include parks and open spaces, plazas, streets, sidewalks, pathways, transportation hubs, gateways, waterfront areas, natural features,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



## 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<sup>2</sup> to 1200 m<sup>2</sup> 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.

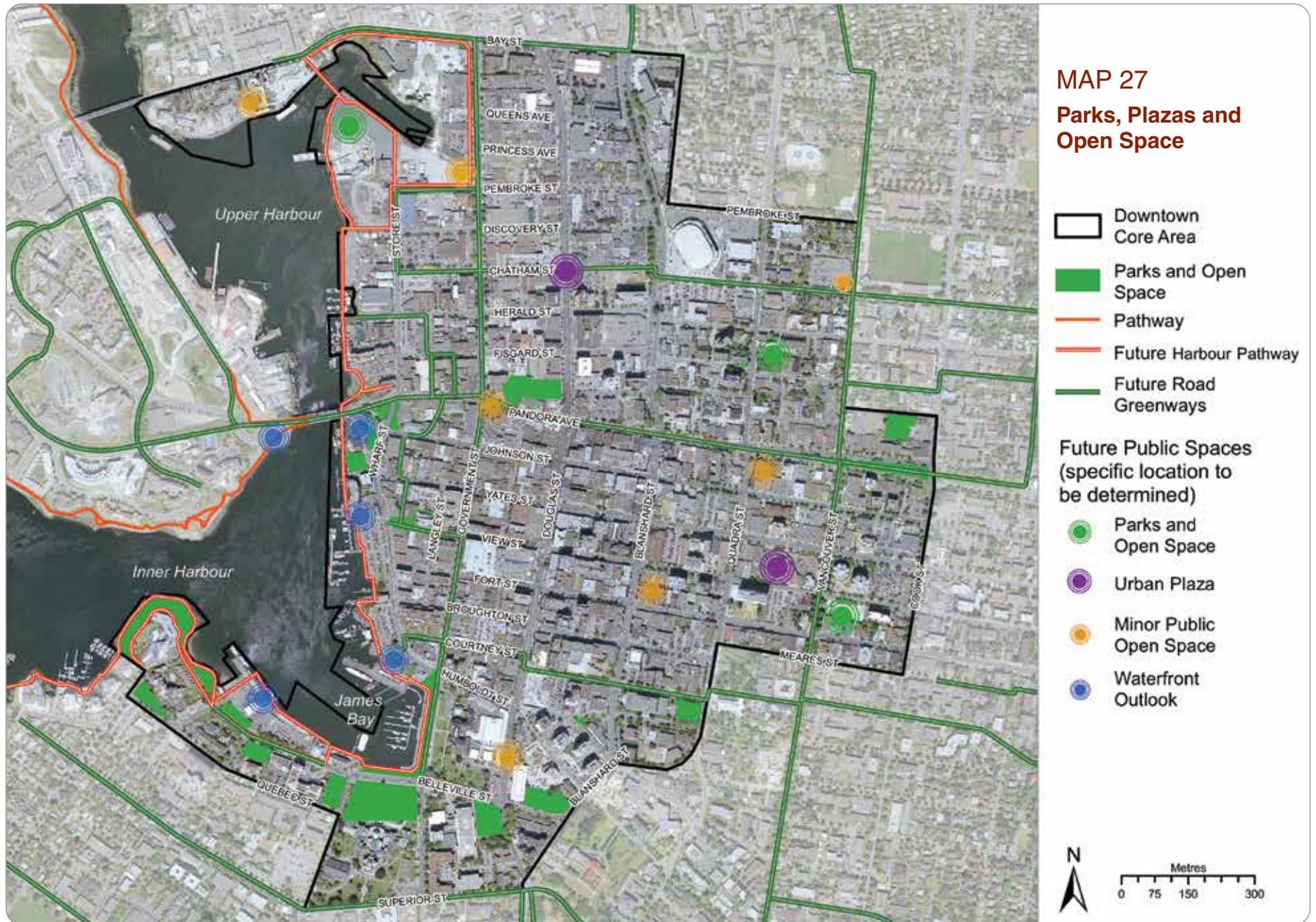
### DESIGN

- 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.





## 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.



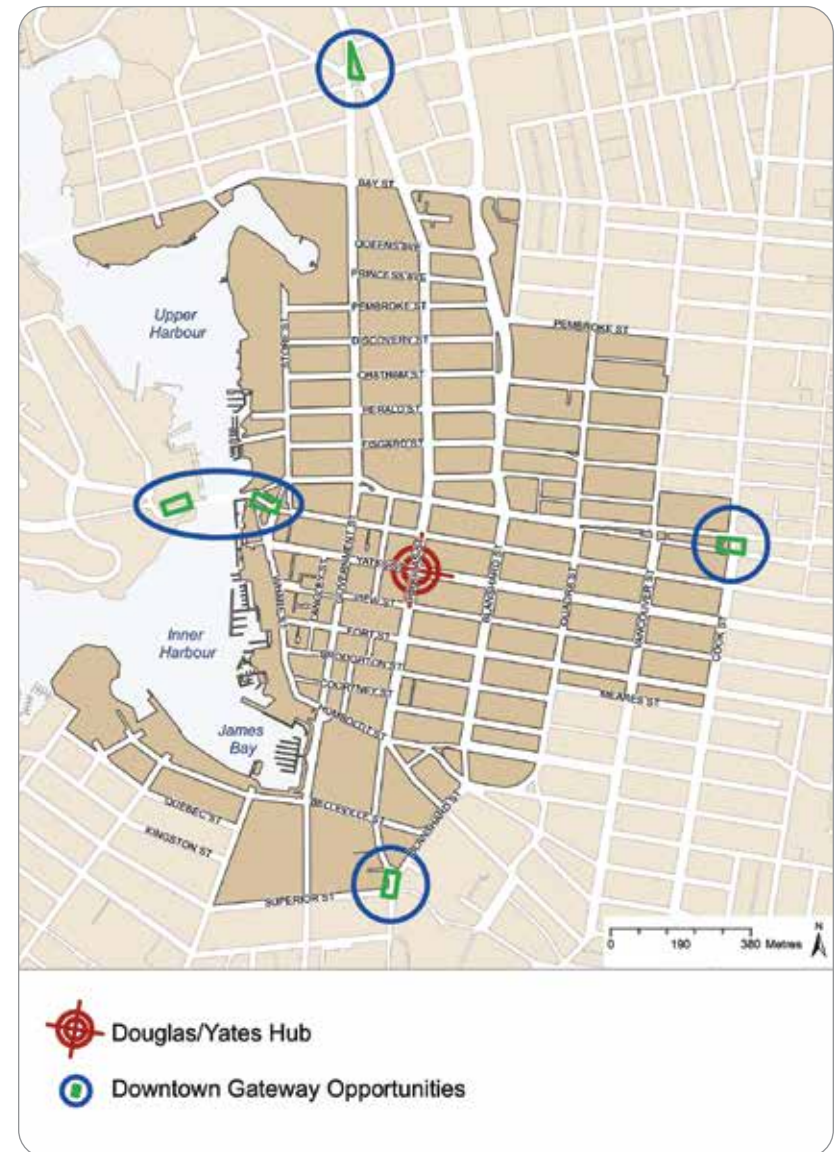
Aerial view of Rock Bay area.

## 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

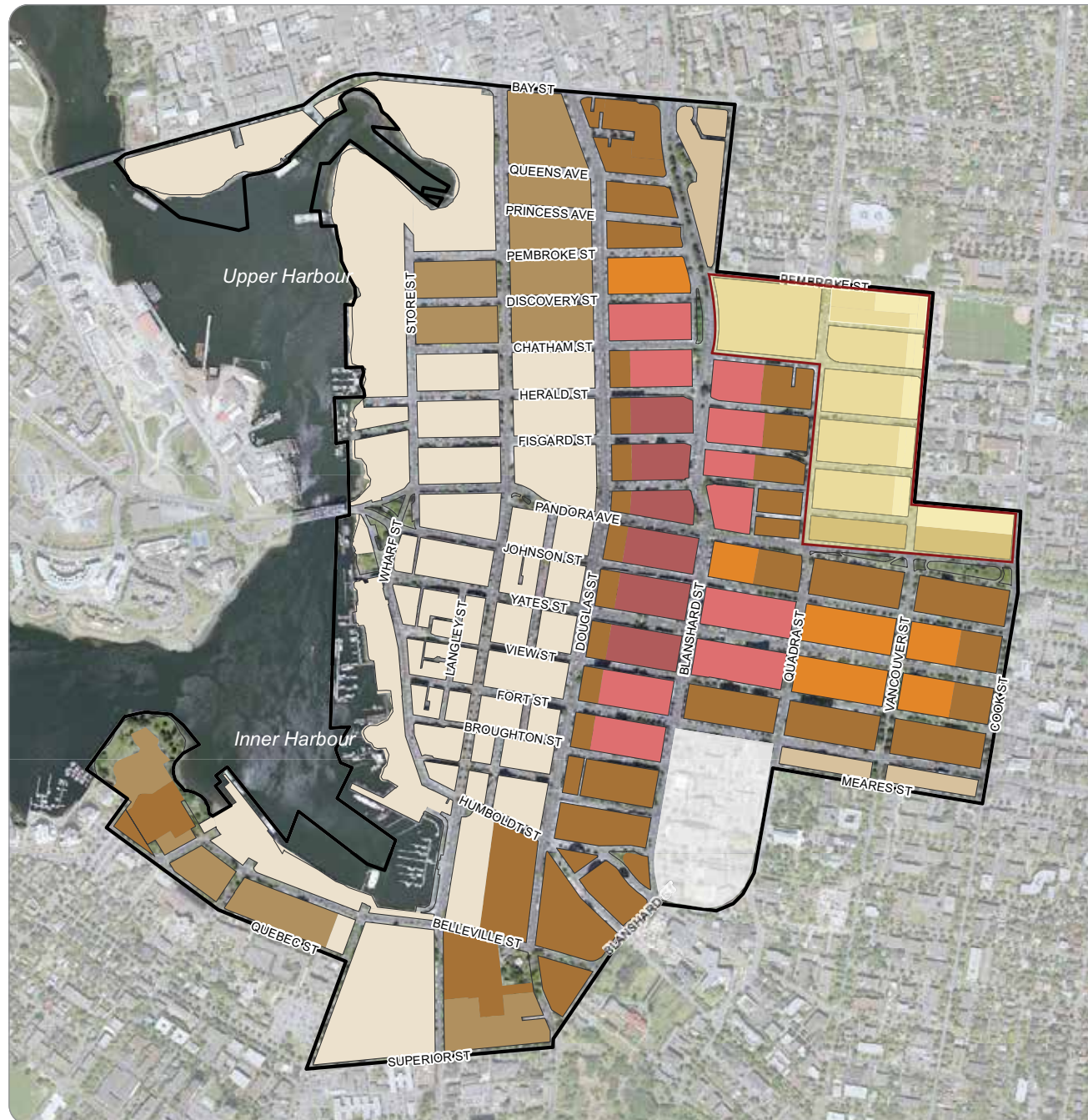
Built form refers to the physical shape, size, mass and design of individual buildings. It is important that the built form serves to complement the local context as well as provide a positive interface with the public realm and the space between individual buildings.

## 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.



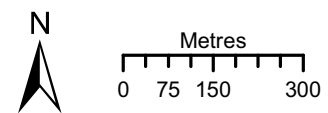
**MAP 29**  
**Maximum Building Heights**

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.

 See North Park Neighbourhood Plan (2022) for building height policies.

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





## 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.

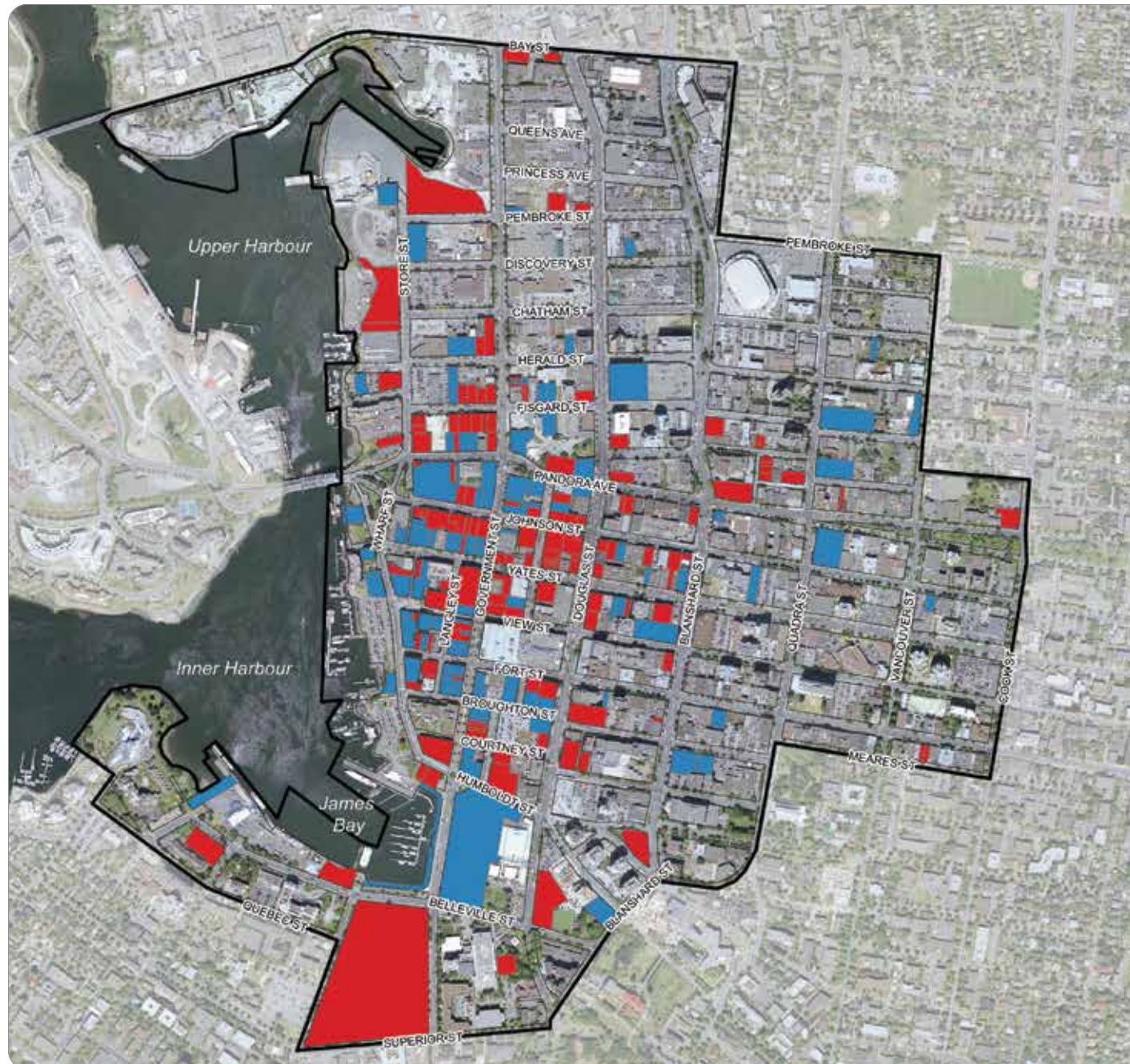
The Downtown Core Area contains more than 200 heritage properties, including those identified as landmarks in this Plan such as the Provincial Parliament Buildings, Empress Hotel and Canadian Pacific Railway Steamship Terminal (SEE MAP 33). The Historic Commercial District is generally characterized 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.





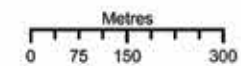
## MAP 30

### 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.



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<sup>2</sup> 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.

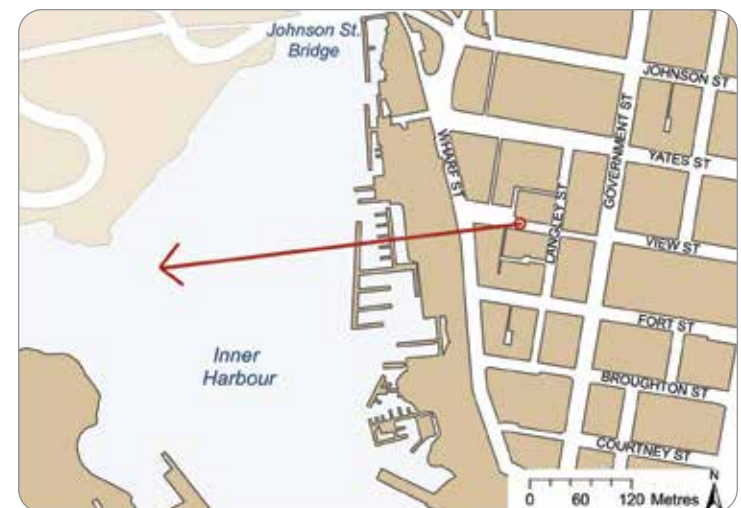
### DESIGN GUIDELINES

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frames south side of view corridor with pathway and park space</li> </ul>
B. Inner Harbour Entrance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distant views to Shoal Point</li> <li>• Background view of Sooke hills</li> </ul>
C. Songhees Point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frames north side of view corridor</li> <li>• Rock outcrop provides geographic containment of the Harbour mouth</li> </ul>

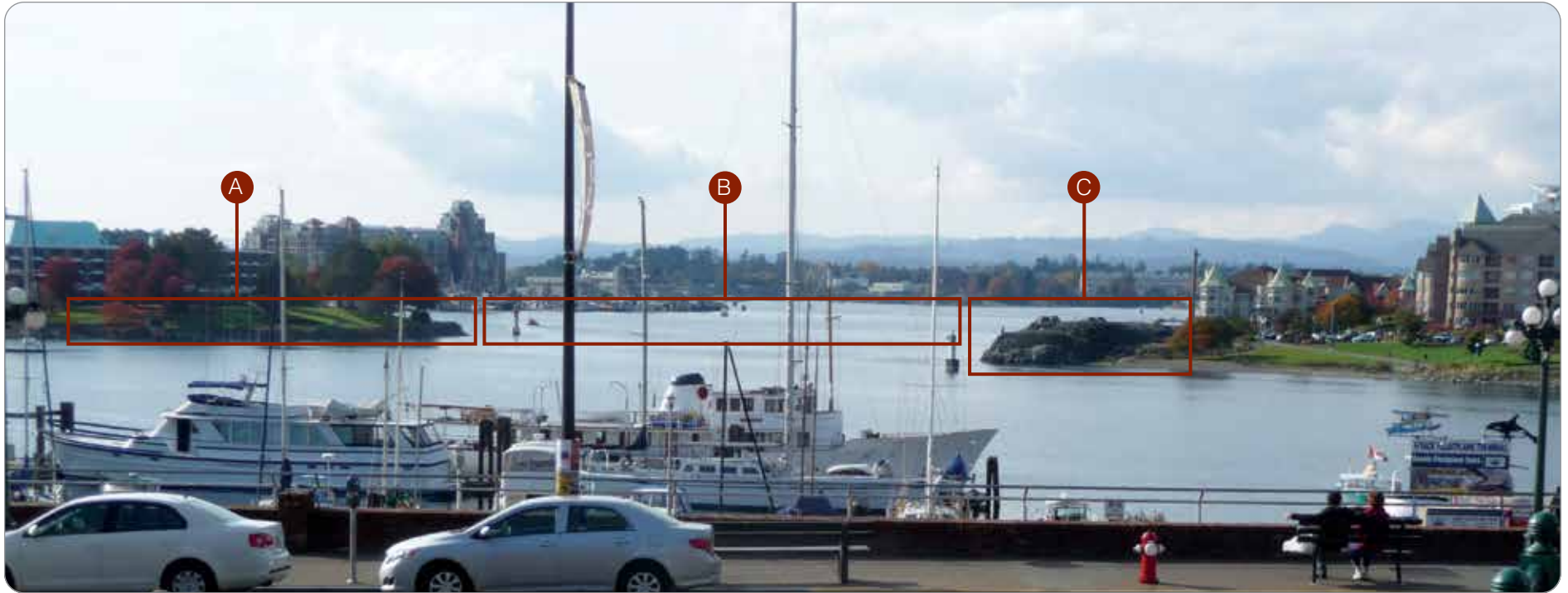


Vantage Point



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

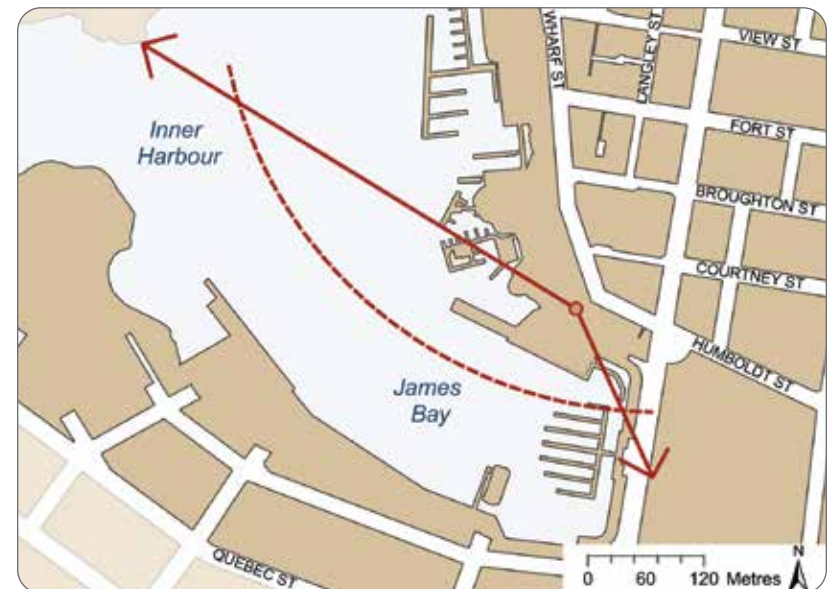
1. Consider the location, siting and design of new development within the specified view corridor to maintain views of the character-defining elements described in this section, as seen from the identified public vantage point.

Character-Defining Elements	Attributes
A. Empress Hotel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic landmark building</li> <li>• Key elements include roofline, front facade, front grounds and architectural night lighting</li> </ul>
B. Parliament Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic landmark building</li> <li>• Key elements include copper roof, cupola, front facade, night lighting and front lawn</li> </ul>
C. CPR Steamship Terminal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic landmark building</li> <li>• Key elements include waterfront facade</li> </ul>
D. Inner Harbour Causeway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key elements include portions of Upper and Lower Causeway</li> </ul>
E. Inner Harbour Entrance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrance to Inner Harbour for marine vessels and float planes</li> <li>• Flanked by Laurel Point and Songhees Point</li> </ul>

### Vantage Point

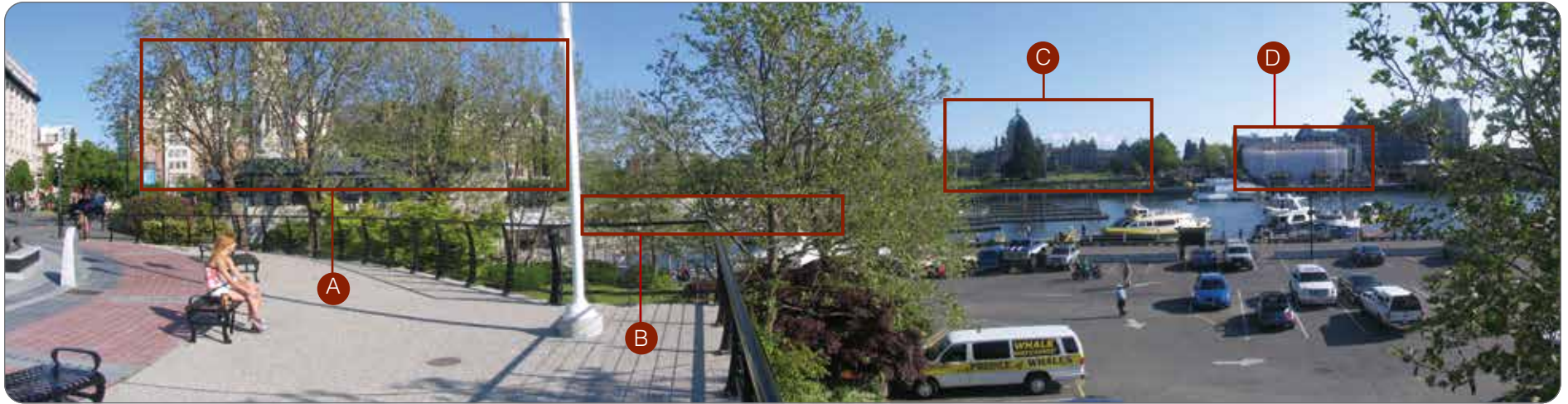


### View Corridor





## 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

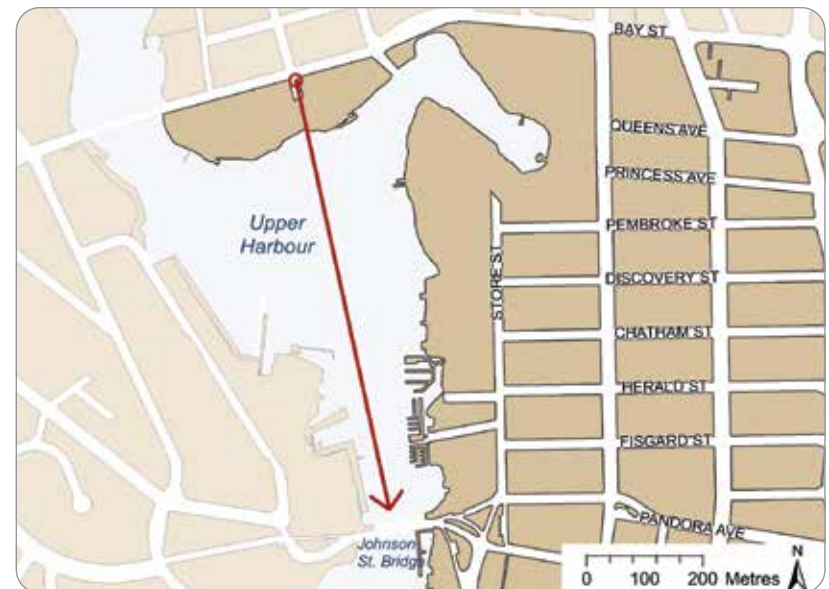
1. Consider the location, siting and design of new development within the specified view corridor to maintain views of the character-defining elements described in this section, as seen from the identified public vantage point.
2. Ensure that new development that is located adjacent to the view corridor 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unique compound Harbour view of the Johnson Street Bridge and the Parliament Building</li> </ul>
B. Olympic Mountains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural landscape feature in the distant background</li> </ul>

#### Vantage Point

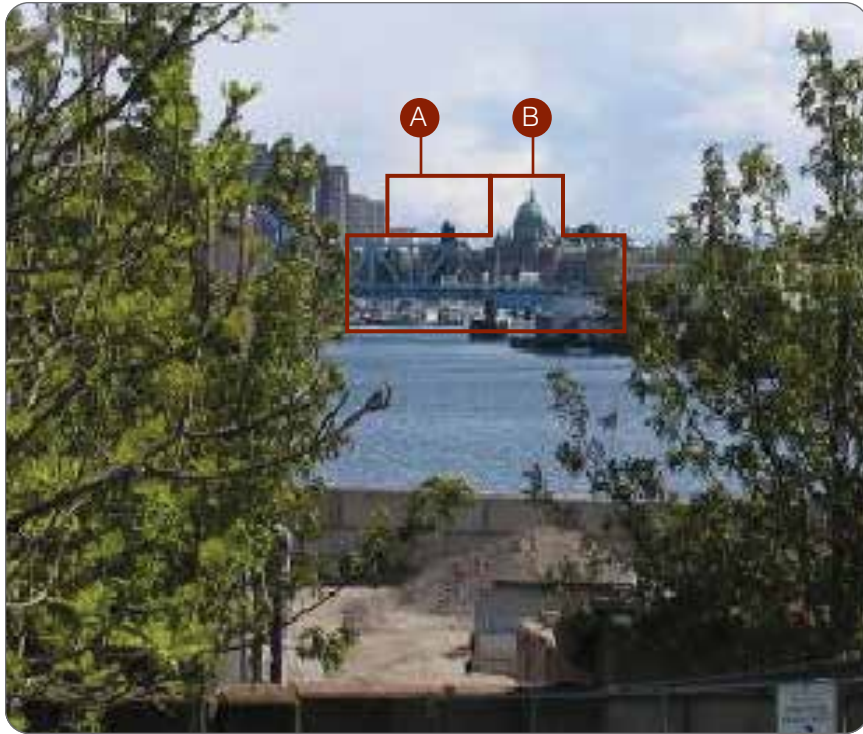


#### View Corridor





### 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visually prominent landmark on a hill-top location</li> </ul>

### 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural landscape feature in distant background</li> </ul>

### 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visually prominent structure</li> </ul>
B. Historic Commercial District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concentration of historic buildings and streetscapes</li> <li>• Tiers up from the Harbour</li> <li>• Marine and pedestrian-oriented waterfront</li> <li>• Key elements include: modest scale buildings, richly detailed masonry facades, accentuated cornice lines, irregular rooflines, and feature lighting</li> </ul>
C. Inner Harbour Causeway Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Causeway Area provides the south flank or termination of both the HCD and the CBD</li> <li>• Key framing element – the Empress Hotel</li> </ul>

### Vantage Point

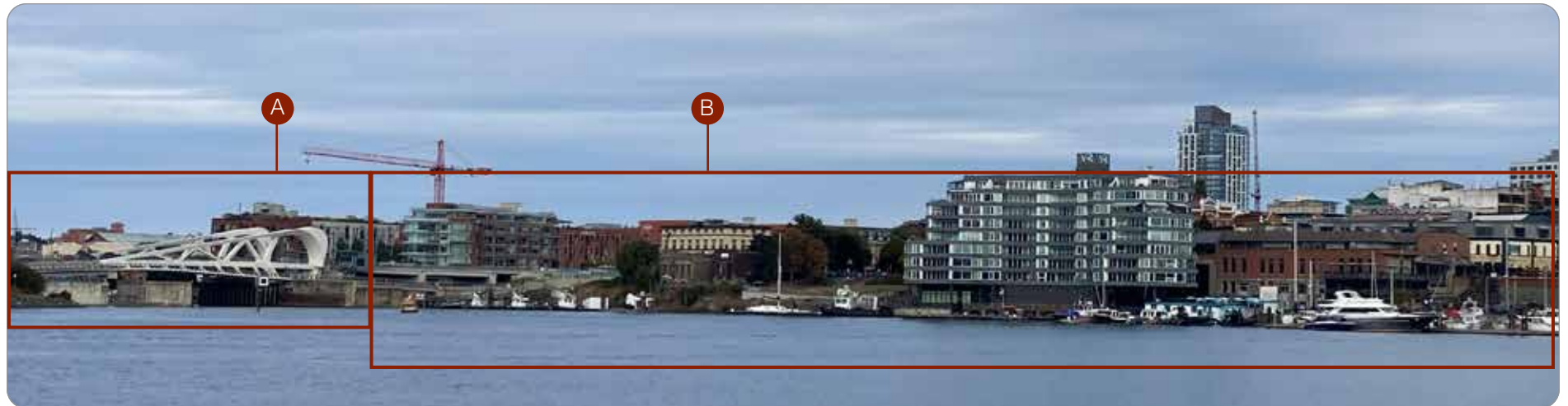


**View Corridor Guidelines**

View Element	Guidelines
1. CBD Backdrop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul>
2. Johnson Street Bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>
3. Waterfront	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enliven waterfront areas with visually vital marine-oriented uses, wharves, docks, waterfront activity, boat access, public outlook spaces and marine-oriented landscaping and lighting</li> </ul>
4. Massing, Proportion and Spacing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>
5. Street wall, Horizontal Roofline and Cornice Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>
6. Design Details, Materials, Colours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilize sympathetic materials and colours for new buildings, with well-crafted detailing, to relate to adjacent historic buildings</li> </ul>
7. Tiering up to Backdrop Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>
8. Building Illumination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Old and new buildings may be accented with architecturally designed lighting</li> </ul>



**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 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage landmark building</li> <li>• Anchors the east side of view, and frames the south end of the Downtown skyline</li> <li>• Key elements include roofline, front facade, front grounds, cornice lines and architectural night lighting</li> </ul>
B. Royal BC Museum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prominent Provincial cultural institution</li> </ul>
C. Parliament Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic landmark building</li> <li>• Key elements include copper roof, cupola, front facade, front lawn, unique night lighting</li> </ul>
D. CPR Steamship Terminal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic landmark building</li> <li>• Key elements include waterfront facade and connection to Lower Causeway</li> </ul>
E. Inner Harbour Causeway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Causeway wall and esplanade</li> <li>• Key elements include Upper and Lower Causeway</li> </ul>

### Vantage Point



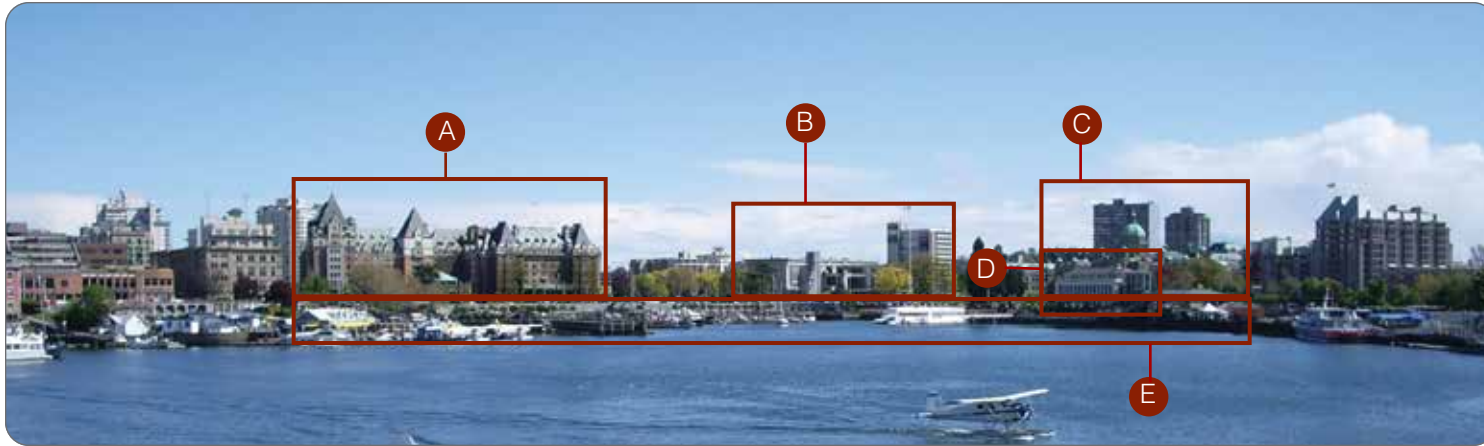
## VIEW CORRIDOR GUIDELINES

View Element	Guidelines
1. Integrity of View	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustain the Inner Harbour Causeway Area as a pre-eminent image of Victoria, with high quality visual and architectural stature</li> </ul>
2. Landmarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain the Parliament Buildings, the Empress Hotel, the Royal British Columbia Museum, and the CPR Steamship Terminal as predominant landmarks</li> </ul>
3. Supporting Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain the visual role of supporting buildings including the Belmont Building and Dominion Customs House</li> </ul>
4. Building Scale, Massing and Spacing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain the general moderate scale of the built surrounds in this area, with massing and spacing in character with existing buildings</li> </ul>
5. Tiers of Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reinforce the general pattern of buildings rising in tiers from the Harbour</li> </ul>
6. Tall Buildings as Backdrop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that taller buildings in the distant background are designed, located and oriented to not overwhelm or detract from the visual presence of the character-defining elements described in this section.</li> </ul>
7. Roofline Profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Express new roofline profiles as part of a unified ensemble. Maintain the visual dominance of the Parliament Building and the Empress Hotel rooflines</li> </ul>
8. Architectural Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure new buildings reflect high quality architectural design to complement the surrounding context</li> </ul>
9. Building Materials and Colours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relate building materials and building colours to those of existing landmark buildings</li> </ul>
10. Building Frontages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>
11. Horizontal Crown Lines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>

View Element	Guidelines
12. Progressive Architectural Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage new building design to be of a contemporary nature, expressing progressiveness and creativity for the city</li> </ul>
13. Public Realm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide for continuity and complementary quality for the treatments of the public realm waterfront areas and landscapes flanking the Inner Harbour Causeway</li> </ul>
14. Building Illumination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>
15. Promenade Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate illumination of new waterfront promenades with existing</li> </ul>



**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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key framing elements include the CPR Steamship Terminal and Parliament Building</li> </ul>
B. Laurel Point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public park space with elements of Harbour Pathway</li> </ul>

#### Vantage Point



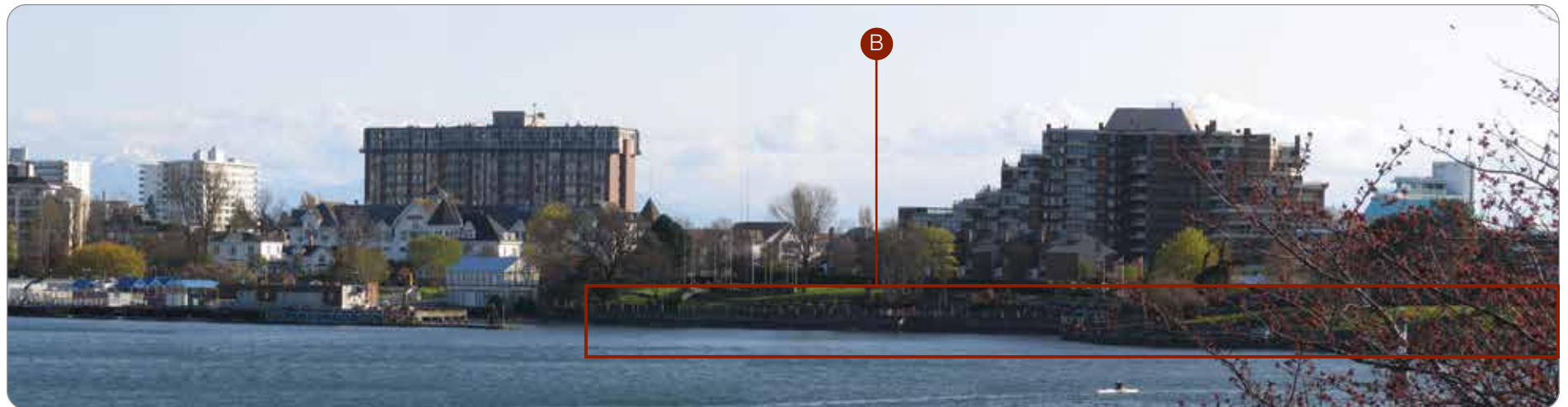
## VIEW CORRIDOR GUIDELINES

View Element	Guidelines
1. Integrity of View	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that the waterfront and the buildings along Belleville Street provide for an important visual south flank to the Inner Harbour</li> </ul>
2. Building Scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respect the scale and quality of design of the surrounding historic structures in the design of new buildings, with contemporary architectural expression</li> </ul>
3. Building Profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Buildings along Belleville Street should create a modest scale, attractively articulated secondary skyline that will frame the south edge of the Inner Harbour</li> </ul>
4. Scale and Character of Building Enclosure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>
5. Building Scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain the moderate and fine scale building context of the Inner Harbour Causeway and the Belleville Street waterfront area</li> </ul>
6. Building Massing and Spacing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide for in-fill buildings sympathetic in massing and spacing to contribute to an integrated, visually cohesive grouping of buildings</li> </ul>
7. Building Character and Articulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>
8. Building Crowns or Cornices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>
9. Building Rooflines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>

View Element	Guidelines
10. Laurel Point as a Visual Frame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relate new buildings in the vicinity of Laurel Point to the taller, terracing profile established in this location</li> </ul>
11. Active Public Waterfront	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage the visual expression of an active public interface with the water edge, and the Harbour itself</li> </ul>
12. Fine Scale Design, Sympathetic Materials and Colours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>
13. Illumination of Roofline Profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>
14. Public Realm Waterfront	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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</li> </ul>



**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.

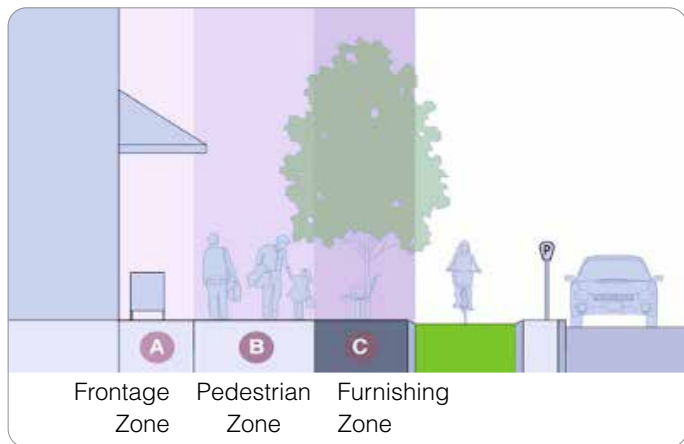
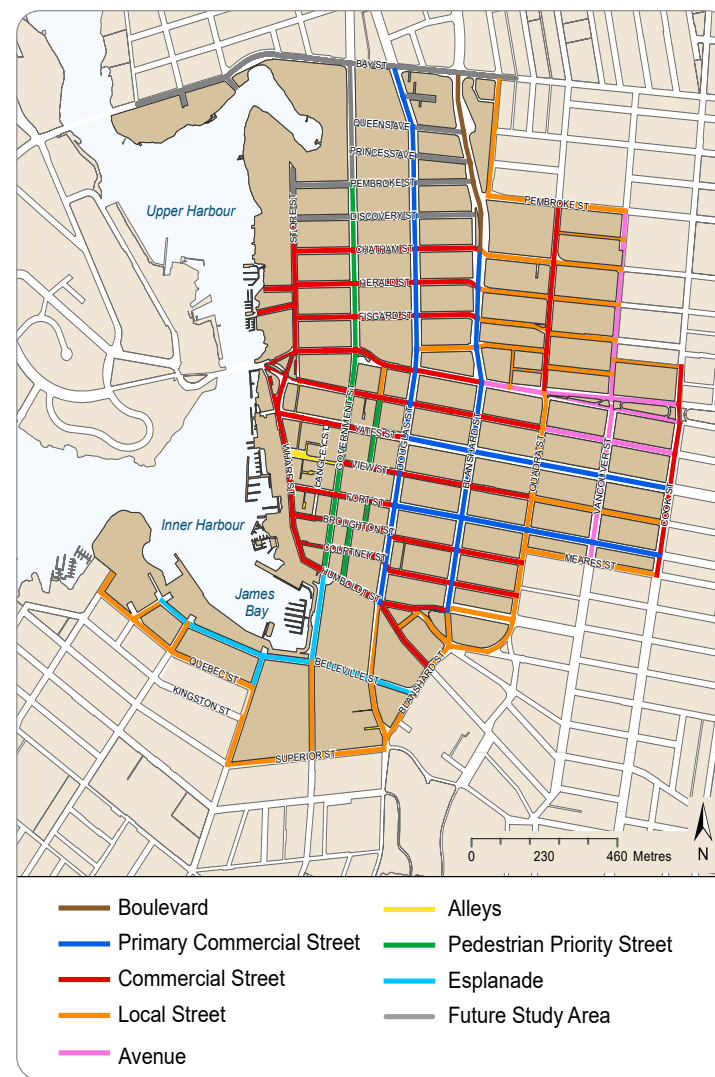


Illustration of sidewalk zones.

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 <sup>(5)</sup>	A. Frontage Zone <sup>(3)</sup>	B. Pedestrian Zone <sup>(1)</sup>	C. Furnishing Zone <sup>(2)</sup>	
		Desirable Width	Desirable Width	Basic	Enhanced
				Desirable Width	
Primary Commercial Street	4.3–8.5m	0.5 – 1.5m	2.0–4.0m	1.8m	3.0m
Downtown Commercial Street	4.1–6.3m	0.5 – 1.5m	2.0–3.0m		
Pedestrian Priority Street <sup>(4)</sup>	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				

<sup>(1)</sup> 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.

<sup>(2)</sup> 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.

<sup>(3)</sup> 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.

<sup>(4)</sup> 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.

<sup>(5)</sup> 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.

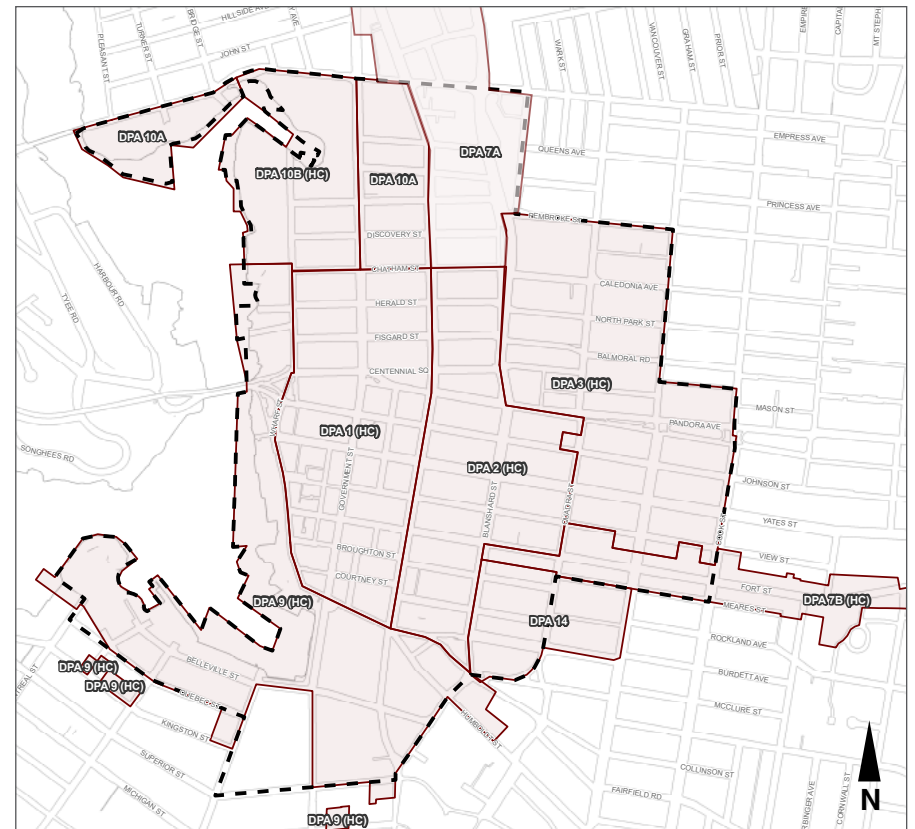
In addition, the Downtown Core Area contains two special sub areas, each with their own unique design guidelines. The design of new buildings and additions to existing buildings within the historic Old Town Area are guided by the Old Town Design Guidelines (2019) while the specialized guidelines for 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



## 2. RELATIONSHIP TO STREET: ACHIEVING A HUMAN SCALE

### Overview

This section applies to all buildings, including Tall Buildings which have further design guidance 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.

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

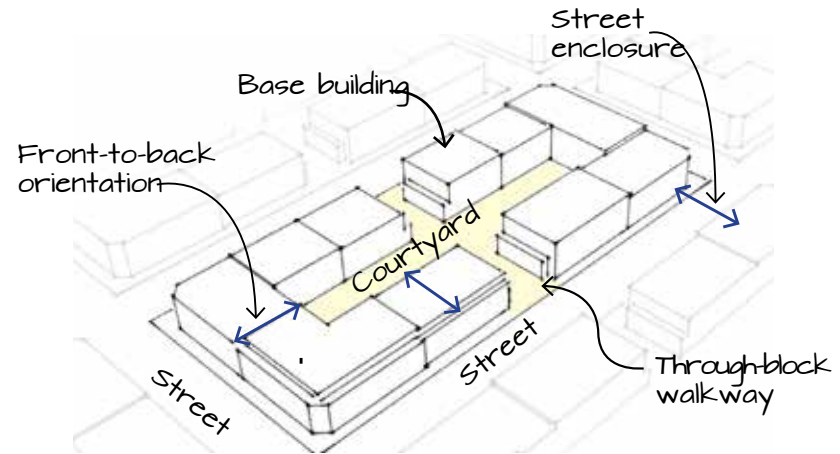
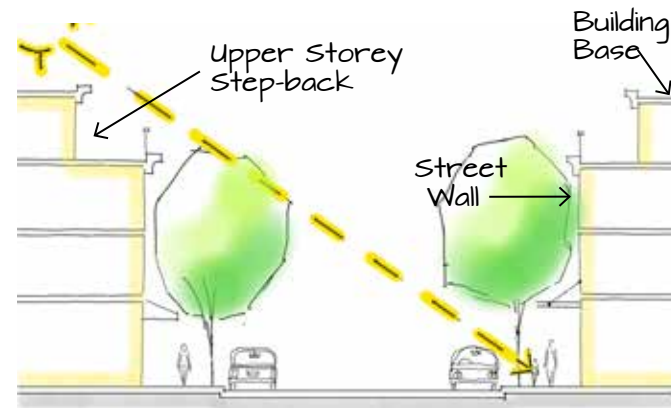


Illustration of a perimeter form of development.



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.

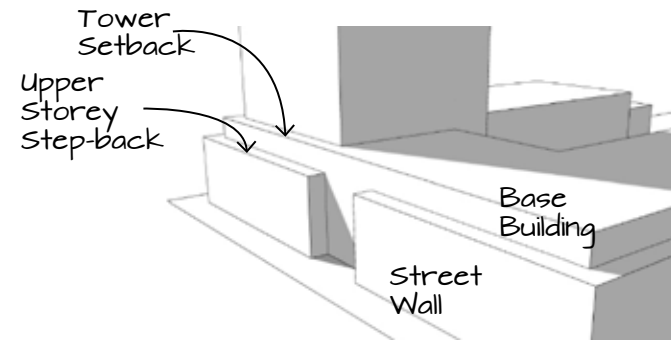


Diagram illustrating tower setback, upper storey step-back, base building, and street wall components.

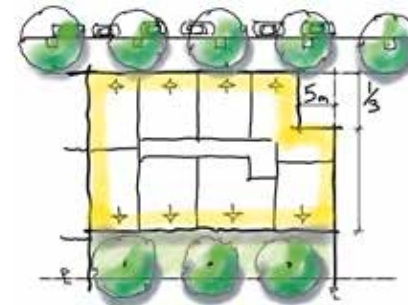
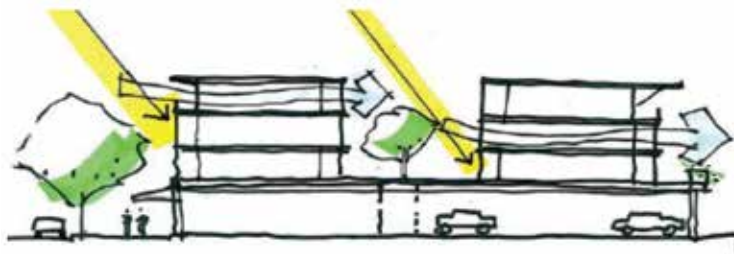


Illustration of residential unit orientation including a 5 m setback for units oriented to a single side yard.



Courtyard buildings with dual aspect units provide opportunities for passive heating and cooling and improved liveability for residents.



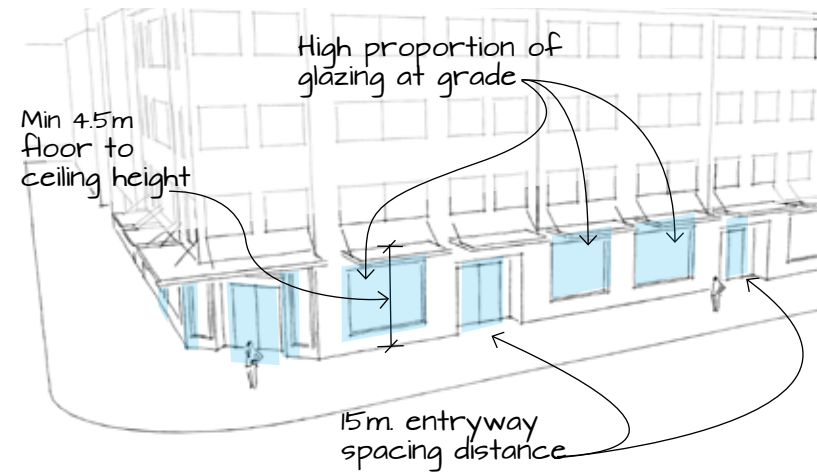
Example of incorporating a vertical break in the building facade associated with a lobby entryway.

- 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

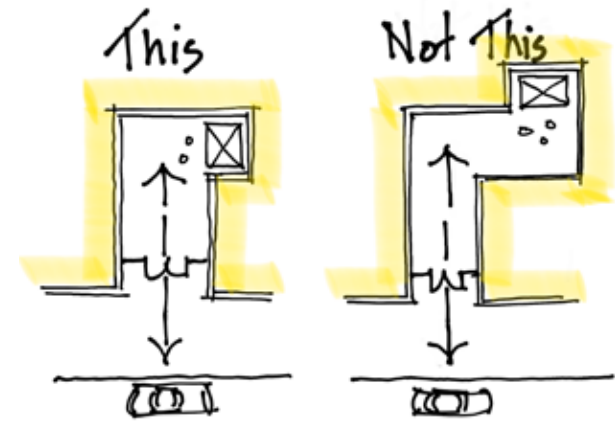
**Intent:** To support street vitality and safety through the creation of active and interesting streets including an increased urban forest canopy.

- 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 tenancing 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.



Direct visibility between a building entrance lobby and the adjacent street provides improved safety and security.

### 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.



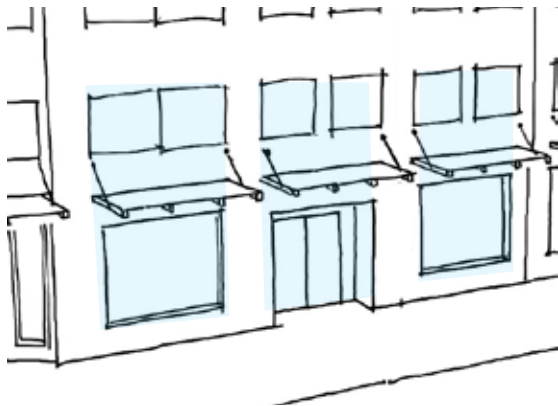
Diagram showing incorporation of entries to individual ground floor units that are accessible and clearly visible from the fronting street.



## 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 than 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.



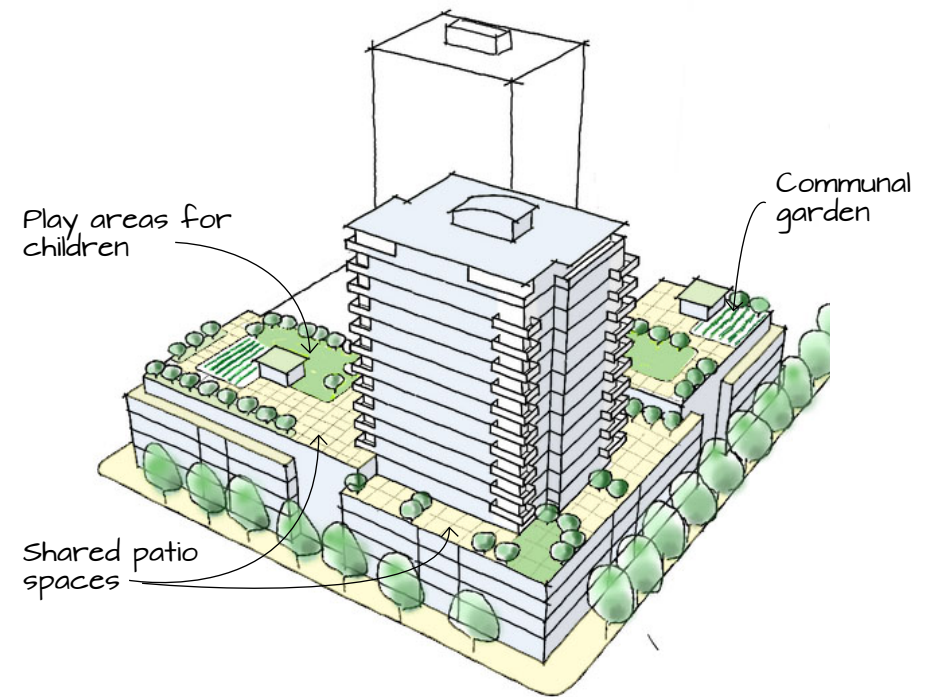
- ii. Where applied visual markers are not an optimal solution, interrupt reflective glass by increasing the density of external visual markers including spandrel panels, mullions, screen shutters, or ornamental grills. Other strategies can include adapted fenestration patterns, external blinds, shutters, 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.



Conceptual illustration of outdoor common spaces incorporated into building terraces and roof tops.



Example of a roof top garden and play area.



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. Through-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

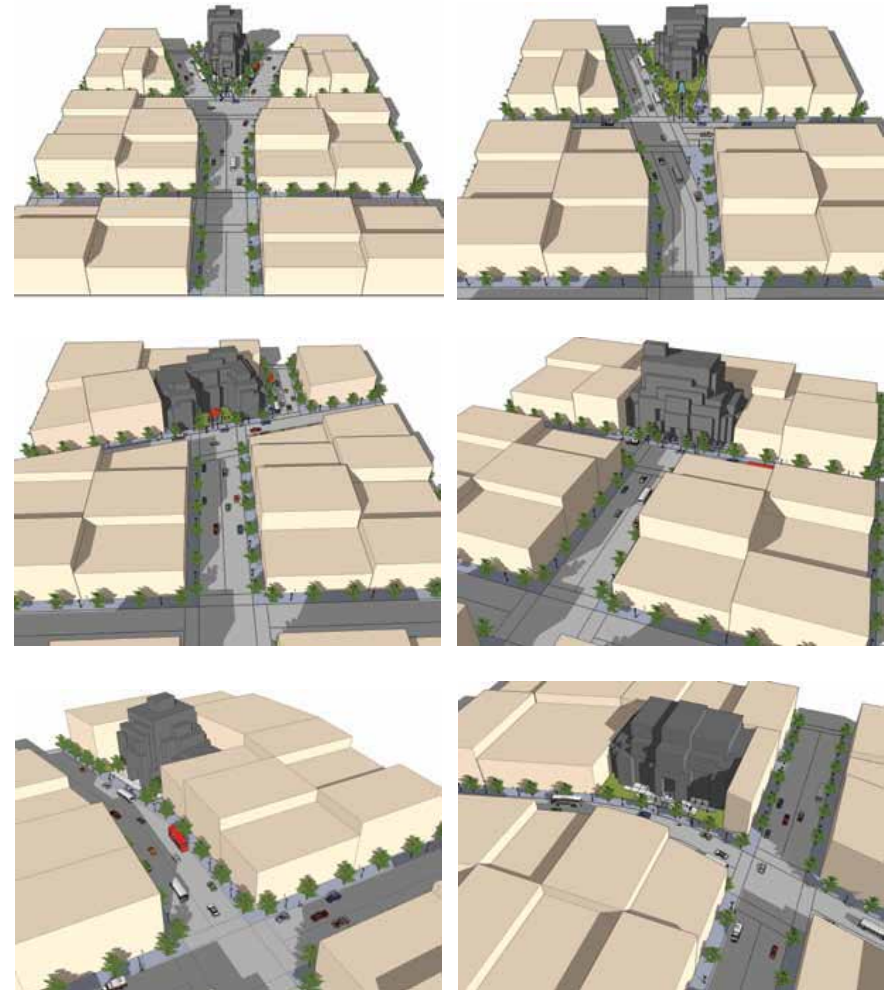
**Intent:** To contribute to a memorable and distinct public realm and support legibility and wayfinding through the termination and framing of street-end vistas.

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Provide appropriate spatial separation between new development and landmark buildings.
- 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.

- 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.
- 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

- 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.
- 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.

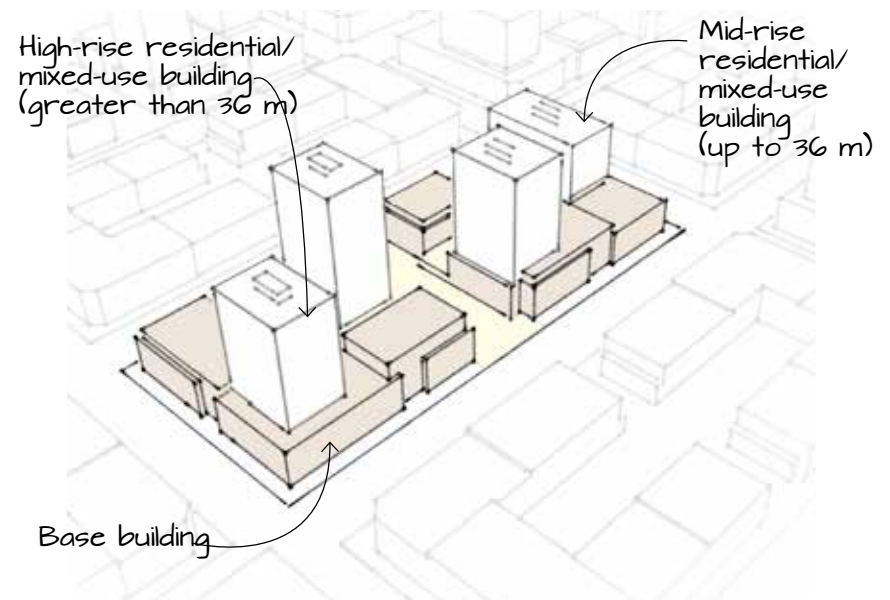
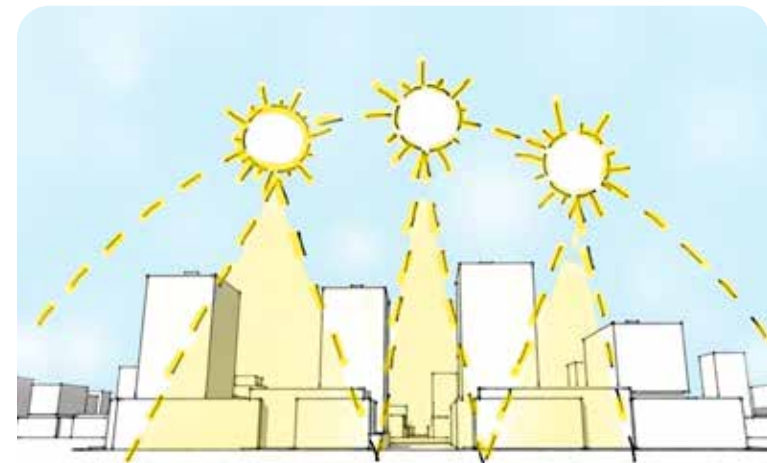


Diagram illustrating accommodation of mid and high rise buildings within a perimeter-block form of development.



Protecting skyview and access to sunlight are achieved through the placement, form and scale of tall buildings.

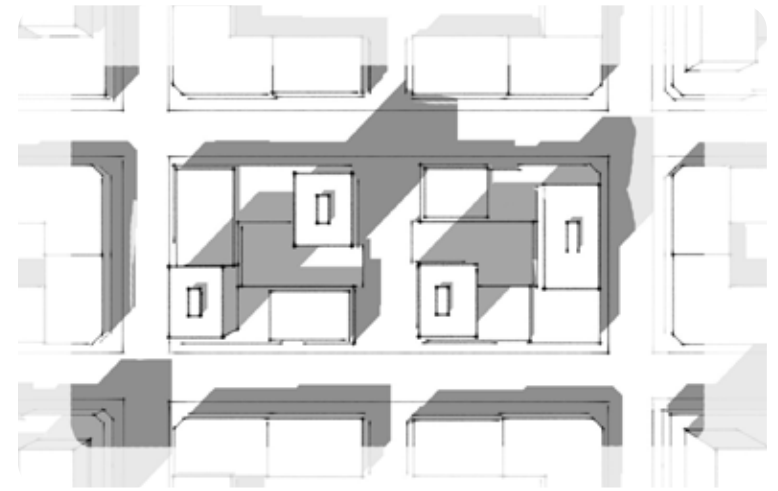


The recommended minimum tower setbacks and step-backs will determine the resultant floor plate size and whether a site can accommodate a tall building. Given the general pattern of parcel and block depths throughout Downtown, developments with tall buildings will generally require a minimum parcel size 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

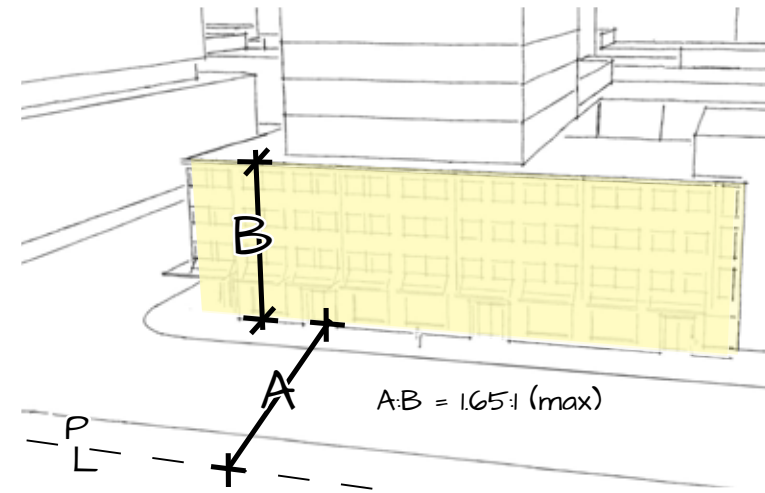
**Intent:** To ensure tall buildings maintain access to sunlight and sky view from public open spaces, and achieve livability and privacy for individual residential units.

- 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 cumulative 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 mass. 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.

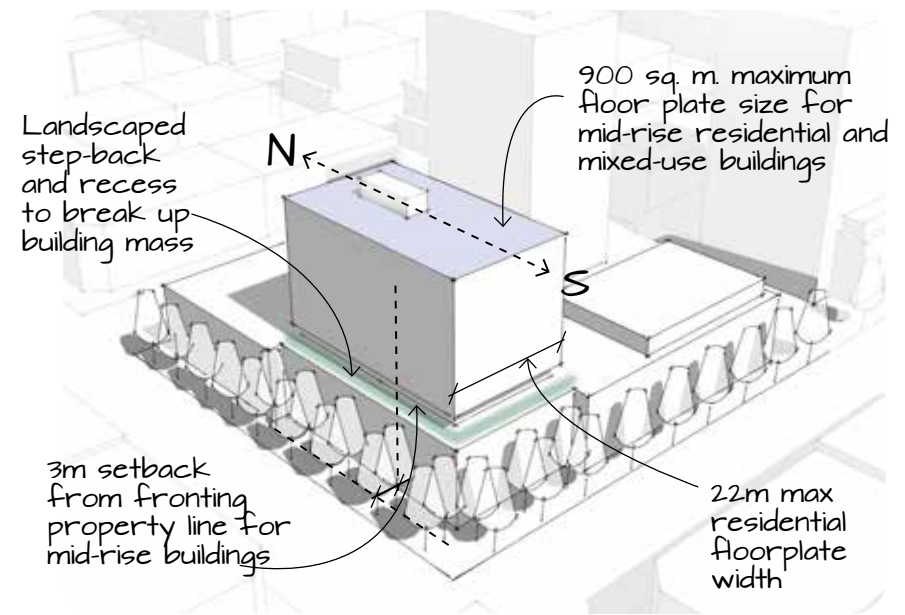


Diagram illustrating form, scale and orientation considerations for mid-rise buildings.



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.

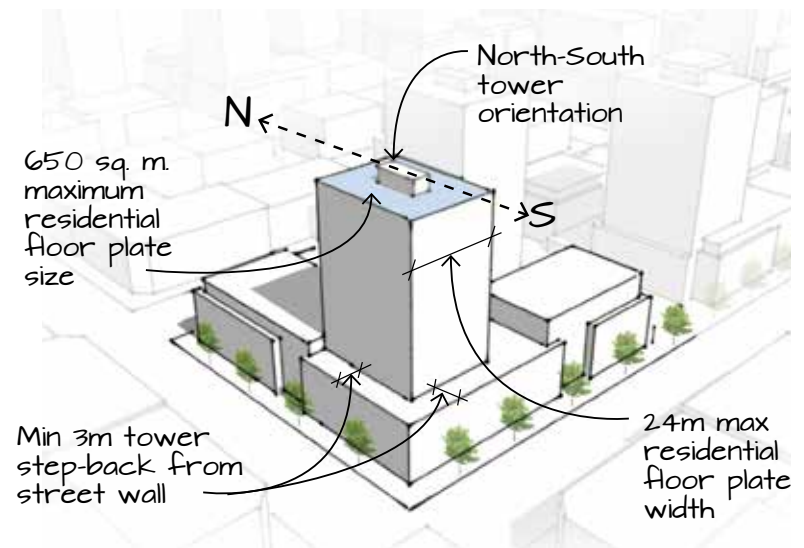
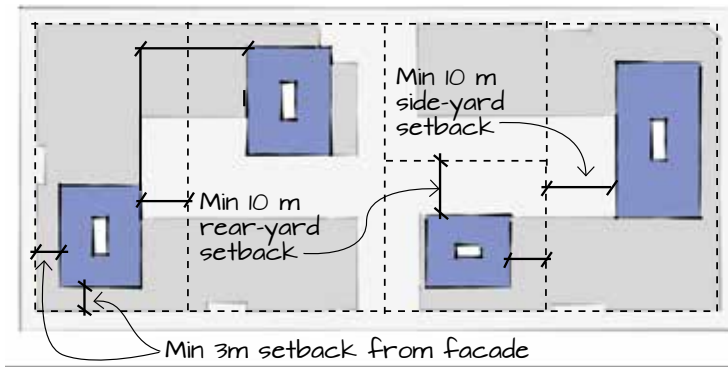
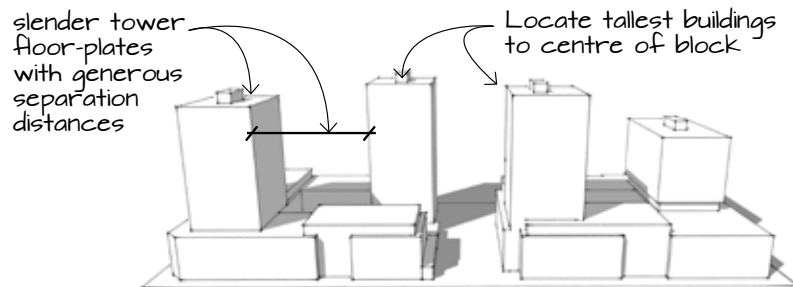


Diagram illustrating form, scale and orientation considerations for high-rise residential and mixed use buildings.



Diagrams illustrating setback considerations for mid and high-rise residential and mixed use buildings (above) tower spacing and location considerations (below).



Example 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 than 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.

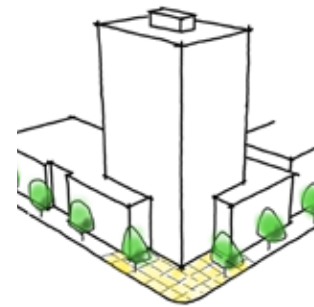


Diagram and photo illustrating a portion of a point tower frontage along a street or open space extending straight down to the ground.



### 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.





