

[REDACTED]

From: Philip MacKellar [REDACTED]
Sent: July 11, 2022 4:49 PM
To: Victoria Mayor and Council; Public Hearings
Subject: Comments on Village and Corridors Public Hearing

Dear Mayor, Council, and City Staff,

I am emailing you to voice my support for the “Village and Corridor” initiative and hope you will pass this important measure. By approving V&C, you will help boost much needed housing supply, increase the city’s sense of community, and create more walkable / livable neighbourhoods.

Housing is the biggest issue facing this city and it is connected to so many other problems. Therefore, by taking action on housing and approving these neighbourhood plans, you’ll also be taking action on addressing climate change, traffic and commuting congestion, tax rates, crime, homelessness, aging demographics, low birth rates, the labour crunch, and economic vibrancy.

The “Village and Corridor” will not solve these issues, but it represents an important step and will help address all of these problems to varying degrees. This is why I support this initiative and think council should approve it.

Thank you for your time and reading my thoughts on this matter. Feel free to reach out to me directly if you wish.

Best regards,

Philip MacKellar

2530 Cedar Hill Road
Victoria, BC

[REDACTED]

From: Patrick Murphy [REDACTED]
Sent: July 11, 2022 3:19 PM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: Re Official Community Plan amendment bylaw Quadra Hillside

This is to vehemently oppose this disastrous amendment. Five and six storey apartments and condos along Quadra Street will permanently change the neighbourhood for the worse. Aside from the unrestrained growth, the single-family dwellings to the east of Quadra will be blighted as this is a ban on gardens as well as privacy. These behemoths will block out the south and west sun and prohibit gardening because of the shade. The so-called planners in their 2,000 page report have no concept what a garden is for sustainability and health. If they had spent less time on the public dime and more on talking to the neighbours they might have learned something. If they can't learn from Jane Jacobs, they should at least have asked if city council supports sustainability or kickbacks from developers.

Patrick Murphy
3150 Fifth Street
V8x1e7
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Victoria Mayor and Council
Sent: July 12, 2022 9:44 AM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: Fw: Villages and Corridors PH

From: David Berry [REDACTED]
Sent: July 12, 2022 9:26 AM
To: Victoria Mayor and Council <mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca>
Subject: Villages and Corridors PH

Hi all,

I am emailing you today to voice my support for the first phase of the Villages and Corridors project. I am a young 28yr old male that was lucky enough to find a missing middle type home to share with my wife in the City of Victoria. I truly believe this policy will help jumpstart more housing that people like myself will be able to rent or own. We have a massive housing deficit in Greater Victoria, and this policy will work to start making that number smaller.

Some items I hope to see revised after this has been approved are:

- Work toward zoning changes, not just community plan changes for rental buildings.
- Open this policy up off of corridors and focus heavily around parks and the waterfront - right now the norm is to have renters and condo dwellers right on busy arterials when there are quieter streets directly adjacent that are better suited for these people.
- End parking minimums. This will open up way more lots for development, it will work towards a mode shift in our city that will help people that rely on cars.

As a resident of Fairfield, I'm excited to see the next phase of this policy and hope more housing can get streamlined in Victoria's most exclusive and expensive neighbourhood.

Thank you for your time

David Berry

[REDACTED]

From: Mark Stephenson [REDACTED]
Sent: July 12, 2022 1:25 PM
To: Public Hearings; Victoria Mayor and Council
Subject: Village and Corridor Planning Public Hearing

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to you in support for the “Village and Corridor” initiative and hope you will pass this important measure. Housing is a huge issue in our city right now, and we need to do everything we can to help boost supply so people can afford to stay in Victoria. My wife who works as a nurse, has seen many colleagues move away, as they simply can’t afford to live here anymore. I was born and raised in Victoria, and many of my friends have moved to the West Shore, or out of the CRD altogether. Every time I go to a local restaurant, it seems there are always staffing issues, as many younger people who would typically fill those roles are forced to move away.

As a homeowner, my family is incredibly fortunate to call Victoria home, but we are tired of seeing countless other families struggle. Additionally, this goes beyond just housing. If we ever want to help slow down the effects of climate change, we need to put an end to continuous urban sprawl. We need to create walkable communities rather than clear-cut forests in the West Shore.

I urge you to pass this motion, and help Victoria continue to be a vibrant, welcoming, and affordable place to live and raise a family.

Kind regards,
Mark Stephenson
#303 – 1500 Elford Street, Victoria BC.

[REDACTED]

From: Victoria Mayor and Council
Sent: July 12, 2022 10:09 AM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: Fw: Please support the "Village and Corridor" Initiative

From: Robert Berry [REDACTED]
Sent: July 12, 2022 10:04 AM
To: Victoria Mayor and Council <mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca>
Subject: Please support the "Village and Corridor" Initiative

Dear Mayor, Council, and City Staff,

Please support the "Village and Corridor" initiative. I hope you will pass this important measure. By approving V&C, you will help boost much needed housing supply, increase the city's sense of community, and create more walkable / livable neighbourhoods. Housing is the biggest issue facing this city and it is connected to so many other problems. By taking action on housing and approving these neighbourhood plans, you'll also be taking action on addressing climate change, traffic and commuting congestion, tax rates, crime, homelessness, aging demographics, low birth rates, the labour crunch, and economic vibrancy. The "Village and Corridor" will not solve these issues alone, but it represents an important step and will help address all of these problems to varying degrees. This is why I support this initiative and think the council should approve it.

There are a few improvements I have seen suggested through the community consultation process that are not reflected in the V&C plan as it exists now and I think should be added at a later date:

- 1) New housing for generally younger renter families is often placed directly on our busiest and most polluted arterials. This is bad for traffic, families and further entrenches the privileges afforded to anyone who can afford detached housing. Please extend areas where multifamily is allowed to a short walk from arterials, transit and villages.
- 2) The Design Guidelines and suggested zoning changes make small lot development almost impossible. Unaffordable detached housing cannot be replaced with multifamily unless a big builder with very deep pockets is involved and buys up 3-4 lots. This does not create the vibrant public spaces and mixed income neighbourhoods like historically existed in Victoria and exist in many other urban centers. Design Guidelines created by staff like deep front and side suburban style setbacks and prohibition on roof decks kill lots of new housing. People should be able to trade smaller, generally unused, front yards for larger usable back yards in their multifamily housing.
- 3) Subsidized homes need increased height or reduced setbacks to pay subsidies. Zoning needs to accommodate that.
- 4) By concentrating the increased density on existing commercial and multifamily lots the city is creating significant development pressure on our cheaper spaces. This pressure should be redirected to nearby unaffordable detached-only lots to pressure our existing villages, and grow them. Thank you for your time and reading my thoughts on this matter. Feel free to reach out to me directly if you wish.

Best regards,

Robert

[REDACTED]

From: Shawn Smith [REDACTED]
Sent: July 12, 2022 10:50 AM
To: Public Hearings
Subject: Support for Neighbourhood Plan & Finlayson Village

Hello,

Myself, my partner, along with our two toddlers and my father, are residents living one block away from the proposed small village at Finlayson and Highview, and we are writing to express our enthusiastic support.

There is a very strong community here full of civic minded young families, and we discuss visions and goals for our neighbourhood quite frequently. ***I have canvassed our community again, and most feel this idea was very responsive to engagements we have had with the city planning process, identifying the need for a pocket of community friendly amenities in what is an otherwise isolated corner of the municipality.***

We have responded to the City's consultations and following closely, sharing that there are virtually no easily walkable cafes/restaurants/pubs/stores/bakeries etc for this neighbourhood (especially with elderly parents or young children). The idea of thoughtful, small village development to bring a few amenities closer to home and add vibrancy is broadly welcome. This should also support options for more affordable and denser housing in nearby areas, which we recognize is important to create a vibrant place where families and young people can thrive.

Increasing density and housing options is always a challenging discussion we know - many are understanding and supportive that this needs to happen in sensible places, though the impact is felt more by some than others. A compromise appropriate to this immediate area might be limiting development on Finlayson near the proposed village to 3 story townhouse type infill vs 4 storey condominiums, as we can see how this might negatively impact those living immediately behind or adjacent.

It is our hope also that this development will **slow** traffic, and improve safety in crossing to allow for more walkability between Summit Park, Highview Park and Peacock Hill. We would also hope there will be further efforts to slow/mitigate traffic on side streets. There is already a significant challenge with speeding through the playground zone on Merritt/Highview, and people cutting through to bypass Cook/Finlayson, which this may exacerbate if not considered. There is very strong support for stronger traffic mitigation (local traffic only except in emergencies, etc).

We are also a very entrepreneurial bunch and would love to see this development prioritize the potential for local social enterprise, non-profit and locally run business. We can easily gather community members surrounding this potential development site for input that is more localized and appropriate than the broad Hillside/Quadra representation which feels disconnected from this sub-area.

One final note is we see that planning includes more density around Jackson park - we would only note that there is a large and much loved daycare operating from the church on that corner, so we hope any plan makes it clear that daycare and preschool spaces in the neighbourhood should be maintained.

I can only imagine there may be a more conservative perspective voiced, worried about typical things like traffic, parking, neighbourhood character, etc...***these all feel like very solvable issues and many of us who live immediately proximate to the location are happy to work with the city on this to move Victoria forward, in an inclusive and thoughtful way.***

Best regards,

Shawn Smith, Samantha Garvey and Richard Smith
1308 Merritt St





SHARON KEEN

ANTHROPOLOGY
CULTURAL ECOLOGY

#105-975 FAIRFIELD ROAD
VICTORIA, B.C.
V8V 3A3

PH [REDACTED]

TUES. JULY 12, 2022

VICTORIA CITY COUNCIL
#1 CENTENNIAL SQUARE
VICTORIA, BC
V8W-1P6

JULY 14, 2022, PUBLIC HEARING, OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN,
BYLAW AMENDMENT (NO. 43)-22-055, FOR FERNWOOD,
HILLSIDE-QUADRA AND NORTH-PARK.

- THE OCP OF 2012, DESIGNED FOR 30 YEARS, NEEDS TO BE HONOURED, & NOT FURTHER DESTROYED BY THE PROPOSED 8 HUGE CHANGES PROPOSED. IT IS BYLAW NO. 12-013.
- * * * THIS PUBLIC HEARING IS A TRAVESTY AND SHOULD NOT BE HAPPENING AFTER TWO YEARS OF ECONOMIC SUICIDE BY LOCKDOWNS: CANCEL, & VOTE NO, JULY 14, 2022.
- THE "LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT" IS LEGALLY ABUSED WITH IMPUNITY, BY THE MAYORS FORTIN & HELPS, PLUS COUNCILS. THE MINISTERS SHOULD HAVE INTERVENED.
- THE MOST HARMFUL OCP 2012 AMENDMENT WAS FOR 21 STORY TOWERS: BYLAW 2018 (NO. 18-72). RESCIND THIS BYLAW, BEFORE "TOWERS" ARE PUT ON TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS!! NOT SUSTAINABLE, AND VICTORIA IS AT DENSITY FOR POPULATION PROJECTED IN 2041 BY 2023.
- THERE HAS BEEN NON-STOP UP-ZONING, AND ZONING VARIANCES SINCE 2018, THAT HAVE DESTROYED THE "MISSING MIDDLE". DEGROWTH & GENTLE DENSIFICATION ARE NEEDED. "VACANCY CONTROL" IS ESSENTIAL.
- TRANSFER PAYMENTS FROM THE PROVINCE & OTTAWA, CUT SINCE THE 1990'S, NEED TO BE GIVEN BACK SO PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT IS NOT THE MUNICIPALITIES MAJOR INCOME. VICTORIA DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN

(1/2)

THE UNION OF B.C. MUNICIPALITIES COMMISSIONED
2014 REPORT: COLUMBIA INSTITUTE "WHO IS PICKING UP THE TAB?"
REGARDING "OFF-LOADING" OF CRITICAL HOUSING &
OTHER FUNDS ONTO MUNICIPALITIES. NOTHING HAS
CHANGED PROVINCIAALLY OR FEDERALLY.

IF ANYTHING, PROVINCIAALLY, "PLUNDER OF THE PUBLIC
COMMONS" HAS SPEEDED UP - "LEGISLATIVE PRECINCT"
LANDS SOLD, & THE "CULTURAL PRECINCT" OF THE
RBCM.... DEVELOPER GREED ENHANCED TO WHOSE
BENEFIT?

** DO NOT PASS AT THIS PUBLIC HEARING ANY
OF THE 8 CHANGES IN O.C.P. AMENDMENT BYLAW
(NO. 43) - 22-055.

Sharon Kea

** THE MINISTER OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS, NATHAN CULLEN
NEEDS IN-PUT, & MORE FROM COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS.

ATTACHMENTS

- NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING "WHAT IS BEING PROPOSED?"
TIMES COLONIST. SAT. JULY 9, 2022 (A4)
- ANDREW DUFFY 7 MAY 2022 "VICTORIA EYES NEW...." TIMES COLONIST (A3)
- EDWARD RELPH
16 JUNE 2021 "WE ARE RUSHING TOWARD A CROWDED
FUTURE" TIMES COLONIST. (A10)

INCLUSIONS

- DOUGLAS TODD
 - 21 JUNE 2022. "CITY HAS 'CREATED A MONSTER' BY
TAKING CASH FOR UPZONING" VANCOUVER SUN. (A1)
 - 18 JUNE 2022. "HIGHRISES NOT THE BE-ALL, END-ALL
OF SUSTAINABILITY" VANCOUVER SUN. (A17)
 - 25 JUNE 2022. "TOWERING CITIES INCLUDE HIDDEN
CLIMATE COSTS" VANCOUVER SUN (A17)

It's your neighbourhood

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Public Hearing items will be considered by Council at a Council Meeting on Thursday, July 14, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.



Where:

Council Chambers
Victoria City Hall
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC

Get Involved:

Outlined below are the ways in which you can participate. The meeting may be viewed and heard via the City's live stream webcast at www.victoria.ca

What is being proposed?

The City of Victoria is seeking your input on the proposed changes to the Official Community Plan being considered for public hearing on July 14, 2022:

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN BYLAW, AMENDMENT BYLAW (NO. 43) – 22-055

The purpose of this Bylaw is to amend the Official Community Plan (OCP) to implement directions in the proposed neighbourhood plans for Fernwood, Hillside-Quadra and North Park.

The following changes are proposed to the OCP:

1. **Introduce two new Urban Place Designations:**
 - A Housing Opportunity designation which envisions multi-unit housing of approximately 1.2:1 to 2.5:1 floor space ratio, with an emphasis on accommodating secured rental and affordable housing in larger developments.
 - A Mixed Residential designation which envisions a mix of housing types, including ground-oriented and multi-unit housing of approximately 1.6:1 floor space ratio.
2. **Introduce policies to further support affordable housing, including:**
 - Enabling consideration of co-locating of residential uses with public facilities or institutional uses for the purpose of supporting the provision of non-market housing.
 - Enabling consideration of densities or heights above those noted in the general guidelines for Urban Place Designations (Figure 8, Chapter 6 of the OCP), for the purpose of supporting the provision of non-market housing or community amenities where consistent with City policies, good urban design principles and local context.
 - Enabling consideration of additional density of approximately 2.5:1 floor space ratio in Industrial Employment-Residential areas where the provision of non-market housing is proposed and is consistent with local area plans.
3. **Revise all maps and policies related to Urban Place Designation** to reflect the proposed designations and related policies in Fernwood, Hillside-Quadra, and North Park neighbourhoods and some adjacent properties in Oaklands and Jubilee neighbourhoods, consistent with the proposed local area plans, as shown in Map 1.
4. **Revise the Parks and Open Spaces map** to add a desired park in Hillside-Quadra near Quadra Village.
5. **Revise Strategic Directions for Fernwood, Hillside-Quadra, and North Park neighbourhoods** to reflect added opportunities for housing proximate to villages, transit and the downtown core area, and to reflect added or expanded urban villages including Quadra at Tolmie, Finlayson at Highview, and along Bay Street, and other key directions identified in the respective local area plans (see Map 1).
6. **Revise Strategic Directions for Jubilee Neighbourhood** to reflect an envisioned Small Urban Village near Bay and Shelbourne Streets (see Map 1).
7. **Revise Strategic Directions for Oaklands Neighbourhood** to consider opportunities for housing along Cook Street.
8. **Add or revise Development Permit Areas** as identified in Map 2:
 - A new Development Permit Area 16A for Fernwood, Hillside-Quadra and North Park neighbourhoods, and some adjacent properties, applying new *General Urban Design Guidelines (2022)*. This DPA would replace DPA16 where it currently applies in these areas.
 - An expanded Development Permit Area 6B(HC): Small Urban Villages – Fernwood, applying updated *Fernwood Village Guidelines (2022)*.
 - A new Development Permit Area 17(HC): North Park Village and District, applying new *General Urban Design Guidelines (2022)* as well as the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*. This DPA replaces part of DPA 3(HC): Core Mixed-Use Residential as well as incorporating additional parts of North Park Neighbourhood and North Park Village.
 - Updating DPA 5: Large Urban Villages – Quadra Village to reflect expanded boundaries and to apply the new *General Urban Design Guidelines (2022)*, replacing the *Quadra Village Urban Design Guidelines (1996)*.

The lands that are subject to this bylaw are shown in Map 1 and Map 2. For further inquiries on how a particular property will be affected, contact Community Planning at 250-361-0353.

HONOUR OCP
BYLAW NO. 12-013.
DO NOT MODIFY.

8 CHANGES:
NOT ACCEPTED
FOR THESE
3 NEIGHBOUR-
HOOD PLANS,
OR ANY
OTHERS IN
VICTORIA:
FAIRFIELD,
ET AL.

COMMENT

163RD YEAR • NO. 157 The Colonist: Founded 1858 | The Times: Founded 1884

- SEE CITY OF VICTORIA
JULY 2012 OFFICIAL
COMMUNITY PLAN
BYLAW NO. 12-013. (261pp)
- SEE BYLAW 2018:
NO. 18-72 (65pp)

Dave Obee
Editor and Publisher
Phillip Jang
Bryna Hallam
News Editors

We are rushing toward a crowded future

EDWARD RELPH

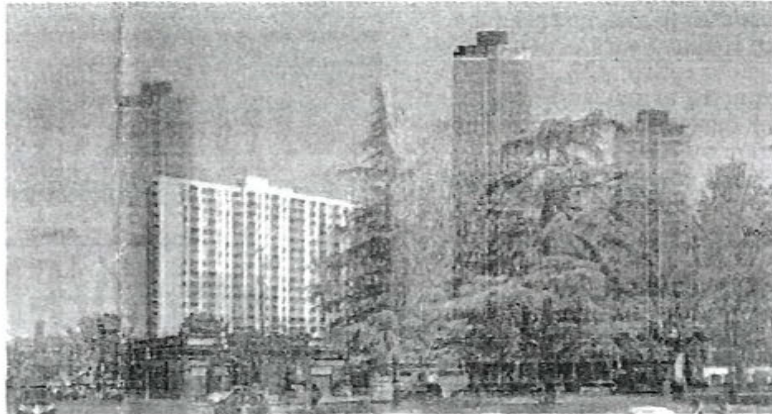
Constant construction in Victoria, and almost everywhere from Sidney to Sooke, is an indication of a looming problem for urban planning in the capital region. Plans expected to be good for 30 years are reaching their end dates about 15 years early because population growth has been twice as fast as projected.

To understand the consequences, you need to know that official community plans in the region must conform with the provincially mandated regional growth strategy of the Capital Regional District.

The key policy of the regional growth strategy is to protect natural areas and agricultural lands by keeping new development within an "urban containment boundary," in effect confining growth to existing urban areas.

To estimate how much growth has to be contained, the regional growth strategy uses data from 2011 as a basis for projecting the population of each municipality at the end of the planning period in 2038.

It turns out that 2011 was at the end of several decades of slow growth. The remarkable speed of growth since then is revealed by annual estimates of municipal populations provided



A modified image superimposes the towers of Harris Green Village, taken from the development application, onto a photo taken from Quadra Street at Pioneer Square. The 19-storey View Towers are in the middle ground. EDWARD RELPH

by B.C. Stats, the provincial agency that monitors demographic change.

In 2016, before the regional growth strategy was approved, Sidney, Oak Bay and Esquimalt had reached their projected 2038 numbers. At recent rates of growth, Langford, Victoria and Saanich will reach their projected populations no later than 2024. The capital region as a whole will follow two years later.

Rapid growth is expected to continue. B.C. Stats projects that in 2038 the population of the capital region will be about 475,000, or 50,000 more than expected.

At current levels of ownership and household sizes, this means there will be about 35,000 more vehicles on the roads and a need for 23,000 dwellings that plans have not anticipated.

The broad aims of the regional growth strategy — protecting green space, tackling affordability, promoting active transportation — apply regardless of the rate of growth, but it is clear that revisions are needed to the parts of plans that deal with how much growth is expected, and where and how it can be accommodated.

This is especially pressing in Victoria, which is fully built out

to its borders and already has a population of about 95,000. If the city maintains its 25 per cent share of the region's population, when its official community plan ends in 2041 it could be home to about 120,000 people, which is 20,000 more than the plan provides for.

There's urgency in attending to this because the city will surpass its projected 2041 population in 2023. This means that any decisions about proposed developments will be made in the context of an official community plan that no longer applies in terms of where and how to allocate growth and density.

The proposal for Harris Green Village is coincidentally caught up in this. It will be the largest and tallest development in the city, covering one and a half blocks along Yates Street, with five towers housing about 2,250 people in 1,500 apartments.

It requires major amendments to the official community plan because three of its apartment towers are about 30 storeys, dwarfing nearby apartments, and 10 storeys taller than maximum heights indicated the plan for this part of the downtown core area.

Victoria is a small city, but has one of the highest population densities in Canada and a relatively fine-grained, mid-rise

downtown that current plans protect by encouraging context-sensitive development.

Harris Green Village, if approved in the absence of up-to-date planning policies, will set a precedent for handling growth the official community plan does not anticipate. It will begin the ad hoc transformation of Victoria into Yaletown West.

There is no end in sight for growth in the capital region, but does it have to be treated as an irresistible force to be accommodated even if resulting developments permanently change somewhere's unique character and sense of place?

Or should sense of place be respected and the pressures of growth resisted by requiring large developments to provide affordable housing and other public benefits while conforming to strict guidelines about density, height and context-sensitive design?

Growth can't be stopped, but perhaps it can be slowed. For Victoria and other communities inside the urban containment boundary, there is no benefit in rushing towards an increasingly crowded future.

Edward Relph lives in Victoria and is an emeritus professor of geography and planning at the University of Toronto.

Victoria eyes new neighbourhood plans to tackle housing crunch

7 MAY 2022

ANDREW A. DUFFY
Times Colonist (A3)

The City of Victoria will consider adopting new neighbourhood plans for Fernwood, North Park and Quadra-Hillside to help create new and diverse housing options.

The committee of the whole voted Thursday to move forward with plans for the three neighbourhoods, which could mean new housing options, new housing designation zones focusing on rental housing and affordability, increased density and new “village” areas.

The plans paint a picture of increasing housing capacity in several zones, in some cases allowing more multi-family projects in traditional residential zones.

A staff report presented to council said there could be a significant increase in housing capacity along Bay Street, Finlayson Avenue and Quadra Street, and throughout Fernwood and North Park.

There would also be enhanced village centres along Bay Street, Hillside Avenue and within Fernwood and North Park that would offer more opportunity for new

shops and services to serve a growing population.

There are also allowances for improvements along both Bay Street and Hillside Avenue to revitalize the streets, make them more comfortable for pedestrians and improve mobility.

The plans, based on feedback from residents over the past two years, take a broad look at the three neighbourhoods and envision what could be possible over the next 20 years. They are also an attempt to get a handle on expected growth in Victoria.

According to a staff report, which acknowledged the city is behind in addressing people’s housing needs, the city expects to add 11,300 new households between now and 2040.

Mayor Lisa Helps said the plans, which reflect thousands of hours of staff work and public input, are definitely ready for a public hearing. “I’m looking forward to hearing from the public in the three neighbourhoods in particular, with this strong housing thrust,” she said.

While there was appreciation around the committee table for the depth of information included in the draft plans, some



Fernwood could be one neighbourhood that sees enhanced village areas. DARREN STONE, TIMES COLONIST

councillors were hoping for more input from neighbourhood associations to be included.

While that is expected to come during the public hearing phase of the project, Coun. Ben Isitt pushed to have written comments from the Downtown-Blanshard Advisory Committee, the Fernwood Community Association, the Hillside-Quadra Neighbourhood Action Committee and the North Park Neighbourhood Association to be included for discussion during the May 19 council meeting when the plans will be debated.

Isitt tried, in vain, to have the matter postponed so the public could have more time to

study the reports.

“The amount of work and analysis that’s gone into this report and [the missing-middle housing report] is substantial. It’s probably fair to say it’s the biggest piece of policy work and planning that is occurring this term,” he said.

Isitt said it’s a lot of information for council to digest, to say nothing of what the average resident will be faced with.

“It does make me really worry about the timeline we’re acting under. And I know there’s been a huge amount of momentum building — the train left the station within the planning department and among several

council members a few years ago — but I don’t think the public’s ready for the train to roll into the station with decisions approaching finality today or in a week or two.”

The public has another two weeks to study the proposed neighbourhood plans before council debates the matter again. If council votes to proceed at that point, it would schedule a public hearing as enacting the plans would require amending the official community plan.

The plans can be viewed at engage.victoria.ca/fernwood-north-park-hillside-quadra. aduffy@timescolonist.com

YOU

ENIORS

Note to self:
ists help
s organize
ur lives A9



2.38 plus GST
3.33 minimum in
outlying areas

VANCOUVER SUN (A1)

City has 'created a monster' by taking cash for upzoning



DOUGLAS TODD

The City of Vancouver website applauds the way property developers are increasingly providing hundreds of millions of dollars to help build housing, daycares, parks and community centres.

But some councillors and specialists warn the city is becoming dangerously dependent on increasing zoning density for highrises and other buildings in return for developers contributing heavily to infrastructure.

"We've created a monster," says Coun. Colleen Hardwick, who maintained previous councils never intended that developers' so-called community amenity contributions become a regular flow of money and facilities.

A Simon Fraser University sustainability specialist, Alex Boston, says amenity contributions are a "double-edged sword" that create "a big revenue stream," but also lead to too much housing construction for the luxury market.

Vancouver and other municipalities, Boston said, over-rely on them.

Still, the Vancouver city website is full of praise for the hundreds of millions of dollars that developers, in return for upzoning, have devoted to help create scores of amenities, such as the Marpole Family Place, the Jim Deva Plaza and the Creekside Community and Children Centre.

SEE TODD ON A2

SPORTS

CANUCKS

KHL star
Kuzmenko
to sign with
team NP8

21 JUNE 2022

Looking for a new home? Start here.

 **POLYGON**
polyhomes.com



THE
CONSERVATORY

VANCOUVER

A collection of one and two bedroom apartments at UBC's Wesbrook Village.

Priced from \$762,800

Call 604.821.8291

Polygon Conservatory Tower Ltd



COMING
SOON

BYRNEPARK

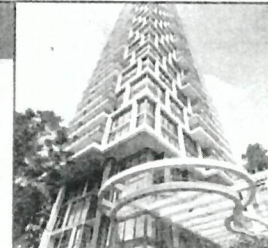
BURNABY

Parkside apartment and townhome residences in South Burnaby.

Register Now

Call 604.228.8530

Polygon Byrnespark Homes Ltd
This is currently not an offering for sale. Any such offer can only be made by way of a disclosure statement. E & O E



Sophora
AT THE EDGE

COQUITLAM

A collection of high-rise residences in Coquitlam Town Centre.

Two bedrooms from \$869,900

Call 604.942.8416

Polygon Sophora Tower Ltd

DEVELOPER CASH HARD TO RESIST: COUNCILLOR

TODD FROM A1

In a gesture of appreciation, the City of Vancouver offers to put developers' names on bronze plaques outside each new facility.

The money and contributions involved are huge. One council report points to how a large bulk of contributions — worth more than \$100 million in revenue and “in-kind” services — is coming from the upzoning of just four luxury towers in Downtown Vancouver.

They include a glamorous 43-storey skyscraper at 1640-1650 Alberni. In exchange for the opportunity to build higher, the developer will provide \$33 million worth of contributions in the form of market rental units, below-market rental units, heritage preservation and public art.

While the Vancouver city website says amenity contributions make it possible to reduce property taxes and support growth, Hardwick is among those who worry the frequent spot upzonings contribute to increasing land values and thus the cost of housing.

“We’ve created a business model for the city around selling zoning,” said Hardwick.

About 60 to 80 major rezoning applications are approved each year in return for contributions, according to a report.

Vancouver’s model is based on the idea that, in return for city council approving more density for a highrise or other buildings, “the city targets 75 per cent of all the increase in land value” as an amenity contribution. The developer can take home the remaining 25 per cent as profit.

Hardwick says those who maintain the heightened property values that flow from upzoning don’t contribute to higher housing prices are dealing in “malarkey.”

Developers are also expected to make financial or in-kind contributions, although to a much



Many suggest Vancouver is becoming dangerously dependent on negotiating increased zoning density for highrise condominiums in return for developers handing over revenue for infrastructure. JASON PAYNE/FILES

lesser extent, when councillors grant them “density bonuses,” or increased floor space under existing zoning. In 2021, the two methods led to developers being able to build five million square feet of more floor space.

A city report shows Vancouver has been bringing in roughly \$200 million to \$400 million a year from developers’ contributions, the majority from zoning upgrades. According to reports, developers have been funding about half the city’s facilities and infrastructure.

Councillor Jean Swanson acknowledges contributions are one of the reasons left-wing decision-makers such as herself keep voting to approve lavish highrises, even while most of their units are out of reach for the vast majority of people who live and work in the region.

“I voted for some more condos in a penthouse once because they

provided a huge CAC — in the order of \$1 million each,” Swanson said, “which is pretty hard to resist when it can be used for the community.”

That said, Swanson believes the contributions are both good and bad for the city.

“They are a cheap way to get dollars for amenities. The city is in desperate need of money to do what residents want, like get affordable housing, community facilities and deal with climate change.” But Swanson would rather impose a progressive “mansion tax” on properties than build “lots of condos” in exchange for developer money.

Last year, council hiked property taxes by 6.3 per cent, a near record.

SFU’s Boston said Vancouver and other municipalities over-rely on the amenity contributions because “they’re a big, predictable revenue source. Property

taxes and utility fees are insufficient to finance all the services required of municipalities, as well as some of the nice-to-haves.”

Vancouver already has zoning to accommodate 20 years of projected population growth, according to a city report, which also estimated that Vancouver, despite containing one-quarter of Metro’s population, has constructed 37 per cent of the region’s apartments.

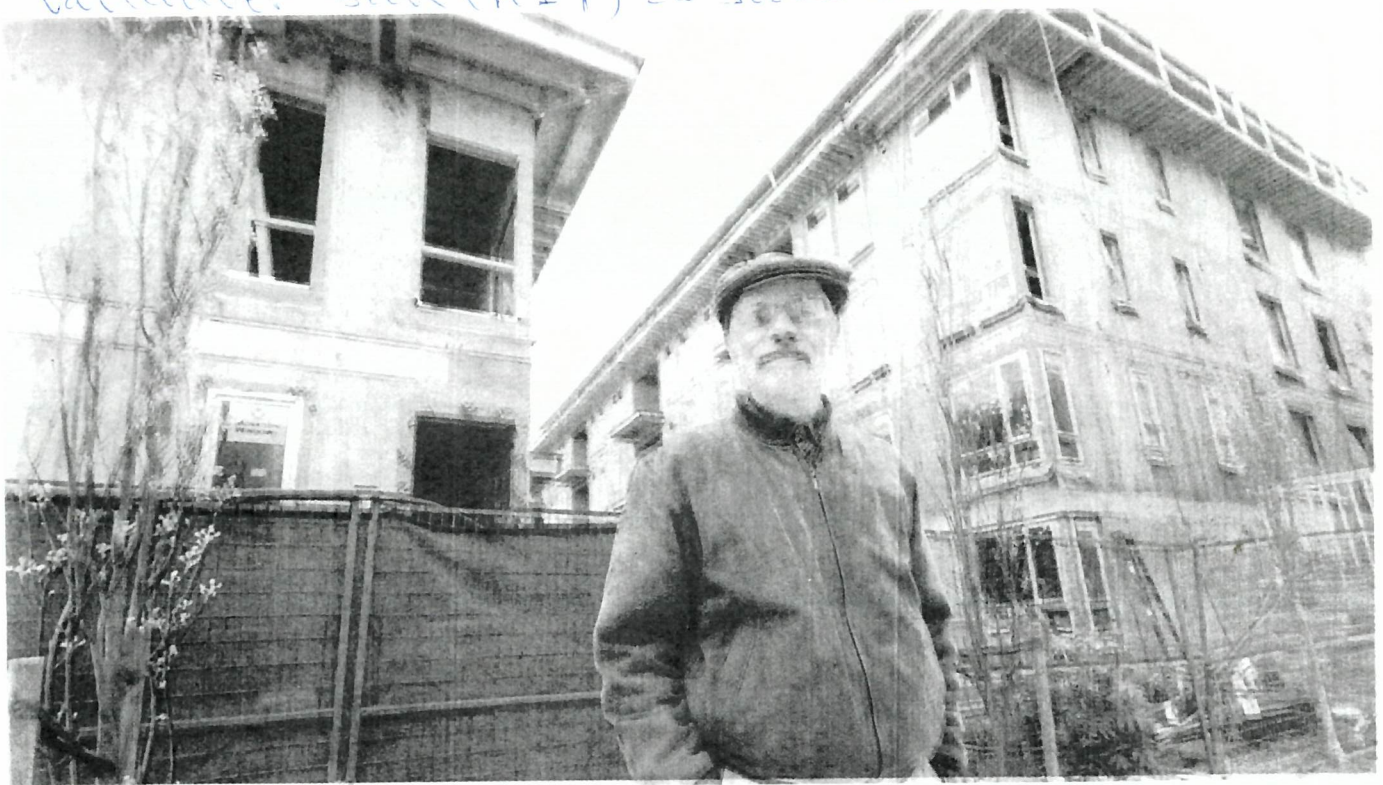
Given that Vancouver has already upzoned “boatloads of property” to more than absorb future population growth, Hardwick maintains it’s time councillors slow down in their pursuit of amenity contribution.

Council, she argued, has “bitten off more than its historic responsibilities” by committing to devoting hundreds of millions of dollars a year to housing and combating climate change.

dtodd@postmedia.com

Vancouver Sun (A17) 18 June 2022

(FRANCIS GEORGIAN)



Sustainability specialist Paul Morris says Vancouver can reach density targets with six-storey buildings. *FRANCIS GEORGIAN*

HIGHRISES NOT THE BE-ALL, END ALL OF SUSTAINABILITY

HIGHRISES NOT THE BE-ALL, END-ALL OF SUSTAINABILITY

Studies suggest tall buildings emit more greenhouse gases per resident



DOUGLAS TODD

The thinking goes that residential highrise towers are more environmentally friendly than low-rise buildings because they squeeze more people onto a smaller footprint of land.

Highrises are also believed to emit fewer greenhouse gas emissions because residents share energy in more compact spaces. Many also maintain skyscrapers reduce suburban sprawl.

Such theories are enshrined at Vancouver City Hall, where for more than 15 years councillors of the right and left, plus planners, have been building highrises to advance "EcoDensity," make Vancouver the world's "Greenest City" and live up to the city's 2019 climate emergency plan to combat global warming. While the green goals appear laudable, are there unintended environmental consequences from soaring residential towers?

The city of Vancouver has more than 1,100 residential highrises. Burnaby, North Vancouver, Surrey and elsewhere have added hundreds more. Skyscraper construction throughout Metro Vancouver now aims faster and higher — 40- to 60-storey buildings increasingly pepper the skyline.

On the plus side, it is widely accepted that housing density, including highrises, can reduce the pollution from suburban sprawl and the need for long-range commuting.

But Metro Vancouver politicians' embrace of highrises has also come despite strong research showing highrises (usually defined as 13 storeys and more) emit more greenhouse gases per resident per day than low-rise (five storeys and less) and medium-rise residential buildings.

And the latest studies are showing highrises are especially polluting when their construction process is taken into account, particularly because they require unusually massive concrete

foundations. There is also a third environmental worry. Despite some people finding high-in-the-sky living enjoyable, especially the views, highrise existence is not always beneficial to community life. This is not to mention what glass towers do to birds.

Few topics are more relevant to the future of Metro Vancouver. The highrise debate is becoming intense, including with protests and extra-long council meetings.

In the name of increasing density and preserving energy, Vancouver city staff have proposed hundreds of new highrises through the Broadway Plan, which seeks to house at least 50,000 more residents in a 500-block area of Mount Pleasant, Fairview and Kitsilano.

The latest studies are showing highrises are especially polluting when their construction process is taken into account.

Former Vancouver chief planner Brent Toderian, now a private consultant, is among the big boosters of the Broadway Plan, claiming its "bold" density reflects "just how far and fast cities need to go to mitigate the climate crisis."

But Gareth Sirotnik, a writer and Buddhist chaplain at the University of B.C. who has made presentations opposing the Broadway Plan, says, "Yes, Vancouver needs plenty of new housing supply. But there are better ways to achieve it than with skyscrapers."

He notes Vancouver's own 2016 Zero-Emissions Building Plan favours low- to medium-rise buildings. "What hypocrisy is going on here?"

The Broadway Plan, which could be decided on June 22, is considered a precedent for hundreds more highrises Vancouver has already approved or is planning — for mostly luxury developments at Oakridge Park, north-east False Creek, Marpole, Alberni Street and on the

Indigenous-owned Jericho Lands, Senakw and Heather Street properties. Surrey City Centre is also turning into a highrise zone and Burnaby is reaching for the skies in Metrotown, Edmonds and Brentwood.

To put the debate a simple way: Which is better for the environment? A skyscraper-filled metropolis like Hong Kong, New York, Shanghai and Dubai, or a low-slung city like Paris, Copenhagen, Vienna and Munich?

The most obvious way to assess the environmental impact of a dwelling is to examine how much greenhouse gas emissions it produces daily.

This is referred to as a building's "operational" carbon cost.

A study of this was done eight years ago for the City of Vancouver, Metro Vancouver, Surrey, Victoria and the Building Owners Association of B.C. A consultancy called

Lighthouse reviewed 337 different buildings across the province.

"The energy performance of low-rise several-unit residential buildings was 22 per cent better than highrise several-unit residential buildings," said Lighthouse's 71-page report.

"The greater the number of floors, the higher the relative emission intensity."

Why do taller apartment buildings tend to produce more greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs)?

"The (superior) performance of low-rise residential buildings is likely due to their predominantly wood construction compared to their taller counterparts that feature concrete structures," said Lighthouse, noting that buildings produce 41 per cent of the province's emissions.

In addition, Lighthouse reported, "Highrise buildings are more likely to have a greater percentage of glazing and curtain walls filled with windows, which decrease their energy efficiency and increase their emissions."

In other words, the Lighthouse report made clear highrises have in significant ways been worse for climate change than low- and medium-rises. Seattle's Office of Sustainability obtained even more negative results, leading to arguments highrises are "energy hogs." But the towers keep popping up.

Vancouver's Paul Morris, former research leader for sustainability at FP Innovation, says highrise residential buildings require more energy because they're less likely to be made of wood and their glass surfaces "are more exposed to the sun, to wind, to rain and ice. So they're more difficult to heat and cool."

With his argument emphasized in a warning by B.C. Hydro during last year's heat dome, Morris is part of a group questioning the Broadway Plan, after the first new contentious highrise for Broadway, at 39 storeys, was approved in April for near Granville Street.

Like most, Morris readily agrees that density reduces pollution by cutting commuting from far-flung suburbs. But he maintains six-storey buildings can create similar density by being gradually added to Vancouver neighbourhoods.

Vancouver Mayor Kennedy Stewart and councillors Adriane Carr, Michael Wiebe and Christine Boyle could not be reached for comment.

However, Sean Pander, the City of Vancouver's manager of Green Buildings, acknowledged in an email that "existing" highrises consume more energy than the city's low- and mid-rise multi-residential buildings (MURBS).

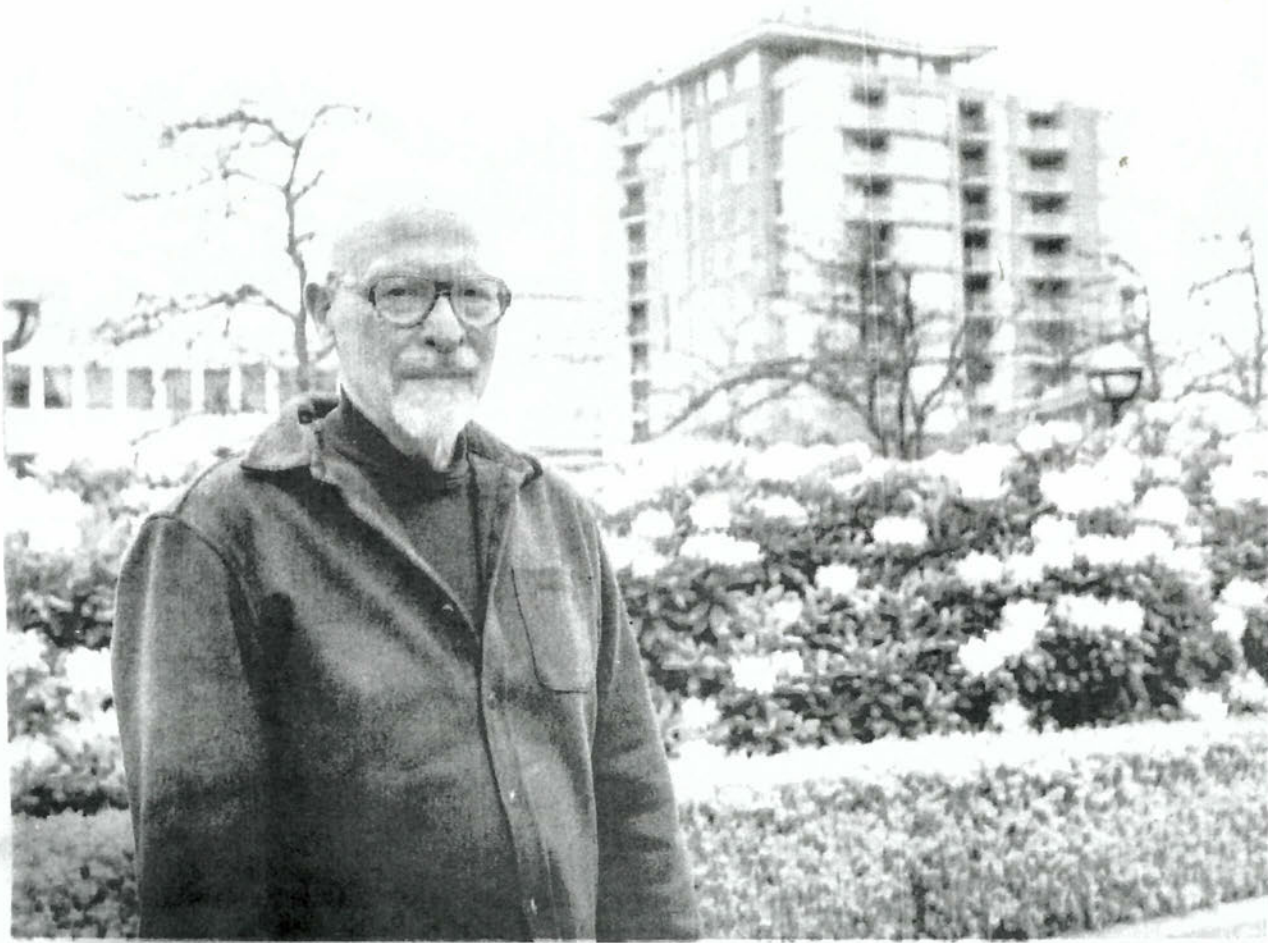
Still, Pander maintains environmental standards are improving. "As of June of 2021, emissions from new highrise developments have been reduced by 80 per cent compared to 2007." Council passed more recommendations on May 17, he said, to further limit carbon pollution from tall buildings.

While such debate continues to rage over "operational" emissions from highrises, two more environmental issues are arguably more important: They focus on emissions during construction and the effects on humans and the ecology.

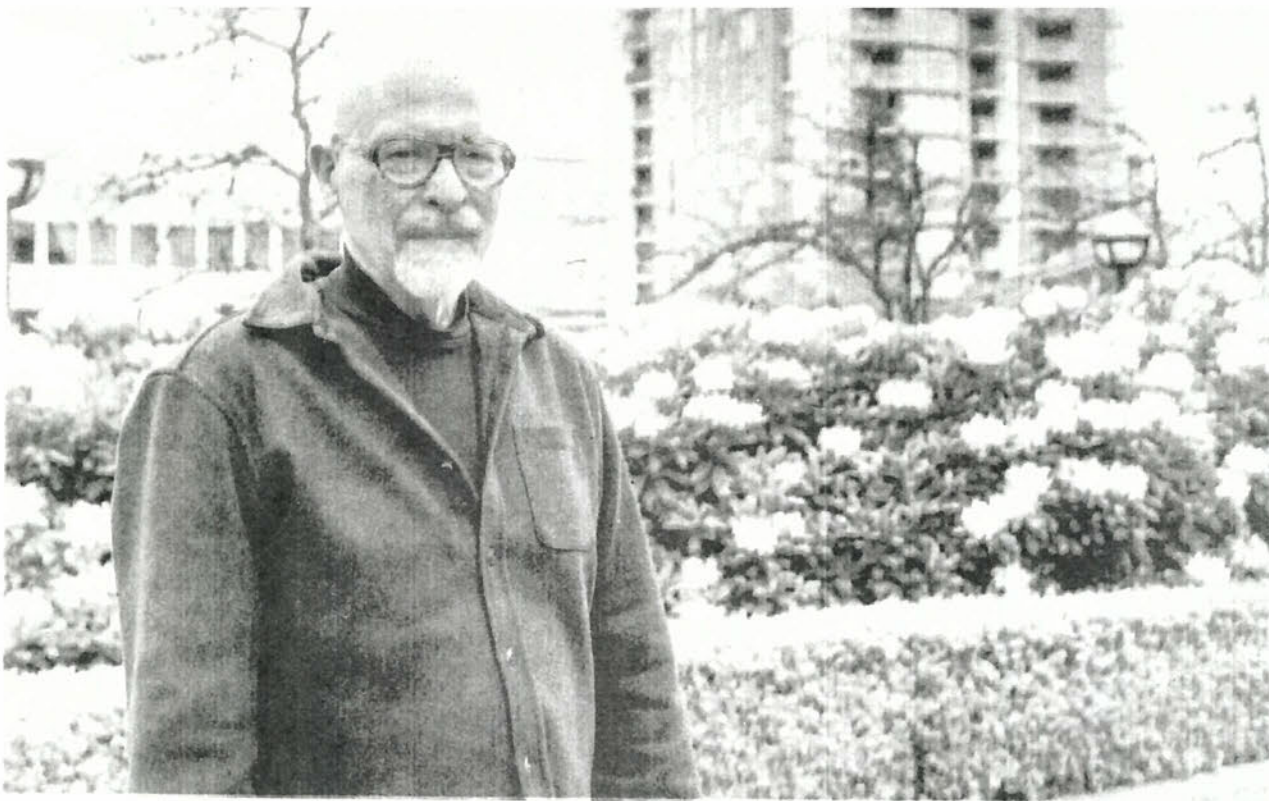
We'll get into these two difficulties next Saturday. dtodd@postmedia.com

(Edinburgh Napier University Prof. Francesco) Pomponi found that over a building's projected lifetime of 60 years, dense, low-rise apartments produce 332 tonnes of carbon dioxide less per person than their skyscraper alternative.

Vancover Sun (A17) 25 JUNE 2022



(INCLUSION JULY 12, 2022)



Condo dweller Gareth Sirotnik opposes the development of tall highrises along Broadway. He laments that councillors no longer seem to expect developers to make significant contributions to community life, to streetscapes or green spaces. FRANCIS GEORGIAN

TOWERING CITIES INCLUDE HIDDEN CLIMATE COSTS

Low-rise regions — more Paris than New York — are the way to go: experts



DOUGLAS TODD

While politicians claim they're reducing the daily pollutants caused by glass and steel highrises, that's not the end of the climate worry.

Research reveals highrises come with elevated "embodied" costs, which refer to the amount of greenhouse gases they emit in their entire lifetime. That begins with the construction process.

It's often ignored during environmental assessments. But when the massive concrete foundations of highrises are taken into account, their contribution to global warming skyrockets.

"'Embodied' carbon emissions have been described as 'the blind spot of the building industry,'" says Vancouver sustainability specialist Paul Morris. "We need to consider embodied emissions from extraction, transportation, manufacture and construction. Concrete is the worst material for embodied emissions."

In a groundbreaking study, Francesco Pomponi, of Edinburgh Napier University, has produced original environmental models that support the building of cities in which more people live closer together — but mostly in buildings of 10 storeys and under. Given the carbon-intensive materials needed to construct tall buildings, Pomponi's team concluded that a neighbourhood of highrise towers would create 142 per cent more carbon emissions than a Paris-like lower-rise region with the same population.

"Our findings show that high-density, low-rise cities,

such as Paris, are more environmentally friendly than high-density, highrise cities, such as New York," says Pomponi, lead author of the 2021 study in NPJ Urban Sustainability.

To put it another way, Pomponi found that, over a building's projected lifetime of 60 years, dense, low-rise apartments produce 332 tonnes of carbon dioxide less per person than their skyscraper alternative.

One reason for that, Pomponi said, is "to build tall you need heavier structures, chunkier foundations."

While Pomponi recognizes highrises can house more people than low-rises on the same footprint, that doesn't take into account "you cannot put two highrise buildings as close as you can two low-rising buildings ... For a lot of good reasons like privacy, ventilation and daylighting, highrise buildings need to be further apart."

Both Burnaby Mayor Mike Hurley and Sean Pander, the City of Vancouver's manager of green buildings, acknowledged the seriousness of "embodied" greenhouse-gas emissions from the construction of concrete-steel-and-glass towers.

"However there are wide variations from the best to the worst," said Pander, who, along with Hurley, stressed how their respective councils recently committed to further reducing such emissions, including through the use of "greener concrete mixes."

On May 17, Pander said, Vancouver council voted to make developers cut embodied emissions. "The recommended requirements will come into effect by 2025 and put Vancouver on a path to achieving" a 40 per cent reduction by 2030, he said.

For her part, Coun. Colleen Hardwick said that while other councillors often talk

about "green concrete," her understanding is it "only reduces emissions by about 15 per cent."

The studies showing strong emissions from highrises are quite credible, said Hardwick. "It does make me wonder why council has only ever been shown a primarily concrete highrise solution to our housing and affordability needs."

There is another concern — a third way to weigh the environmental impact of highrises, which focuses on their effects on community and the ecology.

"Green overcrowding," "Density without amenity." Those were two of the terms that Wendy Sarkissian, an environmental ethicist, used in her study to describe the arguments of those resisting former Vancouver mayor Sam Sullivan's campaign to use highrises to create EcoDensity.

Sullivan was often accused of "greenwashing" developers' crusade for more highrises, which are more profitable.

Sarkissian's concerns are echoed in a recent book by the University of Chicago's Kheir Al Kodmany. In a chapter titled Unsustainable Tall Building Developments, the professor of urban design joins planning gurus like Jane Jacobs and Jan Gehl in critiquing towers.

Low-rise neighbourhoods "emphasize the value of human scale and provide abundant opportunity for healthy social interaction," Kodmany writes. "Therefore, in any urban area, no matter how dense, keep the buildings four storeys high or less."

Kodmany also found tall buildings packed together create an "urban heat island effect. ... Dark surfaces that absorb heat from the sun, a lack of greenery, and waste heat and vehicles lead to higher temperatures."

Then there are the wind tunnels.

"Tall buildings create an adverse effect on the microclimate due to wind funnel-

ling and turbulence around their bases, causing discomfort to pedestrians."

Birds also suffer. "Bird-glass collisions are an unfortunate side-effect of tall building developments throughout the world,"

Kodmany says. Billions of birds perish each year from collisions with glass towers.

To enable people to connect and to combat heat islands, SFU sustainability specialist Alex Boston is among those who would like to see more green space included in the Broadway Plan.

Gareth Sirotnik, who lives a block from the first new highrise approved for the Broadway corridor, laments councillors no longer seem to expect developers to make significant contributions to community life, to streetscapes or green spaces.

"I live on the 14th floor of an 18-storey condo at the crest of Burrard-Granville Slopes I bought new 30 years ago. To gain six floors above the 12-floor guideline limit, my building developer signed away nearly 30 per cent of the property as a permanent public park, which we maintain," Sirotnik says.

"The days for such amenities are gone. The city just approved a 39-storey building a block away without almost any public amenities beyond a grocery store."

Even in the face of strong environmental concerns, some who argue for the necessity of highrises object that those who seek density via shorter buildings seem to want to turn every city into a version of central Paris, with blocks of repetitive six-storey apartment blocks.

However, Pomponi says cities don't need to become monotonously lowrise. "Each building should not be identical to the next, with a very fixed and prescribed height. It's more about having an upper threshold that, unless you've got a really, really good reason, it should not be exceeded."

dtodd@postmedia.com