

Victoria 2050

Emerging Policy Framework

For the Official Community Plan Update



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Vision 2050

Over the next three decades, the City of Victoria will thoughtfully and intentionally navigate difficult trade-offs in pursuit of the following vision:

Victoria is a **diverse community** anchored by a **range** of **livable** housing options, the **prosperous urban core** of British Columbia's capital region, and a global leader in the implementation of **climate-forward** **urban infrastructure**.

Welcoming and inclusive of all ages, lifestyles, incomes, and backgrounds.

Housing options across the housing continuum in all areas of the city.

Healthy, enjoyable private and public spaces for daily activities.

A future-ready, resilient economy that leverages regional strengths while emphasizing local well-being.

Proactively reducing emissions and preparing for the impacts of climate change.

The built and natural infrastructure that provides critical services for our residents and region.

Getting to Vision 2050



Influencing Victoria's Future Shape

Land management is a core municipal function that enables local governments to thoughtfully plan for growth and change. It has profound influence over the shape, form and experience of the city today and in the future. The type of development Victoria chooses to support and enable, and how we choose to regulate it, impacts people's daily lives as well as our ability to meaningfully advance equity and climate action.

The most visible impact of land management decisions is often on **urban form, character and activities associated with the use of buildings and open spaces**. The scale of development we choose to enable can influence the feel and livability of a local area. Development of any scale can feel comfortable and livable when built to ensure high quality urban design. As Victoria grows and lower scale buildings make way for higher density forms, land management regulations and urban design guidelines will play a crucial role in ensuring Victoria continues to celebrate and evolve its unique identity and enhance its liveability.

While land management policies and regulations enable or prohibit various forms of development, the City does not build housing. The provision of new housing is dependent upon market and non-market housing providers and their ability to build within the parameters of the City's policies and regulations. Together, regulation and builder response influence **how much housing is provided and who it serves**. As Victoria grows, the City must take action to encourage and enable a range of housing options that serve various household sizes, income levels and life stages. Then, both market and non-market housing developers are needed to create a housing system that works for everyone.

Land management also influences the **complex, interconnected systems and infrastructure networks** that enable a city to function. The scale and location of development influences **mobility services, options and service levels** that can be realized. Thoughtfully regulated development can improve **the public realm**, promoting active and shared transportation, programming and placemaking that supports social activity and public gathering as well as higher functioning **environmental systems** like the urban forest and other green infrastructure.

Adaptation is increasingly urgent for reducing climate risks to infrastructure, which provides safe spaces for living and working and supports our energy, transportation and utility infrastructure. Thoughtfully phased transitions of the urban form can enable sustainable upgrades to **underground infrastructure** and provide opportunities for more **climate forward systems** to emerge. Increasingly common extreme weather events like heat waves mean that things like thermal comfort and shelter from the elements are more important than ever. Providing shade, ways to cool off or spots to take cover during a storm not only ensure that public spaces are usable in all-weather but also that they become trusted refuges in an era of climate crisis.

It is increasingly important to recognize the **community infrastructure** of a city and the impact land management has on the realization of joyful, resilient communities. Public, institutional, cultural and community serving places play an outsized role in well-being and our ability to withstand shocks. These elements of a city provide opportunity and reason to connect with and support one another and bring joy and contentment to our daily lives. Redevelopment provides opportunities to create, connect and improve these functions.

As we manage our lands, complex systems and infrastructure in the context of growth, we have opportunity to imagine the **continued evolution of Victoria's identity**. Part of Victoria's identity is reflected and represented in the design of buildings and landscapes. As the city thoughtfully and deliberately evolves, so too can its identity and how that identity is expressed. In redevelopment we can embrace, celebrate and steward the histories and assets that represent the full breadth of our past, what people love about Victoria today, what they hope to love about it in the future and what will be passed on to the next generations.

2050 Directions

Growth Goal Posts

In 2021, Victoria’s population was approximately 94,900. By 2050, the City estimates its population will reach 142,000. The projected population growth would result in the formation of approximately 26,600 additional households between 2021 and 2049 – this includes people living here today who will come of age and form households, as well as those who move to the city from elsewhere. The Official Community Plan (OCP) must provide adequate capacity to keep up with this anticipated household growth.

Additional capacity is required to accommodate the estimated latent demand that exists in the housing market today. Latent demand is reflected in trends and indicators like historically low rental vacancy rates and overcrowding in households and, in 2021, was estimated at roughly 8,000 units. The OCP must also provide capacity to catch up with this need that has gone unmet.

The form and tenure of housing that the City chooses to enable and encourage may influence who can and who chooses to live in Victoria in the future. For example, family-friendly housing may support more families to stay in the city, while more rental housing may support people with a diversity of jobs and incomes.

Growth Goal Posts*

	2030	2040	2050	2021-2050 (Net New)
Anticipated Population	110,600	126,300	142,000	47,100

	2030	2040	2050	Total Net New
Net New Homes by Decade	13,600	11,300	9,700	34,600
Share of Rental Units <i>(targeting 65% secure rental units)</i>	8,900	7,300	6,300	22,500
Targeted share family units <i>(targeting 17% 3+ bedroom units)</i>	2,300	1,900	1,700	5,900

*Monitoring will align with Census years.

Growth Distribution

The proposed land use framework generally seeks to accommodate priority housing forms in areas with good access to services, amenities and sustainable mobility options. However, no goal posts are proposed for the distribution of housing by geographic area. This approach is reflective of the size and context of Victoria – a geographically small city at the heart of a greater region. In that context, geographic distribution of growth has relevance, but ultimately the entire city is strategic. For this reason, the land use framework prioritizes low- to mid-rise housing forms to align with the City's climate action, livability and housing diversity goals. This approach further reflects that proposed policy and regulatory approaches will seek to maximize public realm improvements and accommodate new local businesses, services and amenities throughout the city.

Transitioning Urban Forms

Today, Victoria is anchored by a thriving urban core with a mix of modern tall building forms and preserved heritage assets. Outside of the core, local communities benefit from a long-standing network of urban villages with low scale commercial and community serving uses. In between, throughout much of the city, there are single family residences that have increasingly embraced light infill such as secondary suites, garden suites and house conversions to multiple units, with pockets of low- and mid-rise apartments.

In the coming decades, Victoria will begin to transition its urban form to realize the 2050 Vision. The redevelopment potential of the urban core will begin to reach its peak. In the downtown, the City will continue to focus on new placemaking, cultural programming, the provision of needed public spaces and public realm improvements, as well as the economic resiliency of the region's economic centre.

Outside of the core, Victoria's existing urban villages will be nurtured through thoughtful and strategic redevelopment, as well as continued placemaking and public realm improvements so these special areas can continue to serve the local community while enhancing what makes them unique. Elsewhere, new, livable housing options will emerge as residential areas transition, over time, away from single family forms to more diverse ground-oriented and low- to mid-rise apartment forms, supported not just by the historic network of villages but also by new small-scale commercial corners in between.

While the scale and form of Victoria's buildings evolve, the city has an opportunity to embrace the change to create an improved experience of place. New buildings will support pedestrian and social activity, active mobility, climate resilience and ecological enhancement. They will positively orient towards and integrate people, public open spaces and the environment. The combination of new and existing buildings will contribute to an evolving pattern that enhances community identity and sense of place based on the social, cultural and environmental experience of the city. New buildings and open spaces will emphasize the timeless principles of good design that foster human scale and are responsive to local conditions while supporting a diversity of building forms and expressions.

- › See the **Urban Structure Guidance** for more on the urban forms proposed throughout the city.
- › See **Growth Goal Posts** above for additional guidance on housing needs.

Transitioning Urban Infrastructure

As the City supports a transition of Victoria's urban form, it must also support essential urban functions in the modern context of environmental, societal and economic uncertainty. Following the Urban Structure Guidance, this document provides the emerging directions for the city's Community, Mobility and Blue-Green Networks.

What is a Resilient City?

A resilient city understands the past and successfully prepares for climate impacts and a zero-carbon future using data analysis, science, partnerships and policy. It adapts to changing economic, social and natural systems by leveraging opportunity out of challenge. A resilient city protects and supports its vulnerable populations and natural environment to prevent harm and allow for quick and sustained recovery in the face of disaster and climate disruption. Our built environment is designed and powered to provide safe, enduring and adaptable spaces where we can live, work, recreate and thrive.

Community Networks & Infrastructure

A strong and integrated system of community infrastructure is important today and will become increasingly important in a future where climate, societal and economic shocks are anticipated more often. Victoria's population is aging, our economic sectors are changing and global migration patterns are likely to make the city increasingly diverse. Future residents will have new and unique needs. Strong, suitable and adaptable community infrastructure is required to support residents today and in the future.

High quality public spaces support health, equity, the environment and the economy. They attract private investment and provide access to nature, support biodiversity, cool cities and help to manage stormwater. They create the conditions for social connection and belonging and stimulate innovation by bringing people together who might not otherwise meet to learn new perspectives they might not otherwise see. The positive effects of accessible public spaces on human health have been well documented with improvements in mental and physical health and enhanced overall well-being.

As Victoria grows and changes, new development and capital investments will need to thoughtfully integrate physical elements of community infrastructure (plazas, community spaces and parks), pathways (physical and conceptual connections between elements of infrastructure) and programming (like daycares, community services and activities). Objectives will be realized through redevelopment, capital investment and new strategies for enhancing existing public assets, including our road rights-of-way and along waterways.

- › See the **Community Networks** section for proposed guidance on integrating land use, built form and the following elements of Victoria's Community Networks:
 - Centres and Villages that provide not only daily services and amenities but also offer opportunities for planned and spontaneous social connection.
 - Parks, Open Spaces and Linear Parkways that support the Blue-Green Networks and contribute to well-being.
 - Community and Cultural Places that support Victoria's economy and vibrancy and enrich resident's lives.

Mobility Networks & Infrastructure

Urban transportation can have profound effects on cost of living, access, inclusion and quality of life for both existing and future residents. Transportation plays a vital role in connecting people, fostering social connections and contributing to the identity of the city. As Victoria grows, the need for sustainable, affordable, inclusive and low-carbon transportation options becomes increasingly important. Further, the integration of equity into transportation planning and capital investments to reverse existing transportation inequities is imperative.

Mobility objectives will be realized through redevelopment, capital investments, programs and new technologies to support road safety, accessibility and sustainable transportation in personal and commercial travel. Diverse public transit services (including on-demand transit, bus rapid transit, light rail transit and handyDART) and transit-priority infrastructure will continue to be a key priority for advocacy to senior levels of government.

- › See the **Mobility Networks and Hubs** section for proposed guidance on integrating land use, built form and transportation, including:
 - Mobility Networks that support key transportation functions, like transit, cycling, emergency response and goods movements as well as the other key social and environmental functions of the right-of-way as described in the Community and Blue-Green Networks Sections.

- Mobility Hubs that serve as a strategic conflux of several mobility services and features and support new housing density.

Blue-Green Networks and Infrastructure

Healthy, functioning ecosystems are an important part of Victoria’s past and vital to its present and future. Victoria’s shoreline, watersheds, urban forest and natural assets support diverse environmental, economic, cultural and quality-of-life benefits. They are also crucial assets in the context of a changing climate. Victoria, in its growing, urban context will need to thoughtfully consider how to weave green infrastructure into the urban fabric to support the city’s identity as a place where ecology, health and culture are intertwined.

The Blue-Green Networks are comprised of public spaces such as parks, plazas, shorelines and linear parkways, as well as natural features growing across public and private spaces such as the urban forest. The Networks are intended to support ecology by way of healthy ecosystems and diverse wildlife habitats and meet the needs of communities present and future by connecting people with year-round opportunities to play, learn, recreate, gather and celebrate.

- › See the **Blue-Green Networks** section for proposed guidance on integrating land use, built form and Victoria’s Mobility Network, including:
 - Natural Assets that support biodiversity, climate action objectives and nature-based solutions to the city’s urban infrastructure needs.
 - Shoreline and Urban Waterways that support sustainable rainwater management and watershed health.
 - Urban Forest that recognizes and advances the benefits of tree canopy in an urban environment.

Embracing an Evolving Identity

As Victoria’s urban form, systems and infrastructure transition and evolve, so too will its identity, which creates an opportunity to expand what is recognized and celebrated to reflect the full diversity of the community – past, present and future. Cities are always changing and always have been, but a clear articulation of what and how values and aspects of identity should be transmitted into the future is key to managing that change in a sustainable, community-centred way.

Important but select components of Victoria’s history have been embraced and nurtured in the preservation of certain features of its built form, privileging colonial and architectural heritage. However, other elements of Victoria’s Indigenous, multi-cultural and diverse history have been erased or hidden. Efforts are ongoing to bring them back into the city’s expressed and celebrated identity. This includes expanding the narrative to educate and create awareness through placemaking, programming and public art, as well as through building and open space design and recognition of Victoria’s natural environment.

Growth and Development



General Development Guidance

Guiding the Transition to 2050

This section provides the proposed guidance for Victoria's Urban Structure and future land use. This guidance is intended to be integrated and used together with the guidance for the proposed Community, Mobility, and Blue-Green networks which are detailed in the remaining sections of this document. Collectively, these integrated networks serve as the high-level land management tools that will guide the City's decisions and initiatives toward the proposed 2050 Vision.

Public Uses in the City

Public uses are not restricted by the proposed guidance herein and may be realized anywhere in the city if consistent with zoning and urban design guidelines, including parks, schools, public facilities, public utilities, pathways, and public open spaces, as well as places used for public assembly, community services, urban food production and institutional and recreational uses.

Arts and Culture Uses in the City

Arts and cultural uses in the city are broadly enabled and supported with the aim of no net loss of these spaces. Arts and production spaces are encouraged in employment lands. In identified areas and locations they may be considered to be a site-specific amenity.

Innovation in Development

Where proposed development is aligned with the principles of good urban design as described in the following section, development may otherwise depart from the Urban Structure guidance to advance innovative solutions and approaches to realizing the 2050 Vision, including for:

- Innovative or emerging market housing solutions, such as mass timber or modular development, which may require a unique development form and scale.
- Alternative ownership and tenure models, such as community land trusts, cooperative housing and affordable homeownership.
- Preservation and enhancement of heritage assets in line with the City's heritage values framework.
- Projects that provide primarily non-market housing.
- Projects that provide significant climate or greenhouse gas emission reduction benefits, such as renewable technology and district energy systems.
- Projects that deliver major infrastructure to support Rapid Transit.
- Projects that provide significant community climate adaptation functions or that incorporate or are notably responding to prominent on-site or adjacent natural features such as riparian areas or intact Garry oak ecosystems.

Principles of Good Urban Design

All development should adhere to good urban design principles, consistent with the City's design guidance.

The OCP is supported by the City's long-established but evolving urban design framework contained in a number of design guideline documents for both public and private realms that have led to many successful outcomes. This established framework is premised on the role good urban design plays: in delivering both the **quantity and quality** of places to live, work, innovate, play and thrive; in keeping Victoria's public open spaces **vibrant and connected**; in creating and reinforcing a **sense of place**, and; in supporting an **equitable, sustainable and resilient** Victoria that is set up for the future.

The following urban design principles represent a synthesis of the City's urban design framework:



New buildings and open spaces that establish **positive relationships** with existing and future development, streets and open spaces.



High quality design for buildings that support street vitality, visual interest and safety for pedestrians and building users, as well as for public spaces.



High quality design for open spaces that are welcoming and comfortable, capable of supporting year-round social gathering and celebration.



Building composition where buildings achieve **human-scaled** proportions and help enrich our streetscapes for sociability and neighbourliness.



Pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly, transit-supported streetscapes that support places for daily needs and employment with their **safety and accessibility**.



Design with nature using green infrastructure to mimic natural systems, provide stormwater management and habitat areas while supporting watershed health, urban food production and the urban forest.



Livable environments that ensure equitable access to open space, daylight and fresh air while providing adequate shelter, privacy and outdoor amenity.



Healthy, climate-friendly and future-forward buildings and open spaces with small environmental impacts and big positive design outcomes for residents, users and their broader communities.



Inclusive buildings and open spaces for all, including family-friendly environments and amenities and designs for all ages and abilities.



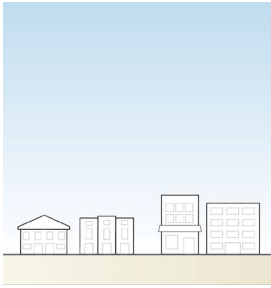
Placemaking and storytelling that express the values of our city, embrace diverse narratives and promote designs attentive to distinctive features of Victoria’s Downtown Core, Legislative Precinct, Midtown Employment District, Town Centres and Villages.

See Also

Principles of good urban design are covered in detail in Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP) Design Guidelines and the General Urban Design Guidelines for the rest of the city.

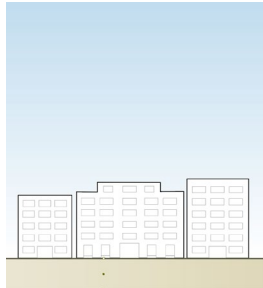
Anticipated Built Form and Scale

General scales for building form are included in the urban structure guidance that follows and can be understood as follows.



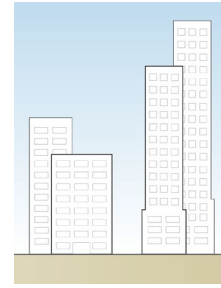
Ground-Oriented/Low-Rise
Form of Development

Ground-oriented residential; small scale village commercial/mixed use, small-lot employment/commercial forms or small civic/institutional facilities of up to four storeys.



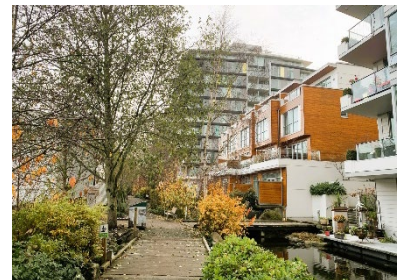
Mid-Rise
Form of Development

Generally four to six storeys (typically wood frame for residential buildings); a variety of residential, employment/retail or civic/institutional uses that help frame streets and activate them on medium- to large-scale sites.



Tall Building
Form of Development

Taller forms (generally greater than seven storeys) with ground-oriented or mid-rise components that frame streets and open spaces.

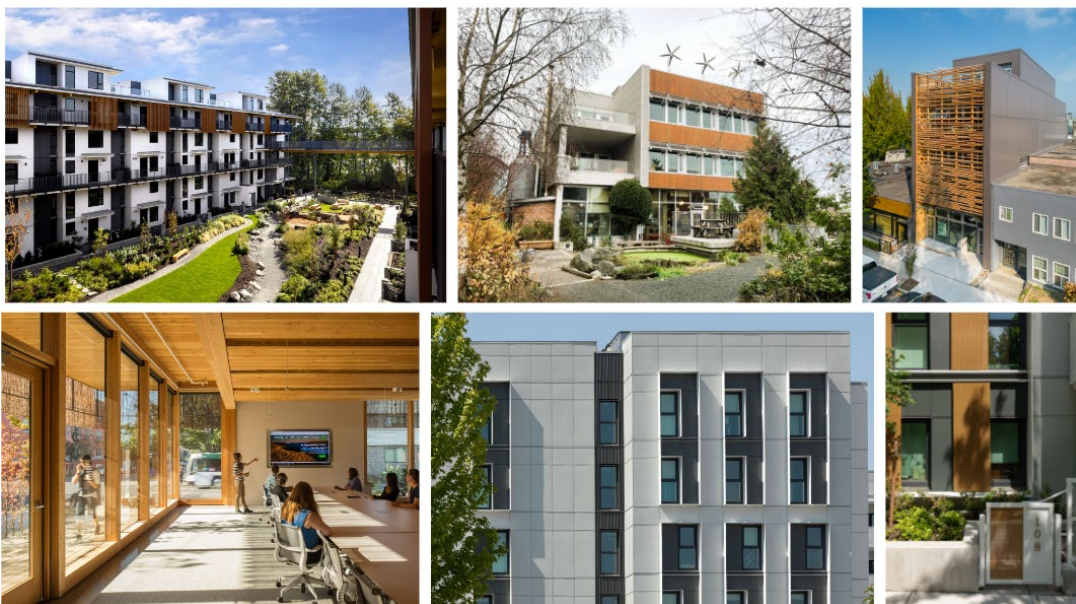


Climate Action and Resilience

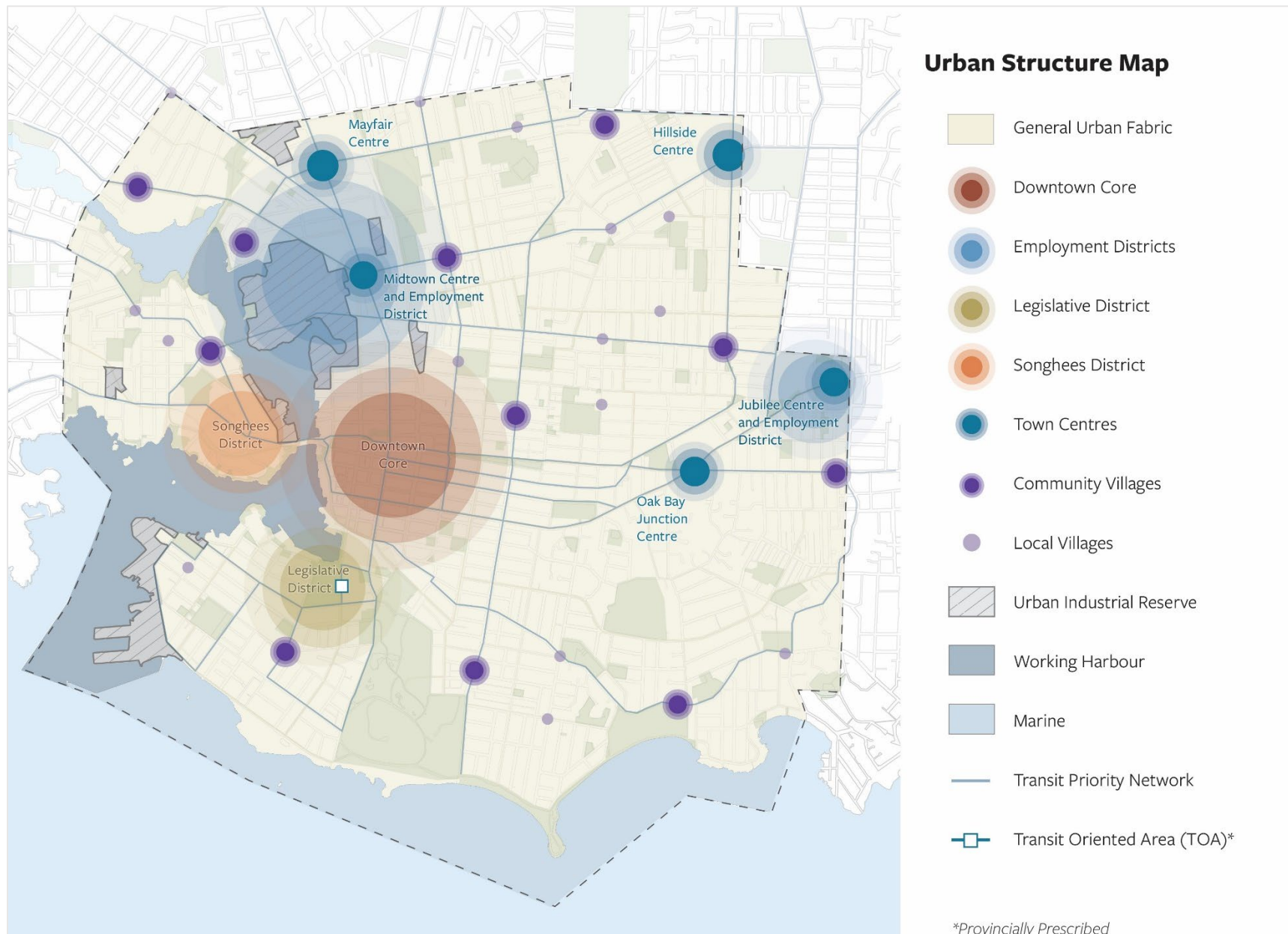
Future development in the city will need to address the climate emergency, while providing the livable spaces needed for growth. The Urban Structure Map and guidance emphasize lower carbon development forms such as ground-oriented and low- to mid-rise wood frame for meeting Victoria's growth goal posts.

All development forms should adhere to the following climate action principles for urban development, representing a synthesis of the City's urban design framework:

- Encourage, facilitate and eventually require high-performance, net zero energy-ready and near-zero emission buildings that provide resilience in extreme weather and ensure good indoor air quality, designed with a changing climate in mind.
- Enable and support 'car-light living' by locating homes, employment areas and places for daily needs at walkable and bikeable distances from transit routes and stops. Where parking is provided, it is electrified, shared, supports diverse mobility devices and considers the most compact form.
- For new and existing buildings, encourage shading and planting design strategies to reduce energy demand, reduce overheating from solar gains and improve occupant comfort while supporting urban design objectives of human-scale proportions, design with nature and livability.
- For existing buildings, encourage and facilitate renovations and retrofits that reduce energy demand and carbon emissions from both building operations and mobility.
- At redevelopment or end of service life, require the deconstruction of buildings for the reuse and recycling of materials, maximizing diversion from landfill. Encourage and facilitate 'design for deconstruction' in new buildings. Encourage and facilitate home relocation where possible.
- Encourage, facilitate, and eventually require designs that incorporate low-carbon materials and minimize the use of high-carbon materials to reduce embodied carbon impacts of new construction.
- For new buildings and retrofits, encourage and facilitate locally sourced renewable materials, such as sustainably-sourced BC lumber, engineered wood products and mass timber.



Urban Structure Map and Guidance



General Urban Fabric

Intent

Victoria's General Urban Fabric will transform in the coming decades to meet current and future housing needs. As lower density housing makes way for higher density housing to meet those needs, redevelopment should focus on housing forms, types and tenures that are appropriate to a range of incomes, ages and lifestyles. Strong emphasis should be placed on high quality, climate-forward designs, improvements to the public realm, the city's urban infrastructure and meeting diverse community needs.

Built Form Guidance

A range of multi-unit forms are contemplated throughout the General Urban Fabric, from ground-oriented to mid-rise buildings.

All forms should prioritize livability, enable car-light living and consider inclusion of suitable and appropriate on-site amenity and social spaces as guided by City policy.



Use Guidance

Uses are primarily residential-oriented but may contemplate a mix of commercial and community serving uses to meet the needs of the evolving community.

- Multi-unit residential uses that include a mix of tenures, sizes and scales.
- Residential and commercial mixed uses, with an emphasis on small-scale commercial uses that support local economic development and help to meet daily community needs.
- Community services such as day cares, health and wellness places and compatible arts and cultural uses.

See Also

- Parks, Open Space and Linear Parkways under the [Community Networks](#).
- Greenways Guidance under the [Blue-Green Networks](#).
- [Mobility Networks and Mobility Hubs](#).
- Related area policies.

Downtown Core

Intent

Victoria's Downtown Core Area is the thriving, pedestrian-friendly cultural and economic heart of the Capital Region. It provides a broad range of employment, housing, tourism and recreational opportunities in a high quality, well-connected and attractive urban environment. The area embraces the Victoria Harbour, celebrates its heritage and Victoria's role as the Provincial Capital and serves as a model for livable and sustainable urbanism.

Built Form Guidance

Low-rise forms that preserve and highlight heritage assets particularly in the historic core, Old Town, the Inner Harbour and Chinatown.

Mid-rise and tall building forms located to maximize harbour views and support the **urban amphitheater concept**, tapering up from the harbour and historic core and back down toward the outer shoulders of the core.

Land Use Guidance

Highest mix of uses to support a thriving regional centre.

- A mix of employment and office uses reflecting the downtown as the metropolitan core of the city and region.
- Multi-unit residential and mixed uses, embracing a diversity of tenures.
- Commercial and industrial uses supportive of regional economic goals.
- Institutional uses that serve modern community needs, including shared infrastructure and services.
- Diverse retail that serves the evolving needs of residents, workers and visitors.
- Prominent waterfront, public, community and cultural spaces that serve as social and economic anchors for the city and region.

See Also

For additional guidance see:

- [Mobility Networks and Hubs](#) guidance.
- The Shoreline Guidance under the [Blue-Green Networks](#).
- [Working Harbour](#) and [Marine](#) Guidance.
- The Downtown Core Area Plan and related area policies.

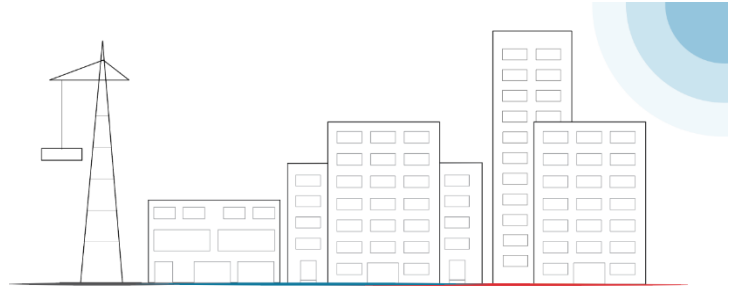


Employment Districts

Intent

With the changing global, regional and local economic landscape, diverse and innovative employment generating uses will be important throughout the city as reflected in the General Urban Fabric, which supports small-scale commercial and community serving uses including arts and culture. Still, major employment nodes focused on jobs and economic growth present opportunities to concentrate and connect ideas and innovation. The Midtown Employment District and the Jubilee Employment District both encompass Town Centres and serve as key employment nodes outside of the Downtown Core.

The Midtown Employment District, including Rock Bay, the Upper Harbour and the North Douglas Corridor enables an innovative mix of industrial, commercial, residential and cultural spaces. The area is intended to attract emerging sustainable economic sectors, embraces industries that support a **Blue Economy** and enables novel land use approaches to support emerging sectors while ensuring the retention and enhancement of the city's industrial land supply, including through **industrial intensification**.



The Jubilee Employment District is anchored by Royal Jubilee Hospital and supports diverse related and supportive commercial and residential activities.

Built Form Guidance

A mix of low- to mid-rise and tall building forms depending on use and context.

Large floor plate commercial buildings and on-site amenities that support office uses.

In the Midtown Employment District, industrial buildings and structures, including higher density and novel forms that support intensification with siting and designs that support commercial vehicle circulation, shipping and delivery.

Land Use Guidance

Midtown Employment District

A mix of industrial, commercial and residential uses strategically located to capitalize on the assets of the area, including marine industrial uses along the harbour and diverse employment and mixed residential uses in strategic locations along the Douglas Rapid Transit Corridor.

- Intensified **marine industrial** uses along the harbour including shipping, manufacturing, processing, transportation, warehousing and accessory office uses that respect and respond to the environmental and social objectives of the harbour.
- Intensified **light industrial** uses including manufacturing, processing, warehousing, distribution and repair, as well as accessory retail and integration of office uses.
- Employment-oriented uses that support evolving economic sectors and practices, including **innovative mixes** of commercial, office, retail, light industrial, live-work, and where appropriate, residential use.

- Mixed commercial and multi-unit residential-oriented uses may be contemplated in close proximity to Transit Corridors, Mobility Hubs and Transit Exchanges.
- Institutional uses supportive of key regional economic sectors, such as arts, innovation and technology.
- As appropriate, tourism supporting uses including **visitor accommodation**.
- Redevelopment of residential uses should seek to **complement adjacent employment** uses including through the incorporation of ground floor light industrial or employment spaces.
- **Shared, centralized parking facilities for vehicles, bicycles and other mobility devices** will act as community resources and allow for maximum site use, and the integration of sustainable design elements.

Jubilee Employment District

- Employment-oriented uses that support economic sectors related to the activity at the Royal Jubilee Hospital campus, including **innovative mixes** of commercial, medical, medical-supportive and research offices, retail and, where appropriate, residential uses.
- Mixed commercial and multi-unit residential-oriented uses are envisioned in proximity to Transit Corridors, Mobility Hubs and Transit Exchanges.
- Institutional uses supportive of key regional economic sectors.
- **Shared, centralized parking facilities for vehicles, bicycles and other mobility devices** will act as community resources and allow for maximum site use, and the integration of sustainable design elements.

[See Also](#)

For additional guidance see:

- [Mobility Networks and Mobility Hubs](#).
- The Shoreline guidance under the [Blue-Green Networks](#).
- [Working Harbour](#) and [Urban Industrial Reserve](#) Guidance.
- The Downtown Core Area Plan and related area policies.

Songhees District

Intent

The Songhees District is closely tied to the Downtown Core and supports its role as an anchor for the region. The area's history is rich providing unique opportunity to daylight Victoria's identity as a coastal city that has long embraced settlement and growth patterns closely tied to its waterways. The area was once home to a Lekwungen village and later the Songhees Nation Reserve. After the 1911 relocation of the Songhees Reserve and sale of these lands, much of the area was redeveloped for harbour-related industry.

The evolution of the area is guided in large part by the master planned developments, in various states of being realized, that ring the Inner and Outer Harbour, including Dockside Green, Bayview Place (including Roundhouse) and Railyards. Existing marine industrial is intended to be preserve and enhanced per the guidance under Urban Industrial Reserve. Adjacent redevelopment should complement the master planned areas and seek to embrace and restore physical and symbolic connections to the water.

Built Form Guidance

A mix of low- to mid-rise and tall building forms that complement the district's assets, depending on context and as guided by existing policy.

Tall building forms that are strategically located, sited and designed with **principles of good urban design** may be contemplated where an appropriate balance of housing, economic, mobility and public open space objectives are realized.



Built forms should be structured to complement and preserve views and access to the inner and outer harbour as well as surrounding heritage assets. A high quality public realm, pedestrian connectivity and amenities play a prominent role in design.

Land Use Guidance

A mix of uses intended to support and enhance the tourism, government and other economic sectors in the area.

- Varied commercial, residential and limited light industrial uses as guided by relevant City policy.
- Multi-unit residential and mixed uses, embracing a diversity of tenures with active frontages on the street.
- Institutional uses that serve modern community needs, including shared infrastructure and services.
- Diverse retail that serves the evolving needs of residents, workers and visitors.
- Waterfront, public, community and cultural spaces.
- Marine water transportation.

For additional guidance see:

- **Mobility Networks and Mobility Hubs.**
- The Shoreline Guidance under the **Blue-Green Networks.**
- **Urban Industrial Reserve** Guidance.
- **Working Harbour** and **Marine** Guidance.
- Related master plans, guidelines and area policies.

Legislative District

Intent

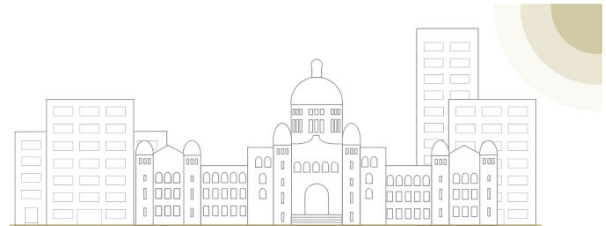
The Legislative District is the iconic gateway to Victoria. It is an economic anchor for the South Island, home to the Provincial Legislature, historic Parliament buildings, modern employment nodes, key tourism assets and prominent public open spaces. It is where Victoria's lands and mobility systems meet significant assets of its **Working Harbour**, including ferry and float plane terminals that connect Victoria beyond the Island.

The area is intended to be maintained as an iconic and vibrant focal point and gateway. Strategic redevelopment and investments will strengthen the district for tourism, government, culture, heritage, employment and economic development. A cohesive, well-designed and vibrant waterfront with improved parks, plazas and public access is envisioned.

Built Form Guidance

A mix of low- to mid-rise and tall building forms that complement the district's assets, depending on context.

Tall building forms that are strategically located, sited and designed with **principles of good urban design** may be contemplated where an appropriate balance of housing, economic, mobility and public open space objectives are realized. Special attention will be given to transit-oriented development and the integration of both tourism-focused and public transit services.



Built forms should be structured to complement and preserve the views of the harbour, key landmarks, prominent public open spaces and surrounding heritage assets. Redevelopment beyond the harbour should be guided by the **urban amphitheater concept**, tapering up from the harbour and historic core and back down toward the outer shoulders of the core. A high quality public realm, pedestrian connectivity and amenities play a prominent role in design.

Land Use Guidance

A mix of uses intended to support and enhance the tourism, government and other economic sectors in the area.

- Public institutional and assembly-related uses.
- Commercial uses, including retail, office and visitor accommodation.
- Marine water and air transportation.
- Recreation and tourism-related uses.
- Residential mixed uses with active frontages on the street.

See Also

For additional guidance see:

- **Mobility Networks and Mobility Hubs.**
- The Shoreline Guidance under the **Blue-Green Networks.**
- **Working Harbour** and **Marine** Guidance.
- The Downtown Core Area Plan and related area policies.

Town Centres

Intent

Town Centres are major nodes outside of the Downtown Core which serve as intermunicipal connection points for Victoria's neighbouring communities. They provide unique opportunities to advance interrelated goals for housing, mobility and public space. They are home to significant employment, institutional and cultural anchors. Large programmed public open spaces as well as major transit exchanges keep the Town Centres vibrant and thriving.

Built Form Guidance

A mix of mid-rise and tall building forms that emphasize low-carbon materials are envisioned.

Tall building forms that are strategically located, sited and designed with **principles of good urban design and for climate action and resilience** may be contemplated where an appropriate balance of housing, economic, mobility and public open space objectives are realized.



Each centre should have strong internal connectivity, anchored by a comfortable and inviting main street that is home to buildings with a fine-grained rhythm of active frontages typically set close to the street, supported by pedestrian-oriented streetscapes and public open spaces with a high quality of design. Curb space is dynamically managed to support loading, shared mobility and accessible parking. Centralized shared parking resources for vehicles, bicycles and other devices may be considered to support maximum site use for housing and other priorities.

Land Use Guidance

Most developments should emphasize a mix of uses with daily services for the surrounding community as well as destinations for the city and neighbouring local areas.

- Primarily multi-unit residential and commercial mixed uses, with an emphasis on office, destination retail and visitor accommodation.
- Institutional uses may serve as a prominent anchor, and supportive uses are encouraged, notably in the Jubilee Centre.
- Innovative mixes of commercial, retail, light industrial, live-work, and residential uses are encouraged in the Midtown Centre.

See Also

For additional guidance see:

- Centre and Village Guidance under the [Community Networks](#).
- [Mobility Networks and Mobility Hubs](#).
- Related area policies.

Community Villages

Intent

Victoria has a strong and historic network of well-connected villages. These are the hearts of Victoria's neighbourhoods, typically centred around a two to three block village main street. The eclectic identity of each local area is most prominently visible within its community village. As the city grows, these areas are intended to be preserved and enhanced as unique local places that serve the surrounding community and provide opportunities for diverse local economic development.

Built Form Guidance

The low-rise, fine-grained rhythm that exists along many village main streets today should be maintained and, where appropriate, replicated in redevelopment.

Mid-rise forms that provide new open spaces or plazas or enhance or respond to existing ones are envisioned on large sites including sites in and behind the village main street.



Taller buildings that are appropriately scaled and strategically located, sited and designed with **principles of good urban design and for climate action and resilience** may be contemplated in developments that provide or enhance community and cultural spaces. As with tall buildings in Town Centres, these forms should emphasize low-carbon materials.

Each village should have a comfortable and inviting main street with logical mid-block connections, small plazas and public gathering spaces and, where relevant, good internal connectivity.

Land Use Guidance

Most developments should emphasize a mix of uses with daily services for the surrounding community as well as cultural uses and destinations for the city and neighbouring local areas.

- Primarily multi-unit residential and commercial mixed uses, with an emphasis on retail and community serving uses.
- Commercial-oriented buildings, such as office primary or visitor accommodation may be considered as appropriate.
- Community, cultural and arts uses.

See Also

- Centre and Village Guidance under the **Community Networks**.
- **Mobility Networks and Mobility Hubs**.
- Greenways Guidance under the **Blue-Green Networks**.
- Related area policies.

Local / Historic Villages

Intent

Part of Victoria’s network of villages includes geographically small nodes of community activity. These areas are home to additional community serving uses for residents somewhat farther from a major community village node. These areas contribute to the local community identity and car-lite living opportunities.

Built Form Guidance

The low-rise, fine-grained rhythm that exists in many villages today should be preserved and, where appropriate, replicated in redevelopment.

Low- to mid-rise developments may be considered where they are responsive to the context of the village and support and enhance the Mobility and Blue-Green Networks.



New and emerging local villages should thoughtfully consider the inclusion of public spaces and the experience of the village as a local destination.

Land Use Guidance

Most developments should emphasize a mix of uses with daily services for the surrounding community.

- Primarily multi-unit residential and commercial mixed uses, with an emphasis on retail and community serving uses.
- Free standing commercial may be considered where appropriate.
- Community, cultural and arts uses.

See Also

- Centre and Village Guidance under the **Community Networks**.
- Greenways Guidance under the **Blue-Green Networks**.
- **Mobility Networks and Mobility Hubs**.
- Related area policies.

Urban Industrial Reserve

Intent

Industrial lands provide an important foundation for fostering employment, innovation and economic prosperity. Industrial land is scarce in Victoria and the greater region, and the lands that exist have historically been and continue to be in high demand.

Broadly including production, distribution and repair (PDR) uses, these areas provide space for a range of current and emerging sectors critical to Victoria's economic health and resilience, including:

- Construction, trades and design.
- Food and beverage processing.
- Traditional and high-tech manufacturing, prototyping and testing.
- Biomedical and environmental laboratories.
- Film production.
- "Back-of-house" uses such as commissary kitchens and commercial laundries.
- A wide range of artisanal and artistic production.

Adjacent to the Working Harbour, these lands include more intense production and processing uses, often benefiting from the deepwater harbour.

As Victoria grows, these lands will be reserved for uses that support economic vitality, including through industrial intensification. Innovative and novel economic and employment generating uses that are responsive to Victoria's urban setting are encouraged. As these lands redevelop, commercial or residential buildings adjacent to industrial employment areas may be encouraged to incorporate compatible uses such as live-work uses, employment, artisan or limited light industrial uses at grade.

Built Form Guidance

A range of industrial buildings, structures, silos, docks, wharves and outdoor processing and loading in Marine Industrial areas.

In Industrial Employment areas, primarily low-rise buildings with features that support the continued realization of industrial uses, including:

- Sufficient floor-to-ceiling heights.
- Appropriate access points and space for loading bays.
- Appropriate on-site circulation and space for storage, materials handling and processing.

Mid-rise buildings or structures that support industrial intensification with diverse employment opportunities, including commercial offices in upper floors. The use of shared, centralized parking facilities for vehicles, bicycles and other mobility devices may assist in maximizing site uses for industrial and employment uses.

Features that mitigate negative impacts of industrial uses (e.g., soundproofing, screening or ventilation structures).

Land Use Guidance

- Production and processing related to marine industrial uses adjacent to the working harbour.
- Predominantly light industrial uses including manufacturing, processing, warehousing, distribution and repair, as well as accessory retail or office uses on lower floors.
- Commercial or light industrial uses on upper floors.

- Limited retail and services for area employees.
- Residential areas immediately adjacent to industrial lands are encouraged to incorporate **complementary uses**, including live-work or ground floor industrial employment mixed uses.

See Also

- [Mobility Networks and Mobility Hubs](#).
- The Shoreline and Harbour Guidance under the [Blue-Green Networks](#).
- Emerging Directions for the Innovation, Arts and Industrial District and other related local area policies.

Working Harbour and Marine

Intent

Working Harbour is an important part of Victoria’s cultural and economic identity. It supports the broader region in realizing objectives to be a globally connected leader and embrace the tenets of a Blue Economy. It is a mixed-use harbour that supports a variety of water-dependent industrial, marine and air transport, commercial, institutional, marine residential and recreational uses.

Marine waters are a crucial element to Victoria’s coastal identity. The shoreline, connecting marine waters to Victoria’s lands, is a key natural asset. The waters themselves are an important component of the Mobility Networks and a recreational oasis. It includes sheltered or open marine waters that provide wildlife habitat and support recreational activities and marine transport, moorage, and harvesting except in those waters formally designated by senior government for habitat protection purposes.

Built Form Guidance

Working Harbour: Port structures, including wharfs, piers, cargo and passenger handling, navigational structures and staging areas.

Marine: Docks for recreation and water-based mobility, moorage and navigational structures in open marine waters and public foreshore areas.

Land Use Guidance

Working Harbour:

- Marine Industrial.
- Water borne and marine air transportation.
- Shipping, cargo handling, port facilities and navigation structures.
- Marinas and marine commercial services.
- Marine residential.
- Public foreshore areas, moorage and recreation.
- Marine uses that support the broader transit network.

Marine:

- Marine transportation, recreation, moorage and harvesting.

See Also

- [Mobility Networks and Mobility Hubs](#).
- The Shoreline and Harbour Guidance under the [Blue-Green Networks](#).
- The Downtown Core Area Plan and other related local area policies.

Community Networks



Intent of the Community Networks

A healthy and thriving community is a key element of the 2050 Vision. Community spaces and places play an important role in fostering social cohesion and a shared sense of identity. They help to define the physical, social and cultural fabric of Victoria. Villages, centres, parks, plazas and other public open spaces provide social and recreational outlets but also serve as forums for dialogue and ideas exchange. These spaces act as catalysts for residents to actively shape Victoria’s identity as it evolves.

As Victoria grows and evolves toward the 2050 Vision, its network of community spaces, services and amenities must also grow and respond to the evolving identity of the community and the realities of a changing climate.

Objectives for the OCP Update

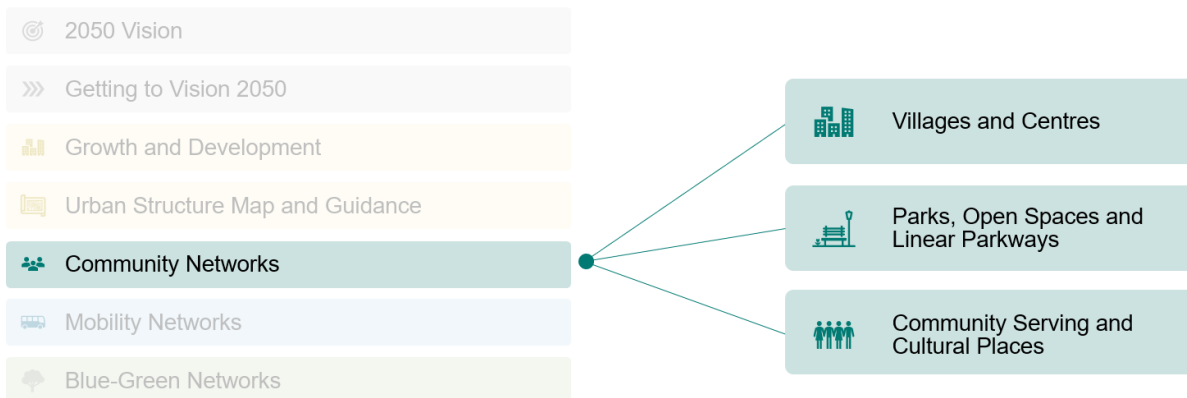
The updated OCP will recognize Victoria’s Community Networks as the foundation for community health, well-being and happiness. It will provide guidance on mechanisms, approaches and priorities for enhancing and connecting the network through redevelopment and capital investment in a manner that appropriately balances and achieves the following:

- Enhancing social cohesion through the planning and design of public spaces that facilitate both planned and spontaneous interactions, events and activities.
- Supporting development that ensures equitable access to necessary services and amenities as well as those that enrich daily life.
- Integrating and reflecting in the goals of the Blue-Green Networks and Mobility Networks in public space planning, design and investment.
- Supporting cultural and recreational enrichment as guided by *Create Victoria*.
- Inclusion and involvement of people with diverse abilities as guided by the *Accessibility Framework*.

Community Networks Realization

The high-level directions in this section may be realized through amenity contributions, development cost charges, frontage improvements, development of centralized shared parking resources and strategic land acquisition aligned with the City’s financial goals and funding mechanisms. They may also be strategically realized through infrastructure investment, particularly in the case of linear parkways, as described in the Parks and Open Space section .

Victoria 2050 Community Networks



Villages and Centres

Centres and villages are the hearts of the community. They are crucial not just for their offering of daily needs and services, but also for the opportunities they provide for social interaction and connection. To this end, a key objective of the OCP Community Networks is to ensure a range of services and amenities as well as the provision of publicly accessible gathering spaces in each centre and village in the city.

Features of Centres and Villages

As reflected in the Urban Structure Guidance, Town Centres and the city's network of Community and Local Villages have differing roles to play in realizing the 2050 Vision.

Town Centres are aligned with Transit Exchanges and Mobility Hubs – the intersections of key mobility routes and infrastructure. New housing and employment opportunities in these areas will facilitate easy connections for more people around the city and region. Town Centres should seek to facilitate the development, preservation or enhancement of the following:

- Regional and city-wide destination retail, in addition to small format retail.
- Health, community and social services.
- City-serving community, recreation, arts and cultural spaces.
- Large, formal public open spaces aligned with Mobility Hubs.

Community and Local Villages should progress towards a complement of community and commercial services as well as public amenities appropriate to and reflective of the surrounding local areas. Community Villages should seek to facilitate the development, preservation or enhancement of the following:

- Small format, fine-grained retail that supports community vitality and local business growth.
- Local-serving community, recreation, arts and cultural spaces.
- Health, community and social services.








General Public Open Space Guidance

Each centre and village should have an internally connected network of public open spaces that feel comfortable, welcoming and safe. These spaces should range in size and function, from places to sit with shade, to micro gathering spaces like parklets where people can step aside for a quick chat or coffee, to small- to medium-sized public spaces such as plazas and small parks that support social connection. Villages should support easy and convenient connections to transit stops and include bike parking, passenger loading and accessible parking.

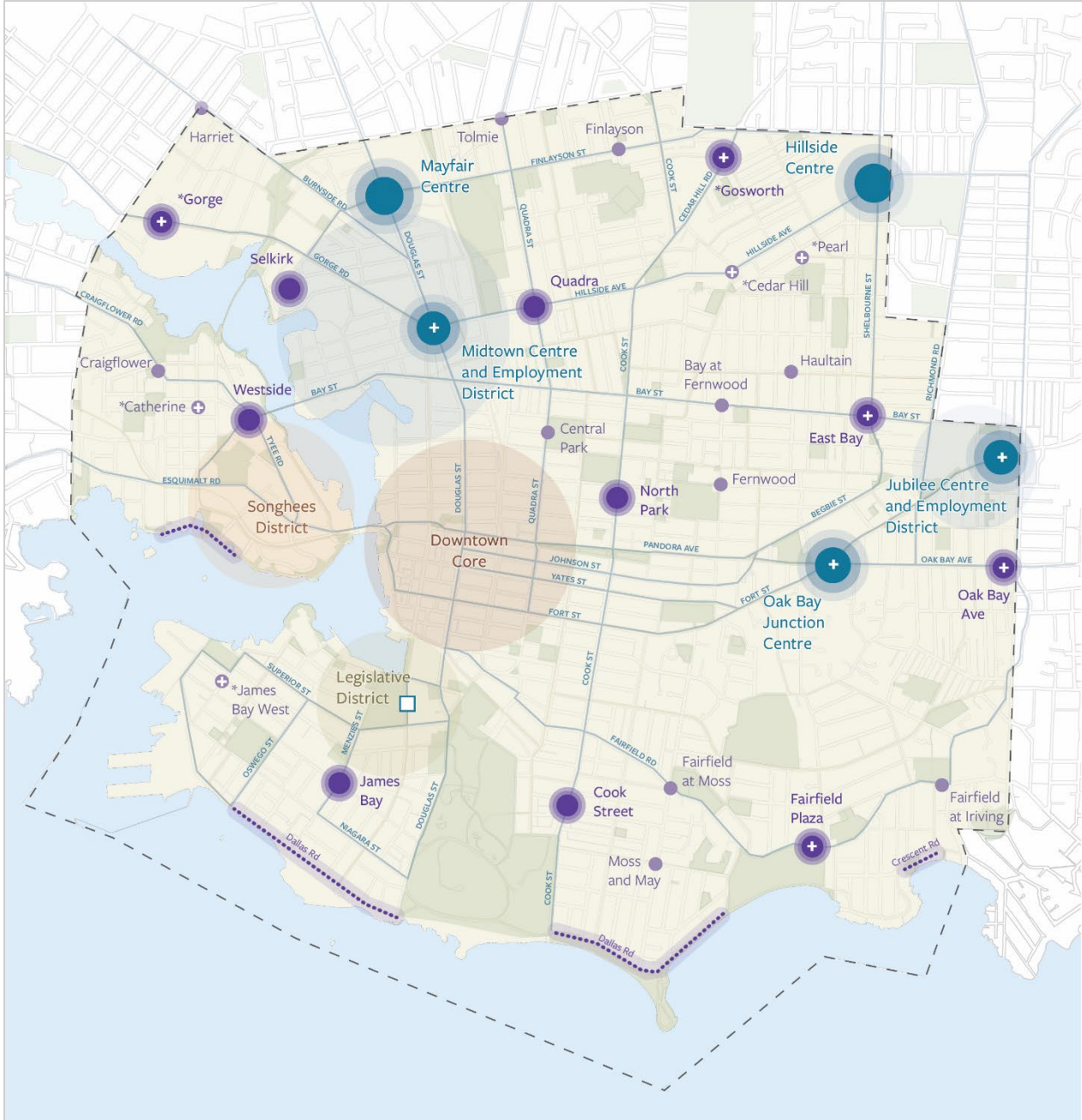
Where appropriate, public open spaces should be designed to facilitate or enable public art, place-making and community events while contributing to urban forest canopy cover, urban ecosystems and climate resilience.

Pedestrian priority should be enhanced on streets within centres and villages, while still providing and balancing the necessary vehicle access and through-ness. Where possible, villages and centres should align with or connect to linear parkways as described in the following section.

Centre and Village Network

-  Town Centres
-  Community Villages
-  Local Villages
-  Newly proposed or redesignated (boundaries to be refined via planning process)
-  Proposed waterfront village area (location to be identified via planning process)
-  Transit Priority Network
-  Transit Oriented Area (TOA)*

*Provincially Prescribed



Parks, Open Spaces and Linear Parkways

Parks and open spaces are a vital part of the urban fabric, serving multiple functions and providing many benefits. They contribute to a variety of ecosystem services that reduce carbon, replenish watersheds, reduce stormwater runoff, support healthy ecosystems, protect and enhance wildlife habitats and increase biodiversity. Parks and open spaces also play a fundamental role in creating healthy communities by offering inclusive amenities and opportunities for recreation, socialization and nature-based experiences that contribute to physical and mental health and well-being.

Victoria is a largely built-out city where land costs are high and opportunities to realize major park space is limited. Meanwhile, existing parks and open spaces are under pressure to meet multiple objectives, needing to advance both social and environmental outcomes and provide physical connections in the community.

Key Directions for Parks and Open Spaces

The City will strategically manage and improve existing parks and open spaces and tactically acquire new spaces in a manner that equitably supports the community's health and well-being. The Blue-Green Networks will also help to guide the City's approach to parks and open spaces, with a focus on biodiversity, wildlife habitat and water quality, while still ensuring ample social spaces for diverse community members.

The City will focus on closing the gap in equitable access to public open spaces, recognizing there are areas of the city that are deficient not only in designated park space but also in the benefits associated with high tree canopy coverage and proximity to nature. To this end, the OCP will recognize the diverse and varying social, cultural, environmental and well-being benefits of each of the following:

- **Parks**, such as Beacon Hill Park, Topaz Park, Irving Park, Central Park and Oaklands Park.
- **Large Squares and Plazas and Small Urban Spaces**, such as Centennial Square, Humboldt Plaza, Bastion Square and privately-owned, publicly accessible plazas such as Capital Park Plaza, Market Square and the Library Plaza.
- **Smaller Plazas and Gathering Spaces**, such as Fernwood Square and McClure Plaza.
- **Greenspaces**, such as school grounds, Government House, the Legislature grounds and the Courthouse Playground, college grounds, cemeteries, roadside greenspace and public gardens.
- **Natural Areas**, such as in Summit Park, Beacon Hill Park and other ecologically sensitive areas.
- **Shorelines, Beaches and Watercourses**, such as Dallas Bluffs, Ross Bay, the Gorge waterway, open marine waters, Cecelia Ravine Park and Bowker Creek.
- **Pathways**, such as David Foster Harbour Pathway, Westsong Pathway, Dallas Road Pathway and the Galloping Goose Trail.

Key Directions for Linear Parkways

Linear Parkways are a new concept in the OCP. Linear parks or parkways are growing in popularity in many urban areas and offer a unique opportunity to repurpose old or under-utilized infrastructure into exceptional public spaces with opportunities for integrated services including those that support recreation, the environment, commerce and art.

In Victoria's urban setting, these would include areas along transportation corridors that can support an expanded multi-functional use and a design that is oriented to people. They emphasize health, well-being and the environment and are in areas that enhance community-wide connection.

The OCP will recognize the important role of linear parkways in realizing the social, health, environmental and climate benefits of more traditional park space. It will further seek to prioritize an equitable distribution of this expanded green network throughout the city.

Realizing linear parkways will require a rethinking of traditional street design in strategic areas, shifting the focus from traditional, vehicle-oriented infrastructure to a focus on climate-forward, people-oriented infrastructure. Linear parkways will be designed to be “sticky” – making them both destinations and connections. This may include removing or limiting private vehicle storage, changing circulation and access and creating new pedestrian oriented green spaces for community gathering, play, urban forest expansion, food growing, creek daylighting, wildlife habitat and for the use and enjoyment of the general public.



Community Serving and Cultural Places

Victoria thrives because of its strong network of community serving and cultural spaces, places and programs as well as the community members, organizations, partnerships and resources that support them. These assets provide spaces for people to gather, develop community, enhance skills or engage with visual and performing arts. Community serving, arts and cultural spaces provide for a fundamental need – enabling residents to support one another, thrive and reach their full potential.

The Nature, Benefit and Future of Community Serving and Cultural Places

Victoria's community serving and cultural space network is made up of a wide array of assets that can be permanent, transitory, mobile or not specific to a location (e.g., online groups.) Assets in the network often provide diverse resources and benefits and therefore serve a range of populations. These assets may include:

- Educational Facilities:
 - Libraries, educational spaces and schools.
- Community Hubs of Activity:
 - Community centres, youth centres and senior centres.
 - Community spaces or organizations advancing sports, recreation, food security and other areas of community well-being.
- Community supporting places or organizations, including for families and youth, seniors, Indigenous residents, new Canadians, persons with disabilities and equity-seeking populations.
- Arts and Cultural Spaces:
 - Publicly owned indoor and outdoor event venues.
 - Non-profit spaces that host performing arts, museums and art galleries, artist-run studios, multi-cultural and community gatherings, places of worship and other spaces.
 - For-profit venues for the performing and visual arts.
 - Businesses that accommodate arts and culture events.
 - Spaces that advance the city's arts and culture economic sector, such filming and production studios.
- Public open spaces that provide opportunities for planned or spontaneous social connection.

Each of these assets, and more, play an important role in supporting a healthy, welcoming and equitable community. The arts and culture sector is also important to Victoria's local economy and to many Victorians' well-being: across the Capital Regional District, the arts and culture sectors employ approximately 10,000 people.¹

Retaining and enhancing arts and culture is crucial to community, economic and individual well-being. However, in Victoria the arts and culture sector continues to face pressure as the increasing cost of space and cost of living challenges artists and creative industries. Meanwhile, community serving spaces will have to shift to meet the evolving needs of Victorians as the city grows and changes – to support the aging population, the children and young families who want to stay in the city and new Canadians seeking build home and community.

To create more equitable access to programs and services, cities must also seek to remove systemic barriers, reflect and respond to multiple lived experiences and ensure inclusion and access for all current and future generations. There is also growing acknowledgement of the existing diversity and intersectionality of Victorians,

¹ CRD Arts and Culture 2021 Progress Report

by age, sex, gender identity or expression, ability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion and economic status. The importance of recognizing, celebrating and planning for diverse needs and greater community inclusion has grown in recent years.

Key Directions for Community Serving and Cultural Spaces

As Victoria evolves, the City and the community will need to proactively preserve, enhance and expand the network of community-serving and cultural places and assets. The OCP Update will seek to utilize the tools and authorities within municipal jurisdiction to advance a healthy, thriving and inclusive community. It will support partnerships and collaboration or realize objectives that require action and attention across jurisdictions and organizations. New, updated or revised policies in the OCP will be crafted with the understanding that the strength of a community relies on the well-being of each of its members.

The OCP Update will build on and seek to implement objectives from the *Create Victoria Arts and Culture Master Plan* and the *Music City Strategy*, including through appropriate land use and regulatory mechanisms to support the retention and development of community-serving and cultural spaces. Targets or principles (such as no net loss), coordination and partnership pathways and incentives will be explored.

Through the OCP Update, the City will continue its commitment to meaningful action on reconciliation. It will also acknowledge and reflect Victorians' various levels of ability and lived experiences in all policies, but particularly to inform directions for the community and personal spaces that enable people to thrive and live healthy lives.



Mobility Networks and Hubs



Intent of Mobility Networks and Hubs

Mobility networks and hubs play a key role in shaping quality of life for residents today, and for generations to come. Making it easy to choose healthy, sustainable and accessible transportation options is crucial for well-being, community inclusion and climate action. Providing practical alternatives to single occupant, privately-owned vehicles will be required to facilitate population growth, and new approaches to delivering goods and services will be necessary. Reducing congestion through demand management can support economic objectives, and shared, centralized parking solutions for diverse mobility technologies will free up space on the right-of-way for other uses.

Land use and transportation are tightly inter-related. Victoria's compact size, relatively high residential and employment density, and fine-grained network of streets not only enables travel on foot, on bicycle and by public transit, but also provides the land use framework to further support growth in sustainable, shared and low-carbon modes of transportation. In the future, the city will need to increasingly accommodate new mobility services, accelerate active transportation mode share, facilitate space for high-occupancy travel (e.g., bus rapid transit (BRT) or light rail transit (LRT)), expand shared mobility options and encourage smaller, cleaner vehicles.

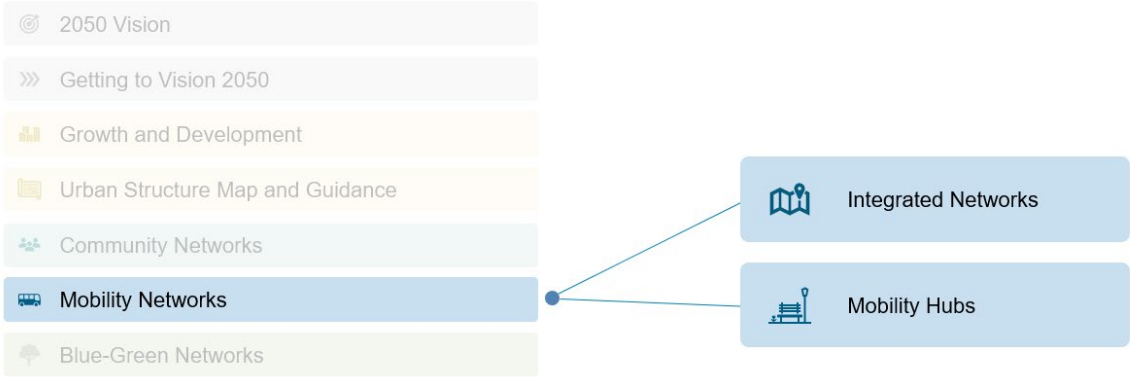
Relationships between mobility and built form – the design of individual sites, proximity and density of adjacent land uses, features of various streetscapes, quality of linkages to transportation facilities and quantity and arrangement of parking facilities – all determine the attractiveness of various travel modes for both personal and commercial travel. Population demographics, rising fuel prices, increasing health and environmental concerns and changing consumer preferences are reducing demand for automobile travel and increasing demand for high quality alternatives. Similarly, the movement of goods and services will shift with the introduction of new technologies and changing availability of curb space.

Objectives for the OCP Update

The OCP will support and enhance Victoria's Mobility Networks and Hubs to advance climate action, affordability, economic and accessibility objectives. It will provide guidance on mechanisms, approaches and priorities for managing and improving the networks through redevelopment and capital investments to:

- Develop complete communities connected by low-carbon and accessible mobility options and supported by infrastructure to facilitate emergency and goods movement.
- Continue the advancement of seamlessly integrated modal networks, coordinating walking, cycling, transit and vehicle networks with consideration of future mobility needs, travel options, technologies and services.
- Establish levels of services across modes that balance efficiency, connectivity and safety and place reduced emphasis on moving private automobiles quickly through the city.
- Design and animate mobility hubs and networks to serve as focal points for activity with amenities and features that make them attractive, not just as thoroughfares, but as destinations with housing and community activity.
- Support the development of linear parkways throughout the city by identifying areas for road closures or reallocation of road space.
- Support the development of a waterways network and water-based transportation that is integrated with the broader Mobility Networks.

Victoria 2050 Mobility Networks and Hubs



Mobility Networks

Victoria's transportation networks provide a diversity of ways to move around – to get from the places we live, to the places we work and to the places we play. These networks also allow goods and services to reach our community and ensure we are connected to emergency service providers. These networks must be nimble and adaptable to support new mobility devices or services and provide the functional space for best practices in safety and comfort. As Victoria grows and adapts to a changing climate, the mobility networks will increasingly support both the Community and Blue-Green Networks.

Key Directions for Mobility Networks

An intentional set of public transit, cycling, emergency response and goods-movement networks will continue to support access, economic development and accessibility objectives. However, with added growth our public rights-of-way will be increasingly relied upon to support a variety of other functions. For example:

- *Shared Mobility space* for the facilities and infrastructure required to support car, bicycle and micro-mobility share.
- *Loading space* for commercial, passenger and speciality vehicles such as handyDART to access buildings and services.
- *Urban Forest space* for trees and landscaping to help meet the City's urban forest objectives, particularly in areas with limited natural space or low tree canopy cover.
- *Rainwater Management areas* specifically set aside to manage run-off and lessen the burden on the City's municipal infrastructure systems.
- *Public Realm areas*, including road closures, to accommodate people gathering and stationary, particularly in areas that lack access to a park, plaza or other off-street public space.
- *Street Furnishing areas* for street furnishings and public art that enhance the pedestrian experience, support placemaking objectives and provide functional needs such as utility access or EV charging infrastructure.
- *Utilities space* for surface, under-ground and above-ground utilities that are owned by the City and other providers.
- *New mobility interfaces* to support transportation within existing rights-of-way, such as rail service, shared micro-mobility or air- and water-based mobility services.



The OCP Update process will establish a baseline to understand the City's current rights-of-way allocation (travel mode and supporting activity) and confirm new targets and metrics to support repurposing and reallocating space to align with sustainable mobility needs and streetscape functions, as described above. Innovations to provide shared, centralized parking facilities may be considered in select areas and policies will encourage smaller-scale distributed servicing approaches for commercial and residential buildings.

The City's Street Classifications will also be updated to reflect differing contexts, desired characteristics and cross-sections for corridors which are intended to prioritize transit (including BRT, LRT or other high occupancy technologies), cycling or other objectives as defined in the Community and Blue-Green Networks. A detailed review of cross-section requirements, including laneways, will be undertaken along with identification of compulsory vs. desirable cross-section components to support trade-offs and decision making where insufficient width is available.

New policies will support reduced vehicle level of service (LOS) in exchange for improved LOS for other modes of transportation and street functions, including for public realm improvements and linear parkways. New targets for strategic curbside management that, for example, reflect curb productivity or utilization rates will be introduced along with associated policies to improve management practices, particularly beyond the current focus of the downtown core.

The process will also reaffirm the City's commitment to supporting mass transit on major corridors and establish a new Waterways Network that considers access to docks, integration with water taxis and supports water-based modes, with consideration of future land use and infrastructure improvements. The waterways network will also be integrated into the City's Transit Network to realize linkages with current and future public transit service.

Relationship to Land Use and Built Form

In the context of Victoria's constrained land base, development goals must be thoughtfully aligned with necessary and desired improvements to mobility networks and the public realm. An effort to review and fine tune street cross sections and prioritize uses for mass transit, active transportation or linear parkways will support this alignment and inform updates to regulations and design guidelines.

The propensity for Victorians to choose sustainable mobility options is influenced not just by service levels and modern approaches to safety, but also through the relationship of the city's mobility and blue-green networks and built form. Design features that can impact or support mobility choices include:

- Building placement and entries.
- Design vehicle typology and size.
- Vehicle parking supply and placement (including accessible and car share parking, EV charging infrastructure and shared centralized parking resources).
- Passenger and commercial loading.
- Transit facilities and amenities that offer protection, safety and comfort.
- Secure parking for bicycles and other personal mobility devices.
- Internal access routes.
- Clear and effective wayfinding.
- Access to end of trip facilities (showers, changerooms and lockers).
- Streetscape design including furniture and landscaping.

As a result, new policies, regulations and programs will be developed to confirm a broader range of activities in rights-of-way with clearly identified priority uses and, in some areas, shared centralized parking resources to free up space on street.

Mobility Hubs

Mobility Hubs are a strategic conflux of several mobility services and features where people can seamlessly transfer between travel options to access key destinations, employment and services. Hubs will include public transit service, adjacent active transportation facilities, short term parking, shared mobility (e.g., carshare or bikeshare,) supports for accessible passenger drop-off and pick-up, information and wayfinding and public space.

Hubs are designated areas where different sustainable transportation modes are integrated seamlessly to help promote connectivity between destinations and trip generators. They are supported by higher density, mixed-use forms with diverse housing options, and rely on four core components:

- Located on a rapid or frequent transit corridor or within a mobility-oriented development area.
- Linked by active and low-carbon transportation options, including rail and water-based options.
- Served by shared mobility infrastructure and services.
- Supported by mobility-oriented, high residential and employment density.

Mobility Hubs may offer diverse features and elements that respond to the local context and enhance user experiences. Hubs located in the Downtown, Legislative and Songhees Precincts as well as designated Town Centres are considered as Major Mobility Hubs where frequent transit routes intersect with dedicated space for transit boarding, alighting and layover.

Hubs may also include complementary retail offerings, centralized parcel pick up, public washrooms, integrated payment kiosks for mobility as a service (MaaS) and enhanced bike parking services. Some Hubs may intentionally provide capacity for vehicle parking as a strategy to maximize sites for development, open space and other amenities. The implementation of Mobility Hubs often involves several partnerships that involve stakeholders including public agencies, private mobility services, technology companies and private developers.

Key Directions for Mobility Hubs

- 1) Providing efficient and seamless integration of sustainable transportation options, including personal travel and delivery services.
- 2) Focusing on improving user experience and access to sustainable and shared transportation options.
- 3) Ensuring safety and security for all travelers.
- 4) Creating a sense of place through effective and meaningful placemaking strategies.
- 5) Allowing for flexibility to embrace technological innovations and foster resiliency.
- 6) Addressing equity by considering accessibility to and availability of transportation options in different neighbourhoods.
- 7) Creating opportunities to form effective partnerships with institutions, private mobility services and developers.

Relationship to Land Use and Built Form

Mobility Hubs are a central focus for both housing and employment opportunities. The proposed land use framework seeks to integrate land use, Mobility Hubs and the Transit Network, advancing development and improved provision of sustainable and affordable mobility options.


The OCP will also follow recent Provincial direction to better align transit and housing goals by identifying the Legislature Exchange as a Transit-Oriented Development Area and implementing the required zoning within the area.

The built form and features within Mobility Hubs should consider pedestrian connectivity and accessibility, safety, furniture, weather protection, information, services, art and placemaking, commercial and private vehicle interface and cycling interface. Where possible, public spaces in the mobility hub should support Community and Cultural Places objectives with public washrooms and cultural information as well as the Blue Green Networks, incorporating trees, permeable ground cover and on-site stormwater management measures.


Waterfront docks for the integration of mobility and recreation is required for Hubs located in proximity to the Working Harbour and Marine areas. These should reflect and respond to the Shoreline approach outlined in the Blue Green Networks. Similarly, Mobility Hubs adjacent to existing rail infrastructure and future BRT or LRT corridors should consider public realm, pedestrian connectivity and seamless links to ground transport.


Mobility Hubs and the Centre and Village Network

 Town Centres
(Major Mobility Hubs*)

 Community Villages
(Mobility Hubs)

 Local Villages

 Newly proposed or redesignated
(boundaries to be refined via
planning process)

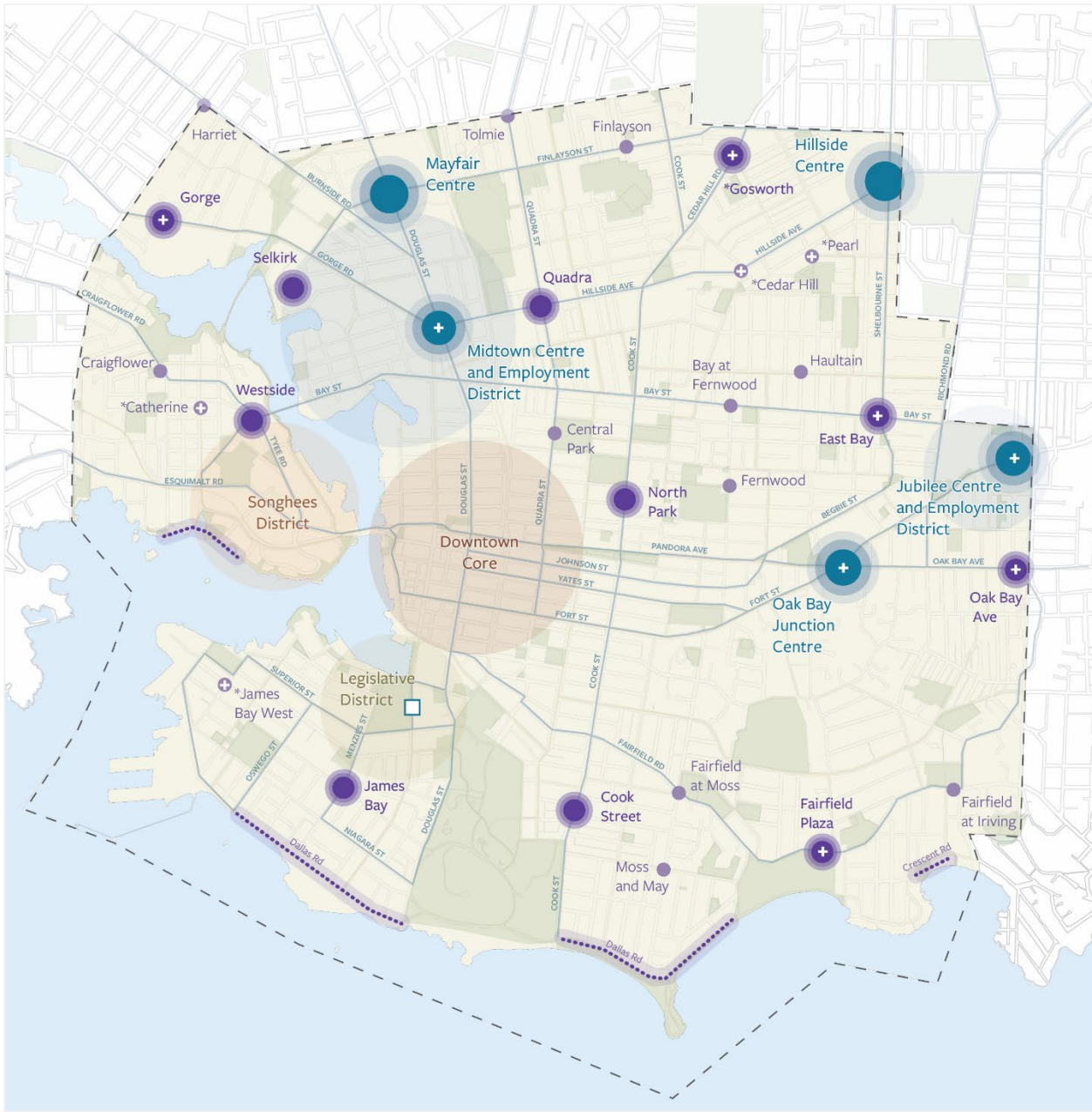
 Proposed waterfront village area
(location to be identified via
planning process)

 Transit Priority Network

 Transit Oriented Area (TOA)**

**Downtown, Songhees, and Legislative
Districts are also Major Mobility Hubs*

***Provincially Prescribed*



Blue-Green Networks



Intent of the Blue-Green Networks

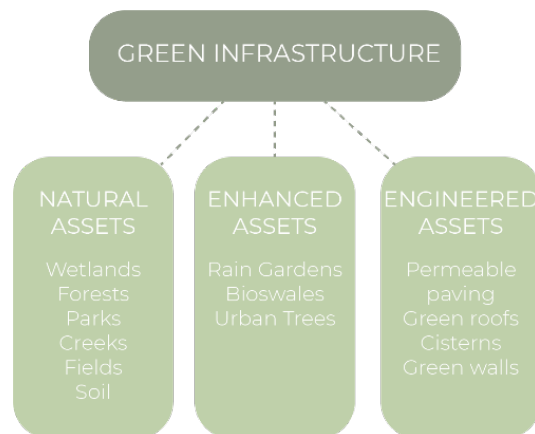
Victoria’s Blue-Green Networks support healthy ecosystems and diverse wildlife habitats. They serve Victoria’s current and future residents by connecting people with year-round opportunities to play, learn, recreate, gather and celebrate. They help to sustain a healthy city and enhance ecological and hydrological functions by encouraging and supporting connection and integration of open space at the site, neighbourhood, city and regional levels.

Over the coming decades, the City will continue to work with partners and private property owners to steward, enhance and showcase the Blue-Green Networks, sharing the diverse environmental, economic and quality of life benefits they provide.

The Blue-Green Networks serve our growing city in many ways:

- **Ecology:** By protecting and enhancing our ecosystems we support natural ecological processes, enhance hydrological values, protect our watersheds and shorelines and provide habitat for living things.
- **Wellness:** Open spaces support health and well-being and offers places for people to experience nature, be physically active and stay socially connected.
- **Celebration:** Open spaces can connect people to each other, instill a sense of place and foster economic vibrancy in places where communities can thrive, gather and celebrate.

The Blue-Green Networks are envisioned to incorporate various forms of **green infrastructure** that can be woven into the city at all scales. Green infrastructure encompasses the natural vegetative systems and technologies that manage stormwater and provide a multitude of economic, ecological, environmental, health and social benefits. The definition of green infrastructure is illustrated below.



For this OCP Update, there are three layers of the Blue-Green Networks related to realizing the 2050 Vision and managing growth and change: Natural Assets, Shoreline and Urban Watersheds and the Urban Forest.

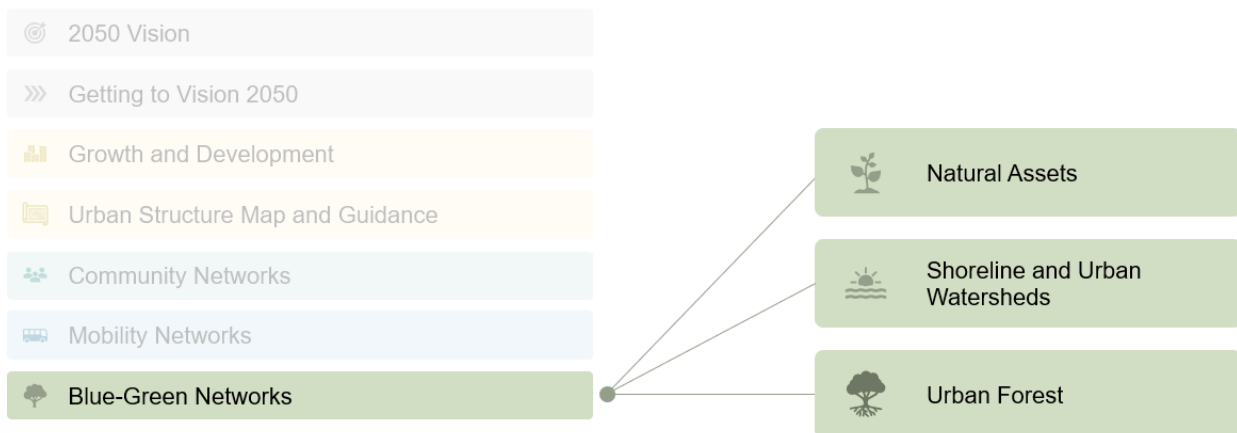
Parks and open spaces are vital to both environmental objectives and a community’s health and well-being. These spaces are an integral part of the city’s infrastructure network, our community’s climate resilience and are an important component of the Blue-Green Networks identified below. They also provide places for people to play, gather, immerse themselves in nature and celebrate; as such, additional direction and guidance is provided in the Community Networks Section.

Objectives for the OCP Update

The updated OCP will recognize Victoria’s Blue-Green Networks as vital components of climate-forward urban infrastructure. It will provide guidance on mechanisms, approaches and priorities for restoring, enhancing and connecting the networks through redevelopment and capital investment in a manner that appropriately balances and achieves the following:

- Adapting to climate impacts, including heat vulnerability and extreme weather events.
- Increasing urban ecology and improving rainwater management, watershed health and biodiversity.
- Enhancing overall community well-being and offering outdoor spaces for recreation and social connection.
- Improving habitat, air and water quality.
- Reflecting Victoria’s cultural landscape and the history and identity of the community.

Victoria 2050 Blue-Green Networks



Natural Assets

The City of Victoria is characterized by a diverse natural environment that includes vestiges of critically endangered Garry oak meadow habitats, a mature urban forest, extensive intertidal zones and marine habitats, all of which contribute to a biodiverse ecological landscape.

The city's natural areas provide vital ecosystem services, offering resilience against climate challenges such as storm surges, rising sea levels and changes to precipitation patterns. These areas also enhance overall community well-being by improving air and water quality, regulating temperatures, providing critical habitat to a variety of living organisms and offering passive recreation spaces. Globally, biodiversity is at risk and ecosystems are threatened due to climate change impacts such as heat domes, drought, new pests and diseases. These impacts may also significantly affect the quality and functionality of Victoria's fragile natural assets.

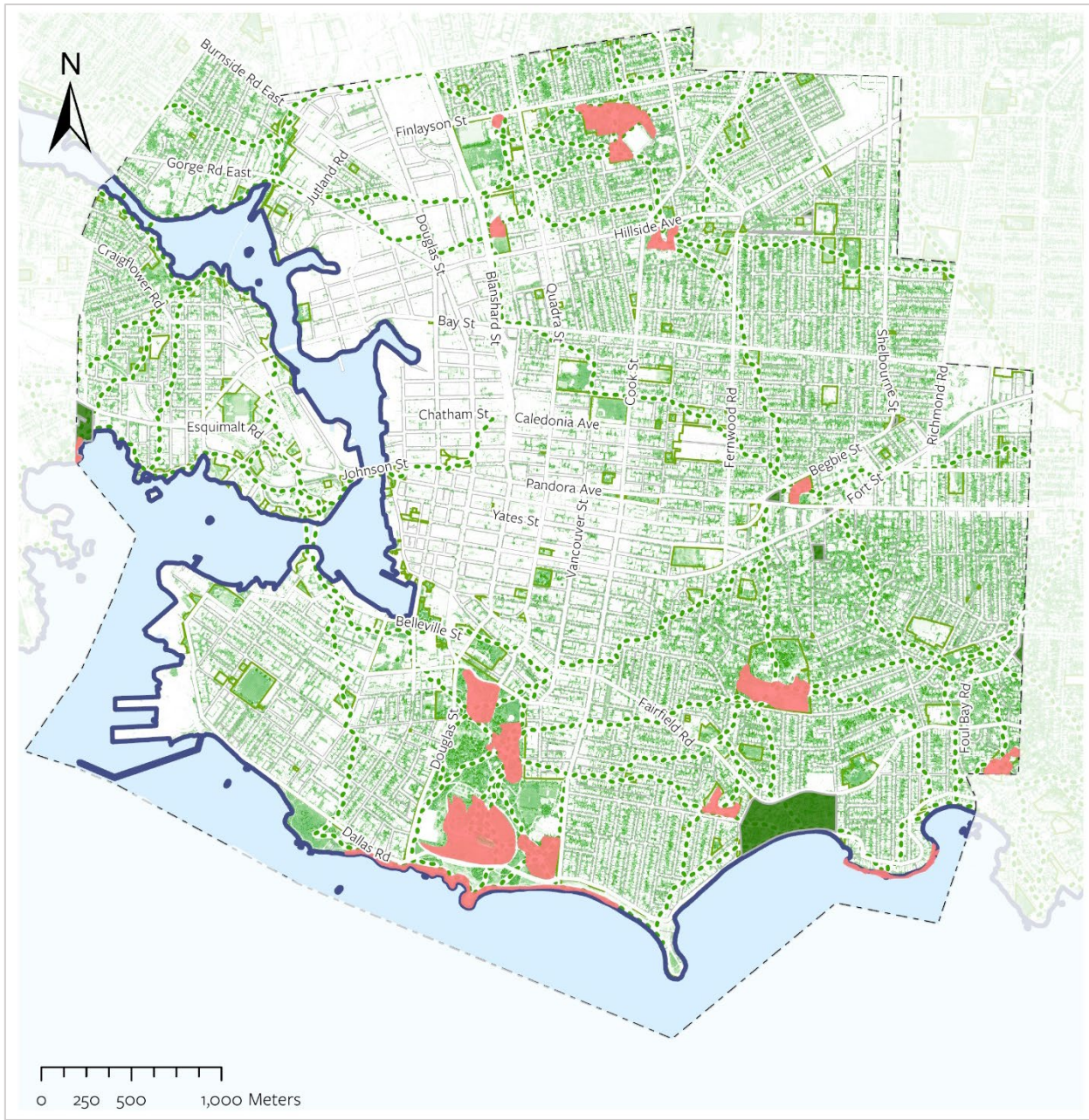
Relationship to Land Use and Built Form

Built form and open space physically define one another and reciprocally enhance the public benefits each offers. New development can be shaped to minimize shading on natural open spaces, and provide healthy setbacks from riparian areas, key habitat patches and other ecological corridors. New development can also be sited and designed to manage rainwater on-site using green infrastructure, mimicking natural systems and reducing stresses on infrastructure systems. Guidelines can encourage strategies such as green roofs, tree planting, rain gardens and pollinator gardens to enhance, connect and improve natural assets in an urban setting.








Key Directions for Natural Assets

The City's land use framework, regulations and design guidelines can support natural assets once strategically identified and prioritized. The City is **preparing a natural asset inventory** that will inform updates to existing tools, like urban design guidelines or the development of new tools like environmental development permit areas.

The Capital Regional District is exploring a regional biodiversity service which can inform and be complemented by a local biodiversity study to understand the urban ecology of the city, and ways to encourage and support improvements to biodiversity.



Natural Assets

-  Ecological Connectivity
- Vegetation Index**
-  Highest
-  Lowest
-  Shoreline
-  Sensitive Ecosystems
-  Other Parks, Open Spaces and Plazas
-  Blocks with Greater than 50% Canopy Cover

Notes:

Ecological connectivity shows the pathways between high value natural areas that best follow areas with vegetation and avoid built up areas or roads.

Vegetation Index is a relative measure of the greenness of vegetation in every part of the city with higher values corresponding to denser or healthier vegetation.

Shoreline and Urban Watersheds

Victoria is a coastal city and water is an important part of its identity.

Our shoreline, beaches and waterways provide significant environmental, cultural, economic and recreational benefits. As climate variability intensifies, these water bodies are essential for ecosystem health, flood control and mitigating the effects of climate change.

The city is also comprised of many watersheds, and although the majority of Victoria's historic creeks are now largely concealed beneath urban development, these watersheds play a significant role in shaping the city's ecological systems and are necessary for stormwater management.

Relationship to Land Use and Built Form

Terrestrial activities and development can have significant impacts on watershed and ocean health. Land-based practices can influence water quality, temperature and volumes, interrupting natural processes and posing direct consequences for freshwater and marine ecosystems. The threat of coastal erosion is exacerbated by sea level rise and storm surge, necessitating a comprehensive approach to safeguard ecosystems and infrastructure. Integrating watershed management into planning is a strategy that considers the interplay between land, water and climate factors.

In the face of climate change, understanding, preserving and restoring these shorelines, watersheds and creeks can help the city adapt to and mitigate potential environmental challenges while still embracing these areas as places to support mobility, recreation and the city's cultural landscape.

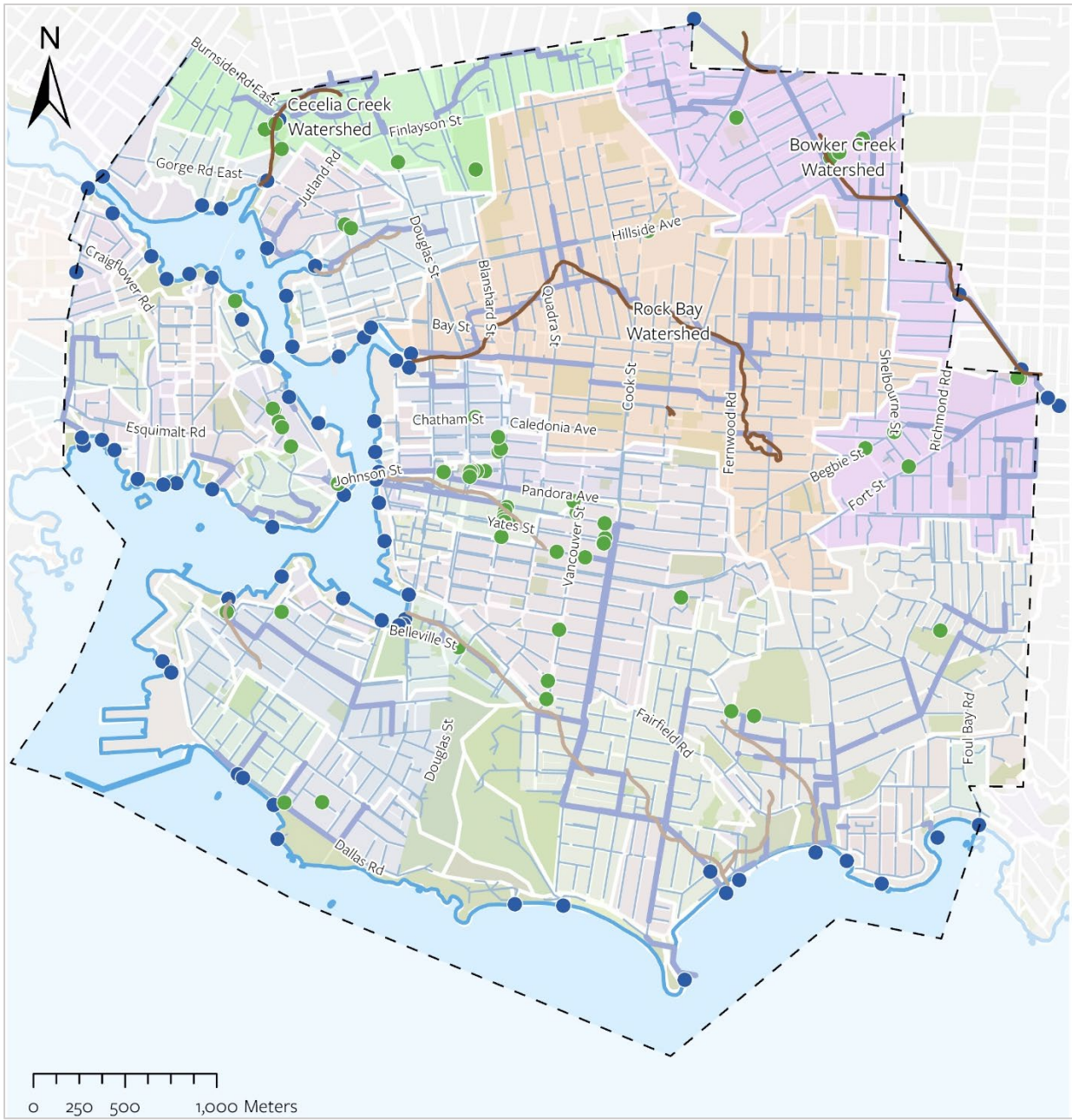
Key Directions for Shorelines and Watercourses

Much as with natural assets, the City's land use framework, regulations and design guidelines can support the realization of blue network objectives. The updated OCP will embrace and integrate natural shoreline management and the outcomes of the **forthcoming integrated rainwater management plan** (anticipated in 2025). The emerging themes and directions of the integrated rainwater management plan include:

- Recognition of watersheds, and a watershed-focused approach to land management that emphasizes climate adaptation.
- Considering the adoption of rainwater management targets.
- Considering an equity lens in the delivery of green infrastructure projects.
- Accelerating action to improve water quality in the harbour and waterways.
- Identifying innovative approaches to green infrastructure in the public and private realms.
- Recommending approaches to celebrate and daylight historic creeks.
- Considering the development of a green infrastructure asset management plan.

These high-level directions and any resulting targets may be realized through updates to existing tools such as the subdivision and development servicing bylaw and urban design guidelines, or the development of new tools such as environmental development permit areas. They may also inform strategic land acquisition or priorities for securing easements in new development. They can also inform capital investments in nature-based solutions to coastline and "end-of-pipe" management that replicate the functions of historic waterways and estuaries.

The forthcoming plan may also inform collaborative approaches to manage the Working Harbour, including working with waterfront industries to mitigate impacts and, where possible, restore and strengthen coastal marine and land habitat areas and ecosystems.



Watersheds and Rainwater Features

- Shoreline
- Prominent Historic Streams
- Other Historic Streams
- Prominent Watersheds**
- Bowker Creek Watershed
- Rock Bay Creek Watershed
- Cecelia Creek Watershed
- Rainwater Infrastructure**
- Rainwater Pipe (Collector)
- Primary Rainwater Pipe (Trunk)
- Rainwater Outfall
- Green Rainwater Infrastructure (e.g., rain garden or bioswale)

Urban Forest

Trees are an integral part of the character and environment of Victoria and provide numerous economic, environmental, social, cultural and public health benefits. There are approximately 150,000 trees in Victoria, growing across public and private lands. Roughly 75 per cent of the urban forest grows on private land and 25 per cent is on land managed by the City – in parks and on boulevards. Together, these trees make up the urban forest and provide a city-wide canopy cover of 28 per cent. Victoria’s urban forest is part of a broader, regional urban forest and is therefore ecologically interconnected with the trees, animals, insects and natural areas in adjacent communities and the region.

Relationship to Land Use and Built Form

Through the guidance of the Urban Forest Master Plan, the City has been prioritizing the management of the maturing urban forest while also working to enhance tree canopy cover, particularly in areas of low tree provision and low canopy cover. Despite tools such as the *Tree Protection Bylaw*, it can be difficult to maintain a healthy and diverse urban forest in a regional urban core where new housing and employment opportunities are a high priority.

Higher density housing with expanded lot coverage provides needed housing supply but often results in tree loss, and minimal open space and soil volumes remain to support new trees. Competition for limited, high-demand space for services to support housing, such as utilities and underground parkades, also contributes to tree loss. On City boulevards adjacent to streets there are many competing priorities, including overhead and underground utilities, transit, bike lanes, wider sidewalks, sight lines and on-street parking, which makes it significantly more challenging to protect and plant trees in the public realm than it was even 15 years ago. Generally, it is becoming difficult to find spaces for trees with sufficient soil volumes and conditions for trees to be viable long-term.

Key Directions for the Urban Forest

The City will seek to establish urban tree canopy coverage targets that reflect the realistic limitations and opportunities for trees based on the forms of development contemplated in the City’s land use framework. Targets will reflect the realities of the built forms that exist or are envisioned in the Urban Structure Map. For example, there may be limited opportunity to increase tree canopy cover on private property in the Downtown Core. Residential areas may provide greater opportunity to provide space for trees on both public and private property, mitigating canopy loss over time.

Modernized zoning will support tree canopy cover targets by providing for adequate open space that is suitable for trees to thrive. These regulations will be aligned and balanced with other open space objectives in private development, including for rainwater management and publicly accessible on-site open space. With appropriate open site space made available, design guidelines and the *Tree Protection Bylaw* can support urban forest goals.

Realizing urban forest goals will also rely in part on how redevelopment shapes street frontages and the City’s ability to expand the public right-of-way where more space is needed. To this end, urban forest objectives will inform updates to the City’s subdivision and development servicing bylaw.

A key direction for realizing urban forest objectives will be to align them with the implementation of linear parkways as described in earlier sections. These linear parkways will, to an extent, be realized opportunistically. However, equity and equitable access to nature throughout Victoria is a primary consideration for strategic decisions, including capital investment in linear parkways and other public realm improvements.

The urban forest is a key element of the city's natural assets, watershed health and climate resilience. Urban forest objectives will also continue to be considered in other tools developed or updated by the City, including policy, regulation and acquisition strategies, as discussed in previous sections.

