

**Engaging Youth to Be Climate Leaders
City of Victoria
Youth Engagement Framework Action Plan**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our youth is our future. The engagement and empowerment of youth to participate, contribute and lead change is essential to make the world a better place for today and tomorrow. The City of Victoria has commenced a movement to engage all youth in their city. A collaboratory with members of City of Victoria staff, Royal Roads University and community members explored the question, how can the City of Victoria engage youth to become climate leaders and help create a more sustainable future? As a result of the collaboratory, a vision was created to engage youth to be climate leaders led by the vision to learn, inspire, design, promote and champion. Utilizing the process of appreciative inquiry, five goals to engage youth were identified including grassroots connection, intergenerational co-learning, youth climate change symposium, creating future leaders, and championing a climate change youth leadership team.

This report has integrated the vision, principles, goals and actions identified at the collaboratory to create a Youth Engagement Framework. The Youth Engagement Framework is aligned to incorporate core principles of the continuum of civic engagement and the youth engagement continuum. With almost one quarter of the population of Victoria within the age of 15 – 29 years (Statistics Canada, 2017), the engagement and empowerment of youth offers promise to the future of Victoria.

**Launching Social Procurement:
An Action Plan for the
City of Victoria**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Communities spend large sums of money on the purchase of goods and services like the construction and maintenance of roads, public buildings, sewage and water infrastructure. *Social procurement* is the process of deriving additional community benefits from these expenditures. Social procurement can manifest in a variety of ways such as employing people who face barriers to employment, paying employees a living wage, encouraging diversity in the workforce, and facilitating the participation of *social enterprises*.

A team of students from Royal Roads University has developed an action plan to assist the City of Victoria in the launch of its social procurement practices. Canadian municipalities with experience in social procurement policies and practices were interviewed. Advice was also received from experts and practitioners in an online collaborative session, and information was gleaned from existing social procurement frameworks and reports that reviewed social procurement practices.

The experience of developing and implementing social procurement policy is described and the successes of these municipalities are highlighted. Common challenges faced by these municipalities are also addressed, along with some potential solutions discovered through the research.

A set of recommendations has been developed for the City of Victoria that will assist in leveraging its initial efforts thus far and launching it into a new way to do business that has a social impact in the community. These include implementing a change leadership strategy, creating a social procurement coordinator position, developing a social procurement program, nurturing the *social ecosystem*, and pursuing opportunities for synergy with other projects.

Rethinking Centennial Square: City Project Action Plan Urban Design & Public Space Activation

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody” - Jane Jacobs

Constructed in the 1960s to celebrate the City of Victoria’s 100th anniversary, Centennial Square has developed into a meaningful public downtown gathering place with significant strengths and assets, but also so much unrealized potential that can be achieved by pragmatic changes to design and programming through focussed community engagement.

In the words of the City of Victoria’s former senior urban planner, “in the right circumstances, Centennial Square can ring as a successful public place. For well-organized festivals and civic ceremonies... the square comes to life as an effective, memorable downtown centre. But the obverse can also be all too evident: on many days, the square, in its current state, underperforms, a sad diminishment of its better self” (Chris Gower, 2016).

The City of Victoria has already completed extensive background works necessary to form the foundation of further action in Centennial Square, namely, the Downtown Core Plan (2011), Visual Victoria (2016), Downtown Public Realm Plan (2017), and Wayfinding Strategy (2017). Throughout these initiatives, Centennial Square was consistently identified as a high priority for further action due to its central location in the downtown and current utility.

This paper first analyzes the current and potential contexts of Centennial Square, including the significant background works already completed by the City of Victoria providing the strategic framework and association policies for future action. Thereafter, case studies of similar public square revitalization projects in Canada and the United States are detailed and best practices compared. To conclude, the paper provides a set of opportunities and recommendations for the City of Victoria for further action to reanimate the space, balancing the need for additional programming with relatively small design changes that will enable additional uses throughout the year. By engaging the community on the future design and programming of Centennial Square, the City of Victoria will be able to dramatically improve the environmental, social, and economic sustainability of the downtown.