



Committee of the Whole Report

For the Meeting of October 19, 2017

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** September 29, 2017
From: Jonathan Tinney, Director, Sustainable Planning and Community Development
Subject: Council Workshop - Draft Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Direct staff to consider feedback from Council and the community and prepare a final proposed Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan.
2. Refer the draft Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan and associated Design Guidelines to the Advisory Design Panel for comment.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present Council with the draft Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan, receive initial feedback from Council, and report on early community feedback on the draft plan. In the spring of 2016, a process was launched to develop a new neighbourhood plan for the Victoria West neighbourhood, involving residents, business owners and community groups. A series of engagement events were held in the fall and winter 2016-2017 to develop a neighbourhood-specific vision and goals, and to dig deeper into key planning issues. The development of the draft plan has been supported by the Neighbourhood Working Group, which has played an important role in advising on the delivery and design of engagement and acted as a sounding board on policy development.

Based on input from the broader community and the Working Group, staff collaborated across departments to develop a draft Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan (Attachment A).

Key proposed directions include:

- allowing secondary suites in duplexes and small lot houses, and townhouse lock-off suites
- encouraging townhouses and rowhouses in certain locations
- new multi-unit housing for Skinner Street, Craigflower Road, Westside Village area and on and near Esquimalt Road
- new housing and office spaces above compatible light industrial uses
- completing active transportation connections and identifying potential improvements
- improving waterfront access and features
- suggesting improvements to guide future park planning.

The draft plan includes an action plan with recommended implementation actions to help inform future staff priorities, capital budget processes and the adoption of regulatory tools such as zoning and development permit area guidelines.

The Victoria West community was invited to review the draft plan from mid-August to the end of September 2017. Early feedback suggests strong community support for the draft plan. Staff are currently analyzing the feedback, and a summary of results will be presented to Council during the workshop. Following the Council workshop, staff will consider Council direction and public feedback and prepare a final plan for consideration by Council.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present Council with the draft Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan, receive initial feedback from Council, and report on early community feedback on the draft plan.

BACKGROUND

In the spring of 2016, a process was launched to develop a new neighbourhood plan for the Victoria West neighbourhood. A Neighbourhood Working Group was formed, comprised of a diverse group of residents, business owners, school representatives, development professionals and the Victoria West Community Association. The Working Group has played an important role by contributing to the planning and hosting of engagement events, encouraging neighbourhood participation, and acting as a sounding board on emerging policies.

Phase 1: Pre-Planning (May - July 2016)

Over 100 people contributed their ideas and aspirations for Victoria West at two community events:

- a community meeting to launch the project
- the Vic West Street Fest Sounding Boards.

Phase 2: Imagine (August - October 2016)

This phase identified planning issues for Victoria West and developed a vision as well as neighbourhood-specific goals. Opportunities for input included:

- on-line survey (152 responses)
- community workshop (50 participants)
- sounding boards (455 ideas).

Phase 3: Co-Create (November 2016 - July 2017)

A series of workshops were held in January to explore and dig deeper into key planning issues in Victoria West and identify early direction for the neighbourhood plan. Events included:

- the Transportation and Community Design Walkshop (90 participants)
- the Future of Urban Villages Walkshop (50+ participants)
- the Ideas Fair (70 participants).

Based on community input, staff reviewed early policy directions with the Working Group and prepared a draft plan in collaboration City departments.

The engagement summary of Phases 1, 2 and 3 is available on the City's website.

Phase 4: Draft Plan Review (May 2017 - present)

The community was invited to provide feedback on the draft Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan from August 22 to September 27, 2017. The intent of engagement was to receive feedback from on the content of the draft plan and determine whether the plan reflects the community's vision for the future.

Staff used a variety of formats, venues and techniques to communicate the contents of the plan and engage with the neighbourhood:

- an on-line survey (187 responses)
- two formal open houses (110+ participants)
- a youth pop-up event at the Vic West Skate Park (25 participants)
- three area-specific drop-in events at Westside Village, Esquimalt Road and Craigflower Village (50+ participants total)
- two pop-ups at the Swim-a-Month event and Vic West Corn Roast (110+ participants)
- four "Pizza and a Planner" living room meetings hosted by community members (85 participants)
- a presentation to the Victoria West Community Association (30 participants)
- meetings with the Gorge Waterway Initiative and the Tyee Co-op (35 participants).

Staff are currently compiling the engagement results and will use this feedback along with direction from the Council workshop to prepare a detailed engagement summary, which will indicate what was heard and how this feedback influences the final proposed plan.

ISSUES & ANALYSIS

Proposed Key Moves in the Plan

Based on community feedback, the draft plan proposes new policy direction for some topics such as urban villages, employment areas and housing in traditional residential areas and along major roads. For other areas, such as transportation and parks, the draft plan builds on existing direction in the existing *Official Community Plan (2012) (OCP)*, *Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan (1986)* and other City-wide policies.

The plan's Key Moves include:

1. Create Strong Village Hearts:
 - i. Westside Village Area: support multi-storey buildings for housing and employment in the Westside Village area; enhance the sense of place and public realm; improve connections for pedestrians and cyclists; explore a centrally-located community facility
 - ii. Craigflower Village: allow a broader mix of housing types, including small multi-unit or mixed use buildings; extend the village footprint to support more retail spaces
 - iii. Catherine Street and Edward Street: establish a new small urban village around the existing commercial area.
2. Connect the community, by:
 - i. completing pedestrian and cycling routes
 - ii. identifying key intersections for improvements
 - iii. better connecting neighbourhood destinations to the Galloping Goose and E&N trails.

3. Add housing that fits the neighbourhood character in older residential areas, including:
 - i. allowing secondary suites in duplexes and small lot houses, as well as lock-off suites in some townhouses
 - ii. supporting houseplexes, rowhouses and single-row townhouses in certain locations
 - iii. supporting double-row townhouses on larger lots in the southeastern traditional residential area
 - iv. reducing the size of lots eligible for small lot houses from 260m² to 180m²
 - v. reducing the size of lot eligible for duplexes from 555 m² to 460 m²
 - vi. conserving and re-using heritage buildings by allowing additional housing types (e.g. single detached house with two secondary suites, or with secondary suite and garden suite)
 - vii. supporting revitalization of existing housing co-ops
 - viii. updating urban design guidelines.
4. Create more places to live near transit and amenities, including:
 - i. new multi-unit housing near Esquimalt Road along Skinner Street, along Craigflower Road (near the village) and within Westside Village.
5. Strengthen connections to the waterfront, by:
 - i. supporting new or improved features to enhance waterfront access (e.g. docks, trail improvements)
 - ii. continuing to work in partnership to restore water and environmental quality.
6. Support jobs in the neighbourhood including:
 - i. encouraging the retention of waterfront industries
 - ii. maintaining existing light industrial spaces
 - iii. supporting housing or offices above compatible light industrial uses in certain locations.
7. Strengthen parks and food systems, by:
 - i. identifying future improvements to guide future park plans
 - ii. supporting opportunities for food production on public and private land.

Design Guidelines

In order to provide more guidance for new development, it is proposed that the *Design Guidelines for Intensive Residential Development - Townhouse and Rowhouse* and the *Revitalization Guidelines for Corridors, Villages and Town Centres* be applied to Victoria West, and that neighbourhood-specific content be added as needed. Staff will present proposed development permit areas and related guidelines for Council's consideration prior to engagement on the final proposed plan.

Early Engagement Feedback

Staff continue to analyze the community feedback on the draft plan and a summary will be presented to Council at the workshop. Early results from the survey and open houses suggest positive support for the plan, with most proposed policies receiving "strongly support" or "somewhat support" rankings from respondents.

Some key comments noted in early results include:

- strong support for proposed housing policies in traditional residential areas, including allowing secondary suites in a wider range of housing types. Some concern for townhouses and rowhouses in these areas, and parking management

- support for additional multi-unit housing along major roads, with some concern for Esquimalt Road building heights and potential change in character on Skinner and Suffolk Streets
- very strong support for transportation policies. Identification of additional transportation issues, including additional “hot spots” and parking management
- support for urban village policies. Some concerns regarding management of additional parking and traffic demand, and mixed opinions regarding additional building height near Craigflower Village and Westside Village
- support for parks policies, including strong support for more docks and waterfront features
- some concern regarding overall density being added to the neighbourhood
- existing master planned areas could be better integrated into the neighbourhood plan.

A summary of engagement on the draft plan will be provided to Council at the workshop.

Action Plan

The plan includes a draft action plan (Chapter 15) to inform future work plan priorities and capital budget processes. Implementation of the action plan must be balanced with available resources and City priorities, and will be accomplished through a variety of sources including capital programming, amenity contributions, grants and partnerships.

Next Steps

Staff will incorporate Council and community feedback on the draft plan and prepare a final proposed plan. Prior to consulting the community on the final proposed plan, staff will identify and seek Council's direction to consult on any proposed OCP amendments needed to align with the neighbourhood plan. The findings of the consultation on the final proposed plan and the proposed OCP amendments will be brought forward to Council for consideration of approval.

OPTIONS & IMPACTS

Preliminary engagement results suggest strong community support for the policies in the draft Victoria West Plan. As a result, staff recommend proceeding with detailed analysis of engagement results, considering revisions and preparing a final proposed plan for review by the community and consideration by Council. No other options are identified.

Accessibility Impact Statement

The neighbourhood plan contains a number of policies that will make the public spaces more accessible to people of all abilities, including improving pedestrian crossings, sidewalks and trails.

2015 – 2018 Strategic Plan

This milestone in the Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan process supports Strategic Plan, Objective 3: Strive for Excellence in Planning and Land Use which contains actions and outcomes to undertake local area planning focused on urban villages and transportation corridors.

Impacts to Financial Plan

Impacts to the Financial Plan will be outlined for Council when the final Action Plan and proposed final plan are presented to Council for consideration.

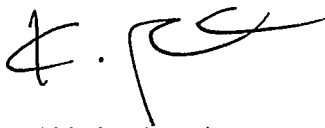
Official Community Plan Consistency Statement

Preparation of a new Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan is consistent with the OCP, which provides planning direction for ground-oriented housing, small urban villages, transportation network, heritage and other policy areas. Some policies will likely require amendments to the OCP to align the two plans, such as land use designations and new development permit areas. Proposed OCP amendments will be brought forward to Council prior to consultation on the proposed final Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan.

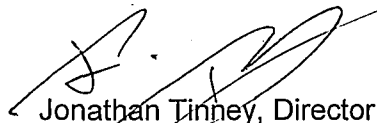
CONCLUSIONS

The draft Victoria West neighbourhood plan represents an important milestone. The draft plan builds on community aspirations and feedback to propose policies related to housing, urban villages, major corridors, waterfront, transportation and other topics. Preliminary analysis of engagement results shows strong community support for the draft plan. Following Council's direction, staff will prepare a final proposed plan for review by the community and consideration of approval by Council.

Respectfully submitted,

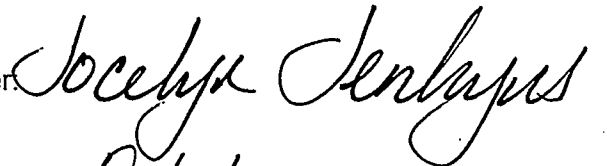


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Jonathan Tinney, Director
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Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:



Date: October 13, 2017

List of Attachments:

- Attachment A: Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan, Draft