

CITY OF VICTORIA | 10-Year OCP Update

# 10-Year Official Community Plan Update

## Engagement Summary Report

February 2025



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The City of Victoria is located on the homelands of the Songhees Nation and the Xwsepsum Nation.



# Executive Summary

Community members were invited to provide feedback on the 10-Year Official Community Plan update over a span of six months, from March 5 to September 1, 2024. Public feedback was received through online and in-person engagement opportunities.

The public engagement approach included outreach to all Victoria residents and businesses and targeted outreach to under-represented groups, including youth, renters, seniors, young families and equity-seeking groups. A total of 1,457 individuals participated in the online survey and 564 feedback emails were received. Over 90 people attended online information sessions, 38 attended focus groups and there were over 2,500 in-person interactions. The online survey invited the community to have their say on housing initiatives to enable more housing in Victoria, actions to address the climate crises and many other proposed plans for transportation, the local economy, blue green networks and parks and recreation.

Participants emphasized the importance of Victoria's unique character and designing accessible and inclusive buildings and urban spaces. They also highlighted the need for planning infrastructure to support population growth, simplify zoning and approval processes and protect green spaces and public areas.

Feedback on housing revealed the community's diverse needs and priorities. Residents expressed opinions on building heights, rental housing options, affordability, accessibility and innovative housing solutions. Discussions also addressed the future development of Victoria's villages and town centers, focusing on priorities such as density, amenities, boundary adjustments, building heights, neighbourhood character, green space and infrastructure.

Through the engagement process, various perspectives and priorities were heard, reflecting the diverse vision of Victoria's community.



# Engagement at a Glance

March 5 - September 1, 2024



**1,457**  
surveys  
completed

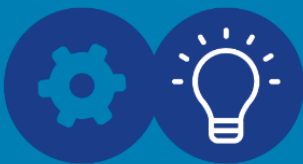


**2,500**  
in-person  
interactions

**550+**  
emails



**90+**  
attended online  
information  
sessions



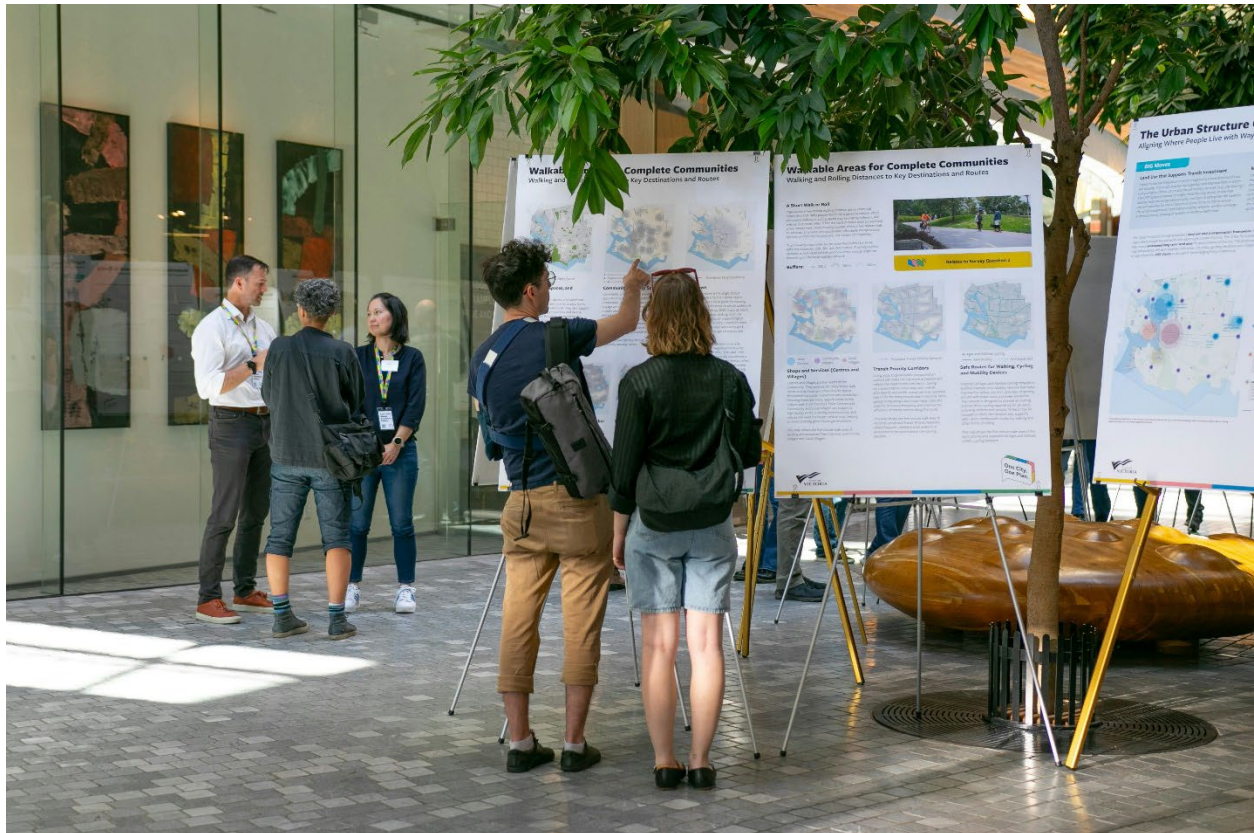
**38**  
people attended  
a focus group

**23 events**

(18 in-person, 5 online)



# Project Overview



The City of Victoria is updating the Official Community Plan (OCP) for Victoria to meet the needs of our growing population and address the housing and climate crises. The plan we make now will help Victoria grow and change to meet future challenges.

From March 5 to September 1, 2024, the City connected with community members in-person and online to talk about housing, community and climate and how Victorians see their city changing and growing.

## Level of Engagement

Engagement activities reflected the Inform and Consult levels of the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation. The City of Victoria provided ways for the public to share feedback, ideas and perspectives on the proposed OCP update and existing City policy and infrastructure.

# Engagement Objectives

**Direct and Clear:** Provide clear direction for the community to respond to and strive to build a clear understanding of how the update could shape the future of Victoria.

**Collaborative:** Work toward shared goals to meet housing needs in the context of climate solutions (i.e., not asking if we add housing capacity, but how in alignment with climate goals).

**Genuine:** Engage where engagement is needed and only when the community's input can meaningfully inform City decisions.

**Equitable:** Strive for diverse representation and inclusion across neighbourhood boundaries and leverage the City's updated Engagement Framework to centre equity, welcome all voices and honour our communities' diverse ways of knowing, learning and sharing.

**Efficient:** Target outreach to communities most impacted by proposed changes.

**Transparent:** Be clear about how decisions will be made and how feedback was used to shape important policy decisions, seeking to build strong civic health.

# Engagement Process



# Engagement Opportunities

The City conducted consultation from March 5 to September 1, 2024. Community members could contribute through an online survey, the OCP email inbox, in-person community events, online information sessions, a virtual open house, community-led engagement sessions, community partner meetings and focus groups. This section goes over each engagement opportunity.

## Open Houses

Three themed open houses provided opportunities to talk to staff, share information and promote the survey. Each open house had a specific focus on an area of the OCP update and included opportunities to participate in in-person survey activities. Over 300 people attended the open houses in total.

**April 6:** Housing Open House at the City Hall Antechamber

**May 11:** Community Open House at The Atrium

**July 6:** Climate Open House at Central Park





## Virtual Open House

The open house boards and activities available at in-person open house events were made available online for community members to provide feedback in an online form.

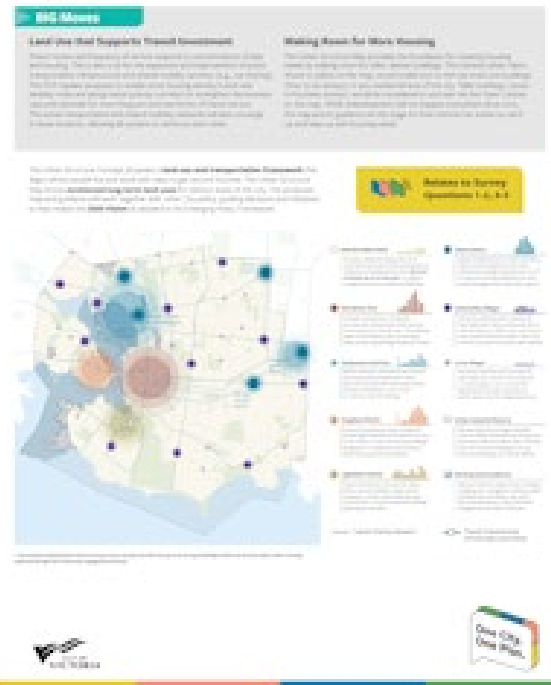
- 67 people viewed the online boards
- 14 participants completed the online open house survey

## Community Pop-ups

Staff attended 15 community spaces, events, and festivals to inform residents about the OCP update, answer questions and give out promotional OCP materials, some of which had links to the survey.

## The Urban Structure Concept

Aligning Where People Live with Ways to Get Around



**March 20:** Victoria Royals Game  
**May 6:** Fernwood Community Dinner  
**May 18:** Moss Street Market  
**May 25:** Selkirk Festival  
**June 1:** Folkloria  
**June 8:** Vic West Fest  
**June 9:** Cook Street Village Block Party  
**June 12:** James Bay Community Picnic

**June 15:** FernFest  
**July 1:** Canada Day  
**July 16:** Harbour Cats Game  
**July 24:** Oaklands Sunset Market  
**August 5:** Harbour Cats Game  
**August 8:** Downtown Bike Valet  
**August 15:** Downtown Bike Valet

## Focus Groups

**June 18:** Experience of Homelessness – In-person session at Cool-Aid Society Office  
**June 25:** Young Families - Online session  
**July 10:** Affordable housing – Online session  
**July 30:** Renters – Online session

## Community Engagement Drop-in

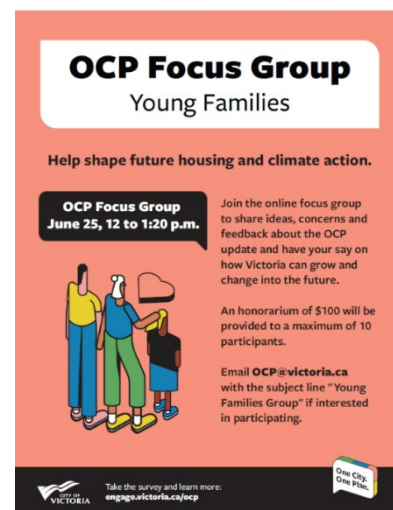
Victoria Native Friendship Centre Soup Lunch -  
**September 13**

## Community Partner Meetings

Staff gave presentations and held engagement sessions to promote opportunities for public input and collect feedback from the following groups:

**Welcoming City Advisory Committee**  
**Accessibility Advisory Committee**  
**International Decade for People of African Descent Advisory Committee**  
**Victoria Youth Council**  
**Victoria Community Association Network**  
**Destination Greater Victoria**

**Healthy Built Environment - Island Health**  
**Transport Canada**  
**Urban Development Institute**  
**Chamber of Commerce**  
**Victoria Harbour Community Partners**  
**Viatch**  
**Maritime Museum of B.C.**



## Youth Engagement

Staff held an information session at Oak Bay High School to inform students of the OCP update, answer questions and collect input. Staff also attended a kindergarten class at Oaklands Elementary School to provide information on the OCP update and collect feedback.

## Online Information Sessions

Lunch and evening online information sessions were held, with a focus on specific themes, to inform the community about OCP updates, answer questions and provide an opportunity for dialogue about how Victoria will grow and change in the coming years.



Over 90 people participated in the sessions below:

**April 16:** Online Information Session – Housing

**April 18:** Online Information Session – Housing

**June 11:** Online Information Session – Community

**June 13:** Online Information Session – Community

**July 16:** Online Information Session – Climate

## OCP Project Page

A dedicated webpage for the OCP update was hosted on the City of Victoria's engagement website at **engage.victoria.ca/ocp**. The page was a main hub for project information, upcoming engagement event information, latest news and opportunities for feedback including the OCP survey and Virtual Open House. More than 18,700 visitors viewed the project page between March 5 and September 1, 2024. Almost 1,500 participated in online engagement and nearly 6,000 project page visitors took action to learn more and explore the page's resources.

### 10-Year Official Community Plan Update



We are updating the Official Community Plan (OCP) for Victoria to meet the needs of our growing population and address the housing and climate crises. The plan we make now will help Victoria grow and change to meet future challenges.

#### Let's Talk About Victoria's Future:

Until September 2024, we will be in your community and online talking with you about housing, community and climate and how you see your city changing and growing into the future. You can have your say by taking the OCP survey, attending an open house, visiting us at a pop-up event or attending an online information session.

Check this page for updates on new engagement opportunities and sign-up for the [OCP Newsletter](#) to keep up to date on OCP engagement activities. You can also try out [CitySpark](#), the Official Community Plan Matchmaker, to swipe through and match with OCP topic areas that have your heart before taking the survey.



#### Ways to have your say

Take the OCP survey at [engage.victoria.ca](https://engage.victoria.ca)



Attend an open house or chat with us at an OCP pop-up event



Join us for an online info session

#### Who's Listening

##### Engagement Team

City of Victoria

Email [ocp@victoria.ca](mailto:ocp@victoria.ca)



No Quick Polls for this project

#### Event Photos



[More...](#)

#### Videos

## OCP Inbox

A dedicated email address was a point of direct contact for community members to provide input, ask questions and learn more about the OCP update. The inbox received over 550 emails.

## **OCP Newsletter**

A project newsletter was created to provide timely updates on the OCP engagement process including upcoming events, latest news, engagement recaps and provide information on the next steps for the project. The newsletter has over 915 subscribers.

## **Online Survey**

Community members were invited to complete an online survey on the OCP update and provide feedback. The survey was broken into three themes – housing, community and climate – and focused on housing solutions, economic and transportation strategic directions as well as climate adaptation and mitigation goals.

1,457 people completed the survey.

## **Meeting in a Box**

Packaged resources and guides including a prerecorded presentation on the proposed OCP update were developed to help communities lead their own engagement sessions and gather feedback. Two community groups led their own sessions and shared the collected feedback with City staff.

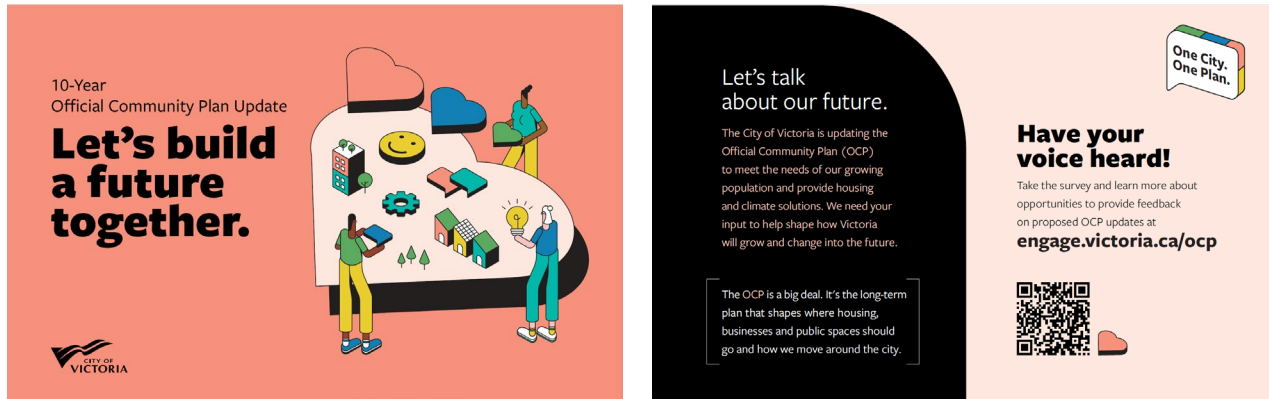


# Engagement Promotion

During this engagement process, the following methods were used to promote the opportunity for public input:

## City-wide Mail Out

An informational postcard was mailed out to all residential addresses in Victoria.



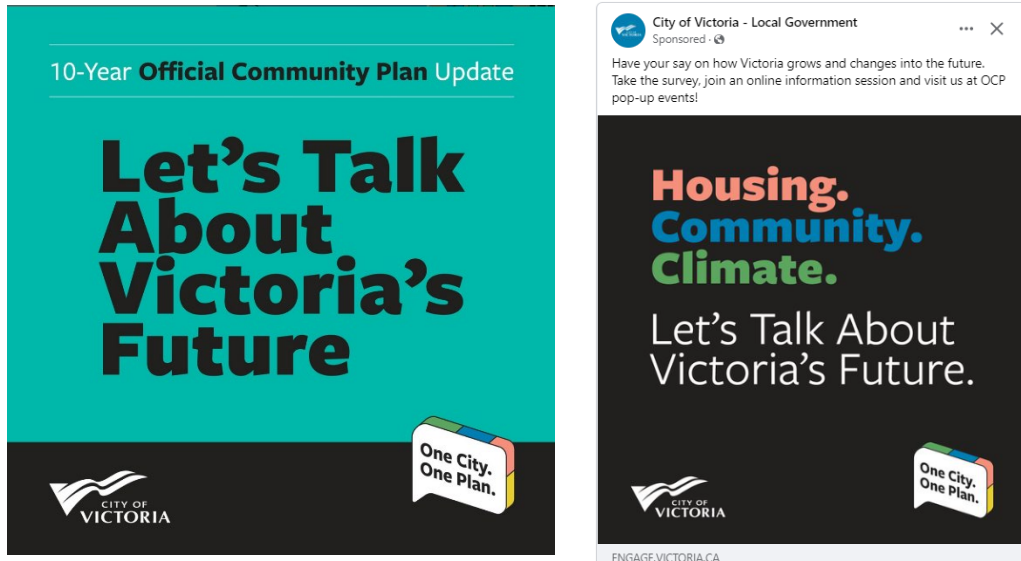
## Informational Video

An OCP video was created to go over the OCP update and shared on the City's social media channels and the project page.



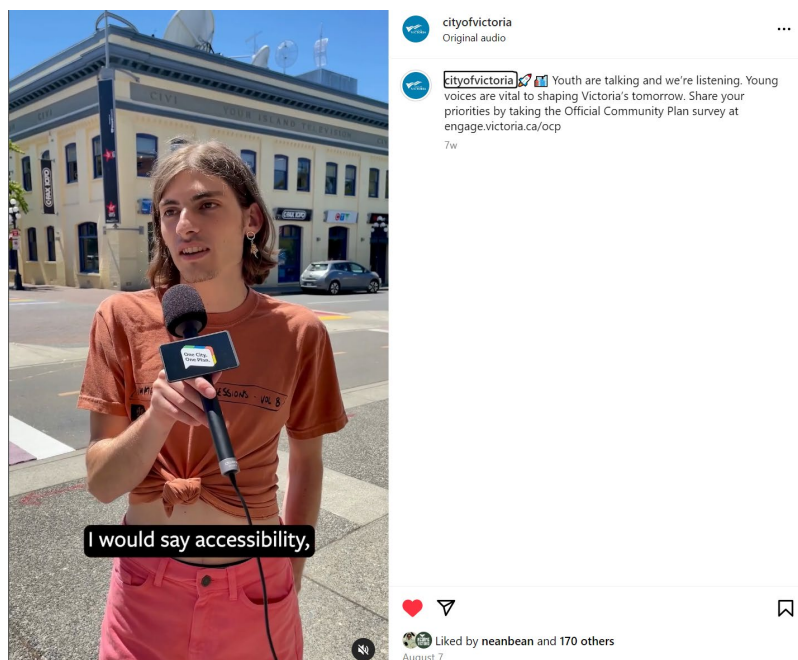
## Social Media

Information about the OCP update and how to participate was posted on Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) and Instagram. Paid and promoted social media were posted on Instagram and Facebook.



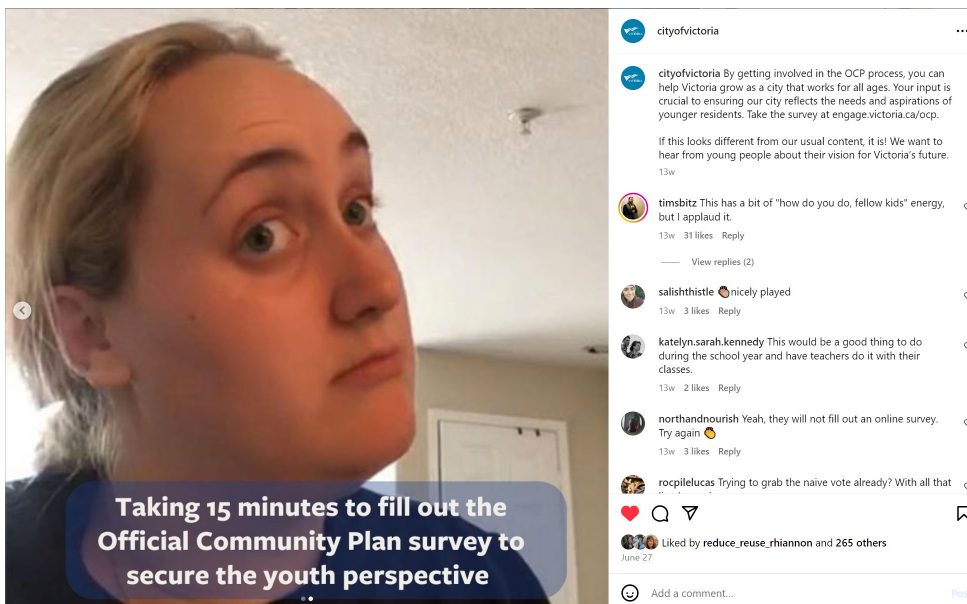
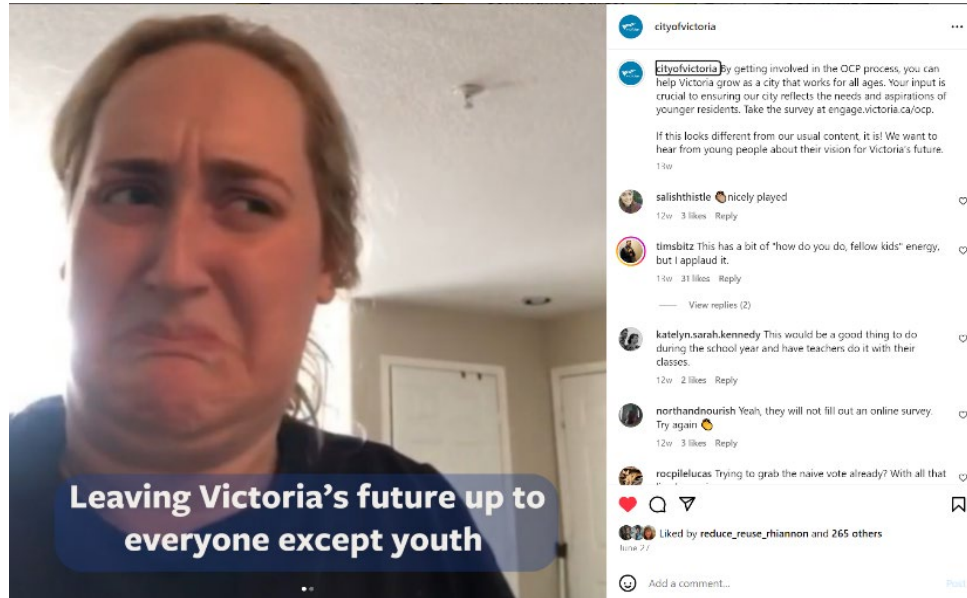
## OCP Streater Interview Videos

Community members were interviewed about their vision for Victoria and what they want their city to look like in the future. Videos were posted to Facebook and Instagram.



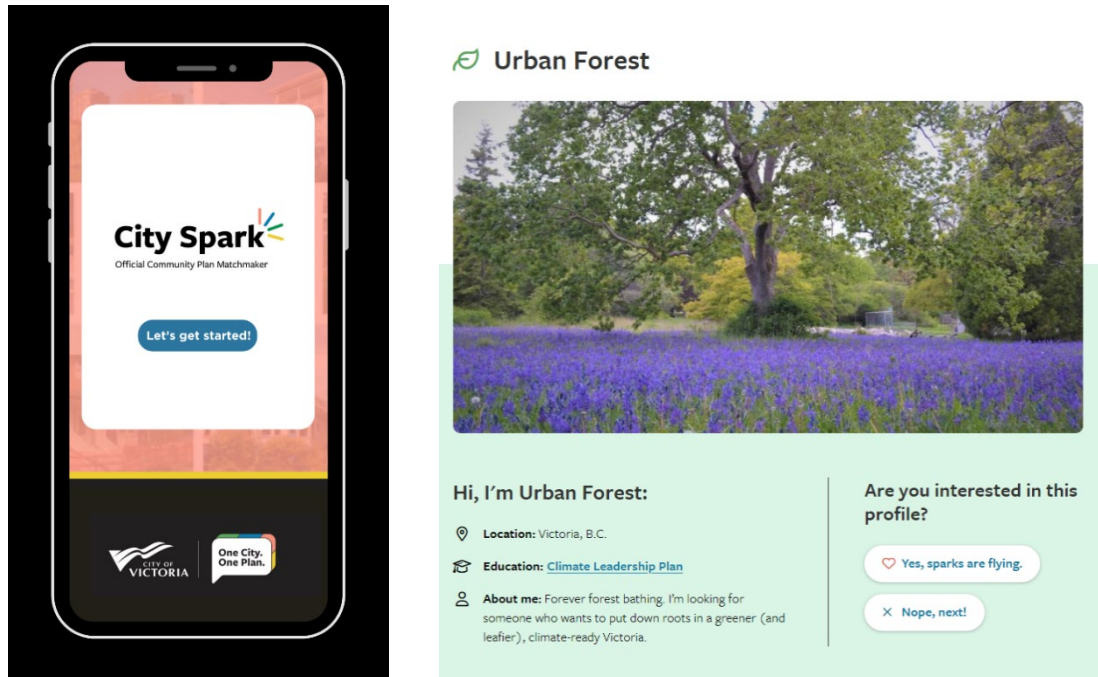
## Youth-focused Social Media

Youth targeted social media awareness increased awareness of the OCP with young people using memes and videos.



## City Spark

An online Official Community Plan dating app game was created at [victoria.ca/cityspark.ca](https://victoria.ca/cityspark.ca) that allowed residents to browse topics related to the OCP and match them with their interests before taking the survey. Over 4,200 people viewed the site and 721 played the game.



## Transit Advertisements

Ads were posted on 17 bus shelters and ten buses in the Greater Victoria Region.





## City Newsletters

Information was included in the following City newsletters:

**Official Community Plan Newsletter:** March, April, May, July, August

**Have You Heard Newsletter:** April, June, August

**Climate Newsletter:** June, August

**Go Victoria Newsletter:** March, June

**Biz Hub Newsletter:** June

**Connect E-News:** March, April, May, June, July, August

## Print Advertising

Information on how to participate in the OCP update was included in:

**Island Parent Magazine**

**Douglas Magazine**

**University of Victoria's Martlet Newspaper**

**Camosun College's Nexus Newspaper**

**Time Colonist Newspaper**

## OCP SWAG

Promotional SWAG distributed at community events included:

**Tote bags**

**Key chains**

**Bike lights**

**Lanyards**

**Stickers**

**Custom heart candy**

**Native wildflower seed paper**

Community members could enter a draw to win all the SWAG plus a:

**Phone charger**

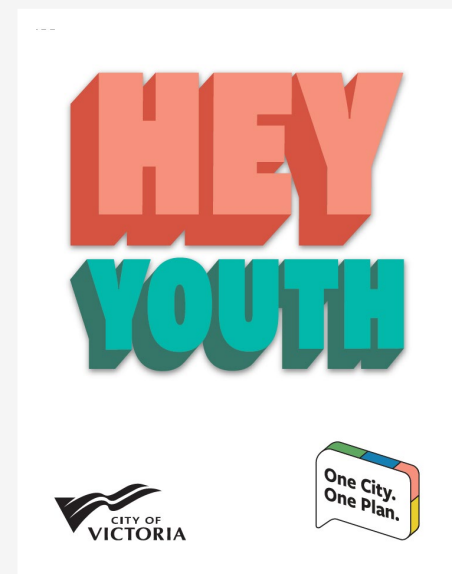
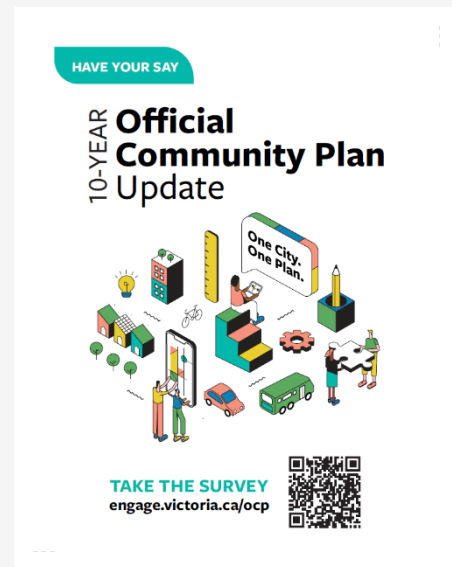
**OCP T-Shirt**





## Poster and Handbills

Posters were distributed to over 300 locations across Victoria. Handbills with information about the updates and a link to the survey were dropped at community spaces and handed out at community pop-ups.

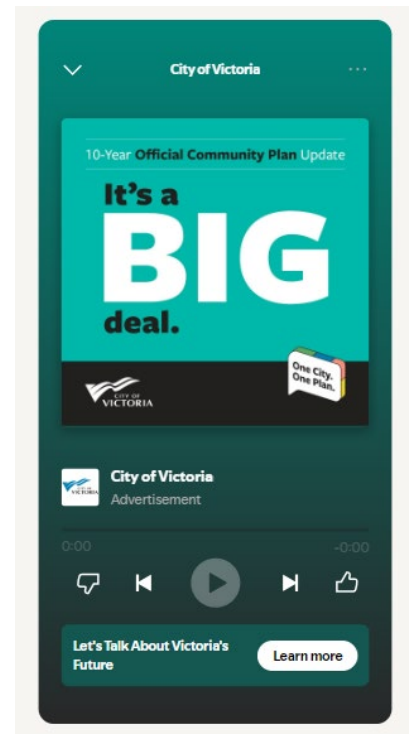


## Radio Advertising

- Spotify advertisements ran June 1 to August 31, 2024
- Radio advertisements ran on The Zone @ 91.3 from July 1 to August 31, 2024

## Additional OCP Promotion

- City events calendar on victoria.ca
- Direct emails to community partner groups
- Communication graphics and materials for community partner groups to share within their networks
- Media release and earned media
- Digital advertising in the City Hall lobby
- Emails to staff liaisons for advisory committees
- Save On Foods billboard sign



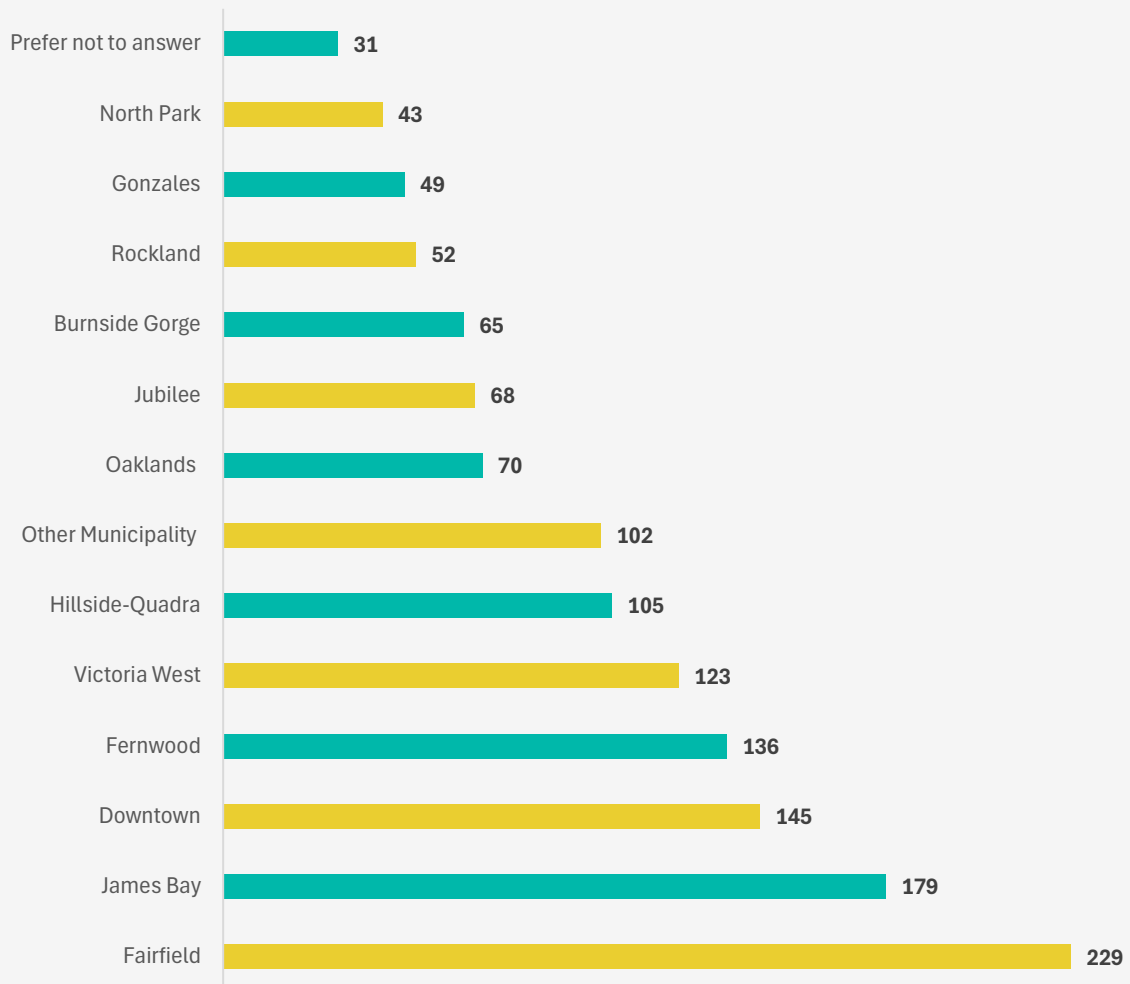
# Who We Heard From – OCP Survey

The following section highlights demographics of respondents that completed the survey and does not include demographics from other in-person and online engagement.

## Neighbourhood

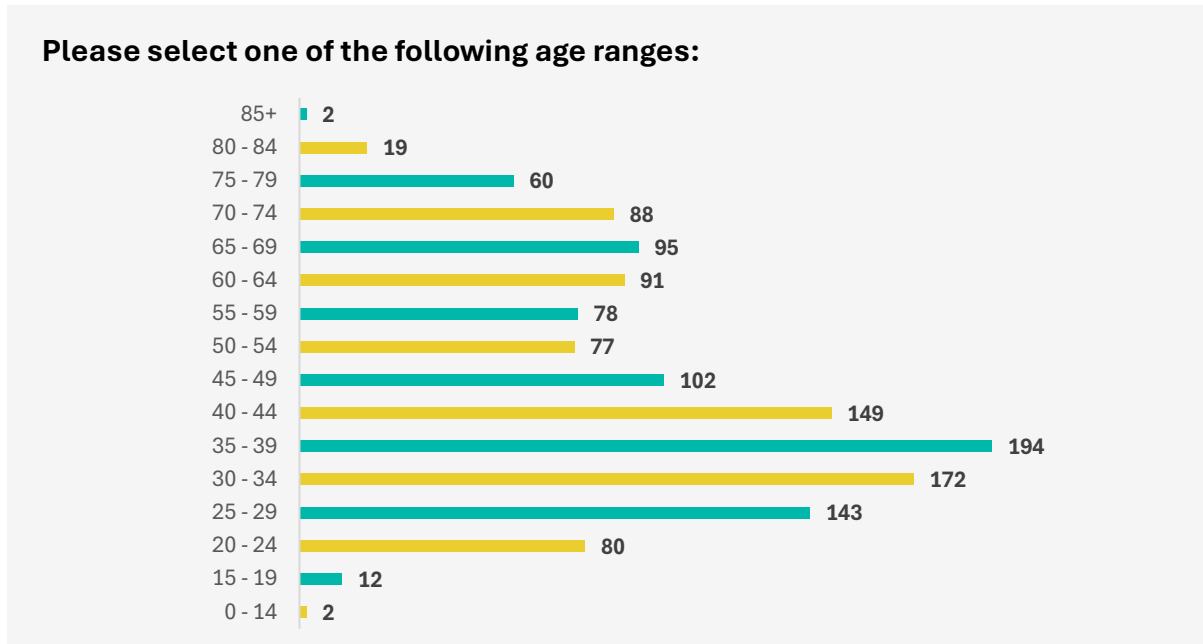
In the survey, we heard from community members from every neighbourhood in Victoria with the largest proportion of respondents indicating they lived in Fairfield (17 per cent), James Bay (13 per cent), Downtown (11 per cent), and Vic West( 9 per cent).

### Which Victoria neighbourhood do you live in?



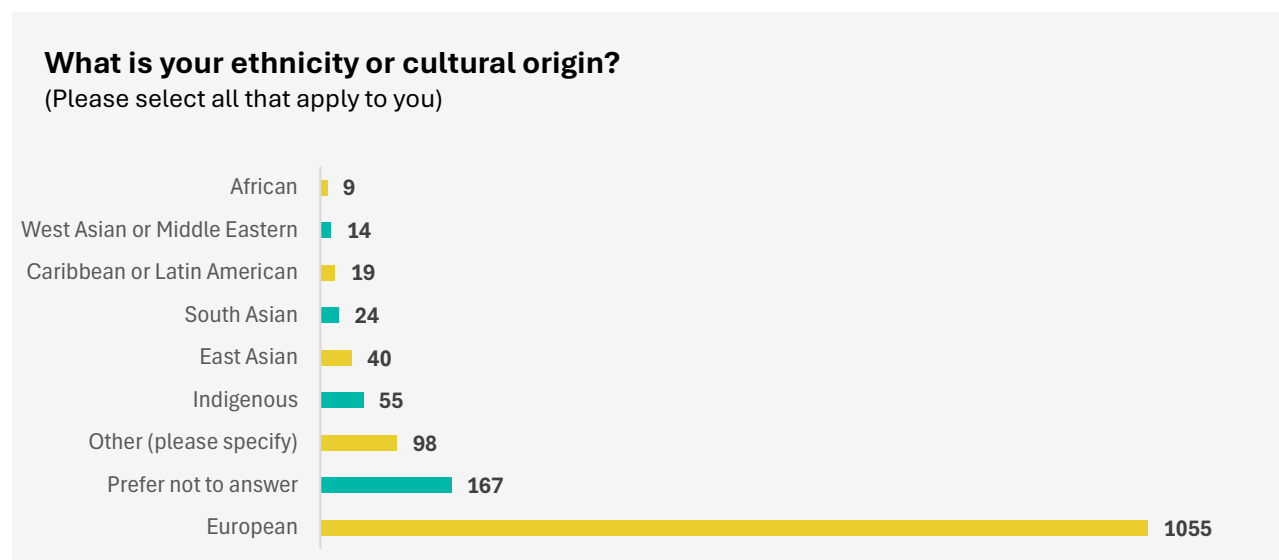
## Age

In the OCP Survey, we heard from people of a diverse range of ages, with the majority (55 percent) between 25 and 44 years of age.



## Ethnicity and Cultural Origin

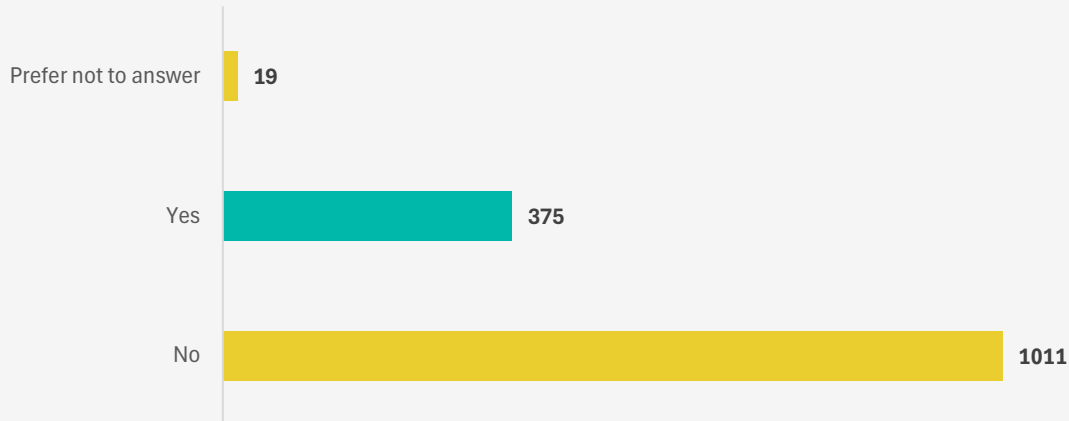
Although we heard from a cross-section of cultural and ethnic backgrounds, 1055 of the respondents that shared their cultural origin, indicated they have a European background (71 per cent).



## Years in Victoria

In the OCP Survey, 72 per cent indicated they had lived in Victoria for over five years.

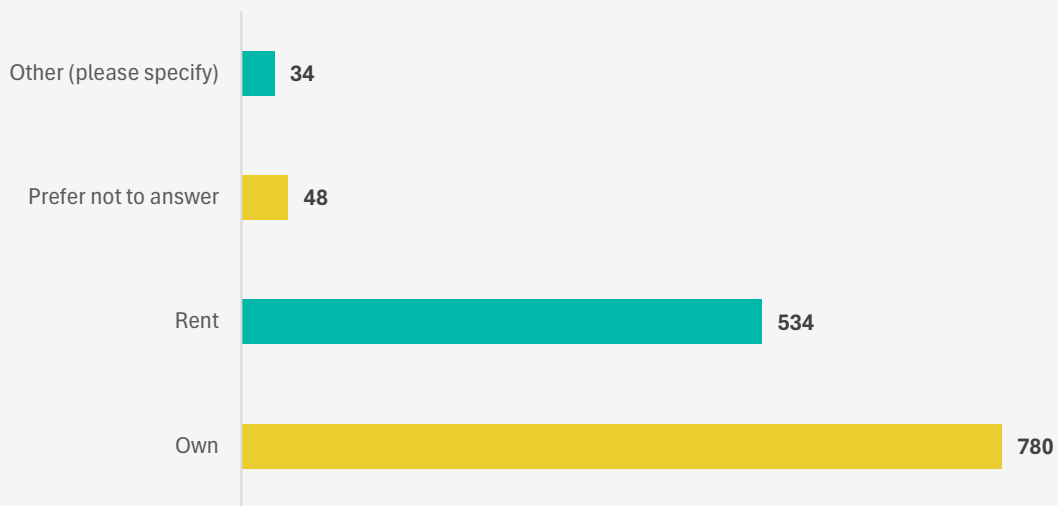
### Have you moved to Victoria in the past five years?



## Current Housing Situation

Of the OCP Survey respondents that indicated if they rented or owned a home, 59 per cent indicated they owned a home and 41 per cent indicated they rented.

### What is your current housing situation?

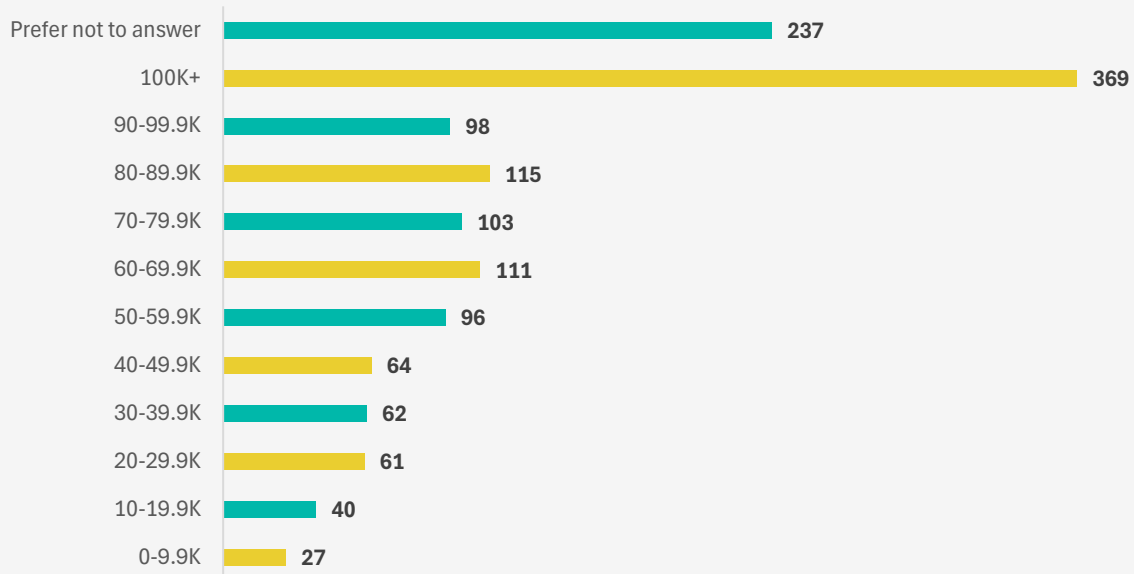




## Income

Of the survey respondents that answered the income question below, the largest proportion of respondents (32 per cent) indicated they earn over 100,000 dollars a year.

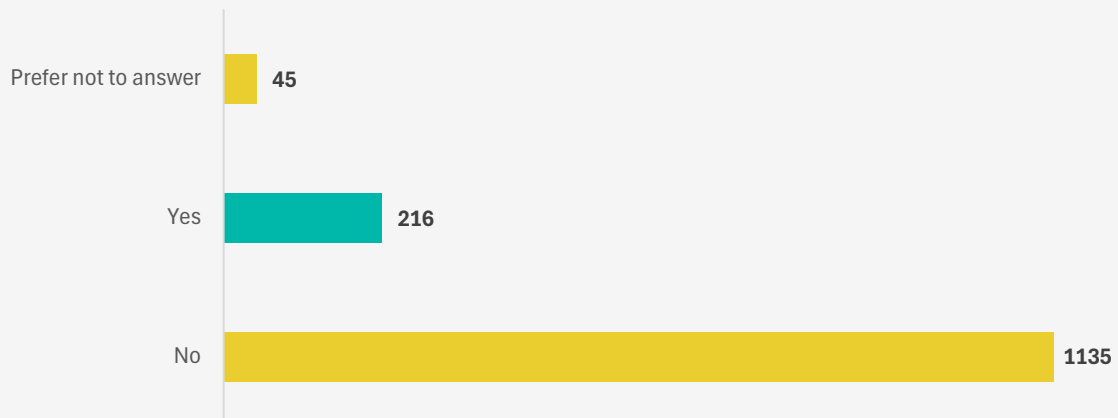
### What is your income?



## Business Owners

Only 16 per cent of respondents who answered the below question were business owners.

### Do you operate a business in Victoria?



# What We Heard

This section summarizes the public feedback collected during the engagement process. The feedback summary is split into sections that relate to the key policy directions and outcomes (often called Big Moves) proposed in the [Victoria 2050—Big Moves: Key Directions for the Official Community Plan 10-year Update document](#) and other topics that arose through feedback received.

Engagement feedback collected via the OCP survey, meetings, events and other forms of correspondence is available at [engage.victoria.ca/ocp](https://engage.victoria.ca/ocp).

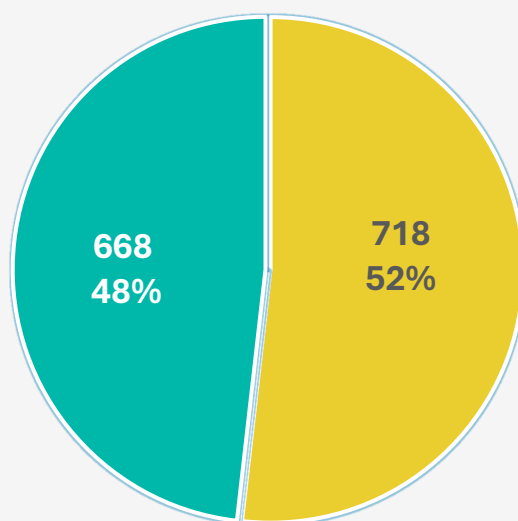
## Housing

This section summarizes feedback gathered on the theme of housing in Victoria. Participants highlighted diverse needs and priorities through feedback shared about building heights, rental housing options, affordability, accessibility and innovative housing solutions.

## Unlocking Land Supply

The graph below summarizes the results from the survey question about low- and mid-rise buildings in residential areas and for which parts of the city's six-storey buildings should be considered.

**Considering these two approaches and their implications, choose the statement you agree with most:**



- The OCP should consider six-storey buildings in any residential area. (Results in a mix of building heights in all residential areas and better supports diverse housing options including more opportunities for new secured rental.)
- The OCP should consider four storey buildings in any residential area and focus six storey buildings in specific areas of the city. (Results in less building height differences in some areas but would likely mean fewer secured rental opportunities.)

*95 per cent of survey respondents completed this question*

The responses indicate a close divide among respondents, with a slight majority favouring the approach that considers six-storey buildings in any residential area.

- 52 per cent of respondents (718 people) indicated they agree most with the approach of considering six-storey buildings in any residential area. (Results in a mix of building heights in all residential areas and better supports diverse housing options including more opportunities for new secured rental).
- 48 per cent of respondents (668 people) indicated they agree most with the approach of considering four storey buildings in any residential area and focus six storey buildings in specific areas of the city. (Results in less building height differences in some areas but would likely mean fewer secured rental opportunities).

Throughout the engagement period, there were mixed opinions regarding the building height options for residential areas. Some respondents saw considering six-storey buildings in any residential area as a more viable solution for addressing the ongoing housing affordability issues.

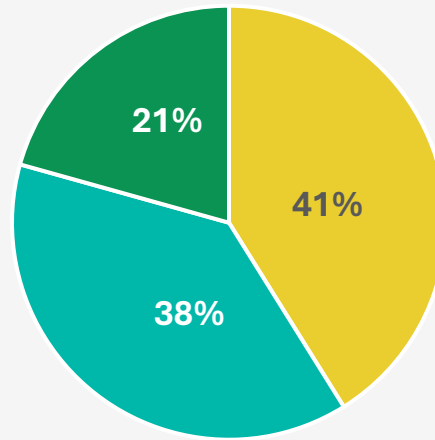
Other respondents favored a more location-specific or conditional approach for where six storey buildings should be considered, such as along transportation corridors, areas that already have similar building heights, and/or where the buildings carry social benefits like rental, family, or social housing. Some of these respondents indicated a priority to preserve more consistent, lower building heights in other areas or architectural heritage contexts.

Additionally, some participants championed allowing more supportive, transitional and affordable residential units above light-industrial buildings within the Rock Bay area to maximize land use.

### **Taller Buildings in Town Centres and Villages**

The chart below illustrates where, outside of the downtown area, survey respondents said that new taller buildings (roughly seven to fourteen storeys) should be considered in Victoria.

**Outside of the downtown, where should new taller buildings (roughly seven to fourteen storeys) be considered in Victoria?**



- In and surrounding Town Centres and Community Villages, as well as adjacent to major public amenities (like large parks or the waterfront)
- In and surrounding Town Centres
- In and surrounding Town Centres and Community Villages

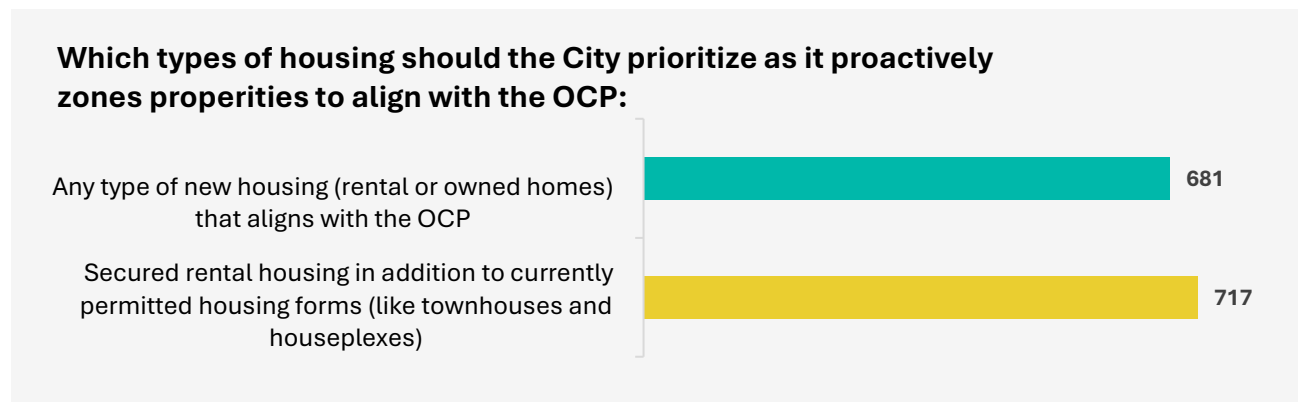
*97 per cent of survey respondents completed this question*

The response to this question indicates a preference among respondents for either considering taller buildings “in and surrounding Town Centres” or “in and surrounding Town Centres and Community Villages, as well as adjacent to major public amenities.”

- 41 per cent of respondents agreed most with considering taller buildings “in and surrounding Town Centres and Community Villages, as well as adjacent to major public amenities (like large parks or the waterfront).”
- 38 per cent of respondents agreed most with considering taller buildings “in and surrounding Town Centres.”
- 21 per cent of respondents agreed most with considering taller buildings “in and surrounding Town Centres and Community Villages.”

## Enabling the Next Generation of Rental Housing

The two graphs below present survey respondents' stated preferences for whether zoning regulations should specifically prioritize rental over other forms of tenure:

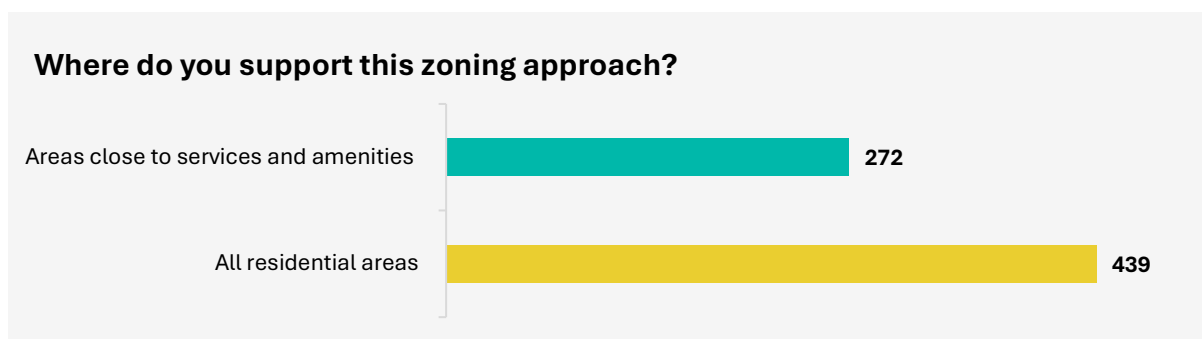


*96 per cent of survey respondents completed this question*

The responses show a slight preference for prioritizing secured rental housing in addition to currently permitted housing forms.

- 51 per cent of respondents (717 people) selected secured rental housing in addition to currently permitted housing forms (like townhouses and houseplexes).
- 49 per cent of respondents (681 people) selected any type of new housing (rental or owned homes) that aligns with the OCP.

Survey respondents who answered the previous question by selecting "secured rental housing in addition to currently permitted housing forms (like townhouses and houseplexes)" were then presented with a follow-up question about where they would support this zoning approach.



*49 per cent of survey respondents completed this question*

- 439 respondents (62 per cent) supported this zoning approach in “all residential areas.”
- 272 respondents (38 per cent) supported this zoning approach in “areas close to services and amenities.”

## **Affordable Housing and Cost of Living**

Many participants called for expanded affordable housing options within the city, both in terms of affordable rental units and affordable home ownership. Many participants shared their concerns about being priced out of Victoria’s housing market. Many shared that rising costs may drive long-time residents away including seniors, students and young families.

Suggestions for increasing the affordable housing stock included introducing more policies and incentives around creating, preserving and protecting affordable rental units (such as rent control or subsidies and incentives for developers providing rental and non-market units). Participants also expressed the importance of fostering strong working relationships with housing partners to produce new affordable homes within the city. Some participants expressed the need for the City to hold developers accountable for delivering affordable housing units.

## **Accessible and Inclusive Housing**

Physical barriers to accessibility and accessible housing were frequently mentioned, with participants expressing concerns about suitable housing for Victoria’s aging population and those with disabilities. Many participants expressed a desire for more accessible units in affordable and market-rate developments rather than “adaptable” ones (i.e. units designed to allow for modifications if residents require changes, rather than being fully accessible from the outset). However, several participants saw merit in promoting further creation of adaptable units, particularly for young families looking to grow and remain in their community longer.

Concerns about the City’s choice to reduce or remove parking requirements in new housing developments were also noted. Participants mentioned that this action has ultimately led to reduced accessible parking spaces, which impacts those with mobility challenges. Participants suggested introducing new policies which would decouple accessible parking from regular parking requirements and establish minimums for new developments, even in cases where regular parking is not required.



## Homelessness and Supportive Housing

Several comments touched on the need for more transitional housing and supportive accommodation for Victoria's unhoused and most vulnerable communities. There was an emphasis on safe and accessible sheltering options when more permanent housing units were not available or waiting lists too long, especially for single people sleeping outside or women needing safety. Comments emphasized the importance of providing supportive housing options that integrate social services to assist individuals in stabilizing their lives. Suggestions included utilizing transitional housing or tiny homes (like the 30-unit Caledonia Village at 940 Caledonia Avenue) and improving existing shelter and housing conditions to ensure people experiencing or at risk of homelessness have access to accessible and suitable accommodation. As well, people with lived experience provided insight into the need to access public spaces, transportation options and community programming that are safe, accessible, encourage well-being and enhance the feeling of community. Service providers highlighted the importance of planning approaches to encourage locations that balance community needs, development feasibility, and compliance with funding and design requirements.

Other comments suggested revisiting certain locations of social service and shelter sites to better balance community needs with safety, enhancing outreach programs to foster positive interactions, and implementing measures to address unpredictable behavior near schools, while recognizing the need for these services throughout our community.

## Short-Term Rentals and Ownership Restrictions

Some people expressed concerns with short-term rentals, particularly regarding how they impact housing availability and affordability. Some expressed concern about the short-term rental limitations placed on those renting their primary residence. They shared that these restrictions may lead to some landlords selling rather than re-listing their property as a long-term rental.

In addition, the issue of renovictions and displacement due to redevelopment or increased rents was a prevalent concern among participants, with many seeking stronger tenant protections to prevent evictions. Suggestions included implementing long-term leases, rent controls and anti-eviction policies to help residents feel more secure in their rental housing.

## Prioritizing Ways to Focus Areas for Mid-Rise Housing

The graph below summarizes respondents' priorities for which areas of the city to focus new mid-rise (five- to six-storey) housing. In the OCP survey, respondents were presented with a StoryMap – an interactive digital storytelling tool. The [StoryMap](#) shows places where it's easy for people to walk to key places like schools, parks and shops. Respondents could then experiment with turning on and off the various features on the map to see which areas are walkable to which features.

**If new mid-rise (five-to-six storey) housing is focused to some areas of the city, what are your priorities for those locations based on your review of the StoryMap?**

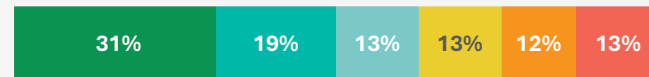
(Rank all that apply with 1 being your top priority, 6 being your lowest priority)

1 2 3 4 5 6

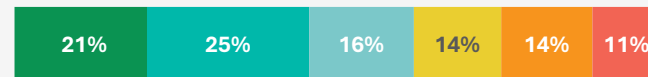
Within a short walk to shops and services



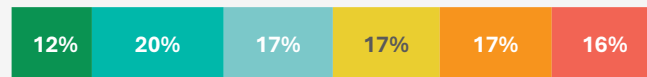
Near parks, open spaces and the waterfront



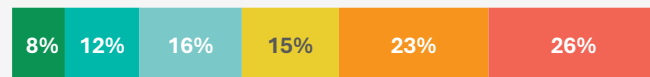
Near amenities like schools, childcare, libraries and recreation centres



Near the Transit Priority Network (where frequent, reliable transit service is available or prioritized for the future)



Close to safe routes for walking, cycling and using mobility devices



Within a 15- to 20-minute walk of downtown



*96 per cent of survey respondents completed this question*

Among the options provided, “within a short walk to shops and services,” “near parks, open spaces and the waterfront,” and “near amenities like schools, childcare, libraries and recreation centres”, emerged as the respondents' highest priorities. At the same time, proximity to transit and downtown was generally less prioritized.

- “Within a short walk to shops and services” and “near parks, open spaces and the waterfront” emerged as the highest and second highest priority overall. This is despite the latter being ranked by 31 per cent of respondents as their top priority.
- “Near amenities like schools, childcare, libraries and recreation centres” was third priority overall, with an average rank just below the first two options.
- Respondents were split in prioritizing “near the Transit Priority Network (where frequent, reliable transit service is available or prioritized for the future)” with a relatively balanced distribution of responses across the ranks, its average ranking landed it fourth overall
- “Close to safe routes for walking, cycling and using mobility devices” and “within a 15- to 20-minute walk of downtown” were the two lowest priorities. A more significant share of respondents assigned these two priorities a ranking of five (23 per cent) or six (26 per cent).

## Housing for Workforce Retention

Participants identified housing affordability as a critical issue for Victoria businesses needing help to retain staff. Concerns were shared about how some essential workers (e.g., police officers, nurses, teachers and doctors) need help to afford to live near their jobs in downtown Victoria. Some noted that high housing costs are pushing workers of all industries to live in neighbouring municipalities, resulting in increases in traffic volumes and commute times and impacting the ability of Victoria’s small businesses to retain staff.

Many participants were adamant about the need to focus on market-rate and affordable housing development in or near downtown and to provide employers with incentives to better assist with housing their staff.

## Encouraging Innovative Housing Solutions

Some comments proposed exploring and incentivizing the creation of more non-traditional living styles and home ownership models, such as co-housing, land trusts, cooperative housing and rent-to-own options, as viable paths to affordability and community building. There was also interest in creating more multigenerational homes that would better suit seniors who wish to stay in their neighbourhoods as they age.

The graph below illustrates survey respondents' priorities for features to consider in new taller buildings (roughly seven to fourteen storeys), where they are considered in Victoria. The options were ranked from one (highest priority) to five (lowest priority).

## What features should be considered for new taller buildings (roughly seven to fourteen storeys) in Victoria?

(Rank all that apply with 1 being your top priority, 5 being your lowest priority)

1 2 3 4 5

Diverse housing options  
(e.g., for different family  
sizes, lifestyles and  
incomes)



Trees and green spaces  
on and off-site



Climate-friendly buildings  
with high standards of design



On and off-site public  
amenity space



On-site private amenity  
space



*97 per cent of survey respondents completed this question*

Overall, “diverse housing options (e.g., for different family sizes, lifestyles and incomes)” emerged as the highest priority for respondents, while “on-site private amenity space” emerged as the lowest priority. “Trees and green spaces on and off-site” was ranked second, “climate-friendly buildings with high standards of design” ranked third and “on- and off-site public amenity space” was ranked fourth.

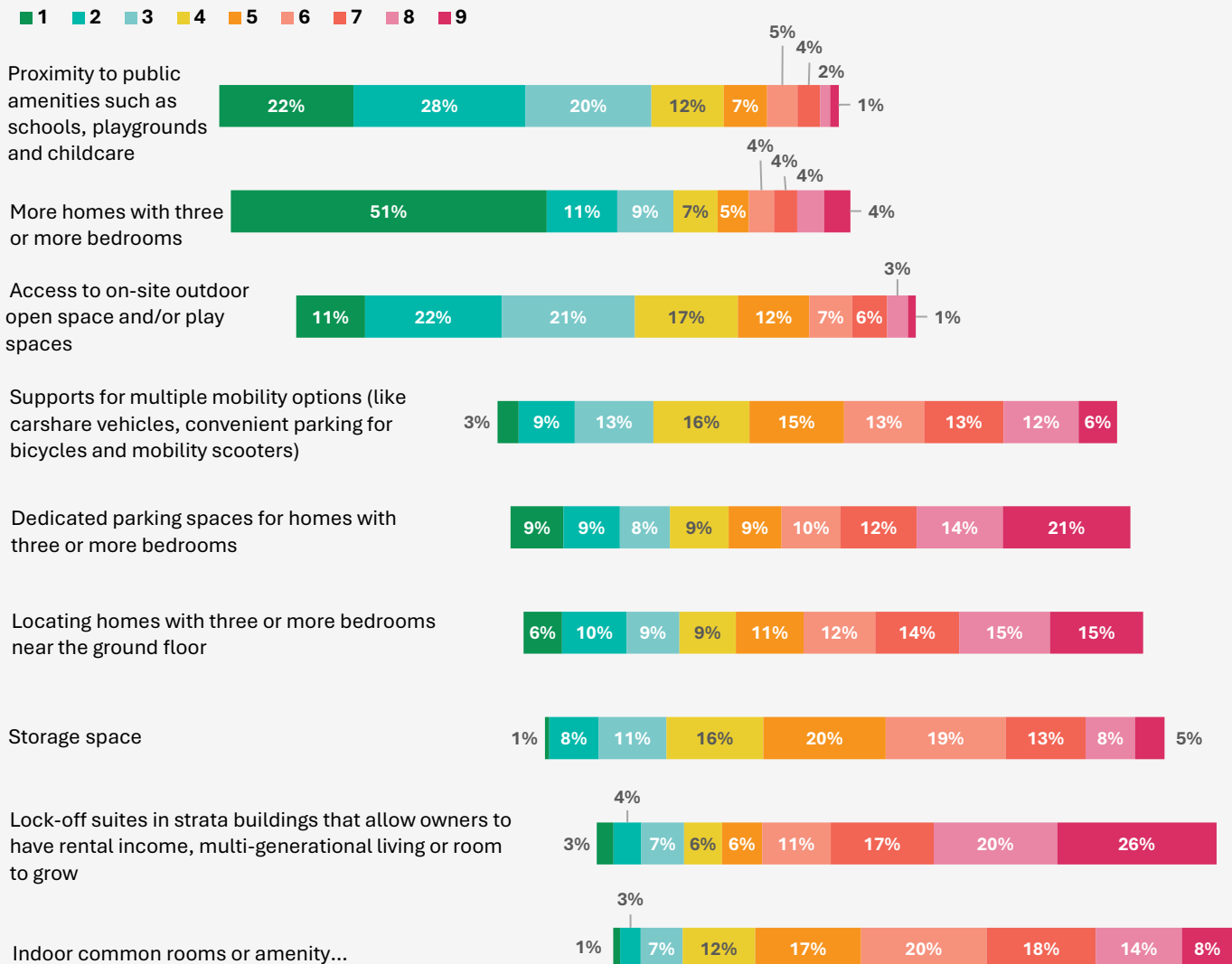
- More than half of respondents ranked “diverse housing options (e.g., for different family sizes, lifestyles and incomes)” as their highest priority, at 56 per cent.
- “Trees and green spaces on and off-site” was also highly valued, with 48 per cent ranking this as their highest or second highest priority.
- 47 per cent ranked “climate-friendly buildings with high standards of design” as their highest or second highest priority.
- “On- and off-site public amenity space” and “on-site private amenity space” were generally ranked lower. Respectively, only 6 per cent and 5 per cent ranked these as their top priorities. “On-site private amenity space was ranked as the lowest priority by 54 per cent of respondents.

## Improving Family Housing Options

The graph below shows how survey respondents ranked what is most important when developing family-friendly housing. The options were ranked from one (highest priority) to nine (lowest priority).

### What do you think is most important when developing family-friendly housing?

(Rank all that apply with 1 being your top priority, 9 being your lowest priority)



*49 per cent of survey respondents completed this question*

Overall, “proximity to public amenities such as schools, playgrounds and childcare,” “more homes with three or more bedrooms,” and “access to on-site outdoor open spaces and/or play spaces” were the top three priorities from the options provided. More than half of respondents ranked “more homes with three or more bedrooms” as their top priority.

- “Proximity to public amenities such as schools, playgrounds and childcare” was ranked highest overall, with 22 per cent ranking it as their top priority, 28 per cent ranking it second priority and 20 per cent ranking it as their third priority.
- “More homes with three or more bedrooms” was the top priority for most respondents, with 51 per cent selecting it as their highest priority. It was ranked as the second highest priority overall.
- Only 11 per cent of respondents ranked “access to on-site outdoor open space and/or play spaces” as their top priority, but 22 per cent ranked it second and 21 per cent ranked it third, resulting in this option ranking as the third highest priority overall.

Comments from public engagement events echoed the survey results, emphasizing the need for more family-sized housing units, including units that provide three or more bedrooms. Some participants mentioned that current housing options reportedly lack sufficient space for families to grow, prompting many to relocate to nearby communities outside the city. Participants urged developers to build larger units to accommodate various family sizes, including options supporting multi-generational living. Participants also encouraged the development of indoor shared amenities in buildings with smaller units. A focus on strategically locating family-friendly housing near child-friendly amenities (like libraries, parks, schools and community centres) was also expressed.

## Villages and Town Centres

This section summarizes feedback on the future development of Victoria’s villages and town centres. Participants shared their views on priorities for density, amenities, boundary changes, building heights, neighbourhood character, green space and infrastructure.

### Key Priorities for the Villages and Town Centres

When discussing density, many engagement participants favoured a phased approach, with gradual increases in heights over time to prevent the sudden transformation of traditional neighbourhoods. Participants mentioned how this gradual increase should consider current single-family homes, protect sunlight access, preserve mature trees and minimize traffic impacts on quieter streets.

Participants highlighted the need for more social and commercial infrastructure in Victoria’s town centres and villages. Examples include healthcare facilities, community parks and recreational spaces that better cater to youth. Some participants emphasized that increased density should be matched with an adequate commercial area to support



effective operations. This includes ensuring access to delivery vehicles and transportation for consumers. Meeting these needs is essential for accommodating a diverse and growing community. The graph below highlights feedback from survey respondents about their top priorities for Victoria's town centres as they develop. The options were ranked from one (highest priority) to seven (lowest priority).

### As Victoria's Town Centres develop, what are your top priorities for these places?

(Rank all that apply with 1 being your top priority, 7 being your lowest priority)

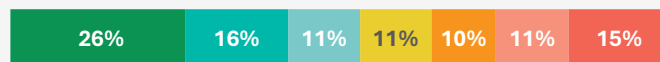
Trees, green spaces and enhanced natural features



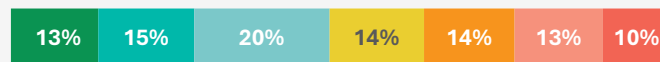
Housing suitable for diverse family sizes and lifestyles



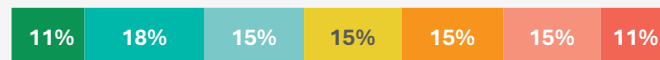
Inclusion of non-market (affordable) housing



Safe and reliable mobility options (like direct access to transit service, walking and cycling routes)



Public open spaces that support community gathering and celebration



Reliable and comfortable mobility features (like safe bicycle storage or comfortable bus waiting areas)



Indoor amenity spaces, including public spaces and arts and cultural venues



*96 per cent of survey respondents completed this question*

Overall, the responses indicate a strong preference for green spaces and affordable housing, with moderate support for diverse family housing and mobility options. Indoor amenities were less frequently prioritized.

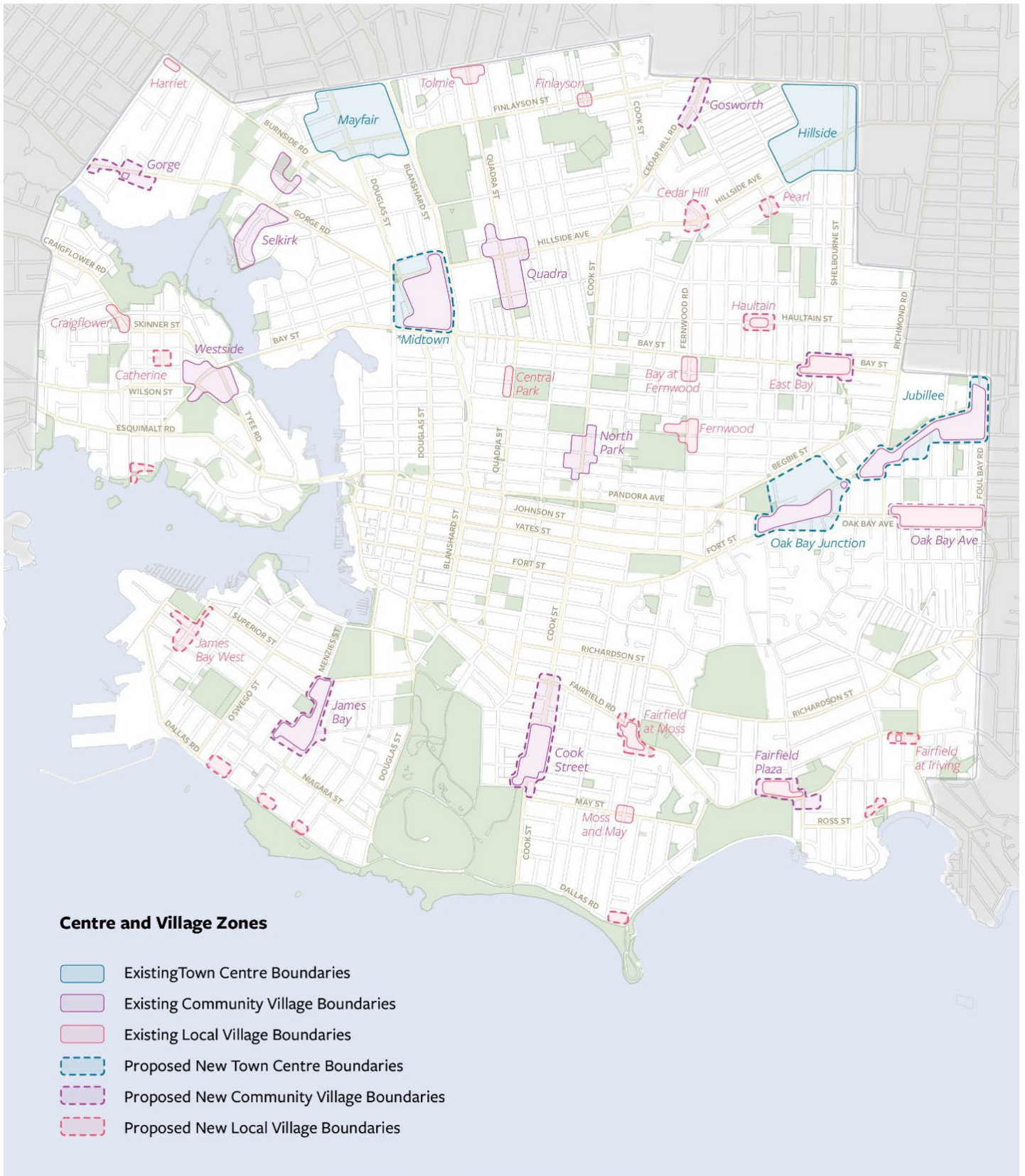
- “Trees, green spaces and enhanced natural features” emerged as the highest priority overall and was also most frequently selected as the top priority (27 per cent ranked it as their top priority).
- While only 19 per cent of respondents ranked “housing suitable for diverse family sizes and lifestyles” as their top priority, a total of 57 per cent ranked it as either their first, second or third priority which resulted in this option emerging as the second highest priority overall.
- “Inclusion of non-market (affordable) housing” was also highly prioritized by respondents, with 26 per cent choosing it as their top priority.
- “Safe and reliable mobility options (such as transit access and walking and cycling routes)” and “public open spaces that support community gathering and celebration” were both ranked relatively evenly, with a slight preference for mobility options.
- “Reliable and comfortable mobility features (like safe bicycle storage or comfortable bus waiting areas)” and “indoor amenity spaces, including public spaces and arts and cultural venues” were the two lowest-ranked options.

## **New Village and Town Centre Locations**

Some participants expressed interest in new villages and town centre locations that offer more facilities and commercial spaces like cafes, restaurants, and shops. Others suggested that alterations or expansions to the boundaries of existing villages and town centres would be a better way to accommodate more amenities and community-oriented spaces. Some participants want municipalities to collaborate with one another to support the growth of retail and commercial services that complement future development in village and town centers and planning for emergency services and recreation.

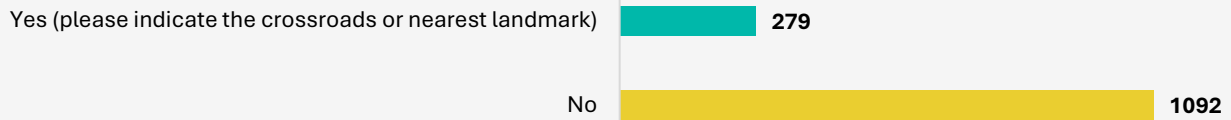
The proposed locations for new local village boundaries along Dallas Road received positive feedback. Some participants expressed a desire to preserve the existing green space, limit traffic congestion and minimize pollution within the area by excluding Dallas Road from new waterfront village designations.

While completing the survey, respondents were asked where they would suggest adding new town centres and villages. They were then presented with a map (shown below) showing the existing and proposed town centre and village boundaries.



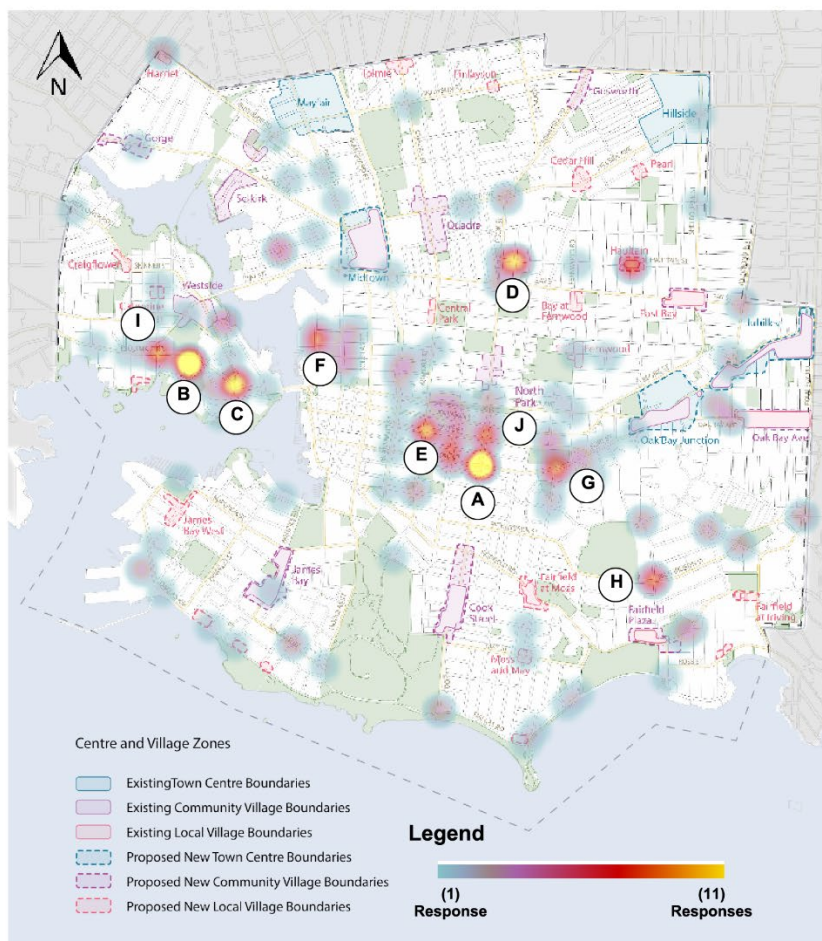


## Are there any villages or centres shown on this map that you feel should be added?



*94 per cent of survey respondents completed this question*

Those with suggestions for new town centre or village locations were prompted to identify the nearest crossroad or landmark to indicate their proposed location. Two hundred seventy-nine responses were collected, which were used to create a map (shown below) of the suggested locations.



## New Centre and Village Locations

Respondent-Suggested Locations

### Survey Asked...

Are there any villages or centres shown in this map that you feel should be added?

If yes, please indicate the crossroads or nearest landmark.

### Most Popular Locations Suggested:

Crossroads	Freq.
(A) Fort St. and Cook St.	11
(B) Esquimalt Rd. and Sitkum Rd.	11
(C) Esquimalt Rd. and Tyee Rd.	7
(D) Haultain St. and Empire St.	6
(E) Yates St. and Quadra St.	6
(F) Discovery St. and Store St.	6
(G) Fort St. and Moss St.	5
(H) Richardson St. and Saint Charles St.	5
(I) Esquimalt Rd. and Saint Catherine St.	5
(J) Yates St. and Cook St.	4

Out of the 10 most suggested locations, the intersections of Fort and Cook Street and Esquimalt and Sitkum Road were the most popular, with 11 suggestions each. Other notable locations included Esquimalt and Tyee Road, Haultain and Empire Street (near Haultain Fish and Chips), Yates and Quadra Street and Discovery and Store Street.

## Village and Town Centre Boundary Changes

The graph below displays survey respondents' views on whether there are any Community Villages or Local Villages that should be larger, have different boundaries or offer more shops and services.



*93 per cent of survey respondents completed the question*

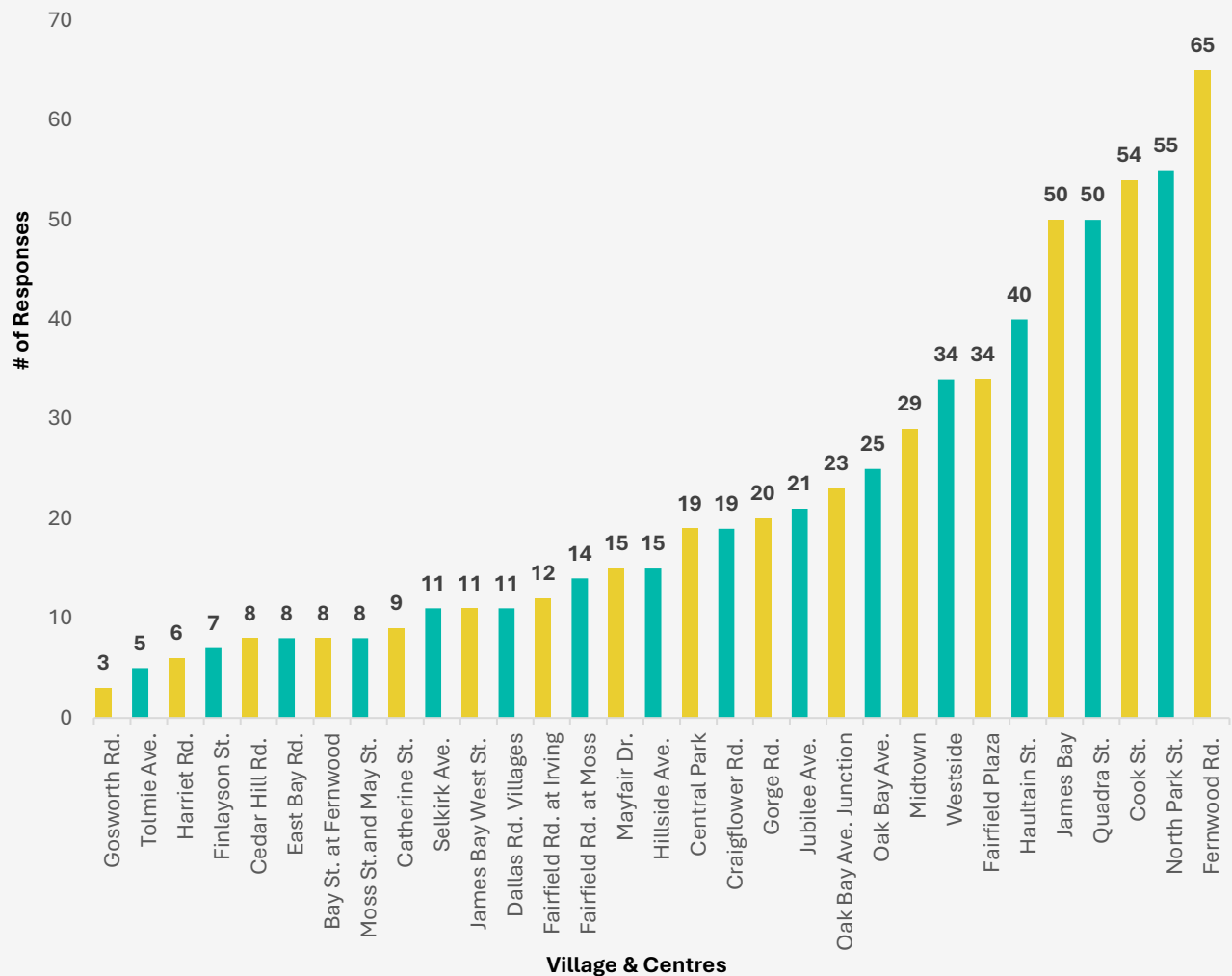
### Key insights:

- 504 respondents selected “Yes”
- 860 selected “No”
- Total of 690 suggestions for adjusting town centres and villages boundaries

The figure below illustrates the number of suggested changes for each town centre and village.



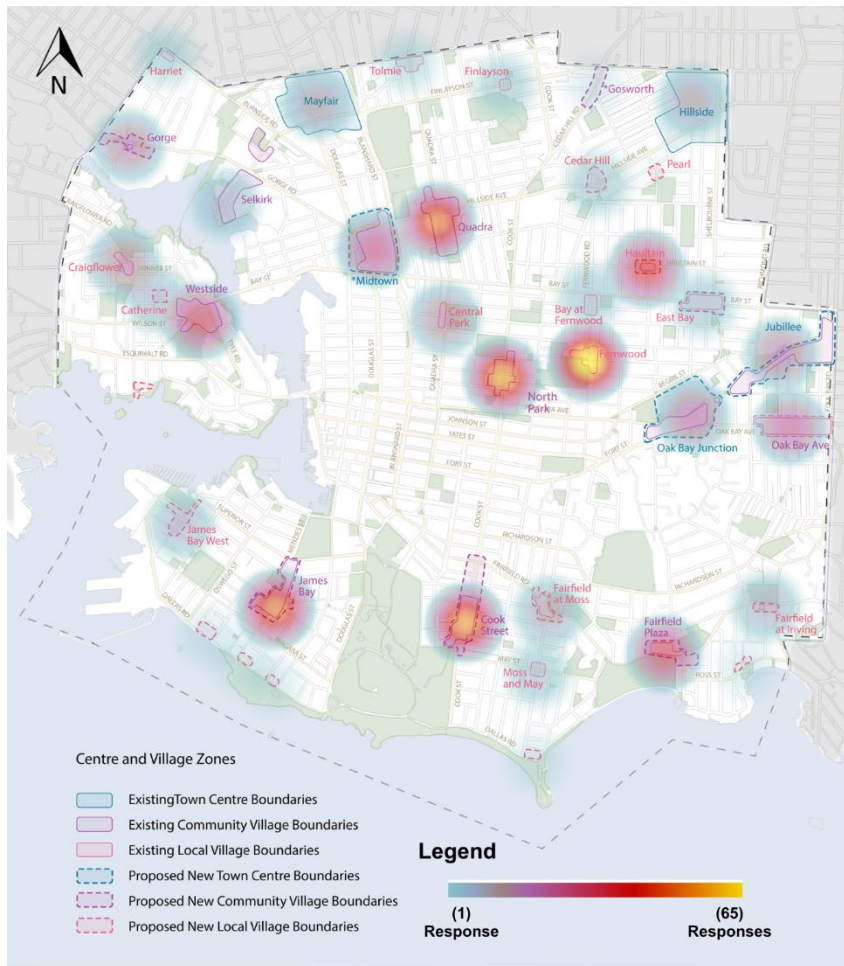
## Number of Requested Boundary Changes By Village and Centre



### Key insights:

- Fernwood Village received the most boundary change suggestions at 65.
- This was followed by North Park Village at 55 suggested changes and Cook Street Village at 54. James Bay Village and Quadra Village were tied, with 50 responses each.

The responses were used to generate a heat map, shown below, showcasing which locations received the most and fewest requests for boundary changes.



## Requested Boundary Changes

for Centre and Village Zones

### Survey Asked...

Are there any Community Villages or Local Villages that should be larger, have different boundaries or offer more shops and services?

If yes, please indicate the crossroads or nearest landmark.

The map shows how smaller villages closest to the municipal boundary and towards the north end received fewer responses than those toward the centre and south end of the city. Many survey respondents named village or town centre locations where they would like to see boundaries change and explained why. Common suggestions included adjustments to proposed boundaries, such as expansion or contraction, upgrading or downgrading boundary designations (e.g., from community village to town centre), or amalgamating multiple boundaries into a larger village or town centre.

Many respondents also made village or town centre-specific suggestions for elements such as supporting the level of walkability, improving public infrastructure, providing greater support for existing local businesses and pushing for the inclusion of specific stores and amenities such as grocery stores, hardware stores, libraries and small-scale retail. A summary of suggestions for each of the top five villages is included below.

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## **Fernwood**

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Many respondents suggested making Fernwood village larger and nearly car-free. There was a call to amalgamate Fernwood with Haultain Corners and North Park, creating a more integrated community. Respondents also highlighted the need for more services, such as grocery stores, liquor stores and pharmacies. There was a strong desire for better connectivity between Fernwood and the surrounding areas like Bay Street. Some envisioned Fernwood as a community village rather than just a local village, with more low and medium-rise buildings to support the growing population.

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## **North Park**

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The responses for expanding North Park emphasized the need for expansion and amalgamation with neighbouring villages like Fernwood and Haultain. Alternatively, some suggested enlarging North Park Village's boundaries to include Pandora Avenue, Cook Street and Quadra Street. There was a strong desire for more shops, services, lower-cost grocery options and improved amenities like a library.

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## **Cook Street Village**

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There were a variety of responses regarding Cook Street Village. Many suggested expanding the proposed boundary further east and west and upgrading it to a town centre within the village boundaries. In contrast, some believed the existing village boundary was too large due to the many apartment buildings. Some respondents highlighted the struggle to retain commercial tenants and suggested focusing on supporting existing businesses before expanding further. There was an expressed need for more essential services like banks, credit unions, larger drug stores and affordable grocery stores. There was a desire for more multi-level shopping and services with accessible public transit rather than more parking.

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## **Quadra Village**

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The responses for the Quadra Community Village highlighted a strong desire for expansion and development. Many suggest enlarging Quadra to include areas up to Bay Street and Summit and the existing Midtown centre. Many respondents also wanted to add new shops, services and community spaces, such as a library. Improvements in pedestrian infrastructure and traffic calming measures were also emphasized. There were also calls to enhance the area's vibrancy and improve public safety.

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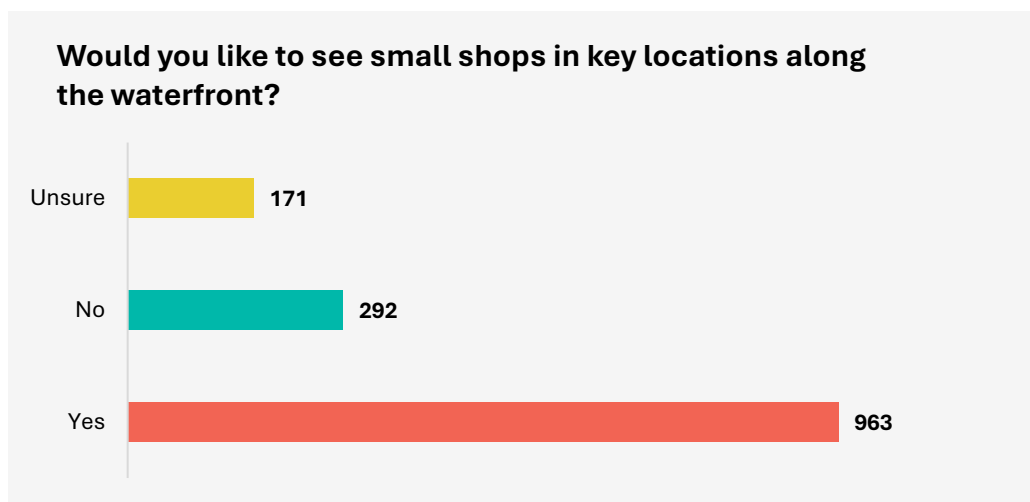
## James Bay

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The responses for James Bay included interest in lower-cost grocery options and additional shops along Menzies Street towards the legislature. Some mentioned that expanding the village north along Menzies Street towards the Inner Harbour and south towards Dallas Road would be interesting, citing its potential for small-scale retail. One roadway that was repeatedly mentioned for a community village was Medana Street. Additional services like a hardware store and a focus on supporting small local businesses were also mentioned. Finally, some respondents suggested amalgamating James Bay and James Bay West villages and upgrading them to a town centre designation.

### Waterfront Villages

Two-thirds of survey respondents indicated that they would like to see small shops in key locations along the waterfront.



*98 per cent of survey respondents completed this question*

#### Key insights:

- A majority of respondents (67 per cent) answered "Yes" in response to the question.
- Some respondents (20 per cent) opposed the idea, answering "No."
- 12 per cent of respondents stated they were "Unsure" about the idea.

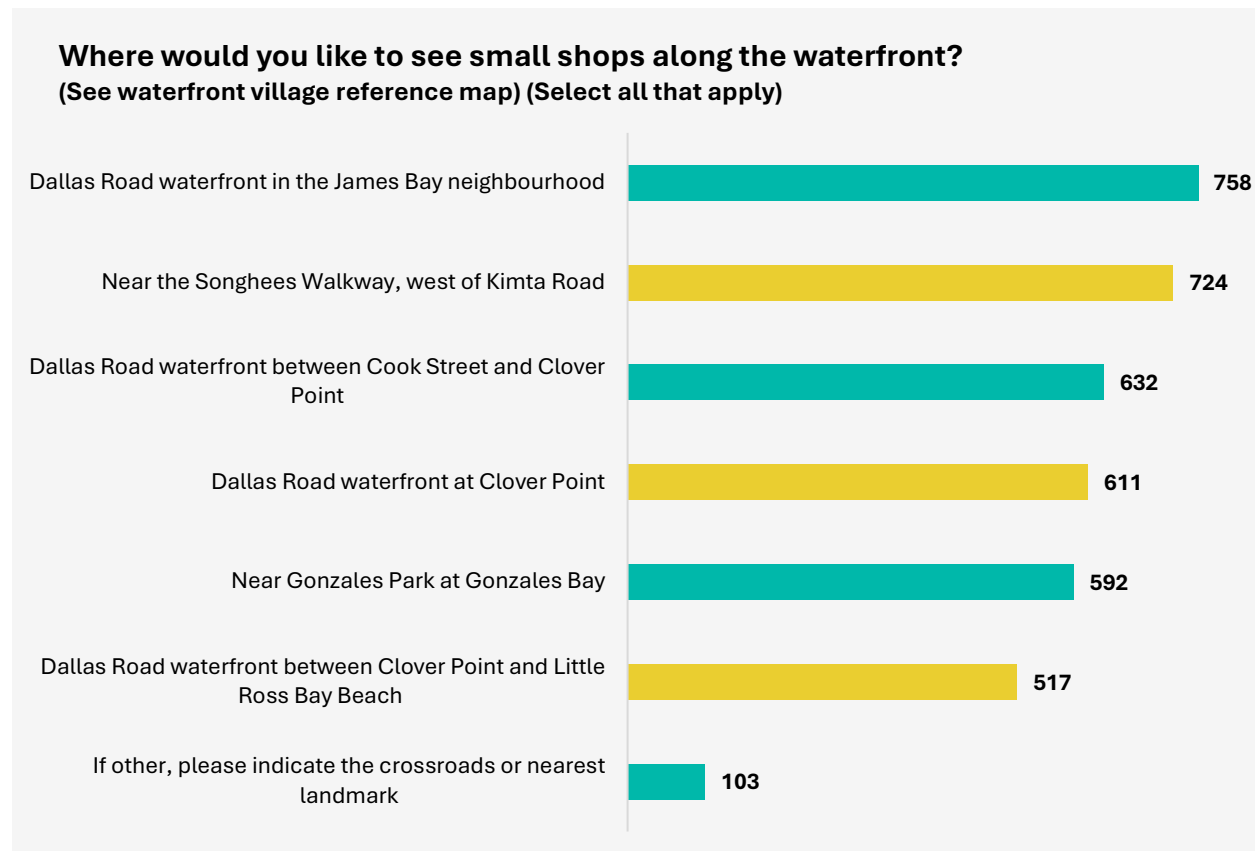
Six potential waterfront village locations were identified in the OCP engagement materials. They are shown on the map below and include:

- Near the Songhees Walkway, west of Kimta Road
- Dallas Road waterfront in James Bay
- Dallas Road waterfront between Cook Street and Clover Point
- Dallas Road waterfront at Clover Point
- Dallas Road waterfront between Clover Point and Little Ross Bay Beach
- Near Gonzales Park at Gonzales Bay





The graph below shows survey respondents' preferred locations for adding small shops along Victoria's waterfront based on the six options provided and the option to specify another location. Respondents could select multiple options.



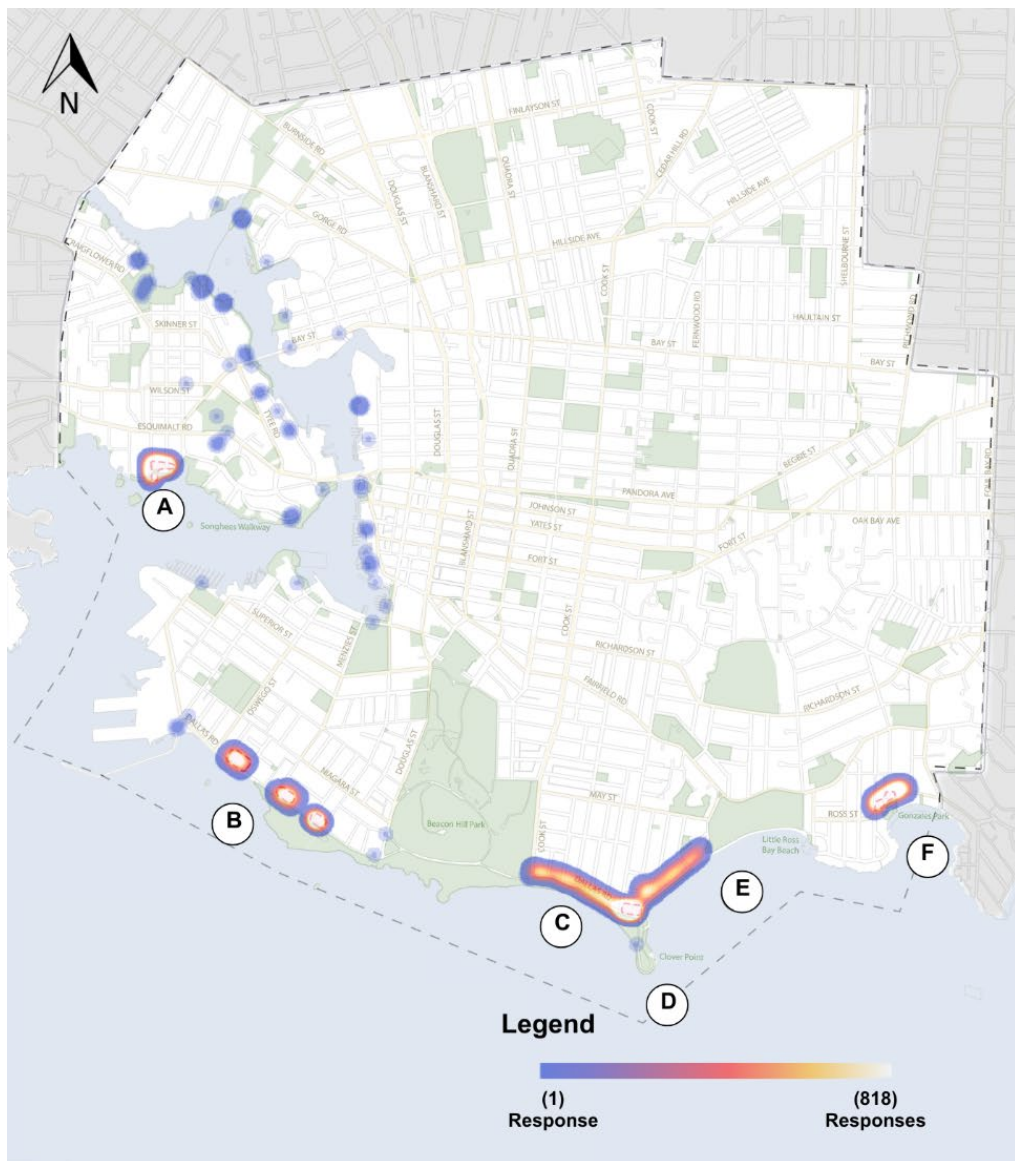
*65 per cent of survey respondents completed this question*

Based on the options provided, locations along Dallas Road west of Clover Point and near the Songhees Walkway were preferred for small shops along the waterfront. The responses to this question are presented on the map below, including alternative locations suggested by respondents.

Highest ranked selections, in order:

- The most popular location was “Dallas Road waterfront in the James Bay neighbourhood,” with 758 selections.
- “Near the Songhees Walkway, west of Kimta Road” was the second most popular among respondents, with 724 selections.

- 632 votes were registered for “Dallas Road waterfront between Cook Street and Clover Point,” followed closely by “Dallas Road waterfront at Clover Point” with 611 selections.
- 592 selections were registered for “Near Gonzales Park at Gonzales Bay,” while “Dallas Road waterfront between Clover Point and Little Ross Bay Beach” received 517 selections.
- 103 selections were registered for “if other, please indicate the crossroads or nearest landmark.”



## Building and Open Space Design

This section summarizes feedback on upholding and contributing to Victoria's unique character, designing buildings and urban spaces for people of all ages and abilities, planning infrastructure for a growing population, simplifying the zoning and approvals process and impacts on green spaces and public places.

### Development Guidelines

Participants provided feedback based on multiple opportunities to review key elements of and proposed updates to development permit area and heritage conservation area guidelines. Some comments emphasized the need for clear and consistent guidelines to ensure the city's Vision and planning principles are upheld. Various comments on this topic emphasized the importance of preserving Victoria's architectural heritage, including Victorian and Edwardian styles, which participants linked to the city's identity and tourism industry. Emphasis was also placed on maintaining a human-scale and aesthetically pleasing buildings that reflect the city's character, which was sometimes juxtaposed with "Vancouverish" glass towers and generic high-rise condos. Preserving and enhancing green spaces, natural element, and tree lined streets was mentioned as an important part of maintaining the city's charm and environmental health. Urban design strategies were encouraged that ensure public safety, accessibility for all ages and abilities, and readiness for mobility changes, such as the inclusion of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. The protection of culturally significant areas, such as Chinatown and Old Town was seen as crucial to the city's historical narrative, cultural diversity and even economic prosperity as it relates to tourism.

### Uphold and Contribute to the Unique Character of Victoria's Neighbourhoods

Many participants expressed concerns about the impacts of new high-density developments on Victoria's character and charm. Some have requested that new buildings complement the architectural heritage and uniqueness of the city's neighbourhoods, particularly in James Bay, Fairfield and in and around the Cook Street Village.

Some criticized the proposed placement of four- to six-storey buildings and called for buildings of that scale to be concentrated along transit corridors. Others expressed excitement about the potential changes and advocated for gradual, context-sensitive densification that harmonizes with existing architectures, focusing on townhouses and small-scale apartment buildings. Significant concerns about preserving heritage buildings and mature trees in these distinctive neighbourhoods were raised.

Some participants expressed concerns that many new building designs lack inspiration, character and charm. This included calls for a more aesthetically pleasing architecture that complements Victoria's historical context. Suggestions included using high-quality

materials, such as brick and wood, instead of cheaper alternatives and incorporating traditional design elements like decorative trim and varied rooflines. Some participants emphasized the importance of designing all sides of a building attractively, not just the front.

Additionally, concerns were raised about the visual impact of large, monolithic condominium blocks with retail spaces underneath, which some viewed as detrimental to the city's character. There were also calls for the use of eco-friendly building materials, energy-efficient building designs and for preserving biodiversity by maintaining green space and the urban tree canopy.

## **Design Accessibility into the Built Environment**

Participants emphasized the need for buildings and urban spaces to be designed for people of all ages and abilities. Accessibility was a central theme, with participants advocating for universal design standards in new buildings to accommodate people with disabilities.

Some participants also highlighted the need for retrofitting existing infrastructure for accessibility, such as providing more time for pedestrians to cross the street at crosswalks and constructing more curb ramps. Participants called for public spaces that promote wellbeing and encourage social interactions, such as well-lit, safe and clean areas with adequate seating and shade.

## **Infrastructure Resilience and Service Planning for a Growing Population**

Some participants expressed concerns about the capacity of Victoria's infrastructure to support the projected increase in population. Highlighted issues included pressure on emergency services, narrow streets that could become bottlenecks, inadequate transit options and strain on the healthcare, education and transportation systems.

A holistic and phased approach to densification was suggested, to ensure that infrastructure—such as water supply, sewage systems and road networks—are upgraded before or with new housing developments. Participants suggested concentrating new housing in areas with established infrastructure, like the Blanshard and Douglas corridors, where frequent and rapid transit service already exists. Safety concerns were raised about narrow streets facing traffic and parking challenges.

Additionally, some emphasized the importance of planning for future climate resilience through strategic infrastructure improvements. Recommendations included integrating rooftop solar panels, green roofs, rainwater catchment systems and natural ground covers to help reduce the urban heat island effect. Other recommendations concerned expanding emergency preparedness efforts, including more emergency supply stations and check-in services for seniors and vulnerable populations. Concerns about urban sprawl affecting

local wildlife were raised with suggestions for creating wildlife corridors and landscaping with native plants.

## **Zoning and a Simplified Approvals Process**

Some participants indicated that the City's permitting and regulatory processes can be challenging to navigate and cause frustration. Some describe the services as slow and inefficient, which has been seen as discouraging investment and slowing down beneficial development. As a result, some participants called for a more streamlined approval method, especially for smaller-scale projects.

Criticism was also directed at zoning regulations, with some participants calling for the City to simplify the rezoning requirements. Furthermore, some participants expressed widespread dissatisfaction with housing policies, suggesting the City strengthen inclusionary zoning policies, implement vacancy controls and adopt faster approval processes for affordable housing.

Participants emphasized the importance of transparency and genuine community engagement in housing and development decisions. They urged the City to communicate more clearly about its housing goals, zoning updates and plans while actively involving residents in shaping policies.

## **Enhanced Green Spaces and Public Places**

Some participants expressed concern about the loss of green space due to new construction and the environmental impacts of development. Many suggested that developers should be required to include useable green space in their projects, such as community gardens, rooftop terraces and tree-lined walkways. The importance of preserving mature trees and avoiding concrete-heavy landscapes was emphasized.

Enhancing public areas was also a key focus for some participants. Suggestions included improving bus stops by adding benches and planting shade trees along busy streets. There was a strong interest in creating urban living rooms or third spaces—places where people can relax and socialize for free—highlighting a desire for well-designed areas that foster social interaction.

## **An Active Waterfront**

This section summarizes feedback on Victoria's harbour and the waterfront, highlighting the balance between economic activity, public enjoyment and environmental stewardship of the harbour.

## **A Waterfront that is Accessible for Everyone**

Throughout the engagement, participants discussed a wide range of harbour uses. Some participants highlighted the harbour's role as a centre for economic activity and goods movement and the need to balance industrial operations with public enjoyment and safety, particularly in congested areas.

There were calls to support commercial vehicle access to the harbour and to retain and expand existing industrial areas. Participants noted that access to commercial and emergency vehicles is essential for maintaining the harbour's functionality. The importance of integrated mobility planning to ensure safety for cyclists, pedestrians and vehicle users was also emphasized.

Some participants expressed a desire for enhanced public access to the waterfront, including completing the David Foster Harbour Pathway and other ways to highlight Victoria's connection to the coastline and ocean. Participants called for increased access to these spaces for recreational activities such as kayaking, paddle boarding and general leisure.

## **A Healthy Marine Harbour Environment**

Participants highlighted several environmental concerns, particularly regarding the impacts of industrial and cruise activities. They emphasized the need for improved ecological protection measures to sustain the harbour's natural environment and to reduce noise and pollution from industrial operations. Some participants requested an assessment of the cumulative impacts on the waterway to ensure the protection and health of sensitive habitats. They also want to prioritize nature-based solutions and Green Shores principles along the shorelines to support climate resilience and biodiversity.

## **Diverse Economic Activity on the Waterfront**

Participants suggested that facilitating a mix of uses in the harbour would enhance economic vitality. Specific suggestions included designating some waterfront areas for mixed-use, including retail, restaurants and harbour-specific experiences. Participants emphasized the importance of the Lekwungen Nations' presence in the harbour and recognized the need for the economic opportunities available to First Nations.

## **Climate Adaptation Through Strategic Governance**

Improved coordination and strategic partnerships between government and industry were suggested to address the challenges related to climate change and sea level rise. Participants highlighted the importance of ongoing commitment to climate change through City governance and organizational practices. It was suggested that dedicated staff could help guide policy and support long-term planning.



## **Mobility**

This section captures feedback from public engagement events and the survey. It includes sections on road safety, education, transit, accessibility and parking. The responses reflect a range of ideas about different modes of transportation.

### **Road Safety and Active Transportation**

Participants' feedback largely supported expanding protected cycling infrastructure, although some opposition was also heard. Many participants raised concerns about cycling safety, particularly at intersections, with multiple calls to improve separation between cars and bikes to reduce crashes. Converting existing painted bike lanes into fully separated paths was suggested to enhance safety for all road users. Some suggested introducing car-free streets to prioritize pedestrians and active mobility options. Many participants stressed that the bike network should be designed to accommodate people of all ages and abilities, including children, those who use mobility devices and users of devices such as e-bikes and electric scooters. Some individuals want to ensure communication between jurisdictions, particularly regarding extending bike lanes on streets that reach neighbouring municipalities.

### **Education, Awareness and Public Safety**

Participants raised concerns about the need for public education on new biking infrastructure, especially around bike lanes and shared road spaces. Several highlighted the confusion accompanying new lanes and traffic features, suggesting educational outreach could improve understanding and safety.

Participants also raised concerns about public safety in public spaces, especially parks and transit areas. They called for effective policing and more straightforward guidelines to ensure these areas are welcoming and secure for all residents and commuters.

### **Public Transit and Accessibility**

Improvements to public transit were frequently mentioned, with participants requesting a more reliable, efficient and comprehensive transit system both locally and inter-regionally. Routes that serve high-demand locations—such as Cook Street Village and downtown—more effectively and frequently are desired.

Many participants highlighted the need for greater accessibility in the built environment. Suggestions included longer walk intervals at crosswalks to accommodate those with mobility challenges, accessible public transit stops with more covered shelters and fully accessible public spaces within the community. Participants also called for lighting improvements along local traffic calming areas within residential neighbourhoods.

## Parking

Many participants expressed concern about reduced on-street motor vehicle parking availability due to bike lanes and other development projects. Some participants suggested retaining or increasing motor vehicle parking in high-density and high-traffic areas (such as downtown) to accommodate residents, visitors and business needs. Parking zones outside the downtown with shuttle access in and out of the city core and dedicated car-share and bike parking in new housing developments to reduce private vehicle parking requirements and enhance transportation options for new residents was also suggested. Some participants suggested reducing the parking requirement of new buildings, which might lower housing and business development costs and be used for other purposes like green space, additional housing or amenities like bike parking. Some participants suggested additional bike parking throughout the city, including secure bike lockers and e-bike charging stations, which would help to support growing e-bike usage.

## Sustainable Transportation Choices

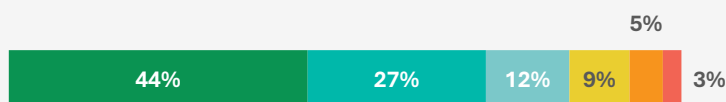
The following graph shows participants' priorities for how the City and its partners can support them in choosing more sustainable transportation choices, more often.

## How can the City and its partners support you in choosing more sustainable transportation choices, more often?

(Rank all that apply with 1 being your top priority, 6 being your lowest priority)

1 2 3 4 5 6

Improvements to public transit (more frequent, reliable and diverse services)



Improvements to the walk, bike and roll networks



More housing and employment options in or near mobility hubs



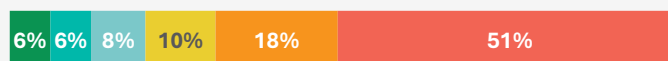
Improved comfort and physical accessibility in public spaces (more shade, seating and public washrooms, accessible parking and accessible bus stops)



More shared mobility options (car share, ride share, bike share)



Improved access and support for electric vehicles



*96 per cent of survey respondents completed this question*

Overall, the responses indicate a strong preference for improvements to public transit, walk and roll networks and accessible public spaces, with less emphasis on shared mobility options and electric vehicle support.

- “Improvements to public transit (more frequent, reliable and diverse services)” was ranked as the highest priority overall. Participants also most frequently selected it as their top priority, with 44 per cent ranking it as their first choice.
- “Improvements to the walk, bike and roll networks” and “More housing and employment options in or near mobility hubs” also received strong support overall with 22 per cent and 21 per cent ranking those as their top priorities, respectively.

- Ranking for “improved comfort and physical accessibility in public spaces (more shade, seating and public washrooms, accessible parking and bus stops)” was distributed across all ranking levels, suggesting mixed opinions on its priority.
- Results for “more shared mobility options (car share, ride share, bike share)” are skewed towards the lower end, with fewer top rankings and most appearances at rank five, suggesting it was seen as less important by respondents.
- “Improved access and support for electric vehicles” is the least favoured choice with 51 per cent of respondents placing this option as their lowest priority.

## Linear Parkways

This section captures feedback on the location and design of linear parkways.

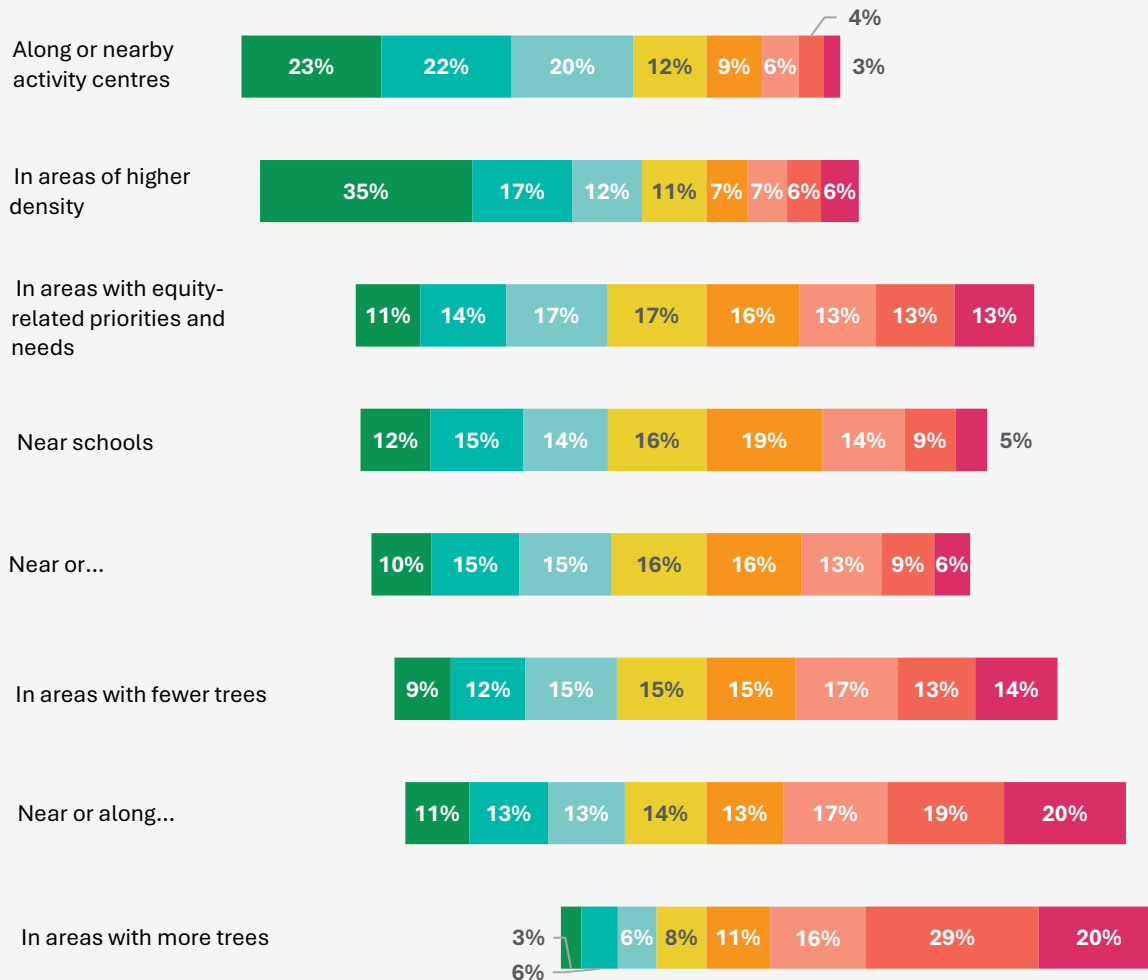
### Where to Locate Linear Parkway

The graph below shows how survey respondents ranked their priorities for where new linear parkways should be prioritized.

## Where should new linear parkways be prioritized?

(Rank all that apply with 1 being your top priority, 8 being your lowest priority)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8



*93.45 per cent of survey respondents completed this question*

### Key insights on where to locate new linear parkways:

- “Along or nearby activity centers (like villages, community centers and commercial streets)” was the top priority overall
- “In areas of higher density” was selected as the first choice for 35 per cent of participants
- The lowest priorities were “near or along creeks or streams” and “in areas with more trees.”

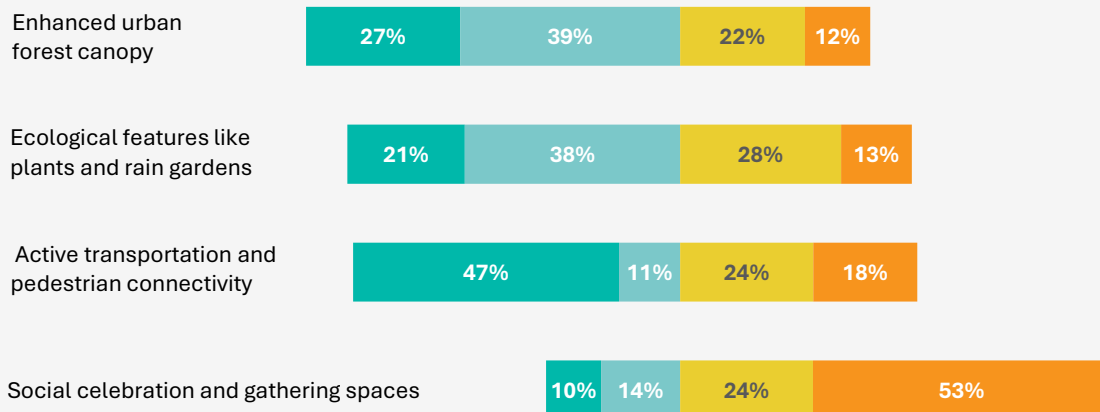
## Features of Linear Parkways

The graph below shows how survey respondents ranked their priorities for potential features of linear parkways.

### What features of linear parkways matter to you most?

(Rank all that apply with 1 being your top priority, 4 being your lowest priority)

■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4



*94 per cent of survey respondents completed this question*

Almost half of respondents (47 per cent) identified “active transportation and pedestrian connectivity” as their top priority among the four options. However, considering the average rankings of all respondents, “enhanced urban forest canopy” and “ecological features like plants and rain gardens” emerged as higher priorities overall. In contrast, “social celebration and gathering spaces” was identified as the lowest priority for more than half of respondents (53 per cent) and was the lowest priority for respondents overall.

- “Enhanced urban forest canopy” emerged as the top priority for respondents, with two-thirds of respondents (66 per cent) selecting it as their first or second choice.
- “Ecological features like plants and rain gardens” ranked second overall, with 59 per cent of respondents selecting it as either their first or second priority and 28 per cent ranking it as their third priority.
- “Active transportation and pedestrian connectivity” was most often selected by respondents as their first priority (47 per cent), but only 11 per cent ranked it as their second priority.
- “Social celebration and gathering spaces” was the option least prioritized by respondents, with only 24 per cent selecting it as either their first or second priority.



## Ecological Benefits

Support for linear parkways highlighted potential environmental and ecological benefits and a positive impact on community health and wellness. Some participants suggested planting pollinator plants and food-bearing trees to create wildlife habitat and enhance green corridors for walking and cycling. Some participants recommended incorporating native, drought-tolerant plants to reduce maintenance costs and to integrate Indigenous names and history into these spaces.

## Effects on Mobility

Concerns were raised about the implications of linear parkways on traffic and access, especially in residential areas such as James Bay. Some participants expressed issues related to road closures, particularly regarding vehicle access and emergency services while others encouraged car-free or car-light streets.

## Sensitivity to Context

Several participants emphasized that linear parkways should be planned considering the specific context of different areas rather than applying a uniform approach across the city. Some participants consider balancing pedestrian use and vehicle access essential.

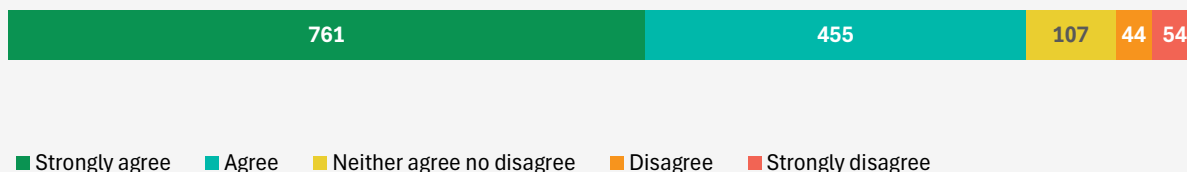
## Parks and Open Spaces

This section captures feedback on parks and open spaces, the connection between community safety, health and well-being and balancing green spaces with development.

Survey respondents were asked to rate their agreement with statements regarding how well Victoria's parks and open spaces support community health and well-being. Over 98 per cent of survey respondents completed this question.

- More than 85 per cent of respondents either strongly agree or agree that Victoria's parks and open spaces support community health and well-being.
- Less than 8 per cent of respondents reported that they neither agree nor disagree with the statement and less than 7 per cent of respondents reported that they either disagree or strongly disagree.

## Victoria's parks and open spaces support community health and well-being.



98.14 per cent of survey respondents completed this question

### Maintaining and Enhancing Existing Green Space

Participants strongly support maintaining and enhancing Victoria's parks and green spaces, emphasizing their importance in contributing to environmental sustainability and community wellbeing. There was a call for green spaces to be more inclusive and accessible, particularly in higher-density areas. Some participants suggested focusing on gardens for enjoyment and shared food-growing spaces to help address food security.

### Balancing Green Space Expansion with New Development

Participants highlighted the need for a range of park features including playgrounds, dog parks and public seating and space for more natural features like trees and green space. Many suggested increasing the need for well-designed, safe places to gather in public for community members to enjoy themselves alone or with friends and family. Many participants suggested planting more pollinator-friendly and drought-tolerant plants and protecting the mature tree canopy to improve resilience to climate change.

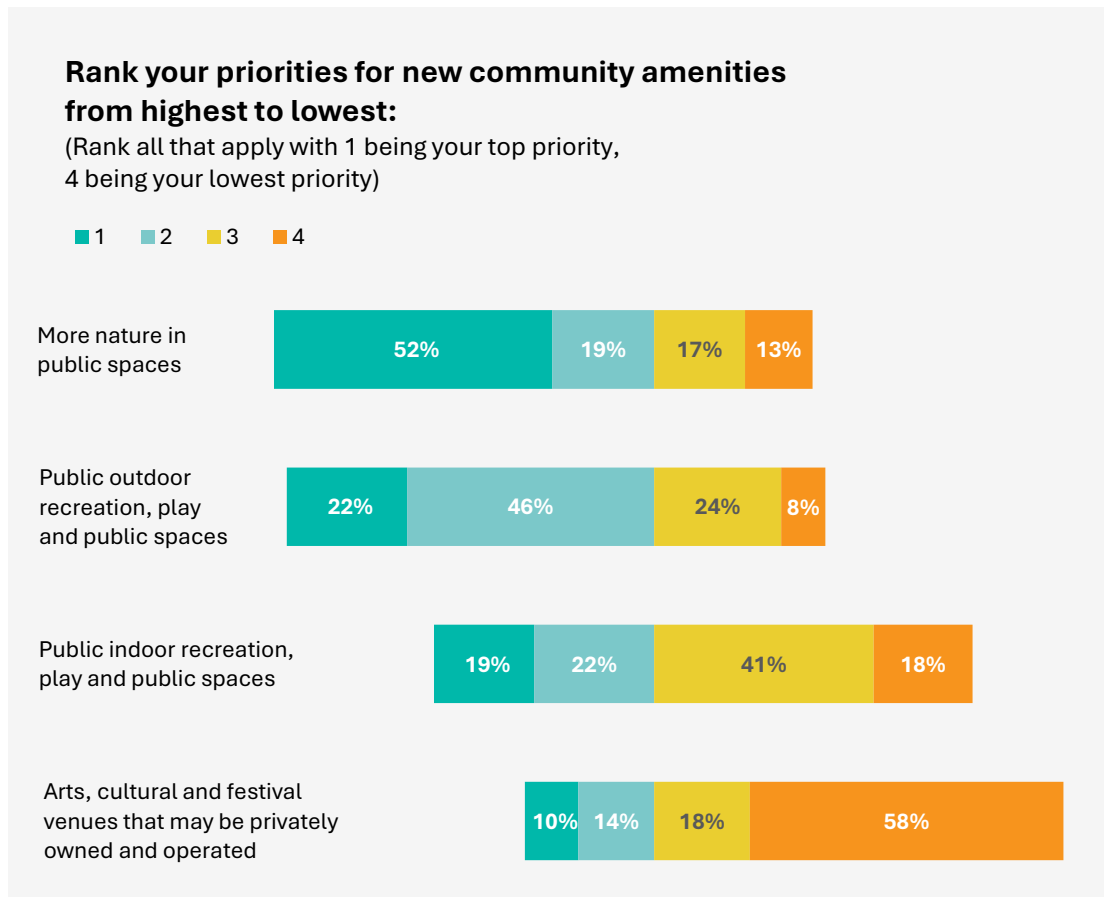
### Public Safety in Parks

Many participants mentioned they are afraid to take their children to parks and public spaces around the city due to ongoing public safety concerns related to the toxic drug crisis. Concerns were also raised about the impact this crisis has on the safety of unhoused populations, with some participants urging the City to develop a more permanent solution that addresses the effects on public parks. Some participants recommended creating new parks among or between mid-rise residential buildings to provide safe places for children to play close to home, as families are seen moving away from downtown for better access to parks and green spaces.

## Public Facilities and Amenities

This section captures feedback on indoor and outdoor community spaces and amenities.

The graph below shows how survey respondents ranked their priorities among the provided options for new community amenities.



*96 per cent of survey respondents completed this question*

### Key insights:

- “More nature in public spaces (like trees on streets or rain gardens in parks)” was the top priority overall and 52 per cent of respondents ranked it as their first choice.
- “Public outdoor recreation, play and social spaces (like multi-use parks and public plazas)” was a close second overall, with 22 per cent of respondents ranking it as their first choice and 46 per cent as their second choice.

- “Public indoor recreation, play and social spaces (like recreation and community centres)” ranked third overall, with 19 per cent of respondents ranking it as their first choice and 41 per cent as their third choice.
- “Arts, cultural and festival venues that may be privately owned and operated” was ranked as the lowest priority overall, with 58 per cent of respondents ranking it last.

## Supporting More Community Placemaking

Participants highlighted the need for social spaces such as plazas, village parks, outdoor gathering areas and community hubs that support family-friendly housing and transit corridors. Features like park benches, shaded walking paths, a mature tree canopy, public art and culture initiatives, such as art installations and musical performances were emphasized as essential for fostering social interaction and improving walkability.

Participants also advocated for increasing greenery in public spaces to ensure these places remain welcoming and pleasant. They suggested repurposing and increasing access to public spaces, including Royal Athletic Park and parking lots near the Inner Harbour. Additionally, there was a call for more inclusive and senior-friendly public places, youth-oriented parks in high-density neighbourhoods and improved waterfront access for recreational activities.

Public facilities were another significant focus, with participants highlighting the need for expanded amenities to accommodate the growing population. This included constructing new schools, upgrading existing facilities like Crystal Pool and Fitness Centre, increasing the number of libraries and building a multi-purpose community centre downtown.

Sustainability emerged as a critical theme, with participants urging eco-friendly materials in new infrastructure projects. Suggestions included a new central library building integrated with arts facilities that meet green building standards. There was also an emphasis on the need for public parking, bike infrastructure and public washrooms to make public spaces accessible to everyone.

## Indoor Community Spaces

Survey respondents were asked to rate their agreement with statements regarding how well Victoria’s indoor community spaces (like recreation and community centres) support community health and well-being.

### Victoria's public indoor community spaces (like recreation and community centres) support community health and well-being.



■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree

*98 per cent of survey respondents completed this question*

- 85 per cent of respondents reported that they either strongly agree or agree with “Victoria's public indoor community spaces (like recreation and community centers) support health and well-being’.
- More than 15 per cent of respondents reported they neither agree nor disagree with the statement.
- Significantly fewer respondents, about 10 per cent, reported that they disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

## Heritage, Culture and Identity

This section captures feedback on preserving Victoria's unique architectural heritage and cultural identity. Feedback highlights architectural preservation, historic buildings in neighbourhoods, heritage tourism and the enhancement of Victoria's local arts and cultural scene.

### Architectural Preservation

Participants strongly supported preserving Victoria's architectural heritage, emphasizing the importance of protecting and maintaining historical buildings and heritage homes. Concerns include the potential loss of Victoria's character due to modern developments, especially taller buildings, which some participants said overshadow the city's unique historical charm. There was a clear call to preserve old homes, historic neighbourhoods and the architectural identity that draws both residents and tourists to Victoria.

Some participants noted that modern urban planning often prioritizes new development over historic preservation and some stressed the need for a planning framework that better respects and maintains the city's character. Suggestions included implementing policies

that limit building heights in certain areas, preserving neighbourhood character and integrating heritage values into placemaking initiatives.

## **Community and Cultural Identity**

Participants highlighted the rich and diverse narratives shaping Victoria's identity, advocating for recognizing intangible heritage and the tangible heritage elements that have been more widely recognized historically. This included a desire expressed by some participants to expand the definition of heritage beyond architecture to encompass cultural influences and contributions from various communities. An inclusive approach to heritage preservation was emphasized, with suggestions to uphold Chinatown's National Heritage Site designation, expand upon Heritage Conservation Areas and better reflect Victoria's multicultural history. This would include emphasizing First Nations and Indigenous Peoples' stories, Chinatown's intangible heritage and contributions from the Jewish community, early settlers and others. Many also acknowledged Victoria's maritime and military history as integral to the city's overall identity.

## **Heritage Tourism**

Several comments highlighted the economic importance of heritage preservation, noting that Victoria's unique historical buildings and aesthetics are significant draws for tourists. Concerns were raised about the potential impact of replacing heritage structures with modern developments, which could diminish the city's tourism appeal and economic strength. Participants emphasized enhancing public spaces to celebrate heritage values through initiatives such as heritage walking tours, interpretive signage and storytelling elements. These efforts could deepen engagement with Victoria's history and foster community pride. Many emphasized that heritage buildings and their unique surrounding neighbourhoods are crucial in distinguishing Victoria from other cities.

## **Enhancing Our Local Arts and Culture Scene**

Participants strongly supported preserving and expanding Victoria's arts and cultural spaces, specifically focusing on areas like Old Town and Chinatown. They called for more Indigenous representation in public art and greater recognition of the Songhees Nation and the Xwsepsum Nation. Suggestions included more diverse, community-driven festivals focusing on the local food scene and enhancements like public art, murals and creative bike racks. Many also emphasized the need for improved nightlife, live music venues and support for grassroots art spaces that are facing rising costs and pressures from urban development.



## Celebrating Victoria's Cultural Identity

One-third (33 per cent) of survey respondents offered insights on Question 20: "What other aspects of Victoria's identity would you like to celebrate?"

Many respondents spoke positively about the city's small-town charm and friendly atmosphere, appreciating the relaxed lifestyle and strong community bonds. There was a notable expression of pride in Victoria's inclusive and progressive environment, with a clear emphasis on safe spaces for the LGBTQIA2S+ community. Participants highlighted the importance of a vibrant cultural scene, including local music, art and culinary offerings and expressed a desire for more community spaces and festivals to support these activities.

Community-building efforts were also commended, with critical mention of volunteerism and collaborative initiatives strengthening connections with residents. Access to the city's flower gardens, green corridors and parks was also acknowledged as a significant point of pride. Survey respondents celebrated Victoria's reputation as a pet-friendly city and advocated for enhanced amenities for dog owners and the upkeep of spaces for animals.

Architectural integrity and urban character emerged as focal points in the feedback, with many calls to protect Victoria's heritage buildings and traditional neighbourhoods. There was a strong emphasis on the importance of thoughtful urban planning that respects neighbourhoods' existing character in the face of new developments. While some participants expressed support for modern and innovative architecture that harmonizes with the landscape, others favoured the preservation of a distinct historic aesthetic.

Concerns were raised regarding the potential impact of proposed increases in building height and size (four- to six-storeys) in neighbourhoods, highlighting the need to safeguard residential communities to accommodate a diverse range of residents, including multi-family units, single-parent households and senior living. Affordability in terms of both renting and purchasing property was also a concern.

Accessibility for individuals with disabilities, those experiencing homelessness and equitable access to public spaces and services were underscored as essential issues. Respondents desired to celebrate the city's rich cultural history, noting its multicultural and maritime influences. Suggestions included enhancing the visibility of First Nations and Indigenous culture through native plant landscaping and educational signage.

Concerns regarding tourism's effects were voiced, advocating for a balanced approach that prioritizes the well-being of residents, supports the local economy and protects natural ecosystems. Despite operational challenges, the resilience of the local economy and small businesses was acknowledged.

Many respondents identified Victoria's natural beauty, favourable weather and coastal lifestyle as significant elements of its identity. They underscored the need to preserve and promote access to nature and outdoor recreational opportunities. Recommendations

focused on creating community hubs through new community centres, sports facilities and gathering spaces that cater to people of all ages, including senior-friendly areas and social spaces that can help strengthen neighbourhood connections and improve residents' quality of life. Participants called for improvements to local infrastructure, emphasizing the development of artificial turf fields, year-round public indoor spaces and the maintenance of city parks. Walking, running, cycling and various outdoor water sports, including paddleboarding, diving, kayaking and sailing, were recognized as essential components of Victoria's coastal culture.

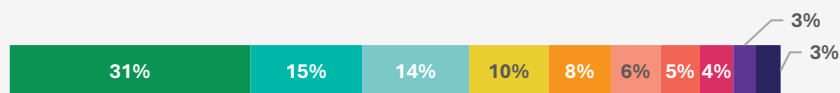
The graph below presents the ranking of various elements contributing to Victoria's identity, as prioritized by survey respondents.

## What elements of Victoria's identity do you value and want to celebrate most?

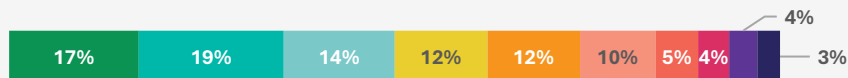
(Rank all that apply with 1 being your top priority, 10 being your lowest priority)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

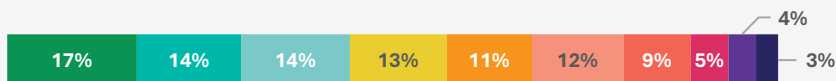
Climate-friendly living  
(walking, biking, food  
growing, low-carbon  
lifestyles)



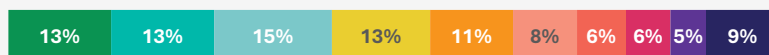
Ecological features  
and connectivity



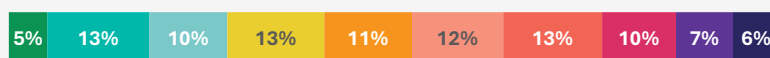
Coastal features and  
activities including tourism



Indigenous identity, cultural  
expression and presence



Diversity and inclusion  
(welcoming and celebrating  
diverse community groups)



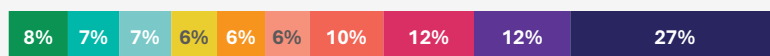
Arts and innovation



Multicultural identity  
stories and presence



Early settlement and old town  
stories and presence



Business and economic hub



Capital city



96 per cent of survey respondents completed this question

Overall, the graph reflects diverse perspectives on what elements are most valued within Victoria's community identity.

- “Climate-friendly living” has the highest concentration of top priority rankings, with 31 per cent of respondents selecting it as their primary focus.
- “Ecological features and connectivity” and “Coastal features and activities (including tourism)” also show significant interest, with substantial percentages in the higher priority categories.
- “Indigenous identity, cultural expression, presence” and “Diversity and inclusion” are spread across the priority spectrum, reflecting a balanced level of interest.
- Categories such as “Business and Economic Hub” and “Capital City” ranked lower.

## Economy

This section captures feedback on economic challenges, rising costs for community members and business owners, and tourism's impacts.

### Local Business and Tourism

Participants highlighted economic challenges facing Victoria's local businesses, with rising costs and reduced revenues leading to closures. Concerns about homelessness, visible drug use and safety in downtown areas were raised as impacting both businesses and tourism.

Additionally, participants mentioned that some rising costs for insurance, security and cleaning due to homelessness have been challenging for businesses in and near downtown. Retaining staff has been a challenge due to safety concerns as well. Some suggested solutions to support these businesses included targeted incentives, tax relief and grants to lower operational costs. Additionally, there were calls for increased funding for ongoing maintenance to address concerns related to vandalism and graffiti.

Participants called for a balanced, sustainable approach to tourism that prioritizes environmental care and residents' quality of life. While tourism, especially from cruise ships, brings economic benefits, participants raised concerns about pollution, overcrowding and strain on local infrastructure. Some advocated for reducing cruise ship traffic due to its impact on the livability of James Bay residents. In contrast, others agreed that the tourism industry was necessary for Victoria's economy and that there was a need for more hotel capacity to accommodate the growing visitor numbers. Participants also highlighted the need for better transit connections to critical areas, like the airport, to support tourism and local businesses.

## Greater Commercial Amenities and Services

Rising food prices and limited access to affordable groceries were highlighted as vital economic challenges. Some participants want more neighbourhood retail spaces, such as restaurants and daycares and more opportunities for recreational activities for youth and young adults.

Participants expressed concerns about the scarcity of jobs that meet Victoria's high living costs. Some suggested developing more office spaces to encourage higher-paying opportunities and incentivizing corporations to set up head offices in Victoria. Some called for increased support for tech sector entry through networking and industry-specific co-working spaces. Participants advocated for more support for young entrepreneurs through financial incentives, promotional opportunities and networking events.

## A Climate-Resilient City

This section captures feedback on climate actions and community programs that enhance natural assets and green infrastructure, climate-friendly building materials, trees and the urban forest, food security and urban agriculture.

The graph below illustrates the ranking of climate actions deemed most important by participants.

**Victoria should invest in programs that help community members make decisions and take actions to reduce emissions and adapt to a changing climate.**



■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree

*98 per cent of survey respondents completed this question*

## Key insights:

- More than 77 per cent of respondents either strongly agree or agree that Victoria should invest in programs that help community members make decisions and take actions to reduce emissions and adapt to a changing climate.
- 11 per cent of respondents stated they neither agree nor disagree.
- Another 11 per cent of respondents stated they either disagree or strongly disagree.

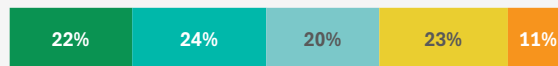
The graph below presents the ranking of the climate actions most important to the participants.

### What climate resilience actions are most important to you?

(Rank all that apply with 1 being your top priority, 5 being your lowest priority)

■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5

Increase and initiate coastal adaptation projects that are responsive to projected sea level rise, species at risk concerns and erosion concerns



Increase requirements for permeable space and green space in new developments, including rain gardens, bioswales and rooftop gardens



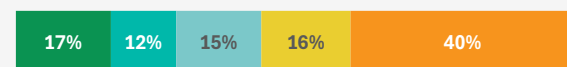
Increase planting of native and drought tolerant species



Increase efforts to daylight and restore natural waterways such as Bowker and Cecelia Creeks



Work with other orders of government on areas with shared jurisdiction



*94 per cent of survey respondents completed this question*



## Key insights:

- “Increase and initiate coastal adaptation projects that are responsive to projected sea level rise, species at risk concerns and erosion concerns” was the top priority overall, with 22 per cent ranking it as their first priority, 24 per cent as their second and only 11 per cent as their lowest priority among the options provided.
- “Increase requirements for permeable space and green space in new developments, including rain gardens, bioswales and rooftop gardens” was ranked as the top priority by the greatest number of respondents, at 36 per cent and it emerged as the second highest priority for respondents overall.
- “Increasing efforts to daylight and restore natural waterways such as Bowker and Cecilia Creeks” was the second lowest priority overall.
- “Work with other orders of government on areas with shared jurisdiction” was the lowest priority among respondents, with 40 per cent ranking it as their lowest priority.

## Enhancing Natural Assets and Green Infrastructure

Preservation and enhancement of green spaces emerged as key priorities. Participants stressed the importance of native plant restoration, protecting unique ecosystems like the Garry Oak meadows and riparian areas and using climate-adapted, non-grass landscaping to support biodiversity. Some participants want the City to develop a natural asset management plan and prioritize natural assets, including daylighting creeks like Bowker Creek and Cecilia Creek.

Some participants expressed concern about the impact that population growth may have on access to potable water and mentioned that the City should draw lessons from cities that have experienced water crises. Some called for new and expanded approaches to stormwater management, including more green infrastructure such as permeable surfaces, rain gardens and bioswales and incorporating drought-tolerant, water-efficient plantings to ensure long-term water security.

## Climate-friendly New Building Construction

Many participants emphasized the need for a forward-thinking approach that prioritizes climate-responsive design. Sustainability in housing development is a recurring theme, with calls for green infrastructure, climate-resilient building designs and energy-efficient materials. Some participants voiced concerns about the environmental impacts of demolishing old buildings for new, potentially short-lived structures. Suggestions included hiring specialized consultants for climate and health assessments and integrating climate considerations into City planning policy. There was also strong support for measures such as mandating solar panels on buildings, adopting renewable energy solutions like heat

pumps, green rooftops, natural cooling solutions like window covering and implementing incentives to reduce energy consumption and promote sustainability.

The graph below presents survey respondents' priorities regarding promoting climate-friendly new building construction.

## What do you think is most important to ensure climate friendly new building construction?

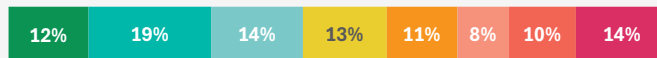
(Rank all that apply with 1 being your top priority, 8 being your lowest priority)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

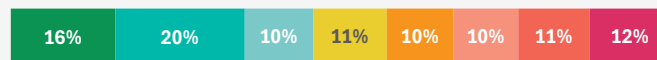
More homes in the same land area (building up, not out), which requires fewer construction materials and resources for each home built



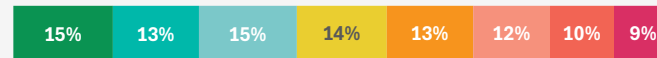
Adapt or expand existing buildings for reuse, including heritage buildings



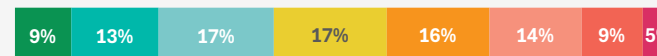
Support the transition to non-motor vehicles through strategies such as increased access to bike storage and car share and transit services



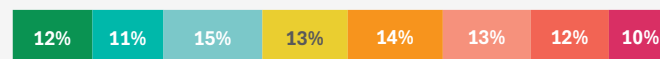
Require larger areas for green space and permeable surfaces



Incorporate and encourage climate-friendly innovation and new technologies



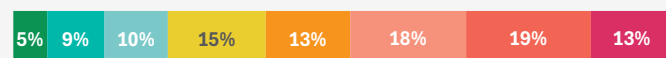
Re-use and recycle building materials



Require the use of electric systems for heating, cooling and hot water heating



Limit the use of carbon intense materials for construction, such as concrete



95 per cent of survey respondents completed this question

Overall, the average rank of the options provided was similar, particularly among the options that were ranked second, third, fourth and fifth overall.

- “More homes in the same land area (building up, not out), which requires fewer construction materials and resources for each home built” stands out as the top priority overall, with 33 per cent selecting it as their top priority.
- “Re-use and recycle building materials,” “require the use of electric systems for heating, cooling and hot water heating” and “limit the use of carbon intense materials for construction, such as concrete” were ranked lower overall, as third lowest, second lowest and lowest, respectively.

## **Trees and the Urban Forest**

Public feedback emphasized the importance of the urban forest. Some participants emphasized the importance of street trees in creating shade, reducing the ambient temperature at street level and contributing to a more comfortable public realm. More broadly, participants also highlighted the critical role of the urban forest in maintaining ecological health and climate resilience, particularly for mature trees in residential areas and parks. Some participants highlighted the need to promptly replace dead or diseased trees with similar sized trees to preserve canopy coverage.

Participants questioned whether current tree protection measures are effective, highlighting that trees are often perceived as obstacles to development. Feedback emphasized the importance of preserving mature trees, which provide more shade, support biodiversity and provide significant climate benefits compared to the younger trees by which they are ultimately replaced. Suggestions included stronger bylaws, greater enforcement and increasing the diversity of tree species and size at planting. Participants also called for developers to integrate existing trees into designs. Some participants stressed the importance of protecting the urban forest for its role in carbon sequestration, stormwater management and wildlife habitat.

## **Food Security and Urban Agriculture**

During engagement events, participants emphasized local agriculture’s vital role in enhancing Victoria’s food security. Urban growth pressures on supply chains have raised concerns about potential shortages during emergencies. To meet these challenges, they highlighted the need to expand spaces for food production, such as food forests, supportive agriculture infrastructure and community gardens, especially given the long waitlists for existing community garden plots. Some participants emphasized the need for all new residential buildings to include accessible green spaces for food-growing areas or pollinator gardens. Ensuring access to nutritious and culturally relevant foods was also a priority. There were calls for permanent farmers’ market infrastructure and for incorporating Indigenous land stewardship practices to promote sustainable development and advance reconciliation.

Local urban agriculture was praised for contributing to environmental health, with participants noting its role in fostering biodiversity, reducing emissions and creating climate-resilient landscapes. Suggestions from participants included implementing eco-friendly policies, such as on-site composting and pollinator-friendly spaces. Some participants mentioned providing financial support to agricultural users for soil remediation and water subsidies to encourage the long-term sustainability of urban agriculture initiatives. Further suggestions advocated for a city-wide biodiversity strategy and a food systems action plan to coordinate efforts across municipalities to integrate food systems into the planning process and to protect farmland.

In addition to addressing food security, urban agriculture was viewed as strengthening the local economy and promoting a farm-to-table culture. By supporting small-scale farming and creating community-based food production opportunities, some participants envision a future where urban agriculture provides accessible, locally sourced food, enhances local entrepreneurship and continues to build community identity.

APPENDIX A.

# Places and Spaces Engagement Summary

# Places and Spaces Planning

The 10-Year OCP Updates represents a fresh approach to planning the city's future. Moving away from individual neighbourhood plans, the new OCP will present a unified vision for the city that still honours the distinct character of each neighborhood and the insights of past neighbourhood plans.

In May 2024, as part of the OCP Update process, the City launched Places & Spaces, a focused engagement process to consult with three local areas that had outdated plans: Oaklands, James Bay and the Jubilee, Fort Street and Oak Bay Avenue area.

The ideas generated from the Places & Spaces Engagement will help to shape vibrant public spaces, unique urban designs, and enhanced mobility in these neighbourhoods, all within the context of the broader OCP vision.

This approach balances city-wide needs with the unique charm and character of each place.





# Places & Spaces at a Glance



**Phase 1:** May – June 2024

**Phase 2:** June – September 2024

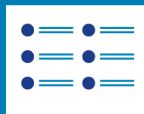
**Phase 3:** Ongoing

**299** Registered Workshop  
Participants



**2**  
Showcase Events  
at City Hall

**181**  
Online Survey  
Responses



**4**  
In-person  
Workshops

# Places and Spaces Engagement Process

## Phase 1: Ideas Workshops

In-person workshops were held in each local area, bringing together City staff, urban planners and Victoria residents to collaborate on ideas for the future of urban design, public spaces and community connections. These sessions were open to all residents and due to high interest, a second session was added for James Bay.

The workshops generated draft ideas and concepts, which were transformed into a set of Big Moves expressed in renderings and summarized for discussion and review in phase two.

## Phase 2: Ideas Showcases

In late June, draft concepts for each of the three local areas were shared with the public at two in-person showcase events held at City Hall. Residents were invited to review maps, renderings and ideas and provide feedback, guided by a one-page questionnaire. People that attended an Ideas Workshop received a personal invitation to the Ideas Showcases, but the events were open to the public and promoted extensively.

## Online Showcase and Survey

In August, the Ideas Showcase was made available online through Have Your Say, the City's online engagement page, where residents could explore the concepts and provide feedback via a guided survey.



*Residents, City staff and urban planners collaborated at the Places & Spaces workshops.*



*Residents were invited to review maps and renderings at the Ideas Showcases.*



*Staff led Places & Spaces workshops.*

# Places & Spaces Engagement Promotion

During this engagement process, the following methods were used to promote the opportunity for public input:

## City platforms

- The City's Have Your Say engagement platform: **[engage.victoria.ca/places-spaces](https://engage.victoria.ca/places-spaces)**
- City ENews: August edition
- Have You Heard Newsletter: Summer edition
- Social media posts: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter
- Email promotion directly to Ideas Workshop attendees

## Out in the community

- Posters and rack cards delivered across the three areas and directly to businesses, schools and neighbourhood associations
- Materials made specifically to reach youth and distributed at schools and via social media
- Pop-ups and festivals: Staff shared information about the OCP and Places & Spaces engagement at festivals and events around the city

## Sharing with neighbourhood associations

Direct outreach to neighbourhood associations to promote through their own platforms and distribution lists. Outreach to:

- Fairfield-Gonzales Community Association
- Fernwood Community and Arts Association
- Fernwood Neighbourhood Resource Group
- James Bay Neighbourhood Association
- Oaklands Community Association
- North Jubilee Neighbourhood Association
- South Jubilee Neighbourhood Association and
- Rockland Neighbourhood Association

## Sharing with key organizations and stakeholders

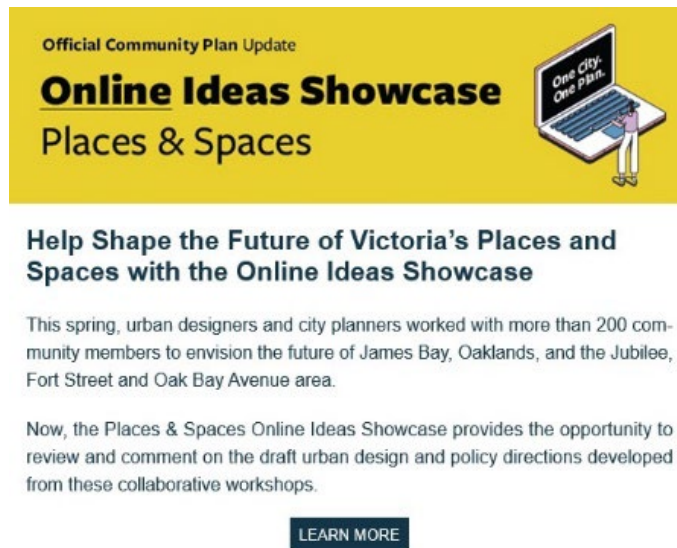
Email promotion directly to key organizations and stakeholders including:

- The Inter-Cultural Association of Victoria
- Alter Arts Society
- Walk On, Victoria
- Greater Victoria Placemaking Network
- Oaklands Rise Woonerf
- Sundance-Bank Elementary School Parent Advisory Council (PAC)
- Central Middle School PAC
- Oaklands Elementary School PAC
- Destination Greater Victoria
- James Bay Beacon (Community newspaper)
- South Park Community School PAC
- James Bay Community School Centre and PAC
- James Bay Community Project
- James Bay New Horizons (Non-profit activity centre)
- Direct promotion through neighbourhood Facebook groups



## Promotional Examples

*The visual used to promote the Places & Spaces workshops on social media.*



*A screenshot of the Places & Spaces promotion in the August edition of the City's E-Newsletter.*





## What We Heard: Oaklands

Located in the heart of Victoria, the Oaklands neighborhood is a vibrant and family-friendly community known for its parks, schools, and diverse housing options. This walkable area is a hub of activity, featuring the bustling Hillside Mall and the charming Haultain Corners village, which continues to grow as a local hotspot. Oaklands is also celebrated for its lively markets and dynamic programming at the community centre, making it a popular destination for locals and a welcoming neighborhood for young families.



## Oaklands Engagement Themes

**Connectivity:** Bike routes, traffic calming, pedestrian pathways and new connections.

**Green Space:** Planting trees and introducing a canopy to mitigate heat and enhance livability and gradually restore, naturalize or 'daylight' creeks.

**Villages and Town Centres:** Walkable amenity and transit-rich environments with enhanced public spaces, greenery and mixed-use buildings; traffic congestion.

**Community Amenities:** Community spaces and public spaces for community events such as night markets, art shows, antique markets and festivals as well as playground upgrades and picnic areas in parks.

## Oaklands Big Moves

The Ideas Workshop for Oaklands generated seven big moves, described below together with the feedback we heard.

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### Big Move #1: Village at Gosworth

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Envisioning a new village at Gosworth Road and Cedar Hill Road that:

- Maintains and enhances existing shops and services.
- Includes welcoming public space to support shops and services.
- Enables new homes, connections and enhanced green spaces.

#### What we heard:

##### Local Village

- Support for small, locally-owned businesses such as coffee shops, pubs, and convenience stores within walking distance for Oaklands residents.
- Suggestions to integrate small shops within residential areas.
- Desire for village design that reflects the area's history and character.
- Concerns that businesses might not be viable in this location.

##### Housing and Density

- Support for affordable housing that aligns with long-term community needs.
- Support for townhomes and family-oriented housing with three or more bedrooms.
- Housing density near amenities with thoughtful architectural design.
- Concerns that density will reduce available parking spaces.

##### Traffic and Transportation

- Desire to make streets safer, quieter and better for cyclists and pedestrians, with a suggestion to reduce the speed limit of Cedar Hill Road.
- Support for protected bike lanes on Cedar Hill Road.

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### Big Move #2: Improvements Along Hillside Avenue

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- Create a vibrant, welcoming street that better connects the neighbourhood.
- Connect the north and south with signaled intersections.
- Create pedestrian shortcuts through large blocks.

- Improve public transit services.
- Consider higher density development.

### **What we heard:**

#### Transportation and Road Design

- Support for making Hillside Avenue safer for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Suggestions to narrow lane widths, reduce vehicle lanes and add raised crosswalks.
- Support for dedicated bus lanes and transit signal priority; a technique to improve service and reduce delays for mass transit.
- Support for protected bike lanes to improve safety and encourage cycling.
- Calls for wider sidewalks, shaded streets and more pedestrian crossings.
- Calls to “make Hillside Avenue less of a highway.”

#### Connectivity and Planning

- Support for better connections to neighborhoods, especially north and south of Hillside Avenue, through greenways, pedestrian crossings and transit corridors.
- Preference for holistic road safety measures (e.g., narrowing roads) over temporary fixes like signalized crossings.

#### Urban Greening

- Support for expanded tree coverage.
- Interest in medium-term plans for daylighting Bowker Creek and incorporating art to highlight natural features.

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### **Big Move #3: Living Streets (Woonerfs)**

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Woonerf is Dutch for ‘living street’ and refers to a way of designing streets as people-friendly, open spaces.

- Design key streets as welcoming and safe spaces with large trees and slow traffic.
- Build on the existing Kings Road woonerf.

### **What we heard:**

#### Traffic Calming and Street Safety

- Support for traffic-calming measures like planters, pocket plazas and woonerfs.

- Calls for streets that are accessible to all users.
- Concerns about people being forced onto roads due to a lack of sidewalks.

#### Greening

- Support for planting trees and introducing more tree canopy.

#### Kings Road Woonerf

- Concerns that the Kings Road woonerf intersection creates safety hazards for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.
- Calls for better maintenance of the Kings Road woonerf to ensure the street is functional and safe.
- Interest in integrating environmental features like raingardens.

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### **Big Move #4: A Walkable Town Centre at Hillside Mall**

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- Reimagine Hillside Mall as a bustling mixed-use centre connected with the surrounding neighbourhoods and served by transit, walking and rolling connections.
- Establish a quality transit hub, linking key bus routes to other modes of travel.
- Develop residential and mixed-use buildings with a diversity of housing, shops, services and amenities.

#### **What we heard:**

##### Mixed-use Development

- Support for infilling parking lots and underutilized spaces with mixed-use, high-density developments that include housing, shops and community amenities.
- Desire for developments to integrate public spaces, green areas, and communal features that encourage gathering and social interaction.
- Calls for a mix of housing types, including townhomes, mid-rise buildings, affordable units, and family-friendly options with three or more bedrooms
- Mixed views on building heights, with some preferring high-rise developments and others favouring lower-density options.

##### Enhanced Transportation and Connectivity

- Support for a transit hub at Hillside Mall.
- Calls for improved transit access, including dedicated bus lanes and better transit integration with surrounding neighborhoods.

- Calls for protected bike lanes on Hillside Avenue and better connections to regional trail networks like the Bowker Creek Greenway.

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### **Big Move #5: Connections with Bowker Creek and Rock Bay Creek**

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- Celebrate and enhance local creeks hidden by urban development.
- Gradually restore, naturalize or ‘daylight’ Bowker Creek.
- Collaborate with the municipalities of Saanich and Oak Bay to create, enhance and connect green spaces along Bowker Creek.
- Seek opportunities to restore and celebrate the Rock Bay Creek watershed.

#### **What we heard:**

##### **Bowker Creek**

- Strong enthusiasm for daylighting Bowker Creek, with many respondents emphasizing its potential to beautify the area, provide recreational opportunities and act as a key feature of the neighborhood.
- Suggestions to use Bowker Creek as a greenway connecting community destinations and integrating it into walking and cycling routes.
- Calls to incentivize property owners and developers to support daylighting efforts.

##### **Environmental and Cultural Considerations**

- Support for enhancing Bowker Creek with flowing water, riparian habitats and opportunities for youth or community education.
- Suggestions to integrate Lekwungen art, design and interpretive panels for education on the cultural and ecological significance of the area.

##### **Integrating the Community**

- Support for housing that opens onto pedestrian routes rather than car streets.
- Suggestions to include elements such as vendors and small businesses, along with community amenities like lighting, public washrooms and water stations.

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### **Big Move #6: Enhanced community hub near Oaklands Green**

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- Connect and enhance schools, community centres and green spaces.
- Build on the community function of Oaklands School.

- Design slow, shared streets that accommodate school-aged children and can be used for community gathering.

### **What we heard:**

#### Community Hub

- Support for enhancing Oaklands School, Oaklands Park and community green spaces to serve as social and activity hubs.
- Support for initiatives such as pocket plazas, night markets and local retail to create vibrant, walkable neighborhoods.
- Mixed views on closing Belmont Avenue, with some supporting the closure for safety and connectivity benefits and others concerned about traffic impacts.

#### Safety and Accessibility around Schools

- Support for safer streets and improved walking and biking routes near schools.
- Concerns about traffic redirection from street closures potentially creating choke points and increased congestion elsewhere.

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### **Big Move #7: Enhanced Villages and New Community Corners**

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- Grow the village at Cedar Hill Road and Hillside Avenue with a focus on new shops, new housing, improved pedestrian comfort and access to transit.
- Expand public space at Haultain Corners and allow the gradual addition of shops or work-live opportunities.
- Enhance existing public space in the Bay Street Village.
- Support small ‘community corners’ retail throughout the neighbourhood.

### **What we heard:**

#### Preserving Neighbourhood Character

- Preference for lower-scale buildings (e.g. townhouses or maximum three storey buildings) and small-scale shops at Haultain Corners.
- Emphasis on retaining existing local businesses to preserve the area's identity.
- Support for mixed-use spaces with retail and housing by allowing small-scale commercial enterprises throughout neighborhoods.

#### Walkability

- Support for more vibrant, walkable community hubs like Haultain Corners.

- Desire for better walking infrastructure and safer, quieter streets, with some support for partial street closures to vehicles.

## Additional Feedback for Oaklands

In addition to giving feedback on the Big Moves, respondents were asked to provide suggestions for amenities and public spaces in Oaklands more generally.

**Question #1:** What are the top three amenities or improvements you would like to see in Oaklands?

### Top Three Ideas

1. **Green spaces and amenities:** Strong support for creating and improving parks, community gardens, and green spaces that are family-friendly, safe, and visually appealing.
2. **Density and mixed-use development:** Calls for restrained densification with a focus on family-oriented housing (for example, townhomes with three or more bedrooms), affordable housing, and mixed-use zoning to integrate small shops, cafes, and local-serving businesses within neighborhoods. Greater density was suggested, particularly along main roads and near hubs like Hillside Centre.
3. **Active transportation and traffic calming:** Strong support for improved bike networks, enhanced pedestrian infrastructure, and traffic calming measures. Suggestions include bus lanes on Hillside, woonerfs, and turning restrictions to reduce congestion and noise while increasing safety for all road users.

**Question #2:** What public space activities and experiences would you like to see more of in Oaklands?

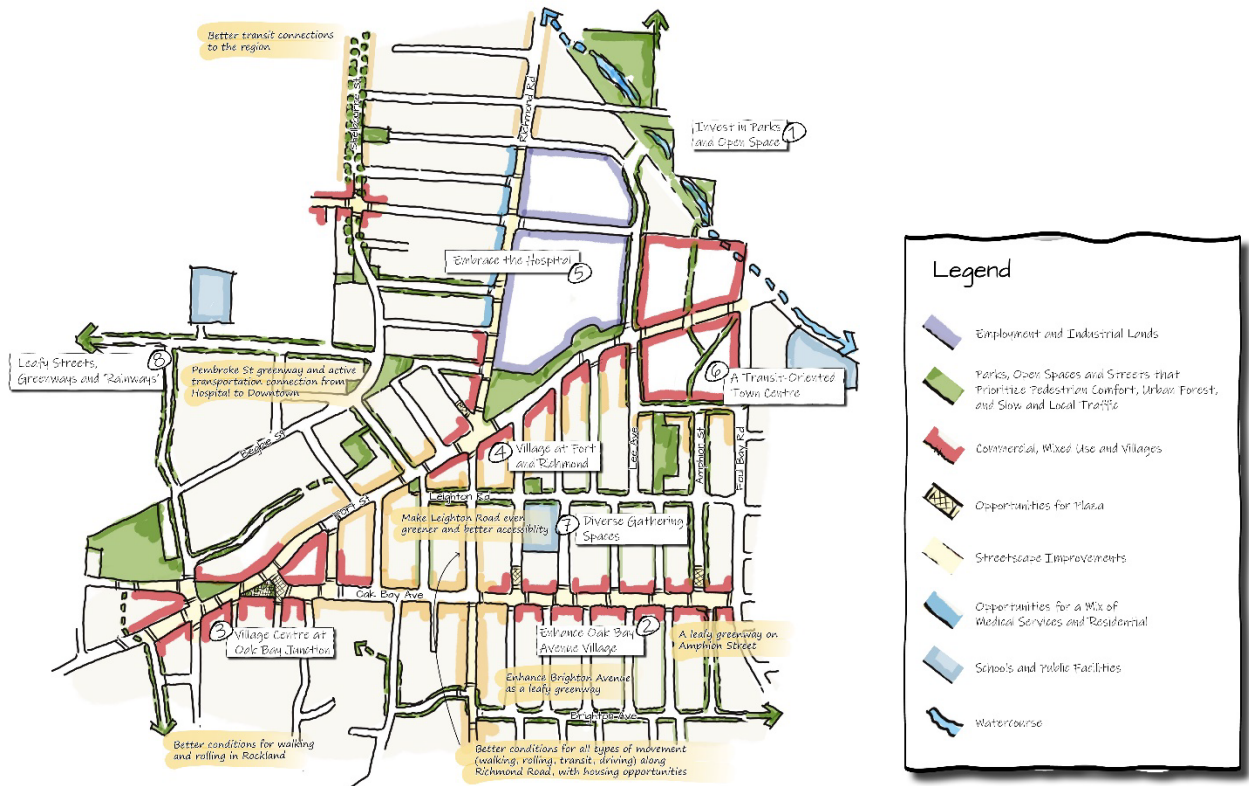
### Top responses:

- Protected bike lanes
- Safer pedestrian areas and crossings
- Community events such as night markets, art shows, antique markets and festivals
- New small businesses such as cafes, restaurants and garden centres
- Family-focused activities, playground upgrades and picnic areas in parks
- More day care spaces, community centres, community gardens, and/or a library
- Unique amenities such as an outdoor climbing wall or an outdoor pool
- Enhanced green space for gathering games and social interaction



## What We Heard: Jubilee, Fort Street and Oak Bay Avenue

Encompassing parts of Fernwood, Rockland, Jubilee and Gonzales neighborhoods, this vibrant area features a diverse mix of housing and bustling junctions that serve as key connections within Victoria. The Bowker Creek watershed weaves through open spaces and residential areas, offering opportunities to beautify the urban landscape. Anchoring the area is the Royal Jubilee Hospital, which draws workers and visitors from across the region.



### Jubilee, Fort St., Oak Bay Ave. Engagement Themes:

**Hospital Integration:** Integrating the hospital with the community through expanded medical facilities, housing for hospital workers and improved transit options.

**Parks:** Enhancing parks and open spaces; Bowker Creek and the hospital's green space.

**Community Amenities:** More amenities in parks, such as picnic shelters, splash parks, off-leash dog parks and spaces for youth.

**Town Centres:** Walkable, amenity and transit-rich environments with enhanced public spaces, greenery and mixed-use buildings balanced with concerns about traffic and congestion.

## Jubilee, Fort St. and Oak Bay Ave. Big Moves

The Ideas Workshop for Jubilee, Fort St. and Oak Bay Ave. generated eight big moves, described below together with the feedback we heard.

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### Big Move #1: Invest in parks and open space

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- Enhance parks, open spaces and natural areas including Bowker Creek.
- Protect, connect and enhance the hospital green space as a natural area with amenities.
- Explore opportunities to expand small parks such as Begbie Green and Fern Street.
- More activities in parks.
- New plazas and green spaces in villages and town centres.
- Connect neighbourhoods to new natural spaces along Bowker Creek (as envisioned in the Bowker Creek Blueprint).

#### What we heard:

##### Green Space and Parks

- Support for more green spaces and upgrades to existing parks.
- Appreciation for trees in urban spaces including boulevards, corridors and parks.
- Support for enclosed off-leash dog parks.
- Desire for park amenities to keep pace with residential growth.
- Suggestions to build more climate resilience with drought-tolerant plants, trees and permeable surfaces to sustainably manage rainwater.

##### Public Spaces and Plazas

- Desire for accessible seating and weatherproof amenities like shelters and picnic areas in parks and plazas.
- Support for spaces that foster social interaction such as dog parks, food trucks and public seating.

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### Big Move #2: Enhance Oak Bay village

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- High-quality public space to support community gathering.
- Public space with shops and services.
- Corner plazas or side street closures to support public spaces.

- Access for all abilities and modes of transportation (walking, rolling, transit and vehicles).

## **What we heard:**

### **Pedestrians and Public Space**

- Support for expanding pedestrian areas by widening sidewalks and adding public spaces.
- Support for safer pedestrian crossings, particularly at night and across wide intersections.
- Mixed views on street closures, with some supporting pedestrian zones and others concerned about the impact on local traffic and accessibility.
- Concerns that side street closures will lead to traffic congestion in other areas, including narrow residential streets.

### **Cycling**

- Support for cycling infrastructure, specifically protected, AAA bike lanes around intersections and crossings.
- Calls for separated bike lanes along Oak Bay Avenue, with others suggesting bike lanes on parallel streets to maintain parking for businesses.

### **Urban Design**

- Support for higher-density residential areas balanced with concerns for overall height and transitions from more urban corridors and town centres.
- Calls for commercial development in support of a vibrant and accessible area.
- Desire to preserve historic buildings and neighbourhood character.
- Support for the creation of youth spaces like skate parks and recreation facilities.
- Interest in public spaces that can host art, music or other community events.

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## **Big Move #3: A Town Centre at Oak Bay Junction**

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- More housing, shops and high-quality public spaces in support of a walkable, transit-rich town centre.
- Residential and mixed-use buildings to create a diversity of housing, shops and services.
- Reorient the Oak Bay Junction intersection for pedestrian safety and a convenient bus exchange while maintaining traffic flow.

- Enhance and expand public plazas and green spaces.

### **What we heard:**

#### Affordability

- Support for affordable housing options.
- Suggestions for mixed-use developments that prioritize affordability and prevent displacement or gentrification.

#### Community Impact

- Desire to balance density with green and accessible public spaces.
- Support for small commercial spaces.
- Emphasis on preserving and/or restoring heritage buildings.
- Concerns about displacement of existing businesses and loss of local character.

#### Traffic and Parking

- Concerns that changes could exacerbate existing traffic congestion.
- Concerns that increased density will put too much pressure on infrastructure.

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### **Big Move #4: A Village at Fort Street and Richmond Road**

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- A well-connected pedestrian-friendly village.
- Enhance and connect the hospital green.
- Support shops, services, medical offices and housing in the hospital precinct.
- Improve sidewalks, plazas and crosswalks to support pedestrians and transit and to create a sense of place.

### **What we heard:**

#### Community Spaces and Amenities

- Support for more pedestrian-friendly spaces, plazas, and gathering areas.
- Calls for improved access to public spaces for vulnerable groups, especially near medical services.
- Desire for more street-level commercial spaces, specifically local businesses.
- Support for redevelopment that includes medical spaces.
- Concerns about gentrification and displacement.

## Pedestrian and Cycling Infrastructure

- Calls for better pedestrian crosswalks, specifically at Richmond Avenue and Leighton Road.
- Support for protected bike lanes and more cycling connections.

## Traffic and Parking

- Support for added parking spaces to supplement housing and commercial spaces.
- Concerns that density will exacerbate traffic congestion in the area.

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### **Big Move #5: Embrace the Hospital**

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- Space for medical offices, non-profits and biotech near the hospital.
- Enhanced connections from the hospital to the neighbourhood and Bowker Creek.
- Improve transit options near the hospital.
- More places to live and shop around the hospital.

## **What we heard:**

### Medical and Commercial Spaces

- Support for embracing the hospital as a central feature by embracing its green spaces, adding medical offices and adding amenities for patients, staff and visitors.
- Support for benches and quiet events in the hospital's green space.
- Support for more dining options, corner stores and services near the hospital.
- Interest in integrating commercial biomedical spaces.
- Concerns about building more medical spaces during ongoing doctor shortage.

### Housing and Affordability

- Support for more housing near the hospital, especially for staff and workers.
- Calls for housing that is truly affordable, with suggestions for non-profit, below-market rental options.
- Support for mixed-use residential to maximize space and accessibility.

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### **Big Move #6: A Transit-oriented Jubilee Town Centre**

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- Transform the existing transit hub into a walkable, amenity-rich Town Centre that is well-connected to the region by several frequent transit routes.
- Support phased shopping centre redevelopment to create a walkable urban place.
- Add green space, tree canopy and connections to Bowker Creek.
- Create indoor and outdoor amenities.
- Develop seamless connections to the surrounding neighbourhood.

### **What we heard:**

#### Transportation and Connectivity

- Support for walkable and bikeable infrastructure, improved public transit connections, and options for reducing car dependency.
- Concerns about sufficient parking spaces to meet demands of increased density.

#### Amenities and Public Spaces

- Support for community spaces such as libraries, childcare centres, community centres and recreational facilities.

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### **Big Move #7: Diverse gathering spaces**

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- Explore a partnership with the school district to create spaces for childcare, seniors programs and community gatherings.
- Complement the services provided at the Oak Bay Recreation Centre.
- Improve access to library services.

### **What we heard:**

#### Community Spaces

- Support for community kitchens, street art and programs encouraging intergenerational interaction.
- Suggestion for a community hub on the Bank Street school site.
- Suggestion for outdoor adult fitness centres.

#### Programs and Social Support

- Support for low- or no-cost public areas such as libraries.
- Requests for programs geared to younger and middle-aged adults.

- Suggestion for evening and weekend activities.

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### **Big Move #8: Leafy streets, greenways and rainways**

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- Create a network of green streets that support urban forest, ecology, health and wellbeing.
- More safe, slow streets for walking and rolling.
- More trees, rainwater features and places to sit.
- Create comfortable connections to expanded green spaces along Bowker Creek.
- Enhance existing greenways such as Leighton Road and explore creating new greenways, potentially along Amphion Street.

#### **What we heard:**

##### Trees and Greenery

- Support for adding trees, shrubs and green spaces, specifically on streets like Amphion Street, Leighton Street and Richmond Road.
- Preference for planting more mature trees for immediate shade benefits.
- Suggestions to add trees as buffers between pedestrians and traffic on busy roads.
- Concerns that road closures will worsen traffic congestion in residential areas.

##### Community Use

- Suggestions for interactive features such as picnic areas, seating and shade.
- Calls to integrate edible landscapes and pollinator gardens into community spaces.
- Concerns that closing Leighton and Amphion Streets will disrupt local access.

##### Bowker Creek and Urban Waterways

- Support for restoring Bowker Creek and daylighting buried streams.
- Concern from Amphion Street residents about frequent flooding from Bowker Creek.

### **Additional Feedback for Jubilee, Fort St. and Oak Bay Ave.**

In addition to giving feedback on the Big Moves, respondents were asked to provide suggestions for amenities and public spaces.

**Question #1:** What are the top three amenities or improvements you would like to see in Oaklands?



## Top Three Ideas

1. **Improved active and public transportation:** Participants repeatedly emphasized the desire for enhanced cycling and pedestrian infrastructure including protected bike lanes, pedestrian-friendly streets, and traffic calming measures.
2. **Housing density and mixed-use development:** Strong support was expressed for increasing housing density (particularly affordable housing) and integrating mixed-use developments. Recommendations include zoning changes to allow residential and commercial use on more lots, building taller or denser housing in some areas, and designing with community-oriented features like small shops, public spaces, and outdoor dining.
3. **Green, community-oriented spaces:** Many calls for increasing tree canopy, creating greenways and using native plants to improve outdoor spaces along with a desire for more parks, public seating, and pedestrian plazas. Participants also asked for small-scale amenities such as libraries, recreation centres, and community hubs.

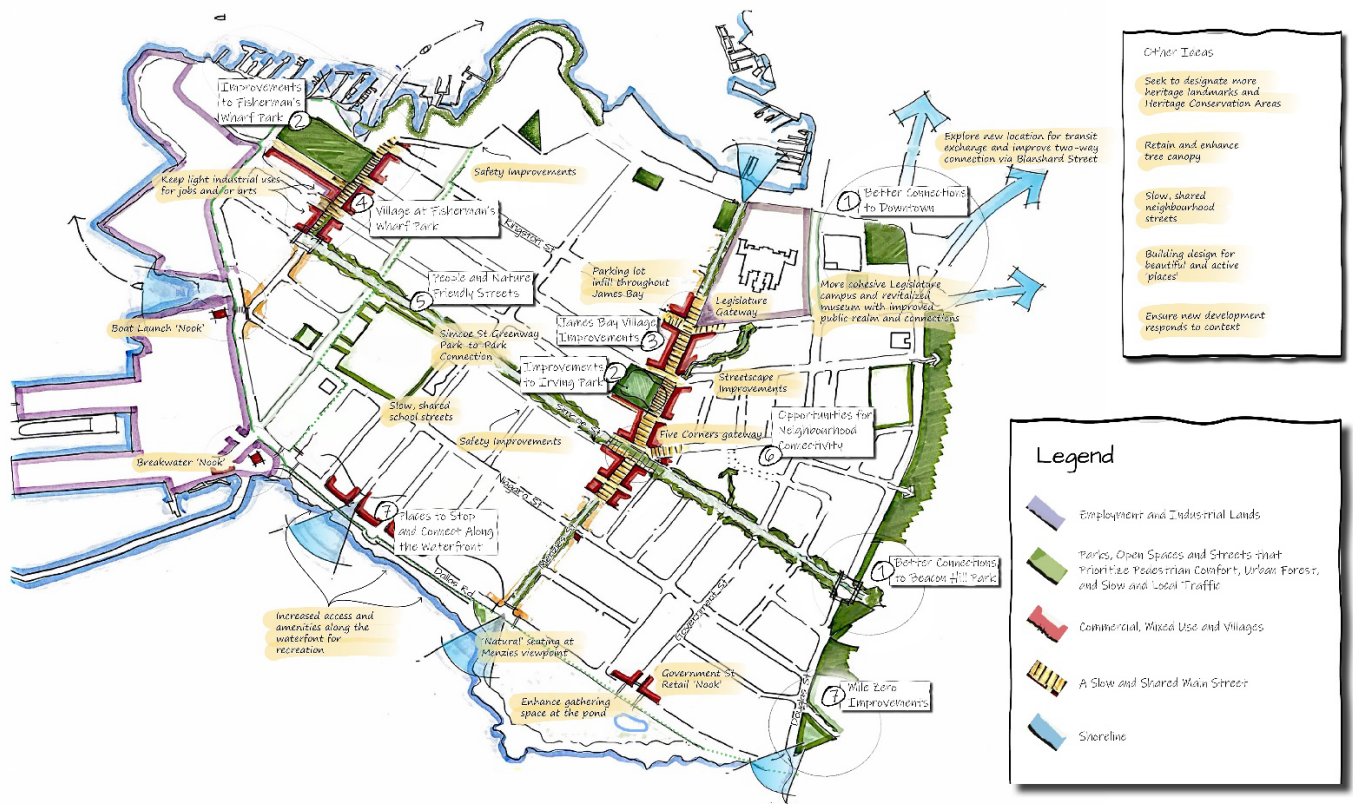
**Question #2:** What are the top three amenities or improvements you would like to see in Oaklands?

- Safer cycling routes
- Improved pedestrian infrastructure
- Outdoor gathering spaces
- Cafes, restaurants and outdoor dining options
- Green space, parks, trees and shaded spaces
- Public seating
- Community-focused activities and spaces that cater to all ages
- Events such as markets, festivals and outdoor movie nights
- Cultural vibrancy through things like public art, performance spaces and cultural events

## What We Heard: James Bay

Nestled between Beacon Hill Park, downtown and the Salish Sea, James Bay is Victoria's oldest neighbourhood and a vibrant hub for visitors during the spring and summer. In addition to events and attractions that draw locals and tourists, James Bay also welcomes thousands of cruise ship passengers annually through the Ogden Point Terminal.

The overwhelming interest in the James Bay Places & Spaces Ideas Workshop led to a second session being added on the same day to meet demand. Participants stressed the need for a balanced approach to growth — one that celebrates the neighbourhood's rich history and character while preparing for its future needs.



## James Bay Engagement Themes

**Connectivity:** Better cycling, pedestrian connectivity, and connections to the ocean balanced with concerns about accessibility, traffic congestion and local vehicle access.

**Park Revitalization:** Enhancing Irving Park and Fisherman's Wharf Park with more greenery, seating and community spaces balanced with concerns about traffic congestion and the loss of existing green space.

**Heritage:** Preserving the neighbourhood's historical architecture and character.

**James Bay Village:** Improved public spaces and expanded retail options along with concerns about street closures and traffic impacts.

**Waterfront Activities:** Improving public spaces at Ogden Point and the James Bay Anglers area, adding more small shops and improved connections to Fisherman’s Wharf Park balanced with concerns about impacts to the natural beauty and tranquility of Dallas Road.

## James Bay Big Moves

The Ideas Workshops for James Bay generated seven big moves, described below together with the feedback we heard.

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### Big Move #1: Better Connections in and out of James Bay

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- Improving connections in and out of James Bay.
- A new transit exchange.

#### What we heard:

##### Public and Active Transportation

- Calls to add transit station and bike hub.
- Support for improvements to bike infrastructure, sidewalks and crosswalks.
- Requests for traffic calming.
- Calls to consider seniors and people with mobility issues in any future designs.
- Calls to address gaps in the cycling network (e.g., Southgate Street near Beacon Hill Park).
- Support for better transit solutions to reduce congestion from cruise ship traffic.

##### Traffic Congestion

- Entry and exit points to James Bay (Douglas, Blanshard and Wharf Streets) are already strained and proposed changes risk worsening congestion.
- Concerns about access to James Bay for emergency services and during evacuations.
- Mixed views on relocating the transit hub to Douglas Street. Some prefer the proposed new location over Government Street, while others fear it will exacerbate congestion and reduce accessibility.
- Calls for any traffic calming measures or pedestrian-friendly designs to balance vehicle and parking needs.

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### **Big Move #2: Make Existing Parks Better**

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- Revitalizing James Bay parks for all ages.
- Improvements to Irving Park.
- Improvements to Fisherman's Wharf Park.
- Community gathering spaces.

#### **What we heard:**

##### **Irving Park**

- Mixed views on a new bandstand, some opposed due to proximity to bandshell at Beacon Hill Park.
- Calls for more children's activities.
- Concern about shade from tall buildings.
- Desire for park to serve as a gathering spot for locals.

##### **Mile Zero Redesign**

- Desire to celebrate Indigenous cultural heritage.
- Support for green spaces and active transit areas.
- Calls for all-ages activities, such as an outdoor gym.
- Support for better pedestrian and bike access, including a roundabout.
- Suggestion for more "history and storytelling" of Mile Zero.
- Preference for services such as a bank or bakery, rather than gathering space.
- Concerns about added road complexity in the area.

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### **Big Move #3: James Bay Village Improvements**

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- A gateway to James Bay Village at the B.C. Legislature Building and Five Corners.
- Public spaces and expanded retail options.
- New plazas offering shops and services.
- Enhance Five Corners to become an iconic destination.

## What we heard:

### Five Corners and Simcoe Street

- Support for a bike valet and traffic calming.
- Preferences for green and sheltered plaza designs that are suitable year-round.
- Some support for fully car-free spaces.
- Opposition to closing Simcoe Street, citing the street as critical route for deliveries, emergency vehicles and local businesses (Alternative suggestion to close Toronto Street or partial closure of Simcoe and Menzies Streets).
- Concerns that road closures or new traffic patterns will push traffic onto narrow residential streets.

### Building Heights and Development

- Support for wider setbacks, greenery and maintenance of heritage facades.
- Preference for buildings up to four storeys tall.
- Concerns about high-rise developments paired with calls for context-sensitive heights that preserve light, heritage and neighbourhood character.

### Waterfront Connections

- Some support for better pedestrian connections to Dallas Road.
- Concern about adding shops and food trucks along Dallas Road: ecological impacts, peaceful enjoyment of nature and viability during winter months.
- Support for places to meet friends indoors.

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## Big Move #4: Village at Fisherman's Wharf Park

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- Establish a new local village around St. Lawrence Street and Erie Street.
- Increase walkable shops and services.
- Better connect the new village to transit, parks and waterfront.
- Design streets as places people want to linger.
- Consider marine transit connections such as water taxis or water bus.

## What we heard:

### Community Destination

- Support for improvements to St. Lawrence Street and Fisherman's Wharf Park.

- Support for adding trees and spaces that encourage lingering.
- Support for added amenities like cafés and washrooms.
- Calls for useful and diverse retail options.
- Support for a year-round covered market.
- Concerns about excessive densification from tall buildings.
- Skepticism about the area’s viability as a destination for locals, citing its popularity among cruise ship tourists in the summer.

#### Getting Around

- Calls to connect David Foster Harbour Pathway to Fisherman's Wharf.
- Enthusiasm for fully pedestrianized streets but concerns about traffic impacts.
- Support for better public transit from cruise ship terminal to reduce vehicle traffic.
- Concerns about congestion from visitor parking and increased foot traffic.
- Some desire for continued vehicle access, mainly for accessibility and local use.

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### **Big Move #5: Streets as Places for People**

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- Creating streets that are comfortable, attractive and easy for people of all ages and abilities to get around.
- Protect and expand urban forest and green spaces.
- Traffic calming and routes to better manage transit for visitors.
- Buildings designed and oriented to create attractive streets and respond to neighbourhood context.

#### **What we heard:**

##### Getting Around

- Strong support for improved connections for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Support for traffic calming, wider sidewalks and tree-lined streets.
- Desire to maintain vehicle access, especially on key routes like Simcoe and Superior Streets.
- Support for better public transit options.
- Concerns about impact of removing parking on residents and businesses.

##### Tourism

- Calls to reduce the impact of cruise ship traffic with pedicabs, e-scooters and better wayfinding signage for tourists.
- Significant concerns around the number of taxis and buses in peak tourism months.

#### Trees and Nature in Public Spaces

- Support for enhancing green spaces, pollinator pathways and garden-focused projects.
- Support for integrating green roofs, rain gardens and sustainable features in new developments.
- Desire for public gathering spaces that are inviting and nature-oriented

#### Building Designs and Density

- Some support for moderate, low-rise densification (four to six storeys) and mixed-use buildings.
- Emphasis on value of James Bay's heritage homes and gardens.
- Many said new developments should harmonize with the neighbourhood's character rather than replace it with uniform, modern designs.

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### **Big Move #6: Neighbourhood Connections**

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- Improve the experience for visitors and locals getting around James Bay.
- Better connection between James Bay and other neighbourhoods, the waterfront and Beacon Hill Park.
- Enhance connections between Mile Zero and Fisherman's Wharf Park.
- Improve wayfinding through the neighbourhood.
- Simcoe Street Park-to-Park greenway.

#### **What we heard:**

##### Park-to-Park Greenway

- Support for greenways, mid-block connectors, expanded sidewalks and enhanced bike and pedestrian pathways.
- Support for more trees, rain gardens and green spaces.
- Michigan Street suggested as an alternative greenway option.
- Concerns about parking, accessibility and traffic redirection.

##### Getting Around



- Support for car-free streets.
- Support for better integration of bike parking at transit stops and public bike-share programs.
- Calls to improve signage and wayfinding to prioritize convenience for locals.

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### **Big Move #7: Places to Stop and Connect Along the Waterfront**

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- Indoor and outdoor gathering spaces for year-round enjoyment.
- Opportunities to pilot retail and seasonal activities along walking routes.
- Enhance James Bay Anglers boat launch with cafes and public seating.
- Opportunities for shops, services and public spaces at Ogden Point.
- Waterfront amenities such as shower, washrooms and a boat launch.

#### **What we heard:**

##### Enhancing and Preserving Waterfront

- Support for added amenities like seating and washrooms.
- Support for reducing vehicle access on Dallas Road.
- Calls to respect natural landscapes, avoid excessive development and preserve habitats.
- Suggestions to limit retail to existing paved areas.

##### Commercial Development

- Support for cafés, shops and markets at Ogden Point.
- Mixed views on allowing for retail and food options along Dallas Road.
- Opposition to large retail chains in the area.
- Concerns about strain on local infrastructure, with limited intersections and bottlenecks in James Bay.

### **James Bay Additional Feedback**

In addition to giving feedback on the Big Moves, respondents were asked to provide suggestions for amenities and public spaces in James Bay more generally.

**Question #1:** What are the top three amenities or improvements you would like to see in James Bay?

## Top Three Ideas

1. **Improvements to Irving Park:** Many participants shared ideas for revitalizing Irving Park, suggesting ways to make it more welcoming and transform it into a vibrant community hub or a dedicated children's play area.
2. **Transportation Improvements:** Many responses mentioned reducing car traffic, improving bike lanes, calming traffic, widening sidewalks and making the neighbourhood more pedestrian-friendly, particularly around Five Corners and Menzies Street.
3. **Preservation of Heritage and Historic Character:** Multiple participants stressed the importance of preserving the historical aspects of James Bay, such as maintaining the heritage buildings and making sure that new developments respect existing character. There was a strong aversion to high-rise structures.

**Question #2:** What public space activities and experiences would you like to see more of in James Bay?

## Top Responses:

- More Community events such as music festivals, farmers' markets and outdoor gatherings
- More activities in MacDonald Park and Irving Park
- Expanded year-round market featuring local produce and crafts
- A public swimming pool
- Spaces for art and busking
- Outdoor seating and informal gathering areas
- More green spaces

Engagement feedback collected via surveys, meetings, events and other forms of correspondence is available at [engage.victoria.ca/places-spaces](https://engage.victoria.ca/places-spaces).