

CITY OF VICTORIA | Sustainable Planning & Community Development

Village & Corridor Planning

North Park, Fernwood, Hillside-Quadra

Engagement Summary Report

April 2022

A Community for Everyone



Housing Choices



Mobility



Public Spaces



Walkable Urban Villages

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The City of Victoria is located on the homelands of the Songhees and Esquimalt People.



Executive Summary

The purpose of neighbourhood planning is to guide growth for more sustainable and inclusive communities over the next 10 to 20 years. A healthy and welcoming city is one with diverse housing choices, sustainable transportation options and joyful public spaces for people with different incomes, lifestyles and family make-ups.

Engagement with the Fernwood, North Park and Hillside-Quadra neighbourhoods took place over three phases between 2020 through to early 2022 and focussed on areas where change is anticipated in the years ahead.

The proposed draft neighbourhood plans and related policies, design guidelines, and Official Community Plan (OCP) amendments have been informed by conversations and engagement with diverse representation and collaborative conversations with the community. While the first two phases of engagement have been reviewed in previous reports, the following engagement summary outlines the process from start to finish with a focus on how we engaged and what we heard in the third phase.

Engagement at a Glance

Phase 1: January through April 2020

Phase 2: September 2020 to January 2021

Phase 3: November 2021 to January 2022



10,264
unique project
page visitors



884 people completed an
online survey (7 surveys)

350 people attended
14 in-person events



230
people participated in **22**
virtual and **21** in-person
focus group discussions
or meetings

50
people participate
in a virtual
workshop series
during Phase 2



50
people provided
written feedback

Public Engagement Overview

Engagement with the community was conducted over three phases between February 2020 and January 2022.

Principles

Principles for Public Engagement included:

- Seek diversity in engagement, including members of equity-seeking groups and those less likely to engage in neighbourhood processes; and reflecting this engagement in drafting policies.
- Provide differing levels of information and engagement accessible to those with differing levels of time and interest
- Communicate links to city-wide policies and plans that have been informed by recent broad engagement (e.g. *Housing Strategy*, *Sustainable Mobility Strategy*, *Urban Forest Master Plan*), while consulting on how these policies can come to life in a local context
- Offer robust rounds of engagement with clear links to outcomes, allowing people to have their say while avoiding engagement fatigue
- Provide clarity on the scope – e.g. those topic areas that local area plans are most effective at influencing – and focusing on these areas while making room for broad input

Engagement Objectives

Building off two early rounds of engagement, the objective of the third round was to present the public draft Local Area Plans, Development Permit Guidelines, associated Official Community Plan amendments and recommendations for zoning changes. Engagement was designed to give people the opportunity to identify what they like, what they would change and what they feel is missing in the draft policies and directions.

Level of Engagement

This third phase of engagement aimed to *inform* and *consult* the community about the content of the three Draft Neighbourhood Plans and the associated Draft Design Guidelines, Official Community Plan Amendments, and zoning directions.

The Draft Plans are based on findings from Phase 1 and 2 of Engagement, which included efforts to consult, involve and collaborate with members of the community.

Engagement Process

Phase 1: Early Engagement

Between January 2020 and March 2020, the City explored Issues, Opportunities, and Big Ideas together with the community. More than 1,000 residents provided ideas and insights about what they love and would like to see improved in Fernwood, North Park and Hillside-Quadra neighbourhoods.

Phase 2: Draft Policy and Design Directions

In the fall of 2020, the City hosted a series of planning and design workshops with diverse community members. The workshops built on what we heard through early engagement and what we learned through technical studies and analysis.

Draft concepts were developed together with the community and were presented to the broader public for review and feedback through a virtual open house (project webpage), focus groups representing diversity in the neighbourhoods and online surveys.

Phase 3 Engagement: Review/Revise Draft Policies and Guidelines

In Phase 3, draft policies, plans, and design guidelines based on previous engagement and additional analysis were presented to the broader public for feedback. The input gathered has informed revised Neighbourhood Plans, Design Guidelines, proposed OCP Amendments and proposed zoning amendments.



Engagement Opportunities

Community-Led Engagement

Each Neighbourhood Association was provided a planning grant to complete community-led work that would help inform the final outcomes of the local area planning process. This supported an increased involvement of community members, deep discussions and new ideas form the community.

This community-led work helped inform key directions for the updated Neighbourhood plans, along with the feedback gathered in Phase 1 of the City-led engagement (described below).

Phase 1: Early Engagement

Between January 2020 and March 2020, the City explored Issues, Opportunities and Big Ideas with the community. More than 1,000 people were engaged in this first phase.

Opportunities included:

- Online surveys with more than 800 responses
- 10 Community Discussions (Community Association Boards and Land Use Committees, Advisory Committees, and other community organizations)
- 5 Pop-up events
- 11 focused discussions (“Meeting-in-a-box” discussions hosted by working group members and meetings with local business, cultural and community organizations)

The City was nearing the end of early engagement when public health orders related to COVID-19 were enacted. Some online engagement was cancelled (not included in the list above) The online survey deadline was extended to allow for additional feedback.

Phase 2: Draft Policy and Design Directions

After broad and diverse engagement in the first phase, Phase 2 started with a virtual workshop series in the fall of 2020 where participants representing a cross-section of different ages, incomes, backgrounds and housing situations came together and developed draft directions and concepts based on what we had learned so far.

Attendees included Working Group members, participants recommended by community associations, land use committees, and diverse community and stakeholder organizations (such as the Metis Nation of Greater Victoria, the Intercultural Association, the Youth Council, arts and culture organizations, local businesses, and others).

Following an interdepartmental review, the concepts generated during the workshops were translated into a virtual open house at **engage.victoria.ca** for public feedback. The virtual open house received more than 6,400 unique visitors during this second phase. Recognizing the circumstances and stresses of the pandemic, engagement opportunities remained flexible and responsive to the community. Different elements were added to this phase over time, and the online engagement was extended to reflect the desires of the community. In total, the virtual open house ran for more than three months.

The online Open House included:

- Surveys (also available in hard copy)
- Virtual video tours
- Discussion forum
- Q&A section
- How We Got Here Photo Essay
- Background materials

Additional opportunities in this phase included:

- Virtual focus groups with parents, Canadian newcomers (including youth), Indigenous residents, youth, BC Housing residents and other groups
- Conversations with local business owners, Community associations, CALUCs, and others
- A self-guided walking tour with stops at significant locations, where information about the relevant key concepts were on display

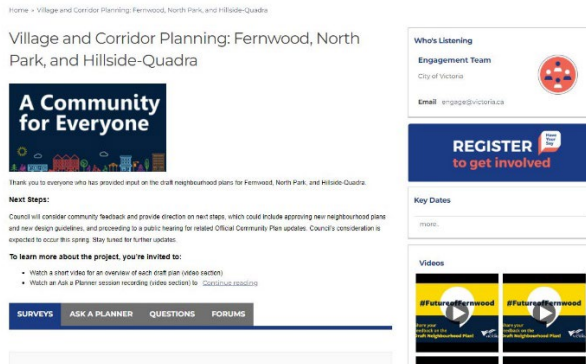
Phase 3: Review/Revise Draft Policies and Guidelines

In the third phase of Engagement, the City brought draft Neighbourhood Plans for Fernwood, North Park and Hillside-Quadra as well as draft Design Development Permit Guidelines to the public for feedback and asked about preferences for Residential Rental Tenure zoning.

Phase three included a virtual open house at **engage.victoria.ca** as well as in-person engagement opportunities to make it easy and inviting for as many as possible to participate. The various engagement opportunities that took place in this phase are outlined in more detail below.

Phase Three Engagement: November 1, 2021 to January 3, 2022

Virtual Open House (1)



- 3 Community Surveys (one for each neighbourhood)
- Discussion Forum
- FAQ's
- Videos summarizing the Draft Plans and the planning process
- Draft Neighbourhood Plans and Design Guidelines, Draft Plan Summaries
- Other relevant documents and materials

Open Houses (3)

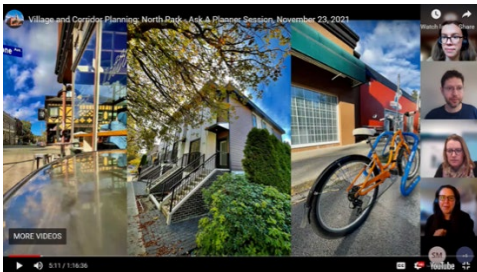
One in-person open house in each neighbourhood was offered with information about the Draft Plans and staff to listen and answer questions.





Walking Tours (6)

Led by staff, these discussion tours took place in parallel with the Open Houses (two opportunities per event) where members of the public could learn about the Draft Plan directions on site.



Ask a Planner Sessions (3)

Three virtual sessions were hosted where City Planners presented summaries of each plan and answered questions from the public. The video recordings were available afterwards at the Virtual Open House.

Pop-Up Events (6)

Six additional events in neighbourhoods to promote the Virtual Open House and in-person Open Houses, and to have discussions with those who live, work, and spend time in the area.

Focussed Discussions

Additional focussed discussions to fill gaps from previous phases, with youth, community associations, residents, and the Summit Resident and Family Council

Promotion

More than 10,000 unique visitors have visited the project page at **engage.victoria.ca** since the project page launched in September 2020.

During the third phase of engagement (November 1 2021 – January 3 2022), the following methods were used to reach the community:

- 60,000 copies of the City's Connect newsletter were mailed to residents and businesses in Victoria in October 2021, featuring an article on the Local Area Planning project
- 7,400 subscribers to **engage.victoria.ca** received four email updates on the project between October and December 2021
- 2,200 subscribers to the City's monthly eNews received two updates on the project between October and December 2021
- Paid ads in local daily, weekly and neighbourhood newspapers
- Digital advertising campaign driving people to the project page
- 45 promotional posterboards throughout the neighborhoods
- Flyers were shared through community services (e.g. family and youth programs, food security programs) and local businesses
- Six pop-up events were held in the community in diverse locations (e.g. urban villages, food banks) to help raise project awareness

What We Heard

Public Space Improvements for Making Connections

Residents in all three neighbourhoods value their public space and appreciate indoor and outdoor amenities to interact with others, build community, recreate and enhance walking and rolling connections. There was a high level of support for proposed public space improvements such as added and improved greenspaces, plazas, and streetscape improvements.

Some additional suggestions raised in all three neighbourhoods included dog parks, water features, picnic and barbeque features, public washrooms, more/better places to linger for those who want more passive recreation (as opposed to playgrounds, for example), and more places for older children and teens. Several survey participants pointed out a need for public spaces that are comfortable in 3-4 seasons, with shelter from sun and rain, for pandemic-safe outdoor gathering, and to support diverse take-out eateries. Both accessibility and safety improvements were desired, including an all-abilities playground for youth in Hillside-Quadra. Stakeholders also pointed to the need for centrally located indoor and outdoor spaces for gathering and cultural practice

People in all three neighbourhoods also asked for more placemaking focused on arts and culture, such as outdoor performance places and public art.

Improved access to indoor facilities such as Community Centres was a theme as well, with strong support for the directions to update, add or expand community centres. Many specific comments revolved around matters that are addressed in City's Strategic Plan, such as the location of Crystal Pool, community space in North Park and the desire expand the Quadra Village Community Centre to serve residents of all incomes.

A recurring theme throughout engagement was the future of greenspace used by the community, but not designated as parks. In North Park, we saw very high support for opening Royal Athletic Park for more public access, and several asked for more specific, bolder plans for the arena itself and for the adjacent parking lot.

"Too much city owned space is dead space. Between the arena and adjacent parking lot, RAP and its parking lot, so much city land is not even accessible to residents of this neighbourhood. Be creative and use the land you own to solve problems and increase equity. Be bold and rethink RAP — our neighbourhood desperately needs green space."

In the Hillside-Quadra survey, existing open space at SJ Willis School, 950 Kings and 2549 Quadra Street (the Warehouse School) were highlighted by many as public green spaces that

should be preserved and enhanced, especially if more housing is added in the area. Some suggested specific improvements such as community gardens at SJ Willis.

In Fernwood, we heard from many that the school grounds at Vic High are well used by youth and residents outside of school hours as well as by dog owners, and some were concerned about losing access to these amenities. Although there was generally strong support for improving the Community Centre, some worried that what is already working well (such as the existing skatepark and programs) could be lost.

Living Car-lite and Getting Around

“Growth in housing density cannot be accompanied by an equivalent growth of vehicle density and [...] an infrastructure of sustainable methods of getting to/from work, home and hobby need to be planned out in order to grow sustainably.”

Overall, we saw strong support for letting the 15-minute community concept guide future planning in the neighbourhoods, and broad understanding of the focus on urban villages and the transportation corridors that connect them. Across the board, residents want it to be comfortable, safe and quick to move around in the community, and those able to walk, bike or roll to go about their everyday activities generally welcome the active transportation improvements identified in the plans. Some requested that the neighbourhood plans better address accessibility (for mobility scooters, walkers, etc.), and some wanted to see a stronger focus on safety with for example better lighting for pedestrians.

Many wanted to see gaps in the public transit network addressed, sometimes pointing to barriers to choosing the bus over the car, such as insufficient routes or shelters or simply that the bus does not work for them.

“Everything sounds great...but, as you have probably noticed, I am concerned about livability for people with cars. Some people can't ride bikes, don't feel comfortable on buses, and aren't walkers. Should we conclude that Fernwood is not for them?”

While most survey respondents were supportive of the mobility directions in the draft plans, we heard strong opinions on two ends of the spectrum regarding trade-offs between travel modes: some think it is unrealistic to plan for a decreasing dependency on automobiles, while others believe that cars don't belong in cities at all. Some who rely on private automobiles feel left out, expressed concern about how recent bicycle network improvements have impacted their experience of driving, or felt these areas are already sufficiently walkable and bikeable.

Overall, we heard strong support for new and improved greenways and crossings. The idea of green and leafy streets was very well received, especially in North Park (although there were

also a few there who said housing needs to be higher priority than any public realm improvements). Some envision the greenways as an appropriate way to facilitate bicycle improvements and traffic calming, while others were concerned that such interventions might make it less convenient to drive in the neighbourhoods. Others wanted clarification on what a greenway designation means. We also received multiple suggestions for added or alternative improvements, including east-west connections to Vic West and the Galloping Goose.

We heard from some who wanted it to be safer and more comfortable to bicycle along the main corridors (e.g., Bay Street, Hillside Avenue), while some felt corridors should primarily facilitate auto traffic, emergency access and that investments in cyclist and pedestrian comfort could impede this.

“The entire Quadra corridor needs to be viewed as a place in need of better crossings, like Bay. None of the existing ‘greenways’ are pedestrian friendly in their current form.”

“Quadra street is the only way I can transverse the city northbound from my neighbourhood via CAR (yes some people still have to drive) and to lose clear access with the proposed pedestrian crossing is insane”

“I love what you guys did on Vancouver Street in Fairfield. Centring lots of smaller streets around pedestrian and biker safety and comfort is perfect. Cars should only be driving off of arterial roads at the very beginning and very end of their trips!”

“Bay Street is a nightmare for bikes so while it's great to improve it for pedestrians and buses, it needs to be safer for cyclists as it's a key, direct route. A problem with these greenways is that they zig/zag and aren't direct, making them inconvenient”

Building Design for Livability and Sense of Place

We heard general appreciation in all three neighbourhoods for design guidelines and principles that came across as site and context sensitive. Many welcome a diverse mix of housing types, building heights and density. When asked how well the proposed housing design principles and guidelines support diverse housing choices in the community, most participants chose “well” followed by “neutral” in both the Fernwood and the Hillside-Quadra surveys. In North Park, most responded “well” followed by “very well”.

By and large, provisions for green spaces, trees and livability in new housing were widely supported. Principles for car-light development were generally well supported, with many feeling less need for auto use in Victoria. On the other hand, some expressed reservations, including concerns that new buildings might not offer enough parking to meet the needs of all who want a car or need one because of disability, work, etc., or places for visitors, trades and

home service workers, and those with mobility limitations to conveniently park. Consistent with previous rounds of consultation, the largest concerns for car-light buildings were either a perception that reduced parking minimums and Transportation Demand Management measures would force new residents to give up a car; that no new parking would be provided; or that owners of single-detached homes might be inconvenienced by reduced on-street parking availability.

Some pointed out that “walkability” does not support all abilities and that there needs to be parking for and/or provision of mobility scooters/devices in new housing.

“Higher density is good. Many People will continue to rely on cars and those people need to be accommodated as well. True diversity includes them.”

In the North Park survey, we saw noticeably more unreserved support for car-lite buildings. Most concerns expressed were about not adding enough density, cautioning that too many design constraints may negatively impact development viability, and emphasizing that affordable housing be a priority. (These concerns were heard in Hillside-Quadra and Fernwood as well.) A few said that more, affordable housing is much more important than livability and design considerations..

“The design principles are fundamentally misaligned with the city's climate and housing goals. If the city is serious about these goals, Fernwood's housing mix should reflect that it is an urban, downtown-adjacent neighborhood, not a suburb.”

“We need taller towers; housing people affordably is more important than trees or a ‘vibe’.”

For some, the problem was not the ideas themselves, but rather skepticism about implementation:

“They are all good but we know when the developers come to the city, they all cave and the principles are compromised in one way or another.”

“Pretty generic principles that are hard to argue with; unclear how they will be operationalized”

Sensitive transitions to neighbouring properties, whether other housing or open space, are important to most. Some were quite concerned about protecting single-detached homes from impacts of multi-family buildings (especially where lots are relatively small) and wanted reassurance. Others advocated having a transitional density area, park, or other feature between urban residential areas and single-detached homes.

In Fernwood, the strong neighbourhood character and sense of place came up a lot among the survey comments. Many pointed to existing heritage homes and an eclectic mix of buildings as key components of that character (although responses throughout the survey recognize a diversity of residents as a core component of community character). While we did hear general support for more housing of various kinds, some wanted to emphasize that density should not be added without attention to architectural quality (and variation, in particular) while others emphasized needs for affordability or housing in general.

“These principles assume that densification is always an improvement. I disagree. Permitting profit driven developers to build shoebox buildings with no architecture or character will perpetuate Fernwood's image as a poor area with a shabby future.”

“I think we should consider going higher possibly. Please do not sacrifice any more of Fernwood's green space.”

In Hillside-Quadra, several survey participants asked for more focus on heritage buildings in the plan and stronger policies to prevent new development in areas with significant heritage value. Some suggested that more lenient house conversion rules, permissions to add multiple suites (incl. garden suites), or missing middle housing would be a preferable way to add density, while others emphasized the need for diverse choices including secure choices for renters (both market and non-market).

Many expressed that North Park is a suitable area for more density, given its proximity to downtown. We also saw support for adding greenery and encouraging ground oriented and missing middle housing. Some proposed more density and height, even suggested that North Park is not the place for green backyards. While there was some focus on heritage, several survey participants expressed hope that new development would *bring* interesting architecture and *add* to a stronger sense of place.

“Promoting medium density housing, encourage building of new character multi-family homes that bring more interest and warmth to the street level.”

More, Diverse Housing

Compared to all other questions in the survey, there was a bit more diversity of opinions about the location of new housing. Overall, most survey participants (in all three neighbourhoods) thought the proposed locations supported the objectives *well*, but many also felt *neutral* about them and in Hillside-Quadra one quarter of survey participants felt the direction supported the objective *very poorly* or *poorly*. A number of households in the northern parts of Hillside-Quadra wrote specifically to the city with concerns over the scale of development envisioned along Quadra Street between Finlayson and Tolmie, while others in this part of the neighbourhood

reached out with an interest in more walkable villages that would thrive with additional housing around them. Staff had subsequent meetings and walkabouts with some of these residents and did additional urban design testing to explore their concerns.

Housing Tenure and Location of Rental Housing

The most appropriate location for multi-family and rental housing was a point of debate in all three neighbourhoods. Many feel strongly that limiting multi-family housing to the busiest corridors is inequitable – that it excludes renters and those who cannot afford a single-family home from quieter, family-friendly, and generally desirable areas. Many pointed to the impacts of noise and traffic on health and livability. On the other hand, some see quieter streets as a places that should remain primarily single-family housing. Concerns included potential impacts to private property such as shading, construction noise, traffic, or general aesthetics. Others still expressed strongly that more housing supply is needed in all locations, that while off-corridor areas should support multi-unit and particularly rental housing, on-corridors areas would still be desirable for others and the priority should be increasing housing supply overall.

Concerns about potentially displacing existing tenants was expressed. Some also feared current homeowners may be tempted to move.

Affordable and Suitable Housing Options

Many think that there is not enough being done about housing affordability and that affordable and subsidized housing should be the top priority. While most respondents saw a strong and immediate need for housing with a range of incomes, some felt there is already enough subsidized and/or rental housing in parts of these neighbourhoods, and it is time for the rest of the city and/or region to catch up. Even among those who felt some reservation for the proposed directions, there was however clear support for increasing the housing stock in the city as a whole.

Many also expressed a want for a wider variety of housing. For many that means adding more rental (both market and non-market), for some it means encouraging more affordable ownership and missing middle type housing. There was a feeling among many that there is not enough housing to fulfill specific needs, whether affordable options for youth as they grow up and leave home, affordable or attainable homes suitable for current and future families with children, co-op housing, pet friendly units, accessible units, or homes for seniors. New Canadians and Indigenous residents in particular cited need for homes, including rental homes, that can accommodate multi-generational, blended, or larger families.

While a number of comments expressed concern that market-rate housing is not affordable, others saw a need for more homes or homes for those who are above the income cut-off for typical non-market housing yet face housing challenges. On the other hand, some felt that rental or multi-family housing would not be a desirable addition to lower-density parts of the

neighbourhood, citing concerns such as site-specific impacts (e.g. shading), traffic, cleanliness of the public realm, potential for low-income neighbours, or poorly managed rentals. Alternatively, some felt that parts of these neighbourhoods already contain a disproportionate amount supportive housing. (Most commonly in North Park where similar concerns were expressed about transitional housing and services for people experiencing homelessness.)

Housing Form

The proposed mixed-density areas were generally welcomed, and some were asking for more of it as they feel added density is a high priority. One concern we heard even among those who generally welcome added density was the potential pressure on community amenities such as schools and daycares.

There were varied opinions about building heights, with some wanting maximum heights reduced (areas where 4, 5 or 6 stories are proposed) or limited overall (e.g. to 4 storeys), others feeling 4-6 storeys is a good neighbourhood form (distinguished from the downtown), and some wanting to see more height in areas, especially if it can support affordability or housing availability.

Some in the Hillside-Quadra survey suggested additional or different areas be considered for multi-unit or mixed density housing, including: areas near Bay Street; along Topaz Avenue; in the proposed new small urban village along Highview Street; and more generally locating family housing close to schools and parks.

We heard both relief and frustration about traditional residential areas (particularly in Fernwood) that were not proposed to change in the draft plans. Those protective of such areas pointed to heritage or character among other things, while others felt that single family residential zoning is a barrier to addressing today's needs and welcome some form of added density in all areas of the neighbourhood. Some wanted to use Local Area Planning to plan for Missing Middle housing. While most welcomed diverse housing, some who owned a home or aspired to do so asked if it would be possible to make single-family houses in these neighbourhoods attainable for today's young families.

Vibrant Urban Villages and 15 Minute Communities

The principle of strengthening and focusing growth in urban villages has been well supported throughout engagement. In all three neighbourhoods, there is very strong support for encouraging small to medium size businesses (depending on location), and residents particularly want to see local businesses thrive here. We did hear some concern about new

development potentially displacing small businesses, although this sentiment was less than in previous surveys, perhaps because of the focus on small-footprint buildings and smaller commercial spaces. (Nonetheless, some continued to remain concerned that diverse businesses may not be able to afford new spaces).

Most people who frequent the existing Fernwood, North Park and Quadra Villages are enthusiastic about the prospect of adding more vibrancy and strengthening the character of these places. Proposed improvements to the public realm were very well received, such as making room for more patios, improving the pedestrian experience, greening, and adding more and better places to gather. Citizen led-placemaking and cultural spaces and expressions are highly requested, including public art and space to perform. There is also a strong desire to preserve and potentially expand both the Belfry Theatre (Fernwood Village) and retain the Roxy Theatre with more offerings (Quadra Village). In North Park Village, Logan's Pub is sorely missed, and many are hoping to see another musical performance venue in this area.

Some expressed concern about the prospect of less parking close to businesses in the future, as many find it hard to park close to services and amenities in these neighbourhoods today, and most small businesses need to attract customers from outside the immediate area, as they cannot rely on nearby residents alone.

Fernwood Village

Survey participants generally welcome the potential for some added commercial activity in Fernwood Village (with a focus on small, local businesses). Most think that buildings up to four stories is appropriate here, and there seems to be a general sense of reassurance that the existing character and feel of the village would be respected and improved with the proposed directions. Adding housing is mostly supported as well, although some felt that townhouses or other missing middle housing forms would be more fitting, while others wanted to ensure new housing reflects diversity.. While the square is loved by many, there is also broad acknowledgement that it could benefit from a refresh to make it more attractive and accessible. . Enhanced pedestrian connections (including “shared space”) were met with enthusiasm by most, Many also expressed a desire to calm traffic and make space for cyclign and walking along Fernwood Road, but some expressed concern about inhibiting automobile flow and parking.

Bay Street Villages

We saw general support for the proposed new Small Urban Village designations at Bay Street at Fernwood Road and Bay Street at Shakespeare Street, confirming a need for more services within walking distance of their homes and welcome initiatives that would activate the public realm. A grocery store at Bay Street and Fernwood Avenue was requested by many. Among those who had concerns, impacts on vehicle traffic along the Bay Street corridor was mentioned

by many as well as impacts on nearby single-detached residences. A few suggested that a bit more expansion in Fernwood Village might be preferable to Bay Street.

North Park Village

The general directions for North Park Village were very well received in the online survey, including beautifying and activating the public realm, strengthening walkability, welcoming small to medium size businesses and strengthening the connection b Franklin Green Park and the Village. We heard some specific ideas about what types of commercial activity are missing today, such as restaurants, pubs and cultural venues. One concern was that the neighbourhood needs more local-serving services and amenities as opposed to regional.

Among those who had reservations about the proposed directions for the Village, many are simply concerned about implementation (calling it a “pie in the sky”, for example), or ask for an even bolder vision for the future (e.g., allowing for taller buildings and/or incorporating more housing). Others have concerns about parking and traffic flow, including some feel that they have already been negatively impacted by recent active transportation improvements which make it harder to navigate by car. Others were concerned about maintaining affordability.

“But how you gonna make it so nice AND keep it affordable?”

“Concerned about the cities ability to see this through to fruition, developers are ruthless in there pursuit of a dollar and are good at manipulation ... perhaps it coming but the "how" is missing”

“It’s just been whitewashed with a brush. This hub needs more creative thinkers to ensure its expanded enough and well enough to afford any ever changing landscape of residents and shoppes and arts of all mediums.”

We saw generally strong support for encouraging “maker spaces” on North Park Street, and many agree that this type of land use is a key part of the existing character of this area and that artists and businesses need spaces. We heard some concerns about disturbance from light industrial activities. Some who would welcome the activity had implementation concerns such as questioning if there are enough businesses that could fall in such a slim category or if they would be able to afford rent here.

Quadra Cultural Corridor

We saw strong support for adding life and vibrancy to the Quadra Street Cultural Corridor area with public realm improvements, housing density, more services and less “blank walls”. Some expressed appreciation for building on what is already there, and some caution about gentrification. It was recognized by many that this area is not very pleasant to walk in today however, and some point to safety concerns that they would like to see addressed.

Quadra Village

We saw lots of support for public space and walkability improvements in Quadra Village as well as for greenery, and a desire for small shops and step-backs and sunlight at street level. Plazas large and small were well-liked, with caveats that they be lined with small shops, programmed, or include places to sit and gather. Arts and culture were desired, both in the public realm and in venues including the retention or renewal of the Roxy Theatre. Some wanted to see reduced scale in the village out of concern that, even with step-backs, buildings over 4 storeys might negatively affect the public realm, while others wanted to see more housing and/or affordability in the village.

Quadra West

There was generally strong support for the vision for Quadra West, in particular green spaces and other public gathering places, spaces for community services and amenities, connectivity improvements, diversity of building types, and mixed income housing. Some also wanted small local business integrated into Quadra West.

Those who did not support the proposal mentioned issues such as wanting less housing, wanting to see 950 Kings be used solely for green space and community amenities, concern for automobile access for current residents or fearing that public improvements in the area would raise rents.

Northern Hillside-Quadra

There was broad support for small urban villages at both Highview-Finlayson and Tolmie-Quadra. People cited the desire for local shops, services, public spaces, and gathering in the northern part of the neighbourhood where they can walk to. Specific desires included trees, on-street parking, bicycle parking, that shops fronts be smaller or otherwise support local and/or local-serving businesses, and that building design be contextual and not overly “modern”. Others commented on desired public space amenities – including a public space on Highview Street; seating; picnic tables; and even barbecues.

However, some felt that local shopping options would either increase traffic; or would slow traffic on what should be a transportation routes.

For the Highview-Finlayson corner, one suggestion mentioned extending the village, housing and public space south along Highview Street to Summit Park. Some people suggested a alternative locations, including Finlayson and Cook and Hillside at Cook and the “Gosworth Village” in Oaklands.

Who Did We Hear From?

Engagement Phases 1 and 2

A Working Group was formed at the start of the planning process to help reach diverse stakeholders. Members include residents recommended by community organizations, neighbourhood associations, land use committees, the local business community, the arts and culture community, the Intercultural Association, the Native Friendship Centre, the Renters Advisory Committee, the Disabilities Resource Centre, and a diverse cross-section of residents. The working group has supported the design and implementation of engagement activities, participated in workshops and walkshops, reviewed materials, and provided connections within the community. Over the course of the planning process membership evolved, with some members stepping down due to capacity issues and others joining, but the group continued to represent a cross-section of the community.

The first phase of engagement (Issues, Opportunities and Big Ideas) was focused on quality and diversity. In an effort to reach a greater diversity of voices, particularly those that the City doesn't typically hear from, staff attended events such as family dinners, youth events and kindergyms at Community and Recreation Centres. Working group members also reached a broad diversity of voices through their individual networks. An estimated 140 residents were engaged in one-on-one and group discussions through this outreach, along with approximately 800 survey responses.

The City was nearing the end of early engagement when public health orders related to COVID-19 were enacted. The online survey deadline was extended to allow for additional feedback. Despite the cancellation of a small number of events and a planned promotional mail-out, a broad and diverse audience was reached.

Staff noted some gaps, potentially due to COVID related restrictions. It was noted that few youth (under age 24) participated in the survey and other key groups were somewhat under-represented (including renters and single parent families). One important youth and family event was also canceled due to COVID related restrictions. In Phase 2 and 3 of engagement, staff worked to fill these gaps.

Phase 2 of engagement had to be planned around the numerous public health restrictions that were in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While these restrictions presented a challenge, it also presented an opportunity to pivot in a way that brought greater emphasis to equity in engagement. Virtual engagement, the ability to connect in new and different ways, and the ongoing support and thoughtful contributions from the Working Group resulted in an engagement approach that felt different from those previous, but one that resulted in a diversity

of voices providing meaningful feedback. This phase had a strong focus on reaching people who tend to be underrepresented in community engagement, including those who rent, families with children at home, single parent families, low-income residents, those who lack stable housing, minority populations, youth, Indigenous residents, Canadian newcomers, and other equity-seeking populations. The feedback and input from Working Group members continually challenged older approaches to engagement and brought forward new ideas to reach people where they are, slow conversations down, simplify language and remove jargon, and promote participation in meaningful ways (including in different languages and with targeted questions).

The Virtual Open House and surveys saw greater diversity in participation than previous neighbourhood-level planning processes. However, the survey data still showed underrepresentation of some groups, especially those that may be part of equity seeking populations. Other engagement approaches strived to bridge those gaps. This included focus groups with parents with kids at home (including single parents), newcomers (including adults and youth reached through Inter-Cultural Association programs), youth (through Victoria High School and Hillside-Quadra Community Centre), Indigenous Canadians (reached through the Metis Nation of Greater Victoria, the Native Friendship Centre and the Centre for Indigenous Education and Community Connection), residents of BC Housing's Evergreen Terrace, as well as general residents, small business owners and operators, and participants in community associations and the renters' advisory committee. Promotions were made through numerous means, both via print media and online, posterboards in the community and flyers distributed to diverse clients of community programs and local businesses.

For the virtual workshop series which informed the survey, about 45 participants from a cross-section of different ages, incomes, backgrounds, and housing situations were recruited. Attendees included Working Group members, participants from or recommended by community associations, land use committees, community organizations, and diverse stakeholder organizations (such as the Metis Nation of Greater Victoria, the Intercultural Association, the Youth Council, arts and culture organizations, local businesses, and others).

Engagement Phase 3

In Person / Virtual Events

In addition to the online survey (summarized below) and the Virtual Open House, staff had conversations with over 400 people throughout Phase 3 at the in-person Open Houses and Pop-ups, virtual "Ask a Planner" meetings, and some more focused conversations such as Community and Land Use Committees, youth at the Hillside-Quadra Community Centre and the Summit (Health Care facility) Resident and Family Council. Strong efforts were made to reach

as wide a population as possible when promoting these engagement opportunities, demographic data was however not collected during the events.

Online Surveys

The three community surveys all asked demographic questions of all participants, which gave a good indication of who we heard from in this phase of engagement. However, many visitors to the Virtual Open House chose to only inform themselves, without participating in the survey or leaving comments or questions for staff.

Below are some comparisons to the city's population or household composition overall, as per the 2016 Census of Population. Please note however that comparative statistics are provided as a reference point, but do not provide an "apples to apples" comparison of representation; many census statistics are at the household (rather than individual) scale while survey statistics are for individuals. For example, larger households may appear to be somewhat overrepresented, but a two-person household has twice as many individuals who may complete a survey so the degree of over-representation, if any, is not clear. Unfortunately, individual comparative statistics are not readily available.

Additionally, as these surveys focused on a particular geographical area, it is to be expected that participants represent a more local population than the city wide. Most survey participants were residents of Fernwood, Hillside-Quadra and North Park respectively, followed by directly adjacent neighbourhoods.

The representation of different age groups varied a bit between the three neighbourhood surveys, but generally seniors and youth were under-represented and the 25-54 age brackets were over-represented.

Age Range	Survey Participants (3 Surveys)	Percent City Population (Census 2016)
14 – 24	5%	11%
25 – 34	25%	19%
35 – 44	29%	13%
45 – 54	19%	12%
55 – 64	11%	14%
65 – 74	9%	12%
75 – 84	1%	6%

Ethnic background of participants mirrored the make up of the city population, although it is difficult to compare as many survey respondents chose not to disclose which ethnic background they identify with. Most survey participants identified as being of European origin, and those with other backgrounds were represented at slightly below the city averages.

1-2% of survey participants were of First Nations background, which is significantly lower than the city wide 4% (Metis background was slightly underrepresented as well, at less than 1%).

Newcomers to the city were well represented, 23.6% on average between the three surveys, compared to 26.1% city-wide according to the Census. This includes anyone who moved to Victoria in the last five years, whether from elsewhere in the region, province, country or from abroad.

Those who identified as immigrants were however under-represented. This is best compared by looking at how many participants identified as non-immigrants. City wide, according to the Census, 78% of residents identifying as non-immigrants, compared to 94% in the North Park survey, 93% in H-Q survey, and 87% in Fernwood (for an average of 91.3%). We heard from two refugees in total between the three surveys.

We continue to hear from more individuals who are homeowners than those who rent, while city wide Victoria has 60.6% renter households and 39.4 owner households. When comparing those indicators, it is important to keep in mind that we may hear from more than one member of a household in our surveys.

Victoria Neighbourhoods	Survey Participants (3 Surveys)	Percent City Population (Census 2016)
Own	63%	39%
Rent	31.3%	61%
Other	5.7%	N/A

We also saw an over-representation of individuals living with a partner (with or without children) and those living in multigenerational or multi-family homes, while singles and single parent households were under-represented compared to the Census. Individuals living with a roommate was proportionate to the Census.

Based on the above observations regarding household types and tenure, it is not surprising that there was also an under-representation of survey participants with lower than average income.

According to the Census, 37% of Victoria residents had a household income under \$40,000 in 2016. Between the three community surveys, only 12% of survey respondents were in that income bracket (keeping in mind there are updated Census statistics coming later in 2022). As seen in the table below, those with higher than average income were generally over-represented.

Estimated household income before taxes	Survey Participants (3 surveys)	Percent City Population (Census 2016)
Under \$40,000	12%	37%
\$40,000 - \$79,999	21%	33%
\$80,000 - \$124,999	26%	18%
\$125,000 - \$199,999	21%	9%
\$200,000 and over	6%	3%
Prefer not to say	15%	N/A

APPENDIX A.

Have Your Say Report

Summary Report

16 September 2020 - 04 April 2022

Have Your Say

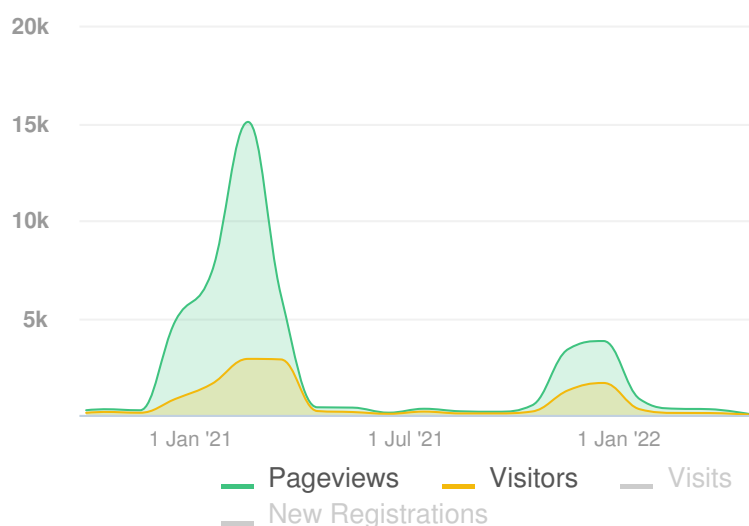
PROJECTS SELECTED: 1

Village and Corridor Planning: Fernwood, North Park, and Hillside-Quadra

FULL LIST AT THE END OF THE REPORT



Visitors Summary



Highlights

TOTAL VISITS

14.6 k

MAX VISITORS PER DAY

268

NEW REGISTRATIONS

273

ENGAGED VISITORS

908

INFORMED VISITORS

3.7 k

AWARE VISITORS

10.3 k

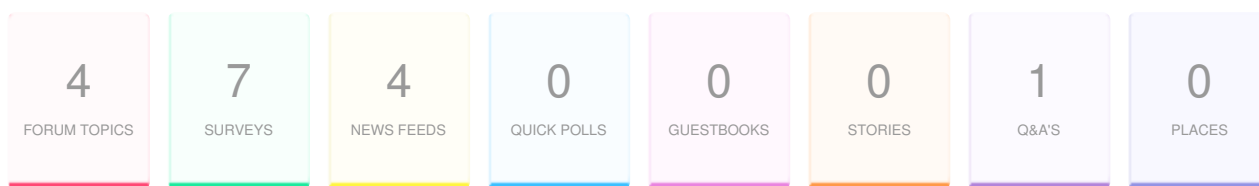
PARTICIPANT SUMMARY

ENGAGED	908 ENGAGED PARTICIPANTS				(%)
INFORMED	Contributed on Forums	19	0	0	Village and Corridor Plannin... 908 (8.9%)
	Participated in Surveys	884	0	0	
	Contributed to Newsfeeds	0	0	0	
	Participated in Quick Polls	0	0	0	
AWARE	Posted on Guestbooks	0	0	0	
	Contributed to Stories	0	0	0	
	Asked Questions	17	10	0	
	Placed Pins on Places	0	0	0	
	Contributed to Ideas	0	0	0	
* A single engaged participant can perform multiple actions				* Calculated as a percentage of total visits to the Project	

ENGAGED	3,720 INFORMED PARTICIPANTS				(%)
INFORMED	Viewed a video	298			Village and Corridor Plannin... 3,720 (36.3%)
	Viewed a photo	170			
	Downloaded a document	930			
	Visited the Key Dates page	92			
AWARE	Visited an FAQ list Page	185			
	Visited Instagram Page	0			
	Visited Multiple Project Pages	2,621			
	Contributed to a tool (engaged)	908			
	* A single informed participant can perform multiple actions				

ENGAGED	10,255 AWARE PARTICIPANTS				
INFORMED	Visited at least one Page	10,255			Village and Corridor Plannin... 10,255
		5			
AWARE					
* Aware user could have also performed an Informed or Engaged Action				* Total list of unique visitors to the project	

ENGAGEMENT TOOLS SUMMARY



FORUM TOPICS SUMMARY	
4	Forum Topics
19	Contributors
40	Contributions

TOP 3 FORUM TOPICS BASED ON CONTRIBUTORS		
9 Contributors to	7 Contributors to	5 Contributors to
Hillside-Quadra Discussion Forum	Housing Discussion Forum	Fernwood Discussion Forum

SURVEYS SUMMARY	
7	Surveys
884	Contributors
1.27 k	Submissions

TOP 3 SURVEYS BASED ON CONTRIBUTORS		
312 Contributors to	209 Contributors to	207 Contributors to
Fernwood Community Survey	Hillside-Quadra Community Survey	Fernwood Community Survey #2

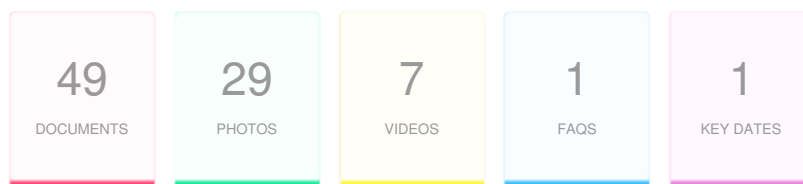
NEWSFEEDS SUMMARY	
4	NewsFeed
5	Visits
5	Visitors

TOP 3 NEWSFEEDS BASED ON VISITORS		
2 Visitors to	2 Visitors to	1 Visitors to
Ask a Planner: Fernwood Neighbourhood Plan - November 9, 2021	Ask a Planner: Hillside-Quadra Neighbourhood Plan - November 15, 2021	Ask a Planner: North Park Neighbourhood Plan - November 23, 2021

Q & A SUMMARY	
1	Q&As
27	Contributors
30	Questions

TOP 3 Q & A BASED ON CONTRIBUTORS	
27 Contributors to	
Do you have a question about this project?	

INFORMATION WIDGET SUMMARY



DOCUMENTS	
49	Documents
930	Visitors
2.16 k	Downloads

TOP 3 DOCUMENTS BASED ON DOWNLOADS		
341 Downloads	171 Downloads	178 Downloads
Housing Futures AUG 3 2021	Draft Fernwood Neighbourhood Plan	Draft Consolidated Guidelines for Multi-Family Residential, Commercial and Industrial

PHOTOS	
29	Photos
170	Visitors
866	Views

TOP 3 PHOTOS BASED ON VIEWS		
139 Views	72 Views	60 Views
deleted_photo	deleted_photo	deleted_photo

VIDEOS	
7	Videos
298	Visitors
482	Views

TOP 3 VIDEOS BASED ON VIEWS		
201 Views	127 Views	56 Views
Future of Fernwood	Future of Hillside-Quadra	Future of North Park

FAQS	
1	Faqs
185	Visitors
228	Views

TOP 3 FAQS BASED ON VIEWS		
228 Views		
Village and Corridor Planning: Fernwood, North Park, and Hillside-Quadra		

KEY DATES	
1	Key Dates
92	Visitors
100	Views

TOP 3 KEY DATES BASED ON VIEWS		
100 Views		
Village and Corridor Planning: Fernwood, North Park, and Hillside-Quadra		

TRAFFIC SOURCES OVERVIEW

REFERRER URL	Visits
m.facebook.com	1773
www.google.com	931
l.facebook.com	630
t.co	280
www.google.ca	247
www.victoria.ca	239
youtube.com	217
android-app	140
lm.facebook.com	85
qr codes.pro	59
instagram.com	37
googleads.g.doubleclick.net	36
mail.google.com	23
www.bing.com	22
www.facebook.com	14

SELECTED PROJECTS - FULL LIST

PROJECT TITLE	AWARE	INFORMED	ENGAGED
Village and Corridor Planning: Fernwood, North Park, and Hillside-Qua...	10255	3720	908

APPENDIX B.

Meetings of City Committees & Organizational Letters

6. Draft Local Area Plan and Design Guidelines for Fernwood

Marc Cittone provided a brief presentation.

Panel Discussion and Comments

Where in Fernwood Village do you see opportunity for new development to be created? The community could allow for densities up to four-storeys and house conversions. Creating policies with increased density can be a threat to heritage conservation, increased height and density should not be proposed for the existing heritage properties. Why wouldn't the plan restrict density and height for these areas to discourage redevelopment for heritage properties? Are incentives being created and threatening heritage in the neighbourhood if higher density and commercial is allowed, why would an applicant not pursue this option and demolish the heritage properties? When a rezoning application comes in, heritage merit would be beneficial to consider in addition to heritage designation.

Avery Bonner left the meeting at 1:02pm

The Fernwood neighbourhood is centered around the character of the neighbourhood, and some homes are not designated. It is important to focus on the community identity and this should also be included in the draft summary and considered in the value of the neighbourhood. Caledonia's street scape is a strong candidate for an HCA, but the draft plan map does not include this or others, and these should be identified in the plan. How can we steer towards densification without zoning a whole block? Missing Middle does include incentives for heritage conservation and adaptive use, it is looked at in the realm of trade-offs, and it's not a heritage retention tool either. How can HCA's be used as a protective measure against significant densification? This was used in the Fairfield local area plan which was controversial. Using registered and designated houses and adding a suite or a few and a garden suite to retain the house and not demolish it could be used to reduce densification and reduce demolition; these types of options need to be detailed in the neighbourhood plan.

The rooftop addition language from the DCAP should be considered in the neighbourhood plan for some consistency for rooftop additions among neighbourhoods. The definition of the public realm can be subjective from which these additions are not readily visible from the street. A photo of the originally Fernwood Inn could be used beside the Belfry theatre on the cover of the neighbourhood plan. The plan needs to be realistic and applicable to the development desire occurring in Victoria. The plan does allow for some multi-family develop on those blocks and seeking how to balance with the heritage assets.

Motion to adjourn: Jim Kerr Adjournment: (Unanimous)

Adjourned at 1:40pm

6. Hillside-Quadra & North Park Draft Neighborhood Plan

Lauren Klose and Marc Cittone provided a brief presentation.

Questions and Comments

During the proposed Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan, neighbourhoods were opposed to creating Heritage Conservation Areas or adding heritage status to a property, which resulted in no action/changes in those neighbourhoods and those heritage properties remain unprotected today. Since character homes were not heritage-designated and protected, they have been demolished and new structures have been built. The proposed plans and policies for multi-storey buildings have no overlay of heritage status to protect the heritage buildings. Increased density is a direct threat to the heritage homes, and there should be more attention to overlaying the heritage status of existing buildings with policies for increased density.

Threat to housing stock is a result of more value being placed on development of multi-unit buildings over retention of heritage homes that are affordable multi-unit houses. Since the 1960's when the federal government incentivized the development of multi-unit buildings, in James Bay hundreds of homes had been demolished to accommodate this type of development. City policies that encourage development and retain heritage elements should be given attention. What do we want the city to look like years from now, and what does it mean to be a community?

The extent of densification and the forecasted future need is commodified and, in this market-based economy, commodification and investment in units exacerbates the affordability and prevents people from being able to live in more affordable housing. Focus on maintaining character and retain these types of home to help maintain affordability and protect the character and green space. Urban villages developed when the neighbourhoods were undesirable to live in and developed into the community they are today. The unintended consequences need to be looked at when developing policies. Overlapping policies allow for some policies to be given more weight than others and ensuring heritage buildings are retained does not hold as much weight as others. Resident-led Heritage Conservation Area's is a process but there are not the staff resources, and these can often take years to complete which can result in unnecessary losses of heritage properties in that time. Lot consolidations are a good example where several character homes that function as multi-family affordable rental homes are demolished to construct new high-rent condos.

Was any historical research taken into consideration during the neighbourhood research? Research was examined when developing the Fernwood Development guidelines. In the North Park neighbourhood, it was considered when planning to renew the history of the neighbourhood while also redeveloping. People leave neighbourhoods because they cannot find somewhere to live. The addition of a neighbourhood survey could be added for future neighbourhood planning. There is interest in existing villages and to build on the character and density of them. The challenge with this is that the character of the villages is determined by the independent businesses there which have lower rent than when gentrification occurs by developing the areas, this can change the area with the scale of proposed redevelopment.

What is the heritage status of the Roxy Theatre? The Roxy Theatre has no heritage status. Planning for that site would encourage development of this site to retain the culture of the neighbourhood. There has been conversation with the arts community, but it is challenging to diversify the use of the space and retain a key piece of the cultural neighborhood. The draft plans reference keeping the performance venue there in that neighbourhood because its retention is important for the culture of the neighbourhood.

Imran left the meeting – 1:10pm

Motion:

The Heritage Advisory Panel urges the City and Planning Department to reconsider the extensive areas categorized for higher densities in the Draft Neighbourhood Plans and give a higher priority to the preservation and adaptive reuse of existing heritage character.

Moved by Steve Barber

Seconded by Jim Kerr

Carried (unanimously)

Motion:

For the City to allocate additional resources to the expansion of the Heritage Register and Resident-led Heritage Conservation Areas in existing neighbourhoods.

Moved by Steve Barber

Seconded by Veronica Strong-Boag

Carried (unanimously)

Motion to adjourn: Steve Barber

Seconded: Deniz Unsal

Adjournment: Unanimous

Adjourned at 1:30pm

3. PRESENTATION

Community Planning presentation on the proposed Consolidated Design Guidelines for multi-family housing and urban villages in Fernwood, North Park and Hillside-Quadra. Introducing specific design guidelines for Fernwood Village, based on its status as a Heritage Conservation Area.

Questions & Comments:

- How does social sustainability tie into this initiative?
 - I think sociability is one of those first principles and goals of good urban design. that sort of the key goal associated with it, and I think you're bang on there too, to highlight that and other city policies that we have around, you know our equity lens, welcoming city, Inclusion and diversity. So designing and orienting buildings to encourage sociability and neighborliness and creating welcoming both public realm but also private realm environment.
 - The guidelines do include some considerations and guidance around accessibility, and it's one where it's similar to building performance where we sometimes struggle within guidelines because we know that there's these other very robust, very technical and detailed regulatory pieces or piece which is the building code which really addresses those issues, so we are sometimes very careful about including those as design guidelines, because we don't want to contradict, especially as the building code gets updated from time to time.
 - To play devils advocate, The building code generally has the bare minimum for accessibility requirements. So, I think this would be a great opportunity to tie in the key elements. There are many types of disabilities which make technical guidelines difficult. I would love to see that as one of the key topics moving forward.
- Has there been any research done for the metrics around what livability actually is and how we achieve that?
- That's a great question. We kind of describe livability as a series of design intent statements, design intent and strategies for achieving that.
- Adaptability of livability, we must create a high priority list of items we don't want to give up, what it means today and what it means in the future.
- Happy to see that there are guiding principles of human scale, ecology, context and livability.

**MINUTES OF THE
RENTERS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
APRIL 19, 2022**

1. Ryan Moen called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm.

Committee Members: Ryan Moen (Co-Chair)
Alieda Blandford
Carrie Chapple
Heather Kirkham
Leslie Robinson
Neha Cradle
Ramya G N Reddy
Stefanie Hardman
Trevor Premack

Regrets: Yuka Kurokawa (Co-Chair)
Azmina Janmohamed

Councillors Present: Councillor Potts

Staff Present: Andrea Hudson – Assistant Director, Community Planning
Rory Stever – Staff Liaison, Tenant Assistance Planner
Lauren Klose – Senior Planner
Ross Soward – Senior Planner, Housing Development
Ayla Conklin – Planning Secretary

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion:

It was moved by Ryan Moen, seconded by Trevor Premack, that the April 19, 2022 Agenda be approved.

Discussion:

- Is item 4. Village and Corridor Planning relevant to rental housing? Request to amend this item to 45 minutes and allow time to discuss the Shift Initiative.
 - The Shift Initiative will likely come to RAC next month but is not prepared to be presented today. The Village and Corridor Planning report will be presented to Council in May 2022.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. Adoption of Meeting Minutes

March 15, 2022, Meeting Minutes

Motion:

It was moved by Stefanie Hardman, seconded by Trevor Premack, that the March 15, 2022 Meeting Minutes be adopted as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. Village and Corridor Planning

Ross Soward and Lauren Klose, Senior Planners, presented information on three proposed plans for Hillside-Quadra, North Park and Fernwood neighbourhoods, which would create more housing capacity, including rental housing.

The committee discussed:

- Concern regarding the current practice that redevelopment proposals can eliminate below-market rental stock with market-rate units or no replacement rental units at all. What tools are being applied to preserve existing affordable housing and prevent tenant displacement?
 - The pressure on the rental market will be increased if the City does not include planning for this growth.
 - The City must continue to use all tools available to support all the sections of the housing continuum. People with low incomes suited for below-market units are created through partnerships with senior levels of government. Significant subsidies are required to offer this type of housing. Creating a more supportive land-use system is a way to support and incentivise affordable housing projects and increase housing stock. The recently-approved [Rapid Deployment of Affordable Housing Project](#) will move affordable housing projects through the development permit/rezoning phase at a much faster pace. These will likely be geared towards median-income tenants (35k-55k).
 - Increasing density geared towards rentals will allow the potential for increased affordability. This could be a tool rolled out to other neighbourhoods. Other tools include process and regulatory incentives. Local area planning is one tool for the City to support the overall rental affordability goals.
- How will people be able to access this type of housing?
 - Through the BC Housing registry waitlist.
- Although single-family dwellings are zoned for single occupancy, there are several that provide affordable rents for tenants. Concern there will be no net increase of affordable rental units. Densifying isn't the sole answer.
- There are many tenants who work that still cannot afford housing. Meanwhile, the City seems to be spending millions to house people facing homelessness and addictions. Do City Councillors have information on the comparison of housing costs for these groups?
 - Councillor Potts: For the most part, the City isn't spending money directly on housing. Many recent projects being developed, such as the purchase of hotels, have been provincial government initiatives (BC Housing) to support a variety of income brackets, including shelter rates and rent geared to income. There may be a perception that more housing is going to people who are unhoused and not enough to people with lower incomes. The Victoria Housing Needs Assessment and City's Housing Strategy show how the City and partners are advancing housing across the spectrum of needs, including for those with lower incomes.
- Has Rental Tenure Zoning already been adopted in the City? How would this be implemented in other areas of Victoria?
 - Specific areas which meet objectives such as mobility, affordability and climate action goals, have been identified as potential rental tenure zoning through local area planning. Future areas could be identified by local area planning, or through other ways to implement the Victoria Housing Strategy, depending Council's direction.
 - Areas identified for rental tenure zoning would avoid displacement and protect good existing rental housing. What is there today could stay there with the new zoning. Rental tenure zoning would add opportunity to add density to specific sites without rezoning, as long as it comes in the form of purpose-built rental and complies with applicable design guidelines.
- Is a recommendation desired for on-corridor or off-corridor density?
 - Staff are recommending a hybrid model, with on-corridor and off-corridor density, and would welcome the committee's feedback.

- A member participated in the Villages and Corridors focus group in Fernwood and North Park. Neighbour feedback is supportive of the hybrid option. Renters have families and want to live on quiet streets as well.
- Concern that not enough is being done for seniors. Affordable rents are still priced much higher than the average senior receives on their pension, and people should not have to decide between housing or food.

DRAFT

KHALSA DIWAN SOCIETY:

COMMUNITY HUB DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Project Introduction

The Khalsa Diwan Society (the KDS) of Victoria is looking to increase their historic contributions to the provision of residential and community housing and services in their neighbourhood. The KDS of Victoria has the vision of creating a diverse, inclusive, and multigenerational community hub through the development of 5 properties they have owned for decades on Blackwood Street and Topaz Avenue. The Gurdwara (Sikh Temple) already acts as an important gathering place for the community, as well as for visitors from abroad. Visiting family members, international students and immigrants visit the temple to be a part of a supportive and welcoming community. The KDS is looking to build on the city's recent Welcoming City efforts and ensure all members of the community are accepted, respected and feel like they belong.

There are currently two projects being envisioned on these properties that are intended to support the local and regional community's ever-growing cultural and housing needs. The projects will serve all populations, but will prioritize elders, students, as well as newcomers, immigrants, and other vulnerable populations. This will be done by achieving the following goals:

- Increasing the supply and diversity of housing, including higher density housing and community amenities
- Increasing the supply of services, including both social and community support services
- Maximizing the opportunity to improve underutilized spaces, such as parking lots, to meet demonstrated community needs and demand
- Align project goals with municipal and neighbourhood current and future policy objectives to realize secured, attainable rental housing and community services in the Quadra Hillside area.

The KDS of Victoria has been on their Gurdwara site of 1210 Topaz Avenue for over 100 years and have been heavily involved in supporting the greater community over this period. Today, the KDS of Victoria numbers over 4,000 members and continues to operate entirely self-funded. The following document outlines the project sites, visions and goals along with opportunities and policy alignment. The document finishes by highlighting the KDS of Victoria's history, experience and involvement in the community, which is more relevant today than ever.

The Site

The 5 properties that the KDS is looking to develop are outlined in red in Figure 1. Four of these properties are direct neighbours to each other, while the fifth property is located on Topaz Avenue, adjacent to the temple site (outlined in blue). Table 1 summarizes the two potential projects property information. Additionally, the KDS has a sixth property located to the north of these which houses their “community house”. This property is outlined in orange in Figure 1.

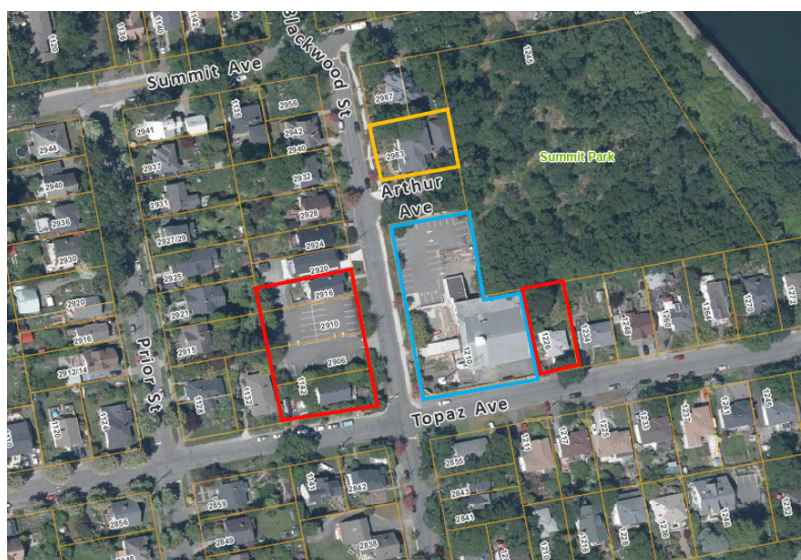


Figure 1

Together, the 5 properties to be developed represent 2,960m² of land and over \$4M in assets.

Table 1

Location	Phase One: 1226 Topaz Av.	Phase Two: 2916, 2910, 2906 Blackwood St. and 1142 Topaz Av.
Approximate Land Size	607 m ² (8,493ft ²)	2,353 m ² (25,327ft ²)
Approximate dimensions	17m front, 37m depth	57m front, 41m depth
Assessed Land Value (2021)	\$787,400	\$3,227,700
Zoning	R1-B Single Family dwelling district	R1-B Single Family dwelling district
OCP Land Designation	Traditional Residential	Traditional Residential
Local Area Plan	Hillside/Quadra	Hillside/Quadra
Development Permit/heritage conservation area	None	None

Location

These sites have been acquired solely by the KDS membership over the years with the long-term vision to provide additional housing and community services. They are ideal locations for secured rental housing and additional community services due to their adjacencies to existing Temple services and programs that have been operating for decades. Additionally,

because these properties neighbour each other and parkspace, the redevelopment of these properties is not expected to significantly impact other neighbours.

The sites are located in the north end of the city, which provides easy access to Blanshard (850m) and the rest of the CRD, including the Westshore or northern peninsula. The closest arterials to the site are Hillside Avenue, located 400m to the south, Finlayson Street, located 400m to the north and Quadra Street, located 500m to the west.

The sites also provide access to greenspace including the neighbouring Summit Park, as well as proximity to Topaz and Hillside Parks and walking distance to two public schools. The site is also in close proximity to several amenities including grocery stores and an 800m (10 minute) walk from Quadra Village, which houses a walk-in clinic, several restaurants and other services. These sites are linked to the active transportation network, with Topaz Street identified as a “people priority greenway”, and are only 2 blocks east of the Vancouver Street bikeway. Although the most immediate neighbours are single-detached homes, there are a number of examples of multi-family and townhome developments within 300m of these properties.

Vision and Goals

The KDS of Victoria has the vision of creating a diverse, inclusive, and multigenerational community hub through the development of 5 of their properties they have owned for decades on Blackwood Street and Topaz Avenue. The hub will focus on providing secured rental as well additional community space to support elders and students, as well as newcomers, immigrants, and broader Quadra/Hillside community members. Elders and newcomers are some of the most vulnerable community members, with these populations being identified as being in the some of the greatest core housing need.

The projects include a plan to build new housing units under ownership of the KDS of Victoria on Blackwood and Topaz. This will be completed in two phases:

1. In phase one, the KDS will build a fourplex on 1226 Topaz, which borders on the Gurdwara property to the east. This property is currently occupied by a single detached home built in 1944 that is being rented.
2. Phase two will involve the development of four adjacent lots (1142 Topaz, 2906 Blackwood, 2910 Blackwood and 2916 Blackwood). Two of these lots are currently occupied by rental houses built in the early 1900s, while the other two serve as parking lots.

Phase two would involve building higher density residential buildings on these four lots, which will likely necessitate a change in land designation that permits for higher density housing than what is currently allowed in the Official Community Plan and the Hillside/Quadra Neighbourhood Plan. The planned developments are still in the initial visioning stage but are anticipated to meet community goals outlined in current planning documents, as well as exceed environmental goals through net-zero construction. The KDS is also anticipating providing a community space for the Hillside/Quadra community as a way of supporting the greater community.

The properties under consideration for development are conveniently located directly across from the Gurdwara, allowing for an age-friendly community to develop and take advantage of the services already offered by the KDS. With this development, the KDS is seeking to add services for members such as health related supports through a partnership with potential health care providers.

The Opportunity

These projects present a unique opportunity to advance the stated goals on KDS lands through a collaborative planning process and partnership between the KDS and the City of Victoria. This process would include opportunities to proactively redesignate the KDS lands through the Hillside/Quadra Local Area Planning process currently underway. This redesignation, combined with the rapid deployment of affordable and supportive housing project underway by the city, would provide a number of advantages to the KDS in achieving their vision including:

- Removing barriers to accessing funding and financing by providing certainty when applying to funders such as the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and BC Housing
- Reducing the financial risk for the society and partners by accelerating the approvals process
- Increased awareness around the vision and goals of the KDS, further attracting community members and funding opportunities
- Supporting a long-standing, independently operating non-profit entity in its continued vision and service provision to the community.

In addition, the project will help the City of Victoria achieve significant policy goals without creating any additional cost burden to the city. It is further assumed that an accelerated approvals process will allow the city to minimize resource expenditures by freeing up staff and council hours for other priority projects.

Alignment with City of Victoria Projects and Policy

Projects

The City of Victoria has a number of current projects that support this vision, including the previously mentioned Hillside/Quadra Local Area Plan, the rapid deployment of affordable housing initiative. In addition to these projects, the City of Victoria has created a Welcoming City Task Force co-chaired by Mayor Helps and Councillor Dubow, which is working towards creating a Welcoming City Strategy. The strategy has the goal of making Victoria more “welcoming, equitable and inclusive”. This community hub project is aligned with this strategy because of its focus on creating an accessible and connected community for new immigrants, elders and other vulnerable populations who are most in need of support. This project will help newcomers make connections within their community and allow them to live affordably, within a walkable neighbourhood close to services and amenities.

Policy

This project would respond to a number of policy priorities identified in the City of Victoria Official Community Plan including the following policies outlined under Section 13, housing and homelessness:

- (a) That housing development that responds to future demand is facilitated through land use policies and practices.
- (b) That housing affordability is enabled for housing types across the housing spectrum, particularly for people in core housing need.
- (c) That the existing supply of rental housing is expanded through regeneration.
- (d) That a wide range of housing choice is available within neighbourhoods to support a diverse, inclusive, and multigenerational community

Section 15, community well-being, identifies the following policy that would be relevant to this development:

- (C) Victorians know their neighbours, are connected to communities of interest, and have diverse opportunities for social interaction.
- (D) Victorians can support themselves and their neighbours in difficult times.

Within the City of Victoria Housing Strategy, newcomers and seniors were both identified as priority groups. Newcomers were described as people who “disproportionately experience overcrowded and unaffordable housing conditions when settling in Canada”, acknowledging continued challenges such as language barriers, income and discrimination. Seniors households are also identified as being more vulnerable given senior rental households have a very low income. The following goals and opportunities support this development including:

- Goal 1: Focus on renters by creating more rental housing supply and creating more opportunities for rental and choices in types of rentals available (p.52)
- Goal 2: Increase supply by:
 - Identifying opportunities for affordable housing in all local area plans
 - Supporting charitable, faith based and non-profit organizations and developers to increase development capacity, foster partnerships and support the creation of community-focused development in Victoria.

Land Designations

This project is currently located within the “traditional residential” land designation, which allows up to 2 storeys and a 1.0 Floor Space Ratio. The project is located 900m from Quadra Village, which is designated as a “large urban village” and provides a number of services to local residents. These land designations are visible in Figure 2, where the top red circle is the current project and the bottom red circle is Quadra Village.

History and Experience

The KDS of Victoria has been established on their current site on Blackwood Avenue since 1912, where they built their first Temple through community donations. In 1969, a new modern temple was constructed on the site using funds raised entirely through donations from the community and local businesses, including a local forestry company that donated the large wooden beams that support the roof. The KDS of Victoria has extensive experience in project management, community and residential development, and property management. Recent project management experience includes the construction of the “community house” duplex at 2983 Blackwood (\$600,000 that was delivered on schedule and on budget) and overseeing a major \$1.6-million-dollar renovation to the Gurdwara that includes the addition of new kitchen facilities and encapsulating the front staircase so that events can be held in adverse weather conditions. Recent property management experience includes the ongoing management of four residential rental properties to non-members of the community. Having relied on donations for previous projects, the KDS is planning on seeking financing from external and internal sources such as Vancity for a business and asset management grant, Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) for both pre-development and development financing for these projects, as well as internal community fundraising and capacity support.

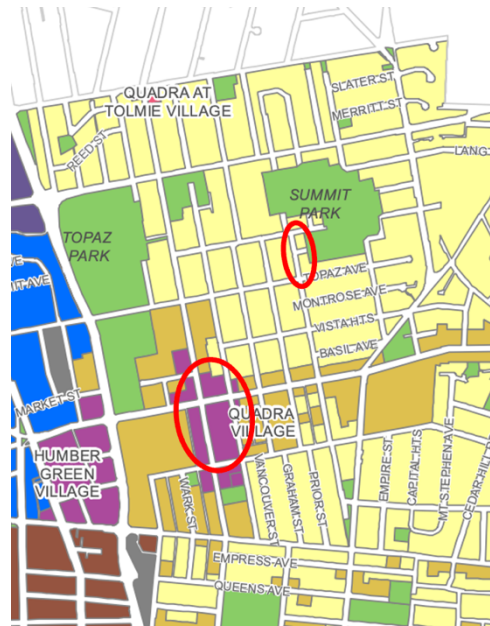


Figure 2

Involvement

The KDS of Victoria is an entirely volunteer-run organization that provides housing and services to all members of the community. The Gurdwara is regularly open to members, where in addition to providing regular faith-based services, acts as a social hub for those in the community. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, the society held monthly lunches for seniors, which utilized the full capacity of their kitchen and gathering space in the basement of the Gurdwara. An estimated 120+ seniors regularly attended these events. The Gurdwara also holds weekly services and several events during the year, including weddings and funerals. Once each ceremony is complete everyone attending is served food honouring the celebration. The KDS of Victoria also operates the “community house”, duplex on Blackwood with a “seniors ground floor area” for socializing through exercise, cards, crocheting, sewing,

etc. The KDS has been active in the community by providing facilities for several organizations including meetings for the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee, where consultation between members of the Indigenous, South East Asian, Black and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) and South Asian communities has taken place with the chiefs of police, as well as the Block Watch meetings for the Quadra/Hillside area. The KDS has also been involved in supplying and preparing food for numerous events and organizations including the Quadra/Hillside local foodbank and lunch during Black History Month celebrations served at Pacific Christian School.